

PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

March 9, 2015 Meeting Minutes

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

Commission Members Present: Vincent Zimnoch, Alan Gannuscio, Jim Szepanski, Alexa Brengi, and Mike Forschino

Commission Members Absent: Pat Sayers (Alternate), and Cindy Cooper (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 7:05 pm.

II. Roll Call

Commission roll call was taken.

III. Approval of Minutes from the December 8, 2014 and January 12, 2015 Regular Meetings

It was **MOVED** (Gannuscio) and **SECONDED** (Szepanski) and **PASSED** (Unanimous, 5-0) that the Planning and Zoning Commission approve the December 8, 2014 minutes.

It was **MOVED** (Gannuscio) and **SECONDED** (Szepanski) and **PASSED** (Unanimous, 4-0; Zimnoch Abstaining) that the Planning and Zoning Commission approve the January 12, 2015 minutes.

IV. Public Hearings (none)

V. Reviews (none)

VI. Action on Closed Public Hearing Items (none)

It was **MOVED** (Gannuscio) and **SECONDED** (Zimnoch) and **PASSED** (Unanimous, 5-0) that the Planning and Zoning Commission move Item VIII B (i), Chapman Chase Phase 2, Modification to Prior Approval, to the current point in the agenda.

VIII. New Business

B. Receive New Applications

i. Chapman Chase Phase 2, modification to prior approval

Mark O'Neill, Manager of Hamlet Homes, addressed the commission. He stated that nothing is changing on the site whatsoever— this is simply a façade change. The footprints, elevations, set-backs, square footages, heights and widths, and

materials are not changing. The values will be at par or greater than what they are in Phase 1. There are four ranches and four bungalow/cape styles. They don't differ too much from what is there but have more architectural appeal with porches. Mr. O'Neill mentioned that he is building nine homes on Limerick Lane off of Suffield Street past the bridge on the right side and invited commission members to drive by anytime to see the quality of the houses that are being built there. The homes are larger but have the same architectural design elements.

Ms. Rodriguez stated that the applicant has come forward to her office to ask that this be considered tonight and added on to the agenda for review, but at this moment a review has not yet started, so she wouldn't want the commission and applicant to get into too much dialogue. She reminded the commission of the past process that the exterior design was a big part of the original approval, and there was a developer at one point that brought a second set forward to the commission, and so this is following that same process that the commission has gone through before. Ms. Rodriguez pointed out that this application was technically received at the last meeting, and even though the meeting was not held, it was received by date, so there is still the statutory deadline that the commission has to start and complete the review by. It would be appropriate, if the commission is comfortable, to add it to the agenda tonight to discuss under a formal review. If the commission were to decide that a public hearing would be a better choice, it would have to be held next month.

Commission members did not feel a public hearing was necessary. Mr. Gannuscio asked Mr. Steele if he had a chance to look over the packet. Mr. Steele responded that he had. He went on to say that his understanding was when this was approved originally it was a special permit, and the commission wanted a variety of styles to show non-uniformity. This applicant is proposing to do that in a slightly different way than what the previous approval showed, so if the commission is satisfied that this non-uniformity will be achieved through what is being submitted, then Mr. Steele believes the commission can approve this tonight.

It was **MOVED** (Gannuscio) and **SECONDED** (Zimnoch) and **PASSED** (Unanimous, 5-0) that the Planning and Zoning Commission at this point in time conduct a review of the modification to the prior approval of Chapman Chase Phase 2, while the applicant is here.

Mr. O'Neill explained that they have altered the ridge and the hip gables on the houses, including the ranches. Each style is just a little bit different architecturally. He assured the commission that they are going to keep it "mixed up" with the architectural details so that there is no uniformity. There will be eight styles--four ranches and four bungalows or colonials, so 8 exterior facades and 12 different interior floor plans. There will be 37 houses and the project timeline will be three or four years. Mr. Szepanski remarked that he is thinking about the people in Phase 1 who will be living there during the construction phase. Mr. O'Neill said he will be addressing them next week and has asked

them to tell him what they're looking for. In other words, what time do they want the workers to start, do they want workers there on Saturdays, etc. Mr. Szepanski asked, "So you are going to work with the Phase 1 neighbors to make it as tolerable as possible?" Mr. O'Neill replied, "Yes, you have to."

Mr. Gannuscio commented that Mr. O'Neill's presentation has been clear and concise and what they were given ahead of time was very comprehensive. Mr. Steele commented that the use of multiple exterior types such as siding and vertical shakes, different styles, is good. He asked Mr. O'Neill how else it is better. Mr. O'Neill replied, "Our quality of construction. We use engineered lumber, zip panels rather than OSB, all homes are energy star certified with ratings in the low fifties, and we have our own crews and try not to subcontract." Also, he uses composite decking materials for the front porches, all rails are PVC and made for him, all windows are either Harvey or Jeld-Wen, and he uses all Mastic siding, not the thinner versions. Ms. Rodriguez commented that the exteriors are very attractive, the variation seems to be there, and there are a lot of windows. She feels it is a quality design. Mr. O'Neill said everyone is welcome to take a walk through 3 Limerick Lane at any time. Commission members felt comfortable approving these modifications.

It was **MOVED** (Gannuscio) and **SECONDED** (Zimnoch) and **PASSED** (Unanimous, 5-0) that the Planning and Zoning Commission approve the modifications of the fronts and other incidentals to the previous approvals of the Chapman Chase project, these changes to occur in Phase 2 of the development.

ii. V-Ride, 5 National Drive, accessory use to existing office use

The applicant for V-Ride was not present. Ms. Rodriguez stated the use per Section 402 of used car sales, is the most similar to this and that use requires a special use permit, so the applicant has applied for a special use permit. She believes the applicant is looking for direction from the commission to find that that use is most similar to used car sales and then if the commission agrees with that, to schedule a public hearing. Mr. Gannuscio asked, "Are they looking for a place to park their vans or to run the program out of?" Ms. Rodriguez replied, "Yes, the tenant has been there for some time with office space, so it's just been office space." Out of this violation with hundreds of vans being parked there, she asked them to be removed and then met with the manager of the business, who mentioned that it would be ideal to be able to have 12 or 15 spaces for the vans so he didn't have to have something off-site. Mr. Gannuscio felt a special use permit and public hearing should be required. There was some discussion regarding whether a site plan review would also be required. Mr. Steele asked if they are going to submit a site plan. Ms. Rodriguez responded that so far they have just submitted a sketch because it's an existing site. Mr. Steele stated that they are not proposing any site improvements because it's just an existing parking lot. He pointed out that a decision is not necessary now, but if the commission had strong feelings about it, then it would be helpful to the applicant to find out now. He stated, "The question for tonight is whether or not this use is similar enough to

retail sale of automobiles. These are not for sale, but they are commercial in nature.” Chairman Zimnoch said they would need a relatively accurate sketch to determine what’s parked where. Mr. Steele stated this might be a candidate for waiving the site plan because of the fact that it’s all there and they’re not proposing any site improvements. Ms. Rodriguez commented that the sketch that was submitted does have a section of spaces that are designated. She said she would work with the applicant to let her know she would like something a little more detailed.

It was **MOVED** (Gannuscio) and **SECONDED** (Zimnoch) and **PASSED** (Unanimous, 5-0) that the Planning and Zoning Commission schedule a public hearing for a special use permit/site review for the application of V-Ride, for 5 National Drive, #7, for the April 13, 2015 meeting.

C. Informal Discussions

i. Home occupation for sale of firearms, 213 Spring Street

The applicant addressed the commission. He stated he came before the commission a few months ago, at which time he was told that he would have to reveal his name and phone number, home address, or whatever was necessary to get the process started, and a placard for a public hearing would have to be placed on his property so neighbors could come to the meeting and ask questions. He reiterated that no items will be delivered to his home. He has spoken to Federal Express, UPS, and USPS, and he will be picking up all items at these locations. He will not store any item more than two weeks at his home. Mr. Forschino commented that he had some concerns initially with this operation, but after going on the internet, he is satisfied with the answers he got. Mr. Szepanski had a few more questions. Chairman Zimnoch stated the applicant would have to file an application with Ms. Rodriguez and then a public hearing could be scheduled for the May meeting.

Mr. Szepanski pointed out to Ms. Rodriguez that Red Riders on Spring Street sells ammunition and wondered if they needed a special permit to do that. She said she would look into it.

60 Main Street, Unit 64, Inspired Intuition and Therapeutic Massage, Special Use Permit with Site Plan Review

Mr. Gannuscio asked Ms. Rodriguez about the exact location of this business. Mr. Forschino remarked that the application was very complete. Mr. Gannuscio asked commission members if they should accept this application and schedule it for a hearing in April. All were in agreement.

It was **MOVED** (Szepanski) and **SECONDED** (Forschino) and **PASSED** (Unanimous, 5-0) that the Planning and Zoning Commission schedule a public hearing for a special use permit with site plan review for Therapeutic Massage and Wellness Office, 60 Main Street, Unit 64, for April 13, 2015.

Mr. Steele pointed out that this is another application where they are not planning to submit a full site plan. It's a developed site and they're just occupying one of the spaces, and it's the use that is triggering the special permit, not the outside changes to the building.

VII. Old Business

A. Discussion with Commission and Staff

i. Zoning regulations

a. Section 1102 (Distribution of Materials), and Section 1201 (Fee Schedule)

Ms. Rodriguez went over the final changes to these sections. In Section 1102-A, in paragraph seven (starting with "Applications shall be submitted..."), "*or by the designated agent where written permission has been given by the property owner*" was added to the end of the last sentence of that paragraph. In Section 1103-A, #3, under Special Use Permit, the language about the sign was changed. "Visible from a public street" was deleted and this was added: "*no farther than ten feet back of the street property line of every street frontage. Where there are more than two street frontages, no more than two signs shall be required.*" There was a brief discussion about having three signs when there are more than two streets. Chairman Zimnoch suggested adding "*as directed by Planning and Zoning Office*" to cover all bases.

Ms. Rodriguez summarized past discussions which were held by commission members regarding increasing fees to cover procedural changes and the purchase of signs for public hearing notices. She suggested that the commission consider increasing the base fees for Site Plan applications (an additional \$30), Special Use Permits (an additional \$50), and zone change map or text amendments (an additional \$50) in order to cover mailing costs and public hearing sign costs. She also suggested leaving applications in staff mailboxes rather than mailing them as a way of saving money. There was a brief discussion about the pros and cons of increasing the fees and if these increases are substantial enough. To summarize, the new, increased fees would be as follows: \$230 for Site Plan/Modification, \$300 for zone change map or text amendment, and \$250 for Special Use Permit, and would include the cost of mailing applications to the commission, and the sign(s) for public hearings. All commission members were in favor of these new fees. Ms. Brengi did not like that the signs were going to be thrown away. She felt this was very wasteful. Mr. Szepanski suggested that applicants be encouraged to return the signs to the Planning Office.

It was **MOVED** (Szepanski) and **SECONDED** (Zimnoch) and **PASSED** (Unanimous, 5-0) that the Planning and Zoning Commission schedule a public hearing for a text amendment to Section 1102 entitled “Distribution of Materials” and Section 1201 entitled “Fee Schedule” from its regulations for April 13, 2015.

It was **MOVED** (Zimnoch) and **SECONDED** (Gannuscio) and **PASSED** (Unanimous, 5-0) that the Planning and Zoning Commission approve purchasing these signs, the amount not to exceed \$350 for 25 of them.

B. Action Items (none)

VIII. New Business

A. Public Input (none)

D. Action Items

i. Election of officers

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

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

It was **MOVED** (Gannuscio) and **SECONDED** (Brenzi) 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.

OTHER

Ms. Rodriguez stated that a potential applicant has asked to look into 12 Ella Grasso Turnpike where most recently Enterprise was approved for truck rental. The property has historically been for used car sales and now for truck rental. This applicant would like to bring it back to used car sales. The company is Vernon Auto. Ms. Rodriguez would like to get direction from commission members on what they think would be required for an application. It was agreed that they would need a revised site plan with a new layout.

Mr. Szepanski commented that on the applications where the property owner and applicant sign, the signatures are often illegible. He suggested that when the applications are reprinted, “please print name” is added underneath. Everyone agreed that this was an excellent idea.

IX. Communications and Bills (none)

X. Adjournment

It was **MOVED** (Gannuscio) and **SECONDED** (Zimnoch) and **PASSED** (Unanimous, 5-0) that the Planning and Zoning Commission adjourn the March 9, 2015 meeting at 8:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

*Debbie Seymour
Recording Secretary*