

PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
November 9, 2015 Meeting Minutes

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

Commission Members Present: Vincent Zimnoch, Alan Gannuscio, Alexa Brengi, Mike Forschino, and Cindy Cooper (Alternate)

Commission Members Absent: Jim Szepanski, and Pat Sayers (Alternate)

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

I. Call to Order

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

II. Roll Call

In the absence of the recording secretary, commission members and staff members stated their names for the record.

III. Approval of Minutes from the June 8, 2015, July 13, 2015, September 14, 2015, and October 13, 2015 Regular Meetings

Chairman Zimnoch stated that Mr. Szepanski told him he had no objections to the minutes of the meetings.

It was **MOVED** (Gannuscio) and **SECONDED** (Forschino) and **PASSED** (Unanimous, 3-0; Forschino and Cooper Abstaining) that the Planning and Zoning Commission approves the June 8, 2015 minutes.

It was **MOVED** (Zimnoch) and **SECONDED** (Cooper) and **PASSED** (Unanimous, 3-0; Gannuscio and Forschino Abstaining) that the Planning and Zoning Commission approves the July 13, 2015 minutes.

It was **MOVED** (Gannuscio) and **SECONDED** (Zimnoch) and **PASSED** (Unanimous, 5-0) that the Planning and Zoning Commission approves the September 14, 2015 minutes.

It was **MOVED** (Gannuscio) and **SECONDED** (Zimnoch) and **PASSED** (Unanimous, 3-0; Brengi and Cooper Abstaining) that the Planning and Zoning Commission approves the October 13, 2015 minutes.

IV. Public Hearings (none)

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. Request for Approval for Subdivision Extension for 360, 362, and 364 North Street from December 11, 2006 to December 11, 2020 per Public Act No. 11-5

Mr. Gannuscio stated there was no reason the commission could not approve this tonight since it would not require a public hearing.

It was **MOVED** (Gannuscio) and **SECONDED** (Forschino) and **PASSED** (Unanimous, 5-0) that the Planning and Zoning Commission adds for consideration this evening the request for the approval of a subdivision extension for 360, 362, and 364 North Street, extending the time for the effective dates on this subdivision through December 11, 2020.

Ms. Rodriguez asked an unidentified woman (Mrs. Szepanski?) if she wanted to talk about what was being requested. She replied that Mr. Szepanski told her there was no interest in building right now because the two builders in town are busy on large projects, and that's why they would like to have it extended. Mr. Gannuscio pointed out that this is a statutory extension that the commission can grant.

It was **MOVED** (Gannuscio) and **SECONDED** (Zimnoch) and **PASSED** (Unanimous, 5-0) that the Planning and Zoning Commission approves an extension of the subdivision previously approved for 360, 362, and 364 North Street, with this extension running through December 11, 2020.

C. Informal Discussions

i. Proposed Use for Elks Club, 482 Spring Street

Ms. Rodriguez explained that 482 Spring Street is the old H&M place. She received a message from the applicant that they were not able to come tonight but they wanted to talk to the commission informally about the use itself. That use would require a special use permit and site plan review, even though it's an existing building, and to some extent they would have to provide some of the site

plan details to the commission. Mr. Gannuscio pointed out that at one time the proposal was Mike's Blue Collar Bar. Ms. Rodriguez said she expects they will be getting an application sometime soon.

D. Action Items

Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD)

Ms. Rodriguez stated that the Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) is due in 2017. She has talked in the past to the commission about starting to gather information and get a schedule going. There are a number of meetings that need to happen, but not everyone has to be at every meeting. There is a general timeline, and each green space is a couple of months where they can have some wiggle room in scheduling meetings to talk about each of the topics that correspond with the numbers. They will be holding workshops and including various departments, so this document is not to be created and used only by the Planning and Zoning Commission, but by the town as a whole. All of the residents, businesses, various departments, boards, and commissions should be involved to some extent, so it would be good to have a commission presence, whether it is one or two people, at each of these meetings. In the beginning of 2016 she will be contacting all of the different boards and commissions and departments. She would like to know if there are specific categories that commission members are particularly interested in. There would probably be a kickoff workshop that would be a much larger push to have a lot of community members there and then others might be more of a subcommittee of people. Over the next few months she would like to fine tune and get some dates set for when these would take place. Tonight she would like to get the commission's thoughts on when to have the first few workshops, and what days of the week would be best.

Mr. Gannuscio noted that one thing that would probably affect this is Simon Group's decision to go forward. Chairman Zimnoch commented that January would be a good time to have a kickoff meeting/workshop. Mr. Gannuscio said that would be a good time because in February they would be going to the Board of Finance. Chairman Zimnoch asked Ms. Rodriguez if she has approached any consultants. Ms. Rodriguez replied that they are working on it, and she would keep the commission updated. She has started to put data, studies, surveys, recommendations from various consultants, the walkability study, the livability index, and some census data into Drop Box so it is available to the public and the commission.

Ms. Rodriguez asked if there was a better day of the week. Tuesday seemed to be the best day.

OTHER

Relocation of Train Station

Ms. Rodriguez stated that the DOT has approved the relocation of the active train station in the southern part of town. The date they talked about is 2018. The tracks were funded but the station itself still needs some funding. They've hired a firm to look at each of the station's transit-oriented development opportunity, and through CRCOG they're going to pair this firm with a municipality to work with each town and a subcommittee of people to look at each of the station's sites. Mr. Forschino asked where they are moving the station. She replied they are moving it north of the historic station. The historic station will be preserved but cannot be used for an active station, so it may be a warming area. There is a re-use study going on now, and there was a mandatory walk-through last week for folks who wanted to bid on the restoration. There were over 20 people in attendance. The most difficult part of that will probably be the staging and getting approval from Amtrak to do the work. Mr. Forschino asked if they moved it from the original site because of the traffic backup on Route 140. Mr. Steele replied that the DOT did a traffic study and looked at all the impacts of the train station coming back to downtown. Mr. Forschino asked why they couldn't restore and use the old train station. Mr. Steele replied that it's in very bad shape and it is too close to Bridge Street. They need a much longer platform. Ms. Rodriguez pointed out that for these reasons and others, it was part of the agreement when the town was able to take ownership of the station that it would not be used; however, it will be a functioning building.

Simon Group

Chairman Zimnoch asked if there was any news with the Simon Group. Ms. Rodriguez replied that they were here last Tuesday driving through the area/region, stopping at the site to do a site walk. The purpose was to attract tenants.

IX. Communications and Bills (none)

X. Adjournment

It was **MOVED** (Zimnoch) and **SECONDED** (Gannuscio) and **PASSED** (Unanimous, 5-0) that the Planning and Zoning Commission adjourns the November 9, 2015 meeting at 7:40 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

*Debbie Seymour
Recording Secretary*