

PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
January 9, 2017 Meeting Minutes

These minutes are not official until approved at a subsequent meeting.

Commission Members Present: Alan Gannuscio, Vincent Zimnoch, Jim Szepanski, Cindy Cooper (Alternate), and Kayleigh Royston (Alternate)

Commission Members Absent: Alexa Brengi, and Luis Valdez

Town Staff Present: Jennifer Rodriguez (Town Planner)

I. Call to Order

Chairman Gannuscio called the meeting to order at 7:07 pm.

II. Roll Call

Commission roll call was taken. Cindy Cooper was seated for Alexa Brengi and Kayleigh Royston was seated for Luis Valdez.

III. Approval of Minutes from the December 12, 2016 Regular Meeting

It was **MOVED** (Gannuscio) and **SECONDED** (Szepanski) and **PASSED** (Unanimous, 5-0) that the Planning and Zoning Commission approves the minutes of the December 12, 2016 regular meeting as published.

IV. Public Hearings

A. Special use permit to serve liquor at Homewood Suites at 65 Ella Grasso Turnpike

Mr. Szepanski noted that the necessary signs for this hearing have been posted, as required.

Mr. Szepanski read the rules for conducting a public hearing.

The Recording Secretary read the legal notice that was published in the *Journal Inquirer* on December 28, 2016 and January 4, 2017.

Attorney Michael Pease, Law Firm of Pease & Dorio, PC, Farmington, Connecticut, spoke on behalf of ARC Hospitality Portfolio I Owner, LLC, the owner of 65 Ella Grasso Turnpike. The applicant is seeking a special use permit that would allow the sale of alcoholic beverages in connection with the hotel liquor permit they are applying for with the State of Connecticut. The intended use is an accessory use to the hotel operation. There will be no bar and no entertainment. This hotel model uses Manager Receptions for guests that they host in the evening in which beer and

wine is provided with hot meals. Alcoholic beverages will only be served in conjunction with the provision of hot meals, in accordance with state statute. There will be no patio or off-premises permit sought. All consumption will be on the premises.

Chairman Gannuscio pointed out that there is no list of surrounding liquor permit holders in the packet. The following restaurants were mentioned as having liquor permits: Ruby Tuesday's, Skyline, Pool Table Magic, Ramada, The Doubletree, Pho 75, Bradley Bowl, and Papa Gino's. Ms. Rodriguez commented that Springhill Suites has a similar liquor permit where they just have the receptions. Chairman Gannuscio remarked that there are a number of surrounding liquor permits but they are different in type. Mr. Zimnoch asked if that license can be converted to a regular for sale license. Ms. Rodriguez replied, "Any state license is going to require our signature in the office, so at that time any noted change from the previous license would cause them to come back here."

Chairman Gannuscio stated that in his viewpoint, this license is different from all of the other existing licenses in the area, and it is not a public welcome. Attorney Pease replied, "That is correct." They do not openly advertise that they have the sale of alcohol, and it is not a bar. Mr. Szepanski had some questions for Attorney Pease. To summarize: A buffet type of breakfast is offered to hotel guests as well as dinner at the Manager's Reception, but lunch is not offered. The dinners are provided to the guests as part of their stay, and the cost is built into the room rate. Guests can still get a drink even if they do not order any food. Food and wine or beer will be available to guests from about 4:30 to 7:30 or 8:00. Room service is not provided. A Manager's Reception is something that the hotel puts on in their Great Room area for the benefit of its guests, and food and alcoholic beverages will be available only during this time. The liquor will be stored in a lockable storage area in their kitchen area. Mr. Zimnoch asked if these receptions will take place every day. Attorney Pease responded that he was not sure if they would be held on Sundays.

Ms. Rodriguez briefly discussed her report dated January 6, 2017.

At this time Chairman Gannuscio opened up the public hearing for comments from the public in favor of this application. There were none. The floor was then opened up for comments in opposition. There were none.

Chairman Gannuscio stated that this is the first application of this type for this part of Ella Grasso Turnpike. He believes it is limited in its scope and how it is provided, and he does not see it as something that's overburdening or competing with anything in the area. It is not a traffic generator as traffic will be limited to the guests that are already there. In addition, this will offer an advantage to the applicant. Ms. Rodriguez remarked that the criteria in Section 503 B have been met: the sale of alcoholic liquors is an accessory use and is for consumption on the premises, and food will be served at all times. There will be no outdoor seating or entertainment,

there will be no traffic concerns, and it's an existing hotel that's been there for many years. All the properties nearby are zoned Business 1, and there are no residential properties that are directly abutting. The applicant has been thorough. Chairman Gannuscio added that this is one of the better kept sites on Route 75.

