

PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

April 10, 2017 Meeting Minutes

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

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

Commission Members Absent: Alan Gannuscio, Alexa Brengi, and Luis Valdez

Town Staff Present: Jennifer Rodriguez (Town Planner), and Dana Steele (Town Engineer)

I. Call to Order

Vice Chairman Zimnoch called the meeting to order at 7:12 pm.

II. Roll Call

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

III. Approval of Minutes from the March 13, 2017 Regular Meeting

It was **MOVED** (Zimnoch) and **SECONDED** (Szepanski) and **PASSED** (Unanimous, 4-0) that the Planning and Zoning Commission postpones approval of the minutes of the March 13, 2017 regular meeting to the next meeting on May 8, 2017.

IV. Public Hearings

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 March 29, 2017 and April 5, 2017.

A. **Special use permit for Windsor Locks Public Schools for placement of WLPS transition program (RISE) at 255 Main Street**

Sharon Cournoyer, Assistant Superintendent, and Les Koziara, Business Manager, addressed the commission. The RISE (Realizing Individual Strengths and Expertise) transition program is currently being housed at St. Roberts Rectory. They are anticipating an increase of students next year and have outgrown this location. This program is for 18 to 21 year-old students with intellectual disabilities, autism spectrum disorders, and/or significant disabilities. This has been a very successful program for Windsor Locks, and there has been interest from other school districts to send students to Windsor Locks to partake of the program. Our students are invaluable to our community, and keeping these students in town rather than sending them to Middletown to other programs allows them to contribute to and become part

of this community. These students develop strong relationships with town organizations, area businesses, and community colleges. There were about 23 other sites in Windsor Locks that were reviewed, and 255 Main Street was the location that they felt best met the needs of the program and the community.

Vice Chairman Zimnoch asked what the maximum capacity is at this location. Mrs. McKenna, one of the teachers at RISE, replied that ideally, the maximum would be 20 or 25 students. They currently have 11 students and 5 staff, and next year they anticipate having 16 students, with some coming from other districts. Windsor Locks students would have first priority.

Ms. Rodriguez discussed her report dated April 6, 2017. Regarding #11, DPW/WPCA comments, Ms. Cournoyer noted that Josh Robinson, Special Services Director, had a conversation with the Health Department about what the kitchen work would entail. The Health Department wanted to ensure that they were a public school not a private school, and they looked at the use of the kitchen as being similar to the Family & Consumer Science type of work that is done at the high school. Ms. Rodriguez read into the record favorable comments from the Fire Marshal dated April 10, 2017 and the Police Chief dated April 7, 2017.

Mr. Szepanski asked who would be responsible for fixing the potholes. Ms. Koziara replied that the owner of the property has agreed to fix the potholes. Mr. Szepanski also pointed out a sidewalk in the front of the building that has deteriorated. Ms. Koziara responded that this will be fixed and will be made wheelchair accessible and up to code. The architect will look at code standards and will address the access to the building. Mr. Szepanski commented that landscaping on the islands would probably not be practical because of snow removal. He then asked where the van would be parked. Ms. Koziara explained that the van would be parked along the side of the building in the front. There was a brief discussion about rain barrels. Mr. Szepanski asked about restriping the lines in the parking lot. Mr. Mills, Facilities Manager, said this is something they can address with the landlord.

At this time Vice Chairman Zimnoch 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.

It was **MOVED** (Zimnoch) and **SECONDED** (Szepanski) and **PASSED** (Unanimous, 4-0) that the Planning and Zoning Commission closes the public hearing on the special use permit for Windsor Locks Public Schools for placement of WLPS transition program (RISE) at 255 Main Street.

It was **MOVED** (Szepanski) and **SECONDED** (Cooper) and **PASSED** (Unanimous, 4-0) that the Planning and Zoning Commission approves the special use permit for Windsor Locks Public Schools for placement of WLPS transition program (RISE) at 255 Main Street with the following two conditions noted in the Town Planner's memo dated April 6, 2017: under #5, the owner of the property will restripe the parking lot and repair the curbs and potholes and any cracks prior to a Certificate of Occupancy being granted; and under #7, the sign requirement will be delegated to staff review.

Vice Chairman Zimnoch stated that this is a use that is allowed by our zoning regulations as a special use and is well within the existing nature of this site. He added that this use will not create any additional traffic problems for the tenants at this site.

V. Reviews

A. **Site plan modification of existing approval for three storage buildings for Park Place Storage LLC at 200/400 Old County Circle**

Wesley Pettit addressed the commission. They are requesting a change in the interior configuration of a building that has already been approved and want to make it smaller by 2,500 square feet than what was previously approved, placing the new configuration on the same footprint of the previously approved building. He clarified that two buildings already exist and this is the third approved building that they have not yet constructed. It will be 250 feet in length by 50 feet in width. It was previously approved for 60 feet in width. They are also changing the use with less impact than what was previously approved. It was approved for a building that could be used for a combination of storage and business use and are asking for the new building to be approved for storage only. The building will be the same as the other buildings in appearance. There will be no changes to landscaping or parking spaces. There will be fewer parking spaces required since they are eliminating the request for business use. To summarize, the request is for the same building essentially but smaller with a larger number of units and for storage only.

Ms. Rodriguez briefly discussed her report dated April 6, 2017. Ms. Rodriguez read into the record favorable comments from the WPCA, Fire Marshal, and Police Chief.

There was a brief discussion about temporary or short term parking on the east and west side of the building and whether a note on the plan would be a good idea. It was decided that as long as Ms. Rodriguez knows that parking is not encouraged there, there is no need for a note.

