

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

**SPECIAL Meeting #1759
Tuesday, May 28, 2019**

MEETING MINUTES

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

The Meeting was called to order in the Senior Center at the Broad Brook Fire Department, 125 Main Street, Broad Brook, CT. at 6:56 P. M. by Chairman Ouellette.

PRESENT: **Regular Members:** Joe Ouellette (Chairman), Michael Kowalski, and Tim Moore.

Alternate Members: Frank Gowdy, and Marti Zhigailo.

ABSENT: **Regular Members:** Dick Sullivan, and Jim Thurz.

Alternate Members: Anne Gobin.

Also present was Town Planner Ruben Flores-Marzan, and Assistant Town Planner/ZEO/Wetlands Agent Matt Tyksinski.

GUESTS: Albert Grant Chairman of the Agricultural and Conservation Commissions; Miranda Hamidovic/A New England Auto & Truck; Dick Pippin, and Kathy Pippin.

ESTABLISHMENT OF QUORUM:

A quorum was established as three Regular Members and two Alternate Members were present at the Call to Order. Chairman Ouellette noted all Regular Members, as well as Alternate Members Gowdy and Zhigailo, would sit in, and vote, on all Items of Business this evening.

LEGAL NOTICE: None.

ADDED AGENDA ITEMS: None.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

Chairman Ouellette queried the audience for comments regarding items/issues not posted on the Agenda. No one requested to speak.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES/May 14, 2019:

**TOWN OF EAST WINDSOR
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
Special Meeting #1759 – May 28, 2019
MEETING MINUTES**

2

MOTION: To ACCEPT the Minutes of Regular Meeting #1758 dated May 14, 2019 as written.

Moore moved/Kowalski seconded/DISCUSSION: None.

VOTE: In Favor: Unanimous (Ouellette/Kowalski/Moore/Gowdy/Zhigailo)

RECEIPT OF APPLICATIONS: None.

PERFORMANCE BONDS – ACTIONS; PERMIT EXTENSIONS; ROAD ACCEPTANCE

No requests presented under this Item of Business this evening.

CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARINGS: None.

NEW PUBLIC HEARINGS : None.

NEW BUSINESS: None.

OLD BUSINESS/A. Application from Miranda Hamidovic/A New England Auto & Truck for Site Plan Review for auto sales and repair at 8 South Main Street. (65 days = 7/18/2019):

Town Planner Flores-Marzan recalled Ms. Hamidovic previously came in with an application for a Site Plan for her business which will be located at 8 South Main Street. During receipt of her application discussion occurred regarding the proposed business use; Ms. Hamidovic had included auto repair on the application, which would require a Special Use Permit application. Town Planner Flores-Marzan reported Ms. Hamidovic has provided the Planning Office additional information regarding the type of repairs; Town Planner Flores-Marzan and Assistant Town Planner Tyksinski had decided the application can move forward as a Site Plan review.

Ms. Hamidovic reported her intent is to do auto repairs required by the DMV which would be associated with the used cars she plans to sell. Ms. Hamidovic reported all her auto body work is done offsite by someone else. She reported she is still having the property surveyed; she felt the application will be ready to be heard at the Commission's next meeting.

Chairman Ouellette noted the Commission will be seeking comments from other departments at that time. He requested a motion to continue the Application until the Commission's June 11th Meeting.

**TOWN OF EAST WINDSOR
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
Special Meeting #1759 – May 28, 2019
MEETING MINUTES**

3

MOTION: To CONTINUE the Application of Miranda Hamidovic/A New England Auto & Truck for Site Plan Review for auto sales and repair at 8 South Main Street until the Commission's next regularly scheduled meeting.

Moore moved/Kowalski seconded/DISCUSSION: None.

VOTE: In Favor: Unanimous (Ouellette/Kowalski/Moore/Gowdy/Zhigailo)

Note: Meeting location is undetermined at the time of this meeting due to the outcome of the Budget Referendum.

OLD BUSINESS/B. Unfinished work at Meadow Farms:

Town Planner Flores-Marzan reported the Planning Office has reached out to Town Engineer Norton regarding confirmation that the money being held in bonds from Mr. Ziegler is enough to complete the outstanding improvements. He noted Letourneau Builders has purchased the remaining seven lots of the development; the Planning Office has reached out to Mr. Letourneau to determine his responsibilities as well.

This item remains pending at this time.

OTHER BUSINESS: None.

CORRESPONDENCE/A. Memos from Albert Grant, Chairman, Conservation Commission: a) 5/14/2019 memo re: restoring a portion of the Kogut Property.

Town Planner Flores-Marzan reported when the Planning Office received Mr. Grant's memos regarding his projects staff felt we should have more communication with the Commissions. Mr. Grant is here to discuss his proposed projects.

Mr. Grant reported a section of the Kogut property behind the Dog Park has become an overgrown tobacco field, which he feels is a liability. The field, which is about 15 acres, is overgrown with trees, and poles and old shade tenting and wires are still in the field. Mr. Grant reported he attended an agricultural conference during the Spring and found out about a farmland restoration grant program. The State will reimburse the Town for 90% of the cost of clearing the property; the Town is responsible for 10% of the costs up front.