It was **MOVED** (Gannuscio) and **SECONDED** (Zimnoch) and **PASSED** (Unanimous, 5-0) that the Planning and Zoning Commission closes the public hearing on the special use permit to serve liquor at Homewood Suites at 65 Ella Grasso Turnpike.

Chairman Gannuscio stated that there is no need for any restrictions on this application. This is a hotel permit and is an accessory use for the benefit of guests, and food will be served at all times when liquor is sold or served. The sale or serving of alcoholic liquor is permitted only in a hotel as defined in Connecticut General Statutes Section 30-21, as that section may be amended or recodified.

It was **MOVED** (Gannuscio) and **SECONDED** (Zimnoch) and **PASSED** (Unanimous, 5-0) that the Planning and Zoning Commission approves the special use permit to serve liquor at Homewood Suites at 65 Ella Grasso Turnpike.

Chairman Gannuscio stated that 4 Lawnacre Road is not on the agenda tonight because it was taken care of on the basis of a previous approval.

V. **Reviews** (none)

VI. **Action on Closed Public Hearing Items** (none)

VII. **Old Business**

A. **Discussion with Commission and Staff** (none)

B. **Action Items** (none)

VIII. **New Business**

A. **Public Input** (none)

B. **Receive New Applications**

i. **Special use permit with site plan review and liquor permit for Bradley Bowl at 129 Ella Grasso Turnpike**

Lindsey Fortunato of Fortunato Construction Group addressed the commission. She is here on behalf of Bowl New England/Spare Time Entertainment, the applicant. The proposal includes renovating the interior of the bowling alley as well as the exterior façade. This company is focused on modernizing the center and creating a family fun center. Their proposal is to reduce some of the bowling

lanes, add some arcade game space and a laser tag arena, relocate the existing bar, and develop a larger restaurant area. They will create a VIP section on one side of the bowling alley with 7 lanes, a private bar, and a space for private or corporate functions. Other than the front façade renovation and the proposal of the new light pole in the parking lot, they are not proposing any new changes to the parking lot or traffic flow on the site.

Chairman Gannuscio asked if there will be a change in the type of liquor permit. Ms. Fortunato responded that it is not a change in the type because they are making a modification to the location of the bars from the within space.

It was **MOVED** (Gannuscio) and **SECONDED** (Szepanski) and **PASSED** (Unanimous, 5-0) that the Planning and Zoning Commission schedules a public hearing for a special use permit with site plan review and liquor permit for Bradley Bowl at 129 Ella Grasso Turnpike for February 13, 2017.

ii. 101 Oak Street, conversion of a one-family house to a two-family owner occupied home with upstairs apartment

Ms. Rodriguez explained that the applicant is willing to wait until March if the commission would like him to present, but his father is doing the work with him, and he would like his father to come in February to speak as his proxy if the commission is willing to let him do that. Chairman Gannuscio pointed out that a special use permit is necessary because an apartment is going in upstairs.

It was **MOVED** (Gannuscio) and **SECONDED** (Szepanski) and **PASSED** (Unanimous, 5-0) that the Planning and Zoning Commission schedules a public hearing for a special use permit with site plan review for 101 Oak Street for February 13, 2017.

iii. 4 National Drive, Nano-brewery

It was **MOVED** (Gannuscio) and **SECONDED** (Szepanski) and **PASSED** (Unanimous, 5-0) that the Planning and Zoning Commission schedules a public hearing for a special use permit with site plan review and liquor permit for Airfield Aleworks, LLC at 4-C National Drive for February 13, 2017.

C. Informal Discussions

iii. Ferti, 80 King Spring Road

Hugo Provencher addressed the commission. He is here tonight with Bob Griffin, their US sales manager, and a local client, Jovin Calvis, They are interested in a building in Windsor Locks but would like the commission's approval to be able to do what they would like in the building. Mr. Provencher explained that Ferti is a fertilizer blender--they buy raw materials and blend and bag them. Their clients

are lawncare companies and retail companies such as Scott's. They only do grass, and the raw materials they buy are almost all dust free. They store the materials, blend them up, bag them, and then re-sell them to distribution who then sells them to the end users. The products are brought by truck to their location. Mr. Provencher went on to explain how the products are dropped from the dump truck into the building and then into the bins.

