

PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION REGULAR ZOOM MEETING APRIL 11, 2023

**Present: Regular members Anna Timell, Keith Bodwell, Christine Gray (in 7:30PM) James LaPorta, Stephen Saccardi (in 7:07PM), Phill West, alternate members Bruce Bennett, Will Evans and Michelle Shipp and LUA/ZEO Karen Griswold Nelson
Absent: Others present: Commission Planning Consultant Janell Mullen**

Chairman Anna Timell called the meeting to order at 7:04PM with a quorum established. Alternate member Will Evan was seated for regular member Stephen Saccardi (until his arrival at (7:07PM) and Bruce Bennett for regular member Christine Gray (until her arrival at 7:30PM).

Public Education Forum, for the purpose of providing information and answering questions about

Zoning Regulation Reformatting Project

PowerPoint "*Cornwall Zoning Regulation Reformat Project March 10, 2020 – February 8, 2023 - Anna Timell chair,*" was screen shared with Chairman Anna Timell leading the PowerPoint presentation. The 20 minute presentation addressed 4 topics in depth:

- Why create Zoning Regulations?
- A Brief History of Zoning in Cornwall.
- What we did change during the regulation reformat process?
- And (Most importantly) what we did not change?

Links listed as part of the meeting:

Informational PowerPoint on the Town of Cornwall website.

<https://cornwallct.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/Cornwall-Zoning-Regulation-Reformat-Project.pptx>

DRAFT COPY OF ZONING REGULATIONS

<https://cornwallct.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/April-2023-CZR-DRAFT-FINAL-.pdf>

After the presentation, the floor was opened to the public.

In response to questions (Ann Trowbridge), there was clarification to the hot links included in the regulations. Hearing no other questions. Chairman Timell opened the floor to Commission planning consultant Janell Mullen for her presentation.

And the potential impact of last year's cannabis legalization on Cornwall.

Power point "*Adult Recreational Cannabis –Land Use and Cornwall*" was screen shared with Janell Mullen leading the power point presentation. Note was made of the current moratorium in place for the P&Z commission to address the matter.

Questions directed to Ms. Mullen:

- Chairman Timell questioned if “gross space” for cultivators and micro-cultivators included both indoor and outdoor space. In response, Ms. Mullen stated that the state has enabled and made changes to the original legislation to allow outdoor and indoor gross space for both. The acronym for PUMA was clarified by Chairman Timell, (speaking from her background as a medical doctor), stating that it meant Palliative Use of Marijuana aka “medical marijuana”.
- Commission member Bruce Bennett questioned if cannabis was considered as part of the definition of “Agriculture”. In response, Ms. Mullen stated that the current definition of Agriculture in the Cornwall regulations was aligned with the state definition of agriculture, that the current state definition was updated to say that it does not include the production of marijuana and that it was up to the town (P&Z commission) to include it within the definition of agriculture in the Zoning regulations.
- Audience - Ginni Block questioned if there any age restrictions in the statues and in response from Ms. Janell, 21 years old similar to alcohol, for purchase and use.
- Audience- Ann Trowbridge raised questions regarding similarity and differences to Massachusetts regulations. In response, Ms. Mullen stated that Connecticut regulations were very different from Connecticut but that Connecticut towns and entities were researching and entities regarding the matter.
- Commission member Michelle Shipp raised questions regarding taxes and revenue that will be brought to town with input from Ms. Mullen as to tax benefits to the town including a 3% gain for retail sales to the municipality and the revenue stream being specific to uses including charitable and civic entities. Ms. Mullen added that there were still a lot of concerns posed to the DCP that remained somewhat unanswered and unclear.

Hearing no other questions, it was noted that any specific questions outside of the evening’s presentation should be directed to the Land Use Office to be re-directed to Planning Consultant Janell Mullen for response.

REGULAR ZONING MEETING:

The regular meeting was opened at 7:49PM with all members in attendance.

ZONING APPLICATIONS: See under ZEO report.

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: January and March special meeting minutes.

Motion made by Mr. West, seconded by Mr. LaPorta, to approve the minutes of the January 30, 2023 special meeting; approved by members in attendance. (Anna Timell, James LaPorta, Bruce Bennett and Phill West)

Motion made by Mr. Bodwell, seconded by Mr. LaPorta, to approve the minutes of the March 21, 2023 special meeting; approved by members in attendance. (Anna Timell, Keith Bodwell, Christine Gray, James LaPorta, Bruce Bennett and Michelle Shipp)

2. NEW APPLICATIONS.

ZP1175- West Cornwall Development Group LLC – Zoning permit for change of use in the “Pink House” and accompanying site plan modification – 417 Sharon Goshen Turnpike.

