

TOWN OF SOUTH WINDSOR
PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION

MINUTES

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NOVEMBER 24, 2020

MEMBERS PRESENT: Bart Pacekonis, Kevin Foley, Frank Bonzani, Stephanie Dexter, Stephen Wagner, Bill Flagg

ALTERNATES PRESENT: Michael LeBlanc, Elizabeth McGuire

STAFF PRESENT: Michele Lipe, Director of Planning; Michael Lehmann, IT Support; Lauren Zarambo, Recording Secretary

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairman Pacekonis appointed Alternate Commissioner McGuire to be seated for Commissioner Greer.

Chairman Pacekonis stated the meeting is being live-streamed through a Webex conference call on the Town website as well as local channels, and will be operating under the following procedures:

- This session is being audio-recorded and video recorded.
- To ensure sound quality, the default rule for this meeting is that everyone will remain on mute.
- Commissioners and staff will generally remain on mute except when speaking or voting, and will generally be keeping video of themselves on throughout the meeting.
- Applicants should feel free to leave their video on or off. However, they will be asked to turn on their video when speaking.
- The public can provide public comments by email and/or phone. The email address and phone number with meeting code can be found on the front of the agenda.

The Chairman stated this meeting is not a public hearing so the only input the Commission will be receiving at this meeting will be under Public Participation for items not on the agenda. The public will have opportunity to comment on the items under discussion on this agenda when a public hearing is scheduled sometime in January.

- During public meetings, all of the normal rules, including stating, and now spelling your name, still apply.
- If you are speaking at this meeting and have an exhibit to submit to the Commission, which was not distributed in advance of the meeting with the rest of the materials, please indicate that you wish to submit an exhibit. You will need to hold it up to the camera so that the Commission and all members of the public may review it. In addition, you will be required to email the exhibit, or take a photograph of it and email it to planningzoningcomments@southwindsor.org, and it will be included in the permanent records of the Commission.
- Members of the public may only speak during public participation for an item not on the agenda and during the public hearing comment period.
- Lastly, a reminder to the public on the phone to press *3 to indicate that you want to speak and # to get back to the main menu.

REGULAR MEETING / Webex Conference ONLINE MEETING

CALL TO ORDER Chairman Pacekonis called the Regular Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: none

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NEW BUSINESS: Discussion/Decision/Action regarding the following:

1. Discussion regarding potential zoning regulation updates:

Home Animal Agriculture

Director of Planning Michele Lipe stated one of the goals of updating regulations for Home Animal Agriculture is to allow chickens on less than an acre because of the demand there is to have chickens from residents. A modification to the regulations was discussed that would allow 12 chickens on a ½ acre and in the A-20 zone for lots 20,000 square feet in size.

Chairman Pacekonis noted roosters are allowed only in RR zones or one acre or larger and asked why roosters are not allowed on Main Street, the biggest farming community. Vice Chairman Foley voiced his approval for roosters on Main Street. Director Lipe stated A-40 zoning could be added to the chart allowing roosters on one acre or more. Discussion followed.

Regarding bee keeping, Director Lipe stated the intent of the regulation is not to be too restrictive, as was a preliminary draft, but to use guidance from the State. The best effort will be to balance concerns about bees with allowing and encouraging bee keeping in our community. Public input is expected if this goes to public hearing. Chairman Pacekonis asked for clarification in the wording for ‘undeveloped land’ and ‘land that will not be developed.’ Director Lipe suggested ‘land that is restricted from being developed’, such as open space parcels, and stated the wording will be qualified as land that is permanently deed restricted as open space.

Fencing was discussed regarding barbed wire fences. ‘Barbed wire fencing will not be used’ will be changed to ‘shall not be used.’ The Commission suggested 15 foot setbacks from property lines to any structure housing animals as long as the structure does not have an egress facing a neighboring property, and manure piles be a minimum of 20 feet from property lines.

Vegetative barriers and water sources for bees were discussed. Commissioner Wagner suggested vegetative barriers may not be needed on land that would allow hives to be located further than 200 feet away from a property line. Director Lipe noted Commissioner Wagner’s suggestion and the need to qualify the definition of a ‘quiet place’ of a yard. Director Lipe noted a request for a non-profit animal related rescue mission or animal sanctuary and suggested adding it by Special Exception to the commercial section of the regulations. All draft changes to the regulations will be compiled and sent to CRCOG for review.

Outside Dining Requirements

Director Lipe stated a change to the regulations could update the table and seat count as to what level has to come before the Commission for review in response to helping restaurants through the pandemic. The 9/24/20 draft regulation would allow 24 tables and 96 seats. Commissioners discussed giving restaurants the support they need to survive, consolidating the numbers of tables and chairs indicated in the draft, listing heaters if they are to be provided, and addressing any parking issues after the pandemic.

EV Chargers

Commissioner Wagner stated the Subcommittee of the Energy Committee has finalized their report on EV Chargers and will send the report to the Energy Committee and PZC in the coming weeks. Draft regulations have been modified to only include EV charging for employees in retail and warehouse locations.

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Commissioner Wagner showed a power point presentation (Exhibit A). The problem the State faces is being ready for electric vehicles that will be a huge share of the market in the coming years. Zoning can help with requiring the infrastructure in new multi-unit housing, retail with certain numbers of employees, restaurants, warehouses and other workplaces. A phased approach would encourage having parking spaces wired along with a few spaces having the equipment to charge installed. As time goes on the percentage of parking would increase. The State is recommending 10% of parking to be EV ready. EV ready parking for housing would be based on required parking, and most commercial and industrial sites would be based on employee parking. Preliminary work done now will save a great deal of money later. Commissioners asked questions. Vice Chairman Foley voiced his full support. The Chairman noted requirements need to be put in the regulations in order to require it going forward.

