

**TOWN OF EAST WINDSOR  
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION**

**REGULAR Meeting #1815  
November 23, 2021  
In-person meeting**

**AND**

**Meeting also held via ZOOM Teleconference  
Meeting ID: 714 897 1799**

***MEETING MINUTES***

**\*\*\*\*\*Minutes are not official until approved at a subsequent meeting\*\*\*\*\***

**I. TIME AND PHYSICAL PLACE OF MEETING:**

Chairman Gobin participated in the Meeting remotely. She called Regular Meeting #1815 of the East Windsor Planning and Zoning Commission dated November 23, 2021 to Order at 6:30 p.m. The Meeting is being held in-person in the John Daly, Jr. Meeting Room, Town Hall, 11 Rye Sreet, Broad brook, CT., and via telconference as well..

**PRESENT:**    **Regular Members:**    Anne Gobin (Chairman), Frank Gowdy, Michael Kowalski (Vice Chairman), Joseph Sauerhoefer, and Jim Thurz (Secretary).

**Alternate Members:** David Leason. There are presently two vacancies for Alternate members..

**ABSENT:**    No one; all Regular and Alternate Members were present.

Also present was Director of Planning and Development/Town Planner Ruth Calarese, and Planning Consultant Michael D'Amato.

**GUESTS/SPEAKERS present in person:** Director of Planning and Development/Town Planner Calabrese hosted the meeting; Planning Consultant D'Amato assisted in the presentations. Also present were: Jay Ussery, of J. R. Russo & Associates, representing Wharton Equity Partners.

**Public signed in remotely (as identified in the Meeting participation list):**  
Anne Gobin, Chairman/Planning and Zoning Commission; Ron Uretta, representing Wharton Equity Partners regarding building renovations; Recording Secretary Peg Hoffman.

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**II. ESTABLISHMENT OF QUORUM:**

A quorum was established as five Regular Members, and one Alternate Member, were present in person at the Call to Order. Chairman Gobin noted all Regular Members will participate in discussion and votes this evening; the Alternate Member can participate in discussion but will not cast any votes this evening.

**III. ADDED AGENDA ITEMS:**

Chairman Gobin noted she had received an e-mail from First Selectman Bowsza regarding the Commission's budgetary needs for Fiscal Year 2022 - 2023. She requested the addition of this discussion item under **NEW BUSINESS**.

**MOTION: To ADD Discussion of the Planning and Zoning Commission's Budget to the Agenda under NEW BUSINESS.**

**Kowalski moved/Gowdy seconded/DISCUSSION: None.**

**VOTE by show of hands: In Favor: Gobin/Gowdy/Kowalski/  
Sauerhoefer/Thurz  
(No one opposed/No Abstentions)**

**IV. LEGAL NOTICE:**

There was no Legal Notice for applications presented this evening.

**V. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (For Items Not Listed on the Agenda):**

Chairman Gobin queried the in-person audience for comments regarding items/issues not posted on the Agenda. Mr. Ussery was the only in-person participant other than Staff; Mr. Ussery will give a presentation later in the Meeting. Chairman Gobin then queried the remote participants; no one requested to speak..

**VI. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

**A. November 9, 2021:**

Chairman Gobin queried the Commission for edits or comments regarding the November 9, 2021 Regular Meeting Minutes. No requests for changes were requested. Chairman Gobin called for a motion of approval.

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**MOTION: To ACCEPT the Minutes of Regular Meeting #1814 dated November 8, 2021 as presented.**

**Kowalski moved/Gowdy seconded/DISCUSSION: None.  
VOTE by show of hands: In Favor: Gobin/Gowdy/Kowalski/  
Sauerhoefer/Thurz  
(No one opposed/No Abstentions)**

**VII. RECEIPT OF APPLICATIONS:**

Chairman Gobin noted there were no new applications to be received this evening.

**VIII. PERFORMANCE BONDS – ACTIONS; PERMIT EXTENSIONS; ROAD ACCEPTANCE :**

**A, Motion to Approve Termination of Special Use Permit Renewal:**

Town Planner Calabrese advised the Commission that the Special Use Permit under discussion for termination relates to the conversion of the Charbonneau Pit on Apothecaries Hall Road to the Gravel Pit Solar Project. While Apothecaries Hall Enterprises/Charbonneau allowed the permit issued on January 28<sup>th</sup>, 2020 to expire Gravel Pit Solar needs the Commission to acknowledge the termination of the expired permit for Gravel Pit Solar to move forward with the project. Town Planner Calabrese noted a motion has been prepared for the Commission.

**Chairman Gobin** opened discussion remotely.

- **Clean-up responsibility:** She questioned if the owner prior to Gravel Pit Solar – Apothecaries Hall Enterprises/Charbonneau – had cleaned up the parcel as the Special Use Permit required? Town Planner Calabrese suggested it's a work in progress; the piles of waste have been removed, or will be. Town Planner Calabrese felt Gravel Pit Solar will have to clean up the site as the CT. Siting Council requires; she noted that once the CT. Siting Council took over the project East Windsor lost any jurisdiction over the project. Chairman Gobin noted that Apothecaries Hall Enterprises used to collect piles of tires and construction debris and waste on the site; she assumes Gravel Pit Solar will have to clean that up.

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Planning Consultant D'Amato suggested Apothecaries Hall Enterprises shouldn't be operating at the site as the Special Use Permit has expired. This termination motion should satisfy the conclusion of any work at the site not required by Gravel Pit Solar.

Chairman Gobin queried the Commissioners for comments or questions; no one had any comments.

Chairman Gobin then called for the motion terminating the Special Use Permit for Apothecaries Hall Enterprises, LLC/Charbonneau.

**MOTION:** It is hereby moved that the Planning and Zoning Commission of the Town of East Windsor to acknowledge the termination of the Special Use Permit Renewal Approval issued to Apothecaries Hall Enterprises, LLC, to conduct sand and gravel operations on property owned by Apothecaries Hall Enterprises, LLC and the East Windsor Sportsman Club, Inc. on January 28, 2020 and recorded in Volume 422, Page 1024 of the Town of East Windsor's Land Records.  
**Finding:** The permit Special Use Permit expired on November 28, 2020 and was not renewed

**Kowalski moved/Gowdy seconded/DISCUSSION:** None.  
**VOTE by show of hands: In Favor:** Gobin/Gowdy/Kowalski/  
Sauerhoefer/Thurz  
(No one opposed/No Abstentions)

**IX. CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARINGS:** None.

**X. NEW PUBLIC HEARINGS:** None.

**XI. OLD BUSINESS:** None.

**XII. NEW BUSINESS:**

**A. 18 Craftsman Road – Site Plan Modification:**

Jay Ussery, of J. R. Russo & Associates, LLC, joined the Commission in person. Mr. Russo is representing Wharton Equity Partners regarding the

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Site Plan Modification of 18 Craftsman Road. Also assisting Mr. Ussery remotely was Mr. Ron Uretta, who has been working on the building renovations.

Mr. Ussery noted Wharton Equity Partners is the new owner of 18 Craftsman Road, which was originally built as the Mushroom Factory in the 1970s. Mr. Ussery noted there have been 3 or 4 owners since that time; the building has never been fully occupied. In 2014 STR, a manufacturer of film for solar panels, received approval before this Commission for work on the site, and subsequently went out of business. Mr. Ussery recalled another business occupied the facility for some time after STR; they also went out of business. Wharton Equity Partners is a real estate investment company out of New York; they have now purchased the facility and have already begun building renovations.

Mr. Ussery noted Mr. Ron Uretta, who is involved in the building renovations, is on the line remotely to answer questions the Commission may have.

Mr. Ussery reported the building currently has 6 loading docks, Wharton Equity Partners wants to add additional doors to the existing loading docks under Phase I of the renovations. Mr. Ussery noted that in the 1970s tractor trailer trucks were typically 55 feet in length; tractor trailers are now 78 feet. Phase I will also include removal of existing islands in the parking lot which restrict access to the current loading docks, and removal of existing pavement and repaving the parking lot to the west side of the facility. Phases II and III will occur subsequently and may happen quickly. Wharton Equity Partners is working with potential tenants as the work commences.

