

PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
December 14, 2015 Meeting Minutes

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

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

Commission Members Absent: Alexa Brengi, and Pat Sayers (Alternate)

Town Staff Present: Jennifer Rodriguez (Town Planner)

I. Call to Order

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

II. Roll Call

Commission roll call was taken. Chairman Zimnoch seated Cindy Cooper for Alexa Brengi.

III. Approval of Minutes from the November 9, 2015 Regular Meeting

It was **MOVED** (Cooper) and **SECONDED** (Gannuscio) and **PASSED** (Unanimous, 4-0; Szepanski Abstaining) that the Planning and Zoning Commission approves the November 9, 2015 minutes.

It was **MOVED** (Gannuscio) and **SECONDED** (Zimnoch) and **PASSED** (Unanimous, 5-0) that Item VIII.C.i. be moved to this point in the agenda.

(VIII. New Business)

C. Informal Discussions

i. Main Street Lighting Presentation, Sylvia Perdikis, Apex Lighting Solutions

Ms. Rodriguez pointed out that there is some funding available to replace sidewalks on Main Street, and for a bit of time they have been in a waiting pattern, waiting for the DOT to commit to relocating the train station. The date for the actual construction is now set for 2018, which means two years' worth of not having a great sidewalk system on Main Street, and that should not wait. She has met with local electricians to see if it made sense to lay conduit and then do the sidewalks. This led to a discussion about a plan for lighting, and it occurred to her that they have never come together as a community to talk about what they want the new lighting to look like. She feels it is important to have some idea of what the community embraces, like visuals and upgrades, so that when we ask applicants to do something it's also reflected in the choices that the town and the officials have made. When she talked to her peers about how these decisions are

made in their towns, many of them recommended Sylvia Perdikis, an outdoor lighting specialist. She invited Ms. Perdikis to the meeting tonight to talk about the types of things the commission might want to think about and to give some feedback on how to help them come up with recommendations.

Sylvia Perdikis, Outdoor Lighting Specialist from Apex Lighting Solutions in Wethersfield, addressed the commission. She explained that her agency represents about 100 interior and exterior lighting manufacturers within Connecticut and throughout New England. She only focuses on exterior lighting, so she deals with about 20 manufacturers. She would like to talk about the different items to take into consideration in general when looking at decorative lighting so that hopefully this will be a town standard that will be a unified element throughout Windsor Locks. One of the most important items to think about is going to be uplight, and how much light pollution you are going to be willing to accept. Typically, DOT projects require full cutoff. It is a state standard for full cutoff fixtures, but they will allow cutoff with a waiver, so it's something you need to apply for. It's not difficult, and it's something very common, because full cutoff can really restrict the style and aesthetic of the fixture head, and they recognize that, so that's why they're willing to go to cutoff. A full cutoff fixture means no uplight above 90 degrees where the lamp is. Ms. Perdikis showed the commission an LED fixture with everything up in the hood. It is not a full cutoff fixture because it has the lenses which will reflect the light. The light will come down and reflect off the lenses and then come up, so it is a cutoff fixture. Ms. Perdikis said to be careful what type of lens you put in there. Not everything that has a solid hood and has the optics in the roof is going to be a cutoff fixture. It can always be tested, and whomever you speak to should be able to tell you what that uplight percentage is. For cutoff you cannot go above 2½%, so you should try and stay away from it, unless you're willing as a town standard to allow the light bomb (lollipop) that doesn't really direct light in any particular direction—it just has an overall glow.

Next, Ms. Perdikis showed the commission a full cutoff fixture. This fixture has no lenses and is open. The light that is reflected off of the arms and the base is so minimal that it doesn't even register. However, not all fixtures that look like this and don't have a lens are going to be full cutoff, so be careful and ask the question. Make sure it's the proper lens because even the look of the lens will affect the uplight. A clear lens will create more uplight. Always ask, "What is the difference in the percentage of uplight?" so you understand what you're getting. Catalogs were distributed to commission members. Ms. Rodriguez also passed out pictures of what is in front of town hall and Walgreens. She commented that she was looking at old photos, and in some of the photos there were globes that were hanging down, and one had two arms with the globes hanging underneath. Ms. Perdikis talked about the different types of bulbs that are available.

Ms. Cooper suggested taking a look at Walgreens so that Main Street has a cohesive look from one end to the other. Ms. Perdikis added, "Another way of looking at things, too, is do you want to completely differentiate from what different retail areas have done throughout the town so far? Do you want to have your own look that is simply for Main Street?" Ms. Perdikis commented that there are many things to consider. A 12-foot pole would be more pedestrian friendly. A 14-foot pole and higher wattage would light the street better. The lower you are in terms of pole height, the lower wattage you'll want so you don't have a hot spot at the bottom of the pole, so it's a matter of how much you want to light. Another thing to consider, especially with the LED's, is the color temperature. It can range anywhere from a 2,700 kelvin all the way up to a 6,000 kelvin. She would not recommend anything above 4,000, which is what they equate to moonlight. Typically, the only time you see 5,000 or 6,000 is if you have a 25-foot pole, and you're in a parking lot. If you go down to 2,700, it starts distorting everything around it as well, so 3,000 or 4,000 is a happy medium.

Ms. Perdikis showed the commission a full cutoff LED fixture with a 4,000 kelvin color temperature. This is a white light, but it's a great light when spaced properly. The key to LED's will be uniformity. It gives you the most uniform light because of the LED's, and now you can control the direction that each LED is emitting its light. That's the key for LED; that's what makes it so effective, that you can control where on the ground it's going to go. It allows you to create a more uniform light pattern on the ground, and the more uniform an area is in terms of lighting, the better it appears to be. LED is more uniform and everyone feels more comfortable because they can see everything around them much more clearly. The next fixture shown to the commission was a 3,500 with a SV1 diffusing lens so you don't see the LED's at all. It's not as white of a light as the 4,000, so you tend to find people going closer to the warmer temperatures now more than they used to. When you go down to the 3,500, it's softer in general and reduces the lumen output very little (maybe 8%, which is rare), so it's a very efficient lens. She does not recommend having a clear lens because even though the LED's will be up in the roof, oftentimes you still see the diodes reflected in those lenses, depending on the angle of the lens, so sometimes you end up with five different orbs of LED lights. With these types of diffusing lenses, even near a historic district, people feel very comfortable with it because of the warmer cooler temperature. Even going down to 3,000, people find that they're okay with this sort of style of light as long as the housing matches the whole aesthetic.

Chairman Zimnoch asked about the material of the lens. Ms. Perdikis said these will typically be acrylic or polycarbonate and will stand up well. Ms. Rodriguez asked if the cobras were going to be removed and if it's a state highway, what will they now require for street lighting. Ms. Perdikis replied that they are fine with decorative but will want to review the light levels, so they will need to see a photometric plan. They do not like to approve semi cutoff fixtures. Walgreen's fixture may be cutoff; it's something you have to look into. She added that a lot of places will still keep the cobraheads on the outskirts where it's necessary for

safety, but in the downtown areas they will be doing the decorative to create that feel that they want. Another item that will need to be selected is the decorative pole, which can be tapered, smooth, fluted, or straight. You also have decorative bases. You have to be careful about the width of your sidewalk. If you have narrow sidewalks in areas, a base 20 inches wide will be an issue. If you're looking to light the roadway and the sidewalks at the same time, you can go to a 22-foot pole and do a larger fixture on the roadway side in a higher wattage that's up higher, say 20 feet, to light your roadway and to take the place of the cobraheads, and then you can have a smaller fixture down 12 or 14 feet that's on the sidewalk side which is now your pedestrian scale light. On top of that, you can add banners (double, single, any size), flag holders, planter holders, and GFI's that you can plug in for holiday lights. Accessories are something you want to think about in the beginning because it plays a part in the sizing (thickness) of your pole. They need to take into consideration all the elements added to the pole and calculate the wind load to make sure the pole is not going to fail with all those elements added to it.

Ms. Perdakis suggested breaking it down into categories. Where are they going? Is it going to go in a location where the DOT is going to have a say? That will limit you right there—it's going to be cutoff or full cutoff. Then you start looking at the styles of fixtures. If we want it to be more decorative, we're willing to go with cutoff because we know we can get a waiver from DOT. Then you can start moving down from there: What's the pole going to be? What's the base going to be? You can be as decorative as you like, it's just the money. If it's too much money, they can slightly change the pole and the base. Ms. Perdakis advised that when looking at LED manufacturers, keep an eye on warranty. Don't ever accept anything that's just a two-year warranty. Minimum five-year warranty is the standard, and a lot of companies will now do a seven-year warranty.

