

PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING JANUARY 10, 2017

Present: Regular members David Colbert, Peter Kalmes, Stephen Saccardi, Anna Timell, alternate member Virginia Potter, Tom McGowan, Commission Planning Consultant and LUA/ZEO and Commission clerk Karen Griswold Nelson.

Absent: Jill Cutler and alternate Dermot Woods.

Other persons present: First Selectman Gordon Ridgway and Priscilla Pavel, representative for the Economic Development Commission.

Chairman David Colbert called the meeting to order at 7:05PM. Alternate member Ginny Potter was seated for Jill Cutler.

1. APPLICATIONS FOR ZONING PERMITS.

ZP#1001 – Michael Feder owner/Arthur Howland applicant – Rebuild and alterations to a non-conforming pre-existing single family residence – 57 Dark Entry Road. Permit approved.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES. October, November and December 2016 minutes.

Motion made by Ms. Timell, seconded by Mr. LaPorta, to approve the October minutes with the addition of discussion to agenda item 8. After “regulatory matters under consideration, including signage.... and “residential versus commercial uses in the Village Districts” (Cutler); unanimously approved.

No action on the November minutes due to the lack of a quorum.

Action on the December minutes deferred.

3. NEW APPLICATIONS:

- A. 8-24 To consider and act upon a referral from the Board of Selectman for the use of land located on Lower River Road for recreational and municipal uses as shown in site plan approved November 8, 2016, entitled Housatonic River Access Improvements at the Bend, submitted by the Housatonic Valley Association (HVA).**

Minutes of the September 20, 2016 Board of Selectman’s meeting was made part of the record, showing the action by the Board to request an 8-24 referral for the Bend project in West Cornwall.

First Selectman Gordon Ridgway was in attendance to address the Commission.

Mr. Ridgway stated that the project had received the approval from the Inland Wetlands Commission and the Housatonic River Commission and had been referred by the Board of Selectman (as noted in the minutes). Note was made of environmental site investigations of the property undertaken by HVA in response to concerns raised during the vetting process. Mr. Ridgway addressed the project providing numerous benefits to the community, including correcting a parking lot eroding into the river, providing better boat access and being part of an overall project to have a parking lot and bathroom facilities available to the public as part of the ongoing conversations regarding the acquisition of land through lease or purchase. Mr. Ridgway stated that town counsel Attorney Perley Grimes agreed that the 8-24 referral could move forward at this point as an 8-24 referral is for the use of land and not who owns the property or whether it is leased or purchased.

Correspondence from Lynn Fowler dated January 10th, 2017 and received by Land Use staff immediately prior the meeting was made part of the record.

Stephen Saccardi in 7:15PM.

The Commission reviewed the application in compliance with the Plan of Conservation and Development, and based on the following (but not limited to) statements in the Town Plan of Conservation & Development, dated May 2010

Economic Development - Village Centers (pages 5-6)

General Planning Recommendations

3. Promote river-related recreational business opportunities...

Village Center Traffic Safety, Parking, and other Public Improvements.....

2. Improve pedestrian safety..... (bullet 4 – public bathrooms, possibly using CL&P land)

4. Create boat access...(encourage enhancements to existing river access on CL&P land)

And in general, 6 and 7

Community and Cultural resources (page 37)

3. Promote recreational areas and public hiking opportunities..... Accordingly,

Motion made by Ms. Timell, seconded by Mr. Saccardi that the Commission finds that the 8-24 referral from the Board of Selectman for the use of land located on Lower River Road for recreational and municipal uses as shown in site plan approved November 8, 2016, entitled Housatonic River Access Improvements at the Bend, submitted by the Housatonic Valley Association (HVA) is not inconsistent with the Town Plan of Conservation and Development as referenced in the review discussion; unanimously approved.

4. PENDING APPLICATIONS. None.

5. CORRESPONDENCE AND COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED.

A. Request for letter of support from the Cornwall Conservation Trust for the preservation of 72 acres of Forest in West Cornwall (Matland Forest) through an open space grant from the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection.

Correspondence dated December 7, 2016 from the Cornwall Conservation Trust requesting a letter of support was made part of the record. It was agreed that the Commission was in support of the acquisition, accordingly:

Motion made by Mr. Saccardi, seconded by Mr. LaPorta, to authorize chairman David Colbert to write a letter of support for the preservation of 72 acres of forest in West Cornwall; unanimously approved.

B. Upcoming Land Use Training Sessions: Feb. 23rd and March 7th /email from Jocelyn Ayer from the Northwest Hills COG.

Information emailed to commission members made part of the record.

Agenda items 6, 7 and 8 were discussed concurrently.

6. OTHER BUSINESS PROPER TO COME BEFORE THE COMMISSION.

7. LUA/ZONING OFFICER'S REPORT.

2017-2018 Land Use budget.

8. PLANNING WORKSHOP to include but not limited to discussion of the Zoning and or subdivision regulations in compliance with the recommendations in the Town Plan of C&D, reports from subcommittee, discussion of upcoming planning meeting and other zoning/subdivision regulatory matters with input from ex-officio member First Selectman Gordon Ridgway.

Regarding preliminary discussions on agricultural regulations at the November and December meetings, (as brought forth by Ms. Timell), there was general discussion regarding the overall Commission's wishes to commit to discussion of the draft agricultural regulations, including the consideration of the statutory definition of agriculture and or farming being added to the regulations. There was discussion regarding the differences between the "right to farm" ordinance and "regulations".

Motion made by Ms. Timell, seconded by Mr. Saccardi for the overall commission to commit to the consideration of changes to the Zoning regulations to address agricultural issues; unanimously approved.

The Commission and First Selectman Ridgway addressed the current budget and the timing needed to open discussion of preparation and/or update of the Plan of Conservation and Development and any funding for the same.

There was general discussion of open issues in the town in particular housing, economic development and agriculture and ways to move forward.

As relating to housing, the consideration of workshop meetings with the Economic Development Commission and the Cornwall Housing Corporation was discussed with staff to move forward on the process for late winter

There was general discussion of the Village Subcommittee and the expansion of the Village Center subcommittee's purview to address economic development in general and to acknowledge and include agriculture in the discussion of economic development.

Based on the recommendation of Ms. Timell,

Motion made by Mr. LaPorta, seconded by Mr. Saccardi, to rename the Village Center Subcommittee to the Economic Development Subcommittee: unanimously approved.

There was discussion of the (June 235rd) 2007 Town of Cornwall Plan of C&D Public Forum held at the Cornwall Consolidated School and consideration of scheduling a similar forum again. Priscilla Pavel, and member of the Cornwall Association and sponsor of the 2007 forum volunteered to discuss the sponsorship of such an event with the association.

9. ADJOURNMENT.

Motion made by Ms. Timell, seconded by Mr. LaPorta to adjourn at 8:50PM; unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted

Karen Griswold Nelson