Griswold addressed information sent to the Commission, noting that the site plan previously approved for the restaurant was being modified with the plan showing the Pink/now White House changing from a “condemned” condition to the proposed current 2 retail/one two bedroom accessory apartment use.

Principals of the West Cornwall Development Jeff Morgan and John VanDoren were in attendance to represent the application. Mapping entitled “As Built Site Plan - West Cornwall Development Plan LLC, 417 Sharon Goshen Turnpike, prepared by Colby Engineering dated 03/09/2023” was made part of the record and screen shared with the Commission for discussion and review.

Jeff Morgan gave an overview review of the application, noting the current principals, and their common goal for the development of the property (and in particular to include a restaurant) to build more hospitality to create energy for other business to open in West Cornwall. Mr. Morgan addressed that all of the changes previously and currently being proposed being consistent with the 2010 and 2020 Town Plans of C&D to encourage activity in the Town centers. Mr. Morgan gave a short history of West Cornwall village and how it had changed and addressed the development of the first phase as approved in 2020 for the restaurant. Mr. Morgan stated that the second phase being presented after making structural changes to the building to make it safe and allow a two retail spaces on the first floor and a 2 bedroom accessory apartment on the second floor. Mr. Morgan addressed parking and infrastructure completed including the installation of the septic systems that were needed to move forward on the second phase. Mr. Morgan addressed the new changes to the plan to add 3 more parking spaces, the inclusion of signage that was being proposed, sidewalks for topography changes for handicapped accessibility,

There was general discussion of the site plan screen shared with notes made by chairman Timell of her review of the plan and finding compliance with the current regulations. In response to questions (Mr. Bennett) regarding details as to boundary lines relating to the state highway, Griswold Nelson addressed the process for resolution, noting that the project engineer, Bill Colby, had and was addressing the concerns being raised by Mr. Bennett. In response to other questions, there was clarification of engineering details and on street parking being addressed by the Board of Selectmen to increase parking and the change of the regulations to allow parking and shared parking) to be more than 500 feet away (Timell and LaPorta).

Motion made by Mr. Bodwell, seconded by Mr. West to “approve” **ZP1175- West Cornwall Development Group LLC – Zoning permit for change of use in the “Pink House” and accompanying site plan modification – 417 Sharon Goshen Turnpike** as presented in the Site Plan; unanimously approved.

3. PENDING APPLICATIONS.

Town of Cornwall Zoning Regulations as reformatted – set for Public Hearing May 9th (CORRECTED BY KGN AND AT)

Griswold Nelson addressed correspondence received from the NWCOG that confirmed that the re-format proposed no changes and therefore did not require a statutory review.

4. STAFF REPORT

**LUA/CZEO – Karen Griswold Nelson
Enforcement Actions – KGN**

ZP#1173 – Lauren Baxter Wasson owner/Robert Trezza applicant – Ground mounted solar array – 169 Cream Hill Road. Permit approved.

ZP#1174 – Deirdre and Adam Fischer owners/Deidre Fischer applicant – Interior modifications to a single family residence for the creation of an attached accessory apartment – 292 Great Hollow Road. Permit approved.

ZP#1175 - ZP1175- West Cornwall Development Group LLC – Zoning permit for change of use in the “Pink House” and accompanying site plan modification (listed under New applications) – 417 Sharon Goshen Turnpike. Approved by action of the Commission.

5. CORRESPONDENCE AND COMMUNICATIONS.

March 30th NWCOG zoom meeting 5th Thursday reports from chairman Timell and member Michelle Shipp.

Reports made part of the record. Chairman Timell addressed the importance of the 5th Thursday meeting with input from Ms. Shipp as to what she learned at the workshop.

6. OTHER BUSINESS PROPER TO COME BEFORE THE COMMISSION. None.

7. PLANNING WORKSHOP MEETING -

Chairman Timell addressed the Cannabis survey in process and how it would be addressed and handled by staff and Chairman Timell and Janell Mullen. General discussion ensued as to how commission members could handle conversations and personal opinions regarding the matter. There was discussion as to how the results of the survey would be handled as to regulatory changes to be addressed by Ms. Mullen and the Commission in the near future.

There was discussion regarding “affordable” housing and the work of the subcommittee and future process for moving the process forward.

8. ADJOURNMENT.

Motion made Mr. Bodwell, seconded by Mr. LaPorta to adjourn at 8:30PM; unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted, Karen Griswold Nelson for Commission secretary Phill West.