Mr. Griffin interjected with some background information: They are a company that has been in business since 1987, and their main manufacturing facility is just outside Montreal. Over the last ten years they have had a lot of growth in the US and have built new plants in Arizona and North Carolina. Their business has grown considerably in the Northeast, and they have started looking for a facility where they can build a plant. They have found a suitable building here in Windsor Locks they would like to make an offer on, and as they started the process there were some questions on whether their particular process fits the local zoning regulations, so Ms. Rodriguez thought it might be a good idea to have an informal discussion to get some input from the commission on how Ferti can fit in.

Mr. Provencher proceeded to show a slide presentation. They deal with a local transporter who will get the railcars and then they can bring in truckloads from the railcar. It's usually three truckloads per railcar, and two or three times a week they will receive a railcar. Starting in February, March, and April, their busiest season, they can get probably ten trucks a week of material. A lot of people think fertilizer can be dangerous, but they do not use gas or water, so there is no risk of explosion. They use about 15% of the building for mixing, and the rest is for storage. They will employ between 20 and 30 employees.

Chairman Gannuscio asked about the changes they would need to make to the existing building. Mr. Provencher responded that the elevator would have to go through the middle of the roof and pipes in the back will need to go through the roof also. Chairman Gannuscio commented that this application would be a site plan review and special use permit. Ms. Rodriguez explained why she felt it would be good for them to discuss this with the commission. Chairman Gannuscio commented that it sounds like there isn't any manufacturing going on, it's a storage and blend and bag operation, and it's all dry and dust free. Mr. Szepanski said it doesn't appear to have any noise or air pollution or intense truck traffic. There was some discussion about their timeline and when to file an application. Mr. Provencher stated that their goal is to be ready in a year.

i. Burger King sign

Ms. Rodriguez stated that Burger King would like to include a digital portion of their sign like Pride and asked if they should come before the commission. Chairman Gannuscio told her to have them come in.

ii. Industrial uses

Ms. Rodriguez stated this discussion about industrial uses was the general conversation that she wanted to have when Ferti first came in to ask some questions, so this has been taken care of.

iv. Old County storage (split last building into smaller units)

Ms. Rodriguez stated that in 2007 the Old County Circle storage buildings were approved and two of the three buildings were built. The developer now wants to build the third building. Right now there are 10 units. The original approval was for storage, and then it became a mix of some strictly storage and some office, and the commission felt they should revise the plans to state that. Now the owner would like to split the last building into 20, and Ms. Rodriguez would like input on parking and whether it should come back to the commission. She has spoken to Mr. Steele and they are both comfortable reviewing that. The regulation requires one and a half spaces for each office space, and a half space for storage, so even though there would be twice as many units, that is still less parking required. The number of spaces won't be an issue as it is proposed and as it will be built. The only change is that there will be twice the amount of storage spaces. He would have to revise the plan to say "storage unit." Ms. Rodriguez asked if the commission thinks he should re-apply. She said, "I don't want to have him apply if you don't think that's necessary, but I don't want to review it and give it the go ahead and not bring it to you." Chairman Gannuscio commented that one of their primary concerns last time was what was going on in those units, so the only reason it might be better having him come in would be to have him say on the record, "I'm not going to have anybody running a business out of here," so he would prefer to have him come in to state this on the record. It was decided that a revised sheet with that indicated application for modification of the approval and a professionally drawn sheet with the prints should be submitted.

D. Action Items (none)

IX. Communications and Bills

Chairman Gannuscio discussed the budget for the Planning and Zoning Commission that has to be submitted to the Board of Finance next month. Buying tablets for the building office was discussed.

OTHER

Ms. Rodriguez mentioned she got an email from CRCOG with all the local town regulation amendments.

X. **Adjournment**

It was **MOVED** (Gannuscio) and **SECONDED** (Szepanski) and **PASSED** (Unanimous, 5-0) that the Planning and Zoning Commission adjourns the January 9, 2017 meeting at 8:37 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

*Debbie Seymour
Recording Secretary*