Chairman Ouellette questioned the cost for clearing the property? Mr. Grant felt people wouldn't charge for providing clearing estimates. He noted there are land clearing firms in the area that would do this type of work, or he hoped to be able to get a tobacco farmer to clear the field in the off season.

**TOWN OF EAST WINDSOR
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
Special Meeting #1759 – May 28, 2019
MEETING MINUTES**

4

Commissioner Kowalski noted the Kogut property is Town-owned land; he questioned if the land clearing estimates would need to go out to bid? Chairman Ouellette felt the Commission would refer this proposal on to the Board of Selectmen for further work. Mr. Grant indicated someone would have to submit a proposal and make sure the work gets done. Commissioner Kowalski suggested someone needs to put together a scope of work to get the clearing bids, and follow up what's involved with permits. Commissioner Gowdy questioned if Mr. Grant would head this project?

Commissioner Zhigailo questioned the condition of the property. Mr. Grant suggested there are trails on the property, he noticed bird feeders out there; Commissioner Moore noted remodelers routinely dump materials along the Chamberlain Road frontage. Commissioner Zhigailo questioned the ability to acquire quotes with the field's current condition. Commissioner Moore and Commissioner Kowalski questioned what the field would be used for after restoration? Mr. Grant suggested the Town could rent it for farming corn, tobacco, or hemp.

Commissioner Kowalski questioned the location of access to the property? Mr. Grant suggested behind the Dog Park; he feels the Town uses that as access to the rear of the dog park.

Commissioner Moore questioned if the grant would cover trails? He noted Vernon has the Rails to Trails system which is heavily used by people. Mr. Grant felt this is a farmland restoration grant.

Commissioner Gowdy questioned where the 10% Town contribution would come from? Mr. Grant indicated the Town provides the 10% up front. Commissioner Zhigailo questioned the timeline for the project. Mr. Grant suggested he needs to submit the grant; the work would probably be done over the Winter. The Commission considered options for funding the Town's 10% contribution. The Open Space Fund was considered but this is not a land purchase.

The consensus of the Commission favored Mr. Grant pursuing this project. Chairman Ouellette questioned the next step? Town Planner Flores-Marzan suggested tonight is an information gathering opportunity; he felt the next step is for Mr. Grant to go to the Board of Selectmen and Board of Finance for their input.

**CORRESPONDENCE/A. Memos from Albert Grant, Chairman, Conservation
Commission: b) 5/14/2019 memo re: Open Space Fund:**

Mr. Grant noted the Open Space Fund has been diminished by the purchase of the Riverbend property (Rye Street), and recently the Sabonis property (Scantic Road). Mr. Grant is seeking ways to replenish the fund. He would like to go to the Board of Finance to request an appropriation to re-fund the Open Space Fund. Mr. Grant indicated he had discussed options with Treasurer O'Toole, who had suggested perhaps money might be

**TOWN OF EAST WINDSOR
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
Special Meeting #1759 – May 28, 2019
MEETING MINUTES**

5

available through the General Fund; bonding would require work on a specific project to be completed within a short time.

Discussion continued regarding moving forward with Mr. Grant's proposal. The consensus of the Commission favored Mr. Grant's appearing before the Board of Selectmen (BOS) and Board of Finance (BOF). Town Planner Flores-Marzan suggested the PZC write a memo to the BOS/BOF noting the Commission's agreement with Mr. Grant's concept, as it ties into the recommendations/goals of the POCD. The memo will acknowledge that the PZC is the body implementing the POCD goals, and ask the BOS/BOF to join us.

Chairman Ouellette questioned if moving forward the PZC could suggest the BOF consider a line item in the budget funding the Open Space Fund; he noted a prior resident survey had indicated people would agree to contributing some funding for land preservation.

Commissioner Kowalski noted the Commission has received many small parcels as Open Space dedication over time from developers. He suggested those small parcels could be sold to abutters, and that money could go into the Open Space Fund to purchase larger, more useful parcels. Discussion followed regarding an inventory of current Town-owned land.

Commissioner Gowdy didn't feel we currently have a Master Plan for land conservation/preservation. He cited the Tschummi land on Rye Street, which is Town owned and currently rented to a farmer for crop production; he noted he couldn't walk his dog on that parcel because an adjacent landowner hunts on the property. Discussion continued regarding the concept of open space; is it only for farmland preservation? Commissioner Kowalski noted other Towns have done hiking trails. Chairman Ouellette suggested the PZC should meet with the Agricultural Commission and the Conservation Commission to develop a strategic plan; Commissioner Kowalski suggested involving the Wetlands Commission as well.

Mr. Grant suggested South Windsor wants to preserve farmland with easements, as someone else takes care of the property. Mr. Grant noted Enfield has an active Conservation/Agricultural Commission working to preserve farmland; they've hired an event person to handle phone calls, etc. Commissioner Moore noted the East Windsor Chamber of Commerce is part of the North Central Chamber of Commerce; maybe East Windsor can become involved in some of those events.