Mr. Ussery noted the improvements will add additional impervious coverage. Town Planner Calabrese and Town Engineer Norton are reviewing the renovations as they occur. Mr. Ussery noted this is a 40 acre site which drains over to the Field Trial property; the sheet flow goes out to Route 5 north of the Stanton property.

Mr. Ussery noted they will be dropping the grades to modify the loading dock. There are currently trees in the existing island in the parking lot which will be, or already have been removed. They will be replanting new trees as the parking lot is completed. Mr. Ussery noted the current lighting on the building is archaic; they will be installing new LED lights.

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Mr. Ussery reported STR did some parking lot work on the north side of the building; no parking lot work has begun on the east or west side currently.

Mr. Uretta, speaking remotely, advised the Commission they have already painted the exterior of the building. They have removed dead trees from the islands in the parking lot, and have 30 replacement trees on hold at a nursery to be planted at the entrance of the building.

Mr. Ussery advised the Commission they have recently received approval from the Wetlands Commission.

**Commissioner Gowdy:**

- **Phasing vs. on-going renovations:** Commissioner Gowdy questioned why the work is proposed in phases rather than an ongoing process? Mr. Ussery suggested the work depends on the tenants secured. Commissioner Gowdy questioned if you don't know who the tenants will be and you're adding 6 or 8 loading docks if the new tenant wants 12 loading docks will you come back to the Commission for an additional Site Plan Modification? Mr. Uretta noted they have done maintenance on the interior of the building already; the utilities enter on the north west corner of the building and they don't want to disturb that area.

**Commissioner Kowalski**

- **Previous traffic pattern:** Commissioner Kowalski questioned how the trucks entered the loading docks previously? Mr. Ussery felt the truck traffic went around the building.
- **Tenant parking:** Mr. Ussery indicated the lot currently provides 30 employee parking spaces; the tenant Wharton is working with would need 40 spaces.
- **What's parking capacity based on?** Commissioner Kowalski questioned the building size? Mr. Uretta indicated approximately 279,000 square feet. Commissioner Kowalski noted the Site Plan Modification before the Commission indicates 141 spaces for employee parking; Mr. Ussery reported that would be with full occupancy of the facility. Commissioner Kowalski questioned if the parking is based on occupancy or size? Planning Consultant D'Amato suggested it's based on both. Mr. Ussery suggested while they have the space to stripe 40 spaces it's not anticipated that they will need that many spaces.

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Mr. Ussery noted technology has changed, today facilities don't have as many on-site employees as in the past. He gave as an example the Lego facility in Enfield; there are only 7 employees in the building managing the facility. He noted many towns have regulations that allow deferred parking; if an applicant can show they have the room to provide additional parking if there is a need the initial parking can be provided on a lower number of spaces. Town Planner Calabrese suggested under Section 1.4 the Commission can waive up to 35% of the parking requirement.

- **Drawing elevations:** Commissioner Kowalski questioned if the elevations shown on the drawings are current or proposed? Mr. Ussery indicated they are proposed elevations.
- **Grading:** Commissioner Kowalski questioned if any ponding is anticipated? Mr. Ussery indicated that everything will be graded away from the building and parking area.

**Chairman Gobin** questioned if the Commission needs to make a finding to waive the parking? Mr. Ussery suggested approximately 162 spaces could be required for the entire site. Planning Consultant D'Amato suggested the Commission consider adding a condition regarding additional spaces be striped based on the occupancy of the building. Chairman Gobin requested Planning Consultant D'Amato draft the condition for inclusion in the approval motion.

**Commissioner Sauerhoefer:**

- **Replacement of trees in parking islands:** Commissioner Sauerhoefer indicated he would like to see the trees that have been removed replaced. Mr. Ussery noted Mr. Uretta had mentioned they have 30 trees being held to plant when the paving work is completed.

Planning Consultant D'Amato read the proposed additional condition.

Chairman Gobin questioned if the Commissioners had any additional comments; no one raised any additional questions.

Chairman Gobin noted she likes seeing an unused building being renovated and coming back into use.

Chairman Gobin called for a motion to approve.

**MOTION TO APPROVE:**

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Application #PZ-2021-27: 18 Craftsman Road- Site Plan Modification -Wharton Equity Partners

This approval is granted subject to the conformance with referenced plans (as may be modified by the Commission and this approval) and the following conditions/modifications.

