

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

**REGULAR Meeting #1848
Tuesday, April 11, 2023**

***THIS MEETING IS BEING HELD IN-PERSON
In the John Daly, Jr. Meeting Room,
Town Hall, 11 Rye Street, Broad Brook, CT 06016***

AND

***VIA REMOTE ACCESS
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 Kowalski called the April 11, 2023 Regular Meeting #1848 of the East Windsor Planning and Zoning Commission 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 Street, Broad Brook, CT., and via telconference as well

PRESENT: **Regular Members:** Anne Gobin, Michael Kowalski (Chairman), and Jim Thurz (Vice Chairman).were present in person this evening

Alternate Members: No Alternate Members were present this evening.

ABSENT: Regular Member Leason and Alternate Member Gowdy were absent this evening.

GUESTS/SPEAKERS present in-person: **Director of Planning and Development/Planning Director** Ruth Calabrese hosted the meeting. Also present in person were: **Planning Consultant** Michael D'Amato, and Deputy Selectman DeSousa.

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GUESTS/SPEAKERS present remotely identified as they sign in:

Heidi Alexander, Maly, Peg (Margaret) Hoffman, Recording Secretary.

II. ESTABLISHMENT OF QUORUM:

A quorum was established as 3 Regular Members were present at the Call to Order. Chairman Kowalski noted all Regular Members will participate in discussion and votes this evening.

III. ADDED AGENDA ITEMS:

Director of Planning Director Calabrese noted items she'll introduce under **CORRESPONDENCE.**

IV. LEGAL NOTICE: None.

V. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (FOR ITEMS NOT LISTED ON THE AGENDA):

Chairman Kowalski queried the in-person audience for comments regarding items/issues not posted on the Agenda. No one requested to speak. Chairman Kowalski then offered the remote participants an opportunity to comment; no one requested to be acknowledged.

VI. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

A. March 28, 2023 – Regular Meeting of PZC:

Chairman Kowalski queried the Commissioners for comments, revisions, or alterations regarding the Minutes of Planning and Zoning Commission Regular Meeting #1847 held on March 28, 2023. Commissioner Gobin referenced page 8, line 323, regarding the comment "...noted they've gone to electric solar equipment...". Commissioner Gobin suggested striking the word "solar".

MOTION: To APPROVE the Minutes of Regular Meeting #1847 held on Tuesday, March 28, 2023, with the amendment to page 8, striking the word "solar" from line 323.

Gobin moved/Thurz seconded/DISCUSSION: None

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**VOTE: In Favor: Gobin/Kowalski/Thurz
(No one opposed/No abstentions)**

VII. RECEIPT OF APPLICATIONS:

Chairman Kowalski noted receipt of the following application, which will be heard on the Commission's April 24, 2023 meeting:

PZ-2023-12 – 115 Bridge Street for a Zone Change/Map Change from Zone B-2 to R-1. Applicant: Maly Phimvongsa.

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

No requests presented under this Item of Business this evening.

IX. CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARINGS:

A. PZ-2023-2 118 Prospect Hill Rd – Special Use Permit for a Site Plan Review for a proposed Truck Terminal. Applicant: Crane Properties LLC. (Requested an Extension to Table Until 4/25/2023):

Chairman Kowalski noted the applicant has requested an extension of his application until the Commission's April 25, 2023 Meeting. Chairman Kowalski requested a motion.

MOTION: To CONTINUE Application PZ-2023-2 for 118 Prospect Hill Road for a Special Use Permit until the Commission's April 25, 2023 Meeting.

Gobin moved/Thurz seconded/DISCUSSION: None

**VOTE: In Favor: Gobin/Kowalski/Thurz
(No one opposed/No abstentions)**

X. NEW PUBLIC HEARINGS: None

XI. OLD BUSINESS: None

XII. NEW BUSINESS: None

XIII. OTHER BUSINESS:

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A. 8-24 Referral:

Planning Director Calabrese referred the Commission to her Staff memo, noting that two residents/property owners, Nancy Callahan and Edward Benicak, wish to donate a 0.17 acre parcel of land to the Town. The parcel is adjacent to another Town-owned parcel at 28 Mill Street. Planning Director Calabrese indicated that should the Planning and Zoning Commission be in agreement regarding the acceptance of this parcel then they need to make an 8-24 referral to the Board of Selectman.

Commissioner Gobin questioned if there was access to the parcel as it appears to be landlocked. Commissioner Gobin noted previous discussion with Deputy Director Sauerhoefer regarding difficulty for the Town to access landlocked properties to remove trees and such.

Discussion continued regarding the Town's ability to access Town properties under dangerous situations. Commissioner Thurz felt the donation was a good thing, Commissioner Gobin continued to cite concern regarding access.

Chairman Kowalski called for additional comments, hearing none he called for a motion. Director Calabrese referred the Commission to her Staff memo regarding information on the parcel and a proposed motion.

MOTION: To MAKE A POSITIVE REFERRAL AND RECOMMEND TO THE EAST WINDSOR BOARD OF SELECTMEN to accept the donation of land of Nancy A. Callahan and Edward J. Benicak. Land described as Mill Street (rear), Assessor's Block 087, Map 38, Block 029A.