Chairman Ouellette suggested Town Planner Flores-Marzan prepare a memo of support for referral to the BOS/BOF, noting the consensus is the PZC's implementation of the goals of the POCD with regard to land preservation/conservation.

**TOWN OF EAST WINDSOR
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
Special Meeting #1759 – May 28, 2019
MEETING MINUTES**

6

CORRESPONDENCE/A. Memos from Albert Grant, Chairman, Conservation Commission: c) 5/15/2019 memo re: leasing town-owned agricultural properties:

Mr. Grant reported that currently the Town rents some of its properties – the Tschummi and the Kogut properties – on a continuing basis to whoever the current farmer is. The current process limits other farmers from renting the Town owned properties. Mr. Grant suggested currently there is no lease process. Chairman Ouellette indicated he understood some discussion occurred at a Board of Selectmen's Meeting; what happened? It was noted that opposition had occurred to discussion of other potential uses of the Kogut property. Mr. Grant indicated that the Agricultural Commission has sort of taken on review of the lease process. The lease agreements are currently handled through the First Selectman's Office.

Mr. Grant reported the Agricultural Commission has reviewed the lease process in South Windsor. Their process is to put leases out to sealed bid on a five (5) year term. Commissioner Gowdy suggested the longer term makes sense as some properties are better for corn vs. tobacco. Commissioner Kowalski questioned if the lessee can put up buildings on the Town properties, as they might look for reimbursement at the end of their lease. Mr. Grant suggested the lease process is lengthy.

Discussion continued regarding current rental value vs. the existing lease rates for farmland. Commissioner Kowalski questioned if the leases would be staggered? Mr. Grant felt that realistically there would probably only be a few bidders as the lessee would want to be close to their own operation. Commissioner Moore questioned if there are penalties for not leaving the property in good condition; how would you enforce that?

The consensus of the Commission favored the competitive bid process for rental of Town owned farm properties. Chairman Ouellette felt this process should be handled through an ordinance. The Commission suggested Mr. Grant move forward with his request to the Board of Selectman.

ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION ITEM/A. Additional Use at Community Garden – Incubator Farm:

Mr. Grant noted that a portion of the Community Garden is not used. The Community Garden is sponsored by the Agricultural Commission. They are considering offering some of the unused portion to someone like a Vo-Ag group to plant an incubator farm, which could be a profit – making opportunity for the group. The Town wouldn't see any revenue from this use.

Mr. Grant indicated that the current provision for water to the Community Garden wouldn't support this additional use. Water for the Community Garden is provided through the Broad Brook Fire Department. Mr. Grant noted there's a well across the

**TOWN OF EAST WINDSOR
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
Special Meeting #1759 – May 28, 2019
MEETING MINUTES**

7

street on the Reservoir Park property which is under-utilized but the Agricultural Commission lacks funding for that water source. Mr. Grant suggested the people who operate the Dog Park might like to partner with bringing water to this side of Reservoir Avenue.

Chairman Ouellette questioned when this proposal would start? Mr. Grant suggested it's too late for this year; he noted the State has a listing of available properties where he could advertise this project to see who's interested. Commissioner Zhigailo questioned how would duplicate parties showing interest be handled?

Discussion followed regarding the current usage of the current Community Garden plots; current rentals occupy 12 of the available 15 plots. Chairman Ouellette suggested the Commission would like to do whatever it can to promote use of farmland but he recalled past complaints of land being taken away from a current lease.

The Commission suggested Mr. Grant investigate potential interest in this proposal and report back to the Commission.

CORRESPONDENCE/B. Notice of Exempt Modification from AT&T; antennae replacement at 104 Prospect Hill Road:

Town Planner Flores-Marzan noted receipt of notification from AT&T for replacement of antennae at the water tower at 104 Prospect Hill Road. He noted the Connecticut Siting Council oversees cell tower locations; this is replacement of existing equipment.

No action on the part of the Commission.

BUSINESS MEETING/(A) General Zoning Issues:

Chairman Ouellette noted Crossroads Community Cathedral (53 and 55 Prospect Hill Road) has submitted encroachment permit plans for Prospect Hill Road to the DOT. The plans were denied for lack of sufficient details; the engineer is reworking the plans for resubmission. Activity is occurring on that parcel.

Town Planner Flores-Marzan noted Assistant Town Planner Tyksinski is leaving the Planning Department to undertake new planning duties at Yale University. Chairman Ouellette and the Commission thanked Assistant Town Planner Tyksinski for his service to East Windsor.

BUSINESS MEETING/(7) Signing of Mylars/Plans, Motions:

No mylars or motions to sign this evening.

ADJOURNMENT:

**TOWN OF EAST WINDSOR
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
Special Meeting #1759 – May 28, 2019
MEETING MINUTES**

8

MOTION: To ADJOURN this Meeting at 7:50 p.m.

Kowalski moved/Zhigailo seconded/VOTE: In Favor: Unanimous

Respectfully submitted,

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