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**Referenced Plans**

Wharton Equity Partners – Loading Dock Expansion – 18 Craftsman Road, East Windsor, Connecticut Map 093 Block 19 Lot 012-04; Zone: M-1; Sheets 1 – 4; dated 11-1-2021 prepared by JR Russo & Associates

**Conditions which must be met prior to submittal of final plans:**

1. A copy of this approval motion has been incorporated into the plan.
2. A copy of the final approved plans with any necessary revisions shall be submitted to the Planning & Development Office for review and comment.
3. All final plans submitted for signature shall require the seal and live signature of the appropriate professional(s) responsible for the preparation of the plans.
4. The One set of final plans, with all necessary revisions, shall be provided to the Planning and Development Office.
5. A single, PDF copy of the final plans, with all necessary revisions shall be provided to the Planning and Development Office.
6. Conditions of this approval shall be binding upon the applicant, landowners, and their successors and assigns.

**Conditions which must be met prior commencing phases II and III:**

7. Final grading, stabilization and seeding shall be in place or adequate bond filed with the Town for the unfinished work.
8. A landscape establishment bond may be required by staff ensure the proposed landscape plans are adequately established, to ensure the proposed landscape plans are adequately established, prior to the issuance of a certificate of zoning compliance.
9. A preconstruction meeting shall be held with staff prior to commencing each phase as depicted in the approved plan.

**General Conditions:**

10. All conditions previously approved on January 10, 2012, under SPR-18 Craftsman Rd-Lighting Plan are hereby incorporated into this approval and shall remain in effect.
11. This project shall be constructed and maintained in accordance with the final plans. Minor modifications to the approved plans that result in lesser impacts may be allowed subject to staff review and approval.
12. Any modifications to the proposed drainage or grading as depicted on the site plan are subject to review and approval by the Town Engineer.
13. Additional erosion control measures may be required by Town staff if field

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conditions necessitate.

14. By acceptance of this approval and its conditions, the applicant, owner and/or their successors and assigns acknowledge the right of Town staff to periodically enter upon the subject property for the purpose of determining compliance with the terms of this approval.
15. The approval granted by the East Windsor Inland Wetland and Watercourses Agency is hereby incorporated into this approval. Any deviations from plans approved by the IWWA shall be subject to the requirements of the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Agency Regulations.
16. Upon completion of site work, one electronic PDF and paper copy of the final as-built survey showing structures, pins, driveways, final floor elevations and spot grades shall be submitted.
17. A separate zoning permit will be required for site signage.

**ADDITIONAL CONDITION:**

18. Not more than 162,000SF of the building shall be occupied until additional parking spaces have been striped per the approved plan

**Kowalski moved/Gowdy seconded/DISCUSSION:** None.

**VOTE by show of hands: In Favor: Gobin/Gowdy/Kowalski/  
Sauerhoefer/Thurz  
(No one opposed/No Abstentions)**

**B. Discussion of the Planning and Zoning Commission's Budget for Fiscal Year 2022 – 2023:**

Chairman Gobin noted the receipt of an e-mail from First Selectman Bowsza requesting the Commission submit a budget request for the Fiscal Year 2022 – 2023 to the Board of Selectmen. Chairman Gobin opened discussion regarding the following Commission expenses:

- **Recording Secretarial Services:** Town Planner Calabrese reported 37% of the current budget has been expended on recording secretarial services. Chairman Gobin questioned the rate of compensation for the annual services. The Recording Secretary advised the Commission the current arrangement is a per meeting fee of \$125 for preparation of a Schedule of Motions, followed by transcription of meeting minutes. The fee has not been increased since 1990. Discussion continued regarding the detailed content of the Commission Minutes in comparison to Minutes for other Boards or Commissions, and meeting fees in comparison to other Towns. Chairman Gobin requested Town Planner Calabrese

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research comparative fees in other towns and report back to the Commission at the next meeting.

- **Dues and Fees for Commissioner Training:** Chairman Gobin recalled she had previously attended a training session on a Saturday which reviewed the legal requirements related to the Commission 's responsibilities; she questioned if funding was available for similar Commissioner training? Town Planner Calabrese indicated there were now mandatory requirements for Commissioner training; she'll research the cost for the next meeting. Commissioner Thurz agreed with Chairman Gobin; funding for refresher training should be available to the Commissioners.

Commissioner Kowalski questioned if money was available to hire consultants to assist the Commission in cleaning up the regulations, and other projects. Chairman Gobin indicated she would like to keep Planning Consultant D'Amato on board as she considers him a resource. Planning Consultant D'Amato indicated his services are included in the Planning Department Budget.

- **IT Assistance:** Chairman Gobin questioned if any assistance was needed related to IT issues? Town Planner Calabrese reported the Planning Department is building a database of Commission approvals, and to scan documents for retention. Chairman Gobin questioned if the Planning Department would need part-time assistance to accomplish these projects? Commissioner Sauerhoefer asked if there were companies that would provide that service? Town Planner Calabrese replied affirmatively, noting she is researching various companies.

**XIII. OTHER BUSINESS:**

**A. Revised 2022 Meeting Dates:**

Town Planner Calabrese advised the Commission confusion occurred regarding preparing the meeting dates for several of the Commissions who meet twice monthly. The revised meeting dates are highlighted in yellow.

Commissioner Kowalski noted a meeting is scheduled for November 8, 2022, which is an Election Day. Discussion followed regarding the process for finding an alternate location for the Commission's meeting, Chairman Gobin questioned if the Commission would be able to use the ZOOM format at an alternate location? Town Planner Calabrese indicated the ZOOM account can be used at any location which can provide the large screen monitor.

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**MOTION: To ACCEPT the Revised 2022 Calendar for the  
Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting Dates.**

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VOTE by show of hands: In Favor: Gobin/Gowdy/Kowalski/  
Sauerhoefer/Thurz  
(No one opposed/No Abstentions)**

**XIV. CORRESPONDENCE:**

**A. Route 5 Corridor Study:**

Chairman Gobin noted the Recording Secretary shared a copy of the Route 5 Corridor Study which was presented to the Board of Selectmen at a recent meeting. The Study was prepared for CRCOG. Chairman Gobin indicated this was good information for the Commissioners to have.

**XV. BUSINESS MEETING**

**A. Review of Draft Planned Commercial Development District  
Regulations:**

Planning Consultant D'Amato reported that he continues to work on creating regulations for a Planned Commercial Development District. He recalled First Selectman Bowsza's intent to encourage development of targeted parcels by assisting property owners or potential developers market a specific property. Under the Planned Commercial Development District, or Special Development District, the Town would work with an engineer to create a concept plan of what could be built on a parcel; the process requires a Zone Change to the Planed Commercial Development District, and the Commission holds a Public Hearing at the front of the process. Planning Consultant D'Amato indicated that this proposal requires significant work on the front end of the project, he is proposing an Alternate Process which would reduce the up front engineering costs but would still promote focused development of a specific parcel.

Commissioner Kowalski questioned if the underlying zone dictates the proposed use? Planning Consultant D'Amato indicated that the standards within the Planned Commercial Development District indicate the potential allowable used, not the underlying zone. Commissioner

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Kowalski noted the Commission approves many developments that never get built. Planning Consultant D'Amato suggested if a property were to be considered for a medical facility the Town could then reach out to Metro Hartford to "market" the property for us, which would increase the development potential.

Commissioner Thurz noted the Hartfield property on Bridge Street has significant land available for additional development behind the current building. He noted a Phase III had been proposed which was never built.

Planning Consultant D'Amato suggested and Town Planner Calabrese will continue to work on regulations for this new district and return with updated information at the Commission's next meeting. The Commission concurred with Planning Consultant D'Amato's suggestion.

**XVI. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

No Executive Session this Evening.

**XVII. ADJOURNMENT:**

**MOTION: To ADJOURN this Meeting at 7:43 p.m.**

**Gowdy moved/Kowalski seconded/DISCUSSION: None.**

**VOTE by show of hands: In Favor: Gobin/Gowdy/Kowalski/  
Sauerhoefer/Thurz  
(No one opposed/No Abstentions)**

Respectfully submitted,

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Peg Hoffman, Recording Secretary, East Windsor Planning and Zoning Commission