**Gobin moved/Thurz seconded/DISCUSSION: None
VOTE: In Favor: Gobin/Kowalski/Thurz
(No one opposed/No abstentions)**

B. Affordable Housing Plan-Listening Session:

Planning Director Calabrese advised the Commission that Staff had discussed options for making the information regarding the Affordable Housing Plan available to the public. Staff has decided to post the

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Affordable Housing Plan, the PowerPoint presentation made previously, the survey results, and a webform for people to communicate with Staff regarding their opinions. Planning Consultant D'Amato noted the information has been made available on the Commission's webpage on the Town website.

Chairman Kowalski suggested the Commission can give the public a couple of weeks to respond, and then schedule a general discussion within one of the future meetings.

Deputy Selectman DeSousa advised the Commission comments are surfacing on Facebook regarding Park Hill.

C. Discussion on Proposed Text Change to Section 601.2 – Parking Lot Design:

Planning Director Calabrese noted that after the decision the Commission made regarding the use of millings rather than bituminous paving in business parking lots Staff is considering proposing a regulation change, she referenced draft language prepared by Planning Consultant D'Amato setting criteria for a change of use option.

Commissioner Gobin suggested she didn't feel the change of use was appropriate across the board. Commissioner Thurz felt there were situations where the millings made sense as they're more economical. Commissioner Gobin felt the use of millings wouldn't be appropriate for a medical building as the material would be difficult for residents needing wheelchair access, and the millings would prohibit striping to identify parking spaces and handicapped parking.

Planning Director Calabrese suggested the criteria needs to address interpreting what's identified on the plan versus what may be proposed. She also noted the Building Official may also have different review criteria to be considered as well.

Commissioner Gobin noted that in Florida a lot of residential properties use driveway pavers for their homes, although they may be more expensive than millings. Commissioner Gobin questioned if the use of pavers could be used for duplex dwellings? Planning Consultant D'Amato felt the regulation change was being proposed for parking lot design rather than residential uses. He suggested considering the use for dwellings

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containing 4 or more units, which would move the proposal above a residential use.

XIV. CORRESPONDENCE:

Planning Director Calabrese advised the Commission someone has contacted the Planning Office to discuss a proposal to sell cigars wholesale. The location would be in Sofia's Plaza, which is zoned M-1; the facility would be open to the public as well.

The consensus of the Commission was to allow the use as long as the retail/public use was maintained.

A. 50 Plantation Rd – Transcend Wireless – Notice of Exempt Modification:

Planning Director Calabrese reported this is notification to the Town of the cell tower's carrier to replace equipment at 50 Plantation. The equipment being replaced is the generators.

Discussion followed regarding the equipment replacement. Planning Consultant D'Amato suggested that often when one carrier replaces another the first carrier takes their generators with them, the second carrier then needs to replace that equipment.

B. 31 Thrall Road, Notice from Pullman & Comley, regarding Solar Energy Project, East Windsor Solar Two LLC:

Planning Director Calabrese advised the Commission this communication with the Town is the first notification of the intent to install a solar farm at 31 Thrall Road. The parcel contains approximately 36 acres. Planning Director Calabrese noted that in 2021 East Windsor took the position that we feel we've done our share to support solar power, and the continued location of solar farms in Town interferes with our goal for farmland preservation. She suggested Staff feels the quickest route to prevent further expansion of solar farms would be to pass a Resolution to formalize our position.

Chairman Kowalski cited the intent of the Town's Plan of Conservation and Development is to be a farm community, which is being lost because

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of the proliferation of solar farms. He noted it changes the landscape and vista of the Town.

Commissioner Gobin indicated she isn't convinced that the land will return to farmland after 20 years based on what's being considered for Chamberlain Road. She felt the Town will receive complaints regarding the truck traffic, she noted that Plantation Road, which also supports a similar operation, is being destroyed by the vehicle traffic, at some point the cost of repaving will be at the Town's expense. It detracts from the character of the Town, the use as proposed feels more industrial than rural.

Chairman Kowalski questioned if any studies have been done regarding the health and or safety of abutters? Planning Director Calabrese indicated she'll research the issue and update the Commission at the next meeting.

XV. BUSINESS MEETING:

Planning Director Calabrese offered the Commission an updated Zoning Enforcement Report. She noted ZEO Boundreau continues her sweep of auto uses along Route 5.

Planning Director Calabrese also advised the Commission that at the last Board of Selectmen's Meeting the Board voted to send the Blight Ordinance to Town Meeting for approval. The document being provided to the public will include the changes made at the last meeting, and the addendum explaining the implementation process. She noted unregistered vehicles is now addressed under the Zoning Regulations, which allows 4 unregistered vehicles if contained within some type of structure.

XVI. EXECUTIVE SESSION: None

XVII. ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION: To ADJOURN this Meeting at 7:15 p.m.

**Gobin moved/Thurz seconded/DISCUSSION: None
VOTE: In Favor: Gobin/Kowalski/Thurz
(No one opposed/No abstentions)**

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Respectfully submitted,

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