

PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION REGULAR IN-PERSON MEETING NOVEMBER 12, 2023

Present: Regular members Chairman Anna Timell, Christine Gray James LaPorta, Phill West, and alternate member Michelle Shippe.

Absent: Keith Bodwell, Stephen Saccardi and Will Evans

Others present: Commission Planning Consultant Janell Mullen.

The meeting was called to order at 7:04PM. Alternate member Bruce Bennett was seated for regular member Keith Bodwell and alternate Michelle Shippe for regular member Steven Saccardi.

Chairman Timell addressed her continued requests for all Commission members to address attendance prior to the meeting, Chairman Timell noted that Commission Members are expected to come to meetings and requested that individuals unable to attend should take on the responsibility of notifying the Chair and the Land Use Office. The reason for this request is to establish that a quorum will be available for an upcoming meeting.

ZONING APPLICATIONS: See under Zoning Officer report.

OTHER BUSINESS PROPER

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES; October regular meeting

Motion made by Mr. LaPorta, seconded by Mr. West to approve the minutes of the October 12th regular meeting with a correction of the date of the continued public hearing for the Ridgway application: unanimously approved. Note was made of errors in the September 26th special meeting regarding dates of the both meeting and the date of the continued public hearing. The correction of the minutes for the record were to be addressed by the Commission secretary (Griswold Nelson).

2. NEW APPLICATIONS :

SP#260 – Little Guild/Town of Cornwall/Cornwall Conservation Trust/applicants – Little Guild/Cornwall Conservation Trust – (owners) – Site Plan Modifications and modification to existing Special Permits– 285 Sharon Goshen Turnpike.

Griswold Nelson addressed the receipt of limited information regarding the application with agreement that additional information was be made available to the Commission for the November 28th special meeting. Griswold Nelson recommended that no action be taken to set the date for the hearing until additional information was available for review.

3. PENDING APPLICATIONS

1. SP#257 – Jayne and Gordon Ridgway owners/Ian Ridgway and Jayne Ridgway applicants - Special permit for a farm cidery and farm store as per 10.5.f (Agricultural & Accessory Uses subject to Special permit) and special permit for a detached accessory apartment as per Section 10.1 (Accessory

Apartments and apartment uses) - 142 Town Street. Continued to November 28, 2023. In Person - Cornwall Town Hall.

Griswold Nelson addressed the receipt of mapping (hard copy only) regarding the changes to the location of the farm cidery/farm store/ accessory apartment) noting that the hard copy was available for review in the Land Use office and that the electronic copy would be made posted on the website upon receipt.

Griswold Nelson addressed legal notices (one posted on the website) and one appearing in the newspaper to satisfy noticing requirements based on clarity as to time and place.

Correspondence between chairman Timell and planning consultant Janell Mullen shared with the Commission (via email and on file in the Land Use office) was made part of the file.

Ms. Mullen gave an overview of the statutory requirement cited regarding the timing for SP257 (continuation of hearing, closing of hearing, and decision), referencing the email made part of the record. There was additional clarification of process for commission meetings in general.

2. Amendments to the Zoning regulations - Article 10.1 "Accessory Apartments & Apartment Uses". Public hearing December 12, 2023 regular meeting.

Comments received from the NHCOC were made part of the record. Note was made that any changes should be part of the discussion at the hearing

3. Amendments to the Zoning regulations - Article 3 - "Definitions" - Buildable Area - Public hearing December 12, 2023 regular meeting.

Comments received from the NHCOC were made part of the record. Note was made that any changes should be part of the discussion at the hearing.

**4. STAFF REPORT -
LUA/CZEO - Karen Griswold Nelson**

ZP#1192 - Richard Dechard & Sally McGoldrick owners/applicants - deck and addition to a single family residence - 5 School Street. Permit approved

ZP#1193 - Cynthia Foote owner/applicant - addition to an existing screened porch - 1 School Street. Permit approved, Enforcement Actions - KGN

Griswold Nelson addressed a pending enforcement action that would be mostly limited to Wetlands issues.

5. CORRESPONDENCE AND COMMUNICATIONS.

6. OTHER BUSINESS PROPER TO COME BEFORE THE COMMISSION.

- **Approval of Meeting dates 2024**

Meeting dates prepared by staff (kgn) showing all second Tuesdays with the addition of January 23, 2024 for the Annual meeting, starting at 7PM in the Cornwall Library, In Person and/or Zoom hybrid, was discussed.

Motion made by Mr. West, seconded Mr. LaPorta, to approve the minutes dates as discussed; unanimously approved.

- **Procedural discussions – Chairman Timell**

Chairman Timell, referencing the approval of the meeting dates, strongly reminded members of the implied commitment of members to attendance. Chairman Timell addressed the “requirement” for all Commission members to address attendance at all meetings without being reminded by the chair or staff.

There was general discussion of other procedural matters, commencing with the discussion of meetings in person, zoom or hybrid with note made that library staff was willing to allow commission members to run the equipment for hybrid meetings. With note made (kgn) that the posted meeting schedule allowed all options being discussed, there was continued discussion as to all factors of zoom/hybrid meetings.

Chairman Timell distributed a document entitled “Proposed New Standard Operating Procedures” for discussion. There was general discussion regarding noticing requirements, pre-Covid, and Covid, and post Covid, preparation of minutes and process for the recording of motions. Discussion was redirected (Mullen) to the issue of availability and access of all documents to concerned parties and the posting of information in various venues.

Motion, as proposed by chairman Timell, that, in view of the Commission’s commitment to transparency and providing the public with all necessary information, a standard operating procedure be in place that the Commission will continue the practice that all notices, agendas, minutes, and correspondence be posted on the CornwallCT.org website and that a deadline be established for receipt of correspondence Thursday at noon, unless Thursday is a holiday, in which case, Tuesday at noon, to be posted on the website.

Chairman Timell also addressed the time needed for Commission members to review applications prior to the meeting (various times 4 days to several weeks) with various issues raised regarding statutory times for application to be accepted, applications being deemed complete (special permits and site plan), finding defects during the hearing process (kgn), best practices for the receipt of information (Mullen) etc., additions to the agenda (regular versus special), completeness of applications with many questions being answered in the Zizka book (Mullen) based on statutory language.

After continued discussion, the vetted “simple” motion:

Motion, made by Mr. West, seconded by Mr. Laporta, that a standard operating procedure is in place that states that the Commission continues the practice that all notices, agendas, minutes, and correspondence be posted on the CornwallCT.org website <https://cornwallct.org/planning-zoning/>

AND that a deadline be established for receipt of correspondence and applications as of Thursday noon, the week before the next regularly scheduled meeting. If a holiday falls on Thursday, the deadline will be Tuesday at noon that precedes the holiday: unanimously approved.

There was general discussion of site walks, proper protocol and procedure and the intent to schedule more Commission site walks.

7. PLANNING WORKSHOP MEETING.

Workshop with Commission planner regarding regulatory changes consistent with the Town Plan of Conservation & Development.

Chairman Timell provided a document entitled "Possible Regulation Amendment Topics", with input from all Commission members in attendance regarding their top choice. The consensus was to proceed to a discussion of amending the regulations to address duplexes and multi-family housing.

Chairman Timell addressed the proposed change of the current "Housing Task Force" to "Cornwall Housing Commission" to be approved by ordinance at Town Meeting on December 8th, 2023.

8. ADJOURNMENT.

Motion made by Mr. West, seconded by Mr. LaPorta to adjourn at 8:47PM; unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Griswold Nelson for Commission secretary Phill West.