It was **MOVED** (Zimnoch) and **SECONDED** (Szepanski) and **PASSED** (Unanimous, 4-0) that the Planning and Zoning Commission approves the site plan modification of existing approval for one storage building for Park Place Storage LLC at 200/400 Old County Circle.

VI. Action on Closed Public Hearing Items (none)

VII. Old Business

A. Discussion with Commission and Staff

- * Ms. Rodriguez stated that she distributed to commission members a list of 14 tax delinquent properties. Several months ago, Peter Juszczynski, Tax Collector, brought to her attention 23 delinquent parcels. Every five years there is the opportunity for either a foreclosure or a tax sale process that can go into place for properties that are delinquent for five years or more. He noticed that these parcels had watercourse running through them or wetland soils or were on paper streets that were never developed. When Ms. Rodriguez started to map all of them, 14 of the 23 were either directly adjacent to or connecting to open space parcels that the town already owned or were true open space or were next to an active recreation park. She brought this to the Conservation Commission at the end of March, and they made a recommendation that we consider using open space funds. It wouldn't be an actual acquisition as in the sale of property, but the acquisition would happen through foreclosure, so the cost of that would be the attorney's fees. One of the incentives to consider this as a package was the expense being a lot lower than if you were looking to get each of those separately from a property owner. Typically in open space you think dozens or hundreds of acres at a time, but she's been here 12 years and doesn't think the open space fund has gone beyond \$20,000, so that \$20,000 could be a match for a much larger parcel, which is something to think about down the road, or you could do something similar to this. The real question being asked is, would the Planning and Zoning Commission consider making a recommendation for the use of open space funds to acquire these all together. She invited everyone to look on the new GIS system to see and understand what's important about each of these parcels.

Vice Chairman Zimnoch commented that this is a great idea and thought it should be discussed at the next meeting. He will mention it to Chairman Gannuscio to add this to the agenda. Ms. Rodriguez reminded him that if the commission wanted to make a recommendation then this item would have to be an action item on the agenda. The new GIS website will be available for testing and feedback on Wednesday, April 12. She will send everyone a link. Mr. Steele added that if the parcel has frontage on a street with sidewalks and the town acquires it, the town will have to shovel the sidewalk. In addition, if there are properties that are near town drainage systems, acquiring the property may allow us to do some storm water treatment, so there might be opportunities for DPW to address issues with the MS-4 permit requirement where they have to treat the water before it goes into a watercourse.

- * Mr. Steele stated that some time ago the commission approved construction of a building along the railroad line that Mr. Barberino purchased at the end of Choice Road and the road pavement had to be extended to be able to access it. Part of that development included a long building that was going to be used to load and unload

cars off of the rail, and this building was going to provide some detailing and prepping of vehicles. Mr. Barberino is now proposing to eliminate that building and in its place put up sheds. Instead of it actually being a building with a foundation, this would be a shed sitting on top of the ground. One of them will have a bathroom in it, and he talked to the engineer about how they will protect it from freezing without a foundation. They do need to get approval from the Health District because that site doesn't have sewer either. There is already a septic system approved, and they just have to make some modifications to it. The question is, what is the approval process for that. He wants to do less building, but the buildings will look different. Overall, it seems to be a de-intensification of the site, but it is a little bit of a change, so staff wanted some direction whether he needs to come in with a site plan modification or if it's something staff can review and approve. Ms. Rodriguez added that the Building Official is asking him to come in with a different type of building because the sheds are residential in code, so they have to come back as more of a commercial shed. Mr. Steele commented that this is a gravel access driveway, so it is a low key operation.

Vice Chairman Zimnoch stated that he thinks Chairman Gannuscio would like to see a site plan modification. Mr. Szepanski agreed.

- * There was a brief discussion about vendors moving items outside. Ms. Rodriguez stated that this is only mentioned in the Main Street Overlay Zone. It's written to apply to new development or a major change to the interior. She said she could get the Town Attorney's opinion on what portions of the MSOZ they could enforce. She will look with the Town Attorney at the language we have in the MSOZ and see if we can pull out what we can use now and what only applies when there's a new development.

B. Action Items (none)

VIII. New Business

A. Public Input (none)

B. Receive New Applications (none)

C. Informal Discussions (none)

D. Action Items

i. Designation of PZC member to TIF District Committee

Ms. Rodriguez stated that the TIF District has been established and part of the policy is to have a committee, and on that committee is a list of members including a Planning and Zoning member. Presently on this committee are

members of the Board of Selectmen and Board of Finance, staff like herself and Mark Pellegrini from EIDC, staff from the Finance Department, and the Assessor. Ms. Cooper volunteered unless someone else wants to do it.

IX. Communications and Bills (none)

OTHER

Vice Chairman Zimnoch asked about Montgomery Mill. Ms. Rodriguez replied that the state changed their date to release who got the tax credits to April 27, but Beacon did ask her to take pictures of the water levels. Mr. Szepanski asked if there has been any discussion with Beacon regarding possible casino traffic. Ms. Rodriguez replied that it's being talked about and the DOT is aware of the possibility.

Ms. Rodriguez will be putting in an order for more public hearing signs.

Mr. Szepanski asked if the regulations will be re-published. Ms. Rodriguez replied if there is money it makes sense to do it now. Vice Chairman Zimnoch said he will talk to Chairman Gannuscio and mention it to him.

X. Adjournment

It was **MOVED** (Zimnoch) and **SECONDED** (Szepanski) and **PASSED** (Unanimous, 4-0) that the Planning and Zoning Commission adjourns the April 10, 2017 meeting at 8:38 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

*Debbie Seymour
Recording Secretary*