Affordable Housing

Director Lipe reported meeting with Commissioners Dexter and McGuire on Zoom to review other town's policies and discuss South Windsor's goals for Affordable Housing. A draft RFP will be ready at the first of the year for review.

Sidewalk/Multi-use Paths

Director Lipe noted she and Town Engineer Jeff Doolittle met with South Windsor Walk and Wheel Ways Chair Ginny Hole in regard to updating the Town's sidewalk plan to see where sidewalks have been built over the years since the POCD was adopted and subdivisions built to see where connection priorities are. The sidewalk map is being prioritized for more detail on priority sidewalks. Sidewalks are built when new developments come in and through grants. Mr. Dickinson has sent in emails over the last months to add stronger language in the Subdivision Regulations related to sidewalk/multi-use paths in industrial and commercial areas.

Chairman Pacekonis noted regulations for new developments requiring sidewalks on both sides of the road and voiced his upmost concern for pedestrian safety and sidewalk networks. Commissioners Flagg and LeBlanc agreed. Director Lipe noted the current standard in the regulations for width for sidewalks of 5' on arterial or collector roads, and 4' on residential streets. The Subdivision regulations require sidewalks on both sides of the street in open space subdivisions and one side of the street in conventional subdivisions. The Chairman recommended changing the regulations for sidewalks on both sides of the streets. Commissioner Wagner recommended a requirement for sidewalks on collector roads to be multi-use for new developments and when grants are received, with a stipulation that the requirement could be waived in special situations. A draft from the SWW&WW subcommittee is expected sometime in December for review.

Residential development trends

Director Lipe discussed the residential data provided to commissioners regarding 10 year trends in projects that have come before the Commission. What was not included was the Geisslers text amendment to allow housing in that zone and a change to the general plan for Evergreen Walk to allow for a 130 unit independent living facility that has not yet come forward. Over the last ten years, the Town has purchased a significant amount of open space land taking it out of development and has bought some development rights on Main Street. Denser housing, SRD and DRZ, have been removed from the regulations. No vacant land is zoned for multi-family housing. A new report from the Board of Education about enrollment projections will be forwarded to commissioners. Chairman Pacekonis noted the Town Center Overlay Zones allowing future

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multi-family development could be quantified. Commissioner Wagner asked about future development behind the Tempo apartments in Evergreen Walk. Director Lipe noted a text amendment that had been withdrawn for additional housing in that area and is in their long term plan.

The Chairman recommended writing a letter to the Chamber of Commerce regarding EV Charging. Commissioner Wagner offered to meet virtually with any interested parties. Director Lipe offered to facilitate meetings.

Chairman Pacekonis requested site lighting standards for foot candles in the regulations. Director Lipe noted the appendix in the regulations that gives the Illuminating Engineers recommendations used as a guide. The standard has been 3.5 foot candles that was not followed on the recent approval for Costco. Research will be necessary to create standards for lighting. Discussion followed about site lighting. Director Lipe will research the lighting plans for sites developed over the last few years as points of comparison for commissioners.

Chairman Pacekonis asked commissioners to look at the regulations regarding recent approvals granted for any improvements to the regulations that can be considered. The Chairman noted development of properties in the A-20 incorporating wetlands and consideration of changing the 80' upland review criteria to 100'. Director Lipe recommended asking the opinion of the IWA/CC.

The Chairman continued discussion about Affordable Housing regarding deed restriction requirements and consideration of allowing in-law apartments to become accessory apartment when deed restrictions are in place to make them affordable.

Signage

Commissioner Wagner noted the committee for signs had not yet met and is in the early stages of a draft.

BONDS: Callings/Reductions/Settings

IWA/CC Bonds

1. Appl. 15-63P, John Fitch Distillery E&S Bond in the amount of \$2,000 to be reduced by \$2,000 to leave a balance of -0-.

Commissioner Flagg made a motion to reduce the above mentioned bond; Seconded by Commissioner Dexter. The motion carried and the vote was unanimous.

2. Appl. 19-44P, New England Power Screen E&S Bond in the amount of \$5,000 to be reduced by \$5,000 to leave a balance of -0-.
3. Appl. 19-44P, New England Power Screen Stormwater Bond in the amount of \$2,000 to be reduced by \$2,000 to leave a balance of -0-.

Commissioner Flagg made a motion to reduce the above mentioned bonds; Seconded by Commissioner Wagner. The motion carried and the vote was unanimous.

4. Appl. 19-28P, 360 Ellington Road E&S Bond in the amount of \$50,000 to be reduced by \$50,000 to leave a balance of -0-.
5. Appl. 19-28P, 360 Ellington Road Stormwater Bond in the amount of \$100,000 to be reduced by \$100,000 to leave a balance of -0-.

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Commissioner Flagg made a motion to reduce the above mentioned bonds; Seconded by Commissioner Bonzani. The motion carried and the vote was unanimous.

MINUTES: 10/27/20 and 11/10/20 accepted by consensus.

OLD BUSINESS: *see page 3*

APPLICATIONS OFFICIALLY RECEIVED:

Appl. 20-57P, Scannell Properties #419, LLC – request for a Site Plan Modification for minor changes to the existing site plan to utilize the 182,000 sf facility as a package delivery station. Changes include elimination of some overhead doors on the building and modifications to the parking area to accommodate an additional 170 parking spaces, on property located at 240 Ellington Road, I-291 Corridor Development zone

OTHER BUSINESS:

CORRESPONDENCE / REPORTS:

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion to adjourn the Regular Meeting at 9:07 p.m. was made by Commissioner Flagg.
Motion seconded by Commissioner LeBlanc. The motion carried and the vote was unanimous.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lauren L. Zarambo,
Recording Secretary