Ms. Rodriguez mentioned that some locations that are close to the road may not be able to have a pole there. (Example: Mike Barile's building) In this case they may be looking at a façade improvement for the property owner and looking at a building mounted fixture that mirrors the streetlight. She feels it's important to have some idea of what the commission and the community would like to have for street lighting so the property owners will know. Mr. Forschino asked if you can get an arm with any fixture. Ms. Perdakis responded that most fixtures can be mounted with an arm, although not all arm brackets will fit with all fixtures.

Ms. Rodriguez commented that tonight the intent was not to make any decisions about lighting but to get a conversation going.

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 (none)

C. Informal Discussions

ii. Plan of Conservation and Development

Ms. Rodriguez stated that she would like to briefly discuss the Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) and asked if commission members had received a timeline. The intention of that timeline is to know that there are about 14 to 15 topics that need to be included in the POCD, and for each of those topics it would be good to have a workshop. A good way to not overburden this commission is to share those workshops throughout all the boards, commissions, and departments in town. For example, the conservation commission or the wetlands commission would host the natural resources conversation. One thing Ms. Rodriguez would like to get started with is to look at the old POCD from 2007. Copies were distributed to the commission. She suggested that they flip through to see if there are things that are irrelevant or things they would like to look into. She was able to pick out 23 items or objectives that were met or were in the process of being met. Ms. Rodriguez went on to discuss the action taken as recommended by the 2007 POCD objectives and listed in a memo to the Planning and Zoning Commission dated December 14, 2015. Chairman Zimnoch remarked that a lot has been done. Ms. Rodriguez commented that one of the next steps is to think about how they would like the kickoff meeting to occur and what sort of venue would make sense to do that, so between now and the next meeting give some thought to that and then schedule something for the later part of February. Chairman Zimnoch agreed that would be a good time to start. Ms. Rodriguez said that she wanted to make sure the commission could realize all of the work that has been done and how important the plan is for the next 10 years.

OTHER

Chairman Zimnoch asked about Simon Group. Ms. Rodriguez said that five weeks ago or so the Simon team had a busload of leasing agents drive to the site and drive through the market area. Following that in New York City there will be a large convention for developers who are looking for retailers to join them in their efforts. The plan was to get that feedback from their leasing agents. At one point they said they were going to submit the application for the general plan of development in January, so they still seem interested.

There was a brief discussion about the possible casino.

Mr. Gannuscio commented that he gets furious some days seeing the amount of trash on people's lawns and was wondering if this was something that they could put in the regulations—some kind of trash or litter mitigation plan that gets submitted at the time a new application comes in for some type of restaurant so there is less material distributed to be ending up on people's lawns. He also mentioned eliminating drive through windows in any new place because this is the biggest source of litter.

D. Calendar of Meetings

The meeting calendar for 2016 was distributed to commission members. Chairman Zimnoch pointed out that the October meeting will be on a Tuesday. Mr. Forschino kindly requested that we have a cake for him on that date, as it is his birthday. Mr. Szepanski said he would be in charge of the cake for him.

E. Action Items

i. Election of Officers

It was **MOVED** (Zimnoch) and **SECONDED** (Szepanski) and **PASSED** (4-0, with Gannuscio Abstaining) that the Planning and Zoning Commission elect Alan Gannuscio as Chairman of the Planning and Zoning Commission.

It was **MOVED** (Gannuscio) and **SECONDED** (Szepanski) and **PASSED** (4-0, with Zimnoch Abstaining) that the Planning and Zoning Commission elect Vincent Zimnoch as Vice Chairman of the Planning and Zoning Commission.

It was **MOVED** (Gannuscio) and **SECONDED** (Forschino) and **PASSED** (4-0, with Szepanski Abstaining) that the Planning and Zoning Commission elect Jim Szepanski for another term as Secretary of the Planning and Zoning Commission.

IX. Communications and Bills

Mr. Gannuscio stated that he received a bill for \$110 for the set of pocket parts updates on Land Use and \$350 for the three new volumes. He contacted the finance office to see what was in their professional education budget. There is \$250 left, and he feels it is not worth going to the Board of Finance to request more money to pay for these books, and we now have local counsel who will be responsive to any questions that come up, so he is going to return these books.

X. Adjournment

It was **MOVED** (Gannuscio) and **SECONDED** (Cooper) and **PASSED** (Unanimous, 5-0) that the Planning and Zoning Commission adjourns the November 9, 2015 meeting at 8:33 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

*Debbie Seymour
Recording Secretary*