

PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION
 Regular Meeting
 February 7, 2012

The Planning & Zoning Commission held a regular meeting on Tuesday, February 7, 2012. Chairman Michael DelSanto, called the meeting to order at 7:00 o'clock, p.m.

The following Commissioners were present, viz:

Paul Chaplinsky	Kevin Conroy
Stephen Kalkowski	James Macchio
Paul Champagne	Michael DelSanto, Chair

Alternates: Randall Gage
 Jennifer Clock
 Ryan Rogers

Ex-officio members present were as follows, viz:

Mary Savage-Dunham, Town Planner
 James A. Grappone, Assistant Town Engineer
 Mark J. Sciota, Deputy Town Manager/Town Attorney

Absent: James Sinclair, Commissioner
 Susan Locks, Alternate

The Chair seated Ryan Rogers for James Sinclair. A quorum was determined.

The Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag was recited by everyone in attendance.

The Minutes are being prepared summary style and the video and audio tapes are available for further detail.

MICHAEL DELSANTO, Chairman, presiding:

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Regular Meeting of January 17, 2012

Mr. Chaplinsky moved to approve. Mr. Kalkowski seconded. Motion passed unanimously on a voice vote.

BUSINESS MEETING

A. Galaxy Development, LLC, site plan application for plaza redevelopment, 365 Queen Street SPR #1605.

Patrick Dougherty, engineer with Midpoint Engineering and Consultants on behalf of the applicant.

Since the last time we met and actually just today I submitted some revised plans. (Passed around the site plan). This is not the formal form and I continue to work with the staff, especially on some of the rougher issues.

He then explained the changes to the revised site plan since the last meeting.

- The building footprint has changed a little bit. The size is 7200 square feet.

- Addressed some of the internal circulation questions that came up at the staff review. Most notably is the circulation to Loper Street. We've lined up the curb cut now with the drive aisle in response to concerns regarding the conflict point.

- The circulation to the east of the bank has changed. Explained it is a shorter distance now and there is some additional parking towards the rear of the building that'll likely be used by the folks in utilizing the Loper Street curb cut.

- On the south property line, you'll see I've called out a 6 foot vinyl fence. I haven't met with the folks to the south and I plan to do so before the next meeting. Explained.

- We've begun to develop a buffer to the east side of the site. I've shown about five new Australian pine trees. Explained.

After meeting with staff and considering future plans for the property --- not that we know of any to-date - we're thinking it may be appropriate to develop a real thick buffer in the 20 foot area from the property line. Explained he will be meeting with the property owner to the southeast sometime before the next PZC meeting to get some resolution on the buffer item.

The project that is in front of you is all that we plan to develop. There is additional business zoned land. We have no plans for that right now. But if future plans should arise, I wouldn't want to negate or not be able to use that land in the future.

We feel if we provide the buffer now, if there were a project in the future, it would be well established and a good screen.

That's a summary of the changes. I assume this Board would table to the next meeting to give staff time to review it fully.

Mr. Kalkowski renewed his concern about the southeast stop and the right turn exit only. The stop facing north and if I'm stopped at that stop sign, I've got to look almost 180 degrees back instead of just 90 degrees left and right if I'm coming straight out. I think we asked you to go back and think about maintaining the straight out from the drive thru. What are your thoughts?

Mr. Dougherty indicated he wanted to keep the circulation within the site. We feel during the peak hours there is going to be a need for people at the bank to use the Loper Street exit. The feeling is if we kept the out only from the drive thru, that essentially is a right-hand only out. The people exiting the bank wanting to go south on Queen Street would have to come back in the next curb cut and go to Loper Street to do a u-turn. I don't think this situation is that uncommon. I do need to remove the tree at the entrance. My feeling is as you pull into the exit you are getting a full view of Queen Street. You're not looking back over your shoulder; you are looking to your left. To make a turn to circle back up to Loper Street is a turn that would be safe.

Discussion.

Mr. Kalkowski stated as a safety concern, he was not convinced this is the right approach.

Mr. Chaplinsky asked if the applicant had considered moving that exit of the parking area further north so that to address Steve's point rather than turning backward to look over your shoulder, you might have more time to head north in the parking lot before turning and heading out. Move the exit another 20, 30 or 40 feet. It may allow for a better sight line and it would get more people to stop as they're approaching the traffic light as they're coming in/out of there.

Mr. Dougherty said he would look at it.

Discussion.

On the easterly border, you mentioned about future projects, just to confirm, you have a site plan and you want to leave this area for future development? Mr. Dougherty said what we are presenting here is what we plan to implement. There is an additional 100 feet of land that is in the business zone. We have no intention of developing right now, should we in the future, we wouldn't want to present this and say this is all that will ever be developed there. Right now this is what we intend. We have no uses in mind.

Discussion of the buffer.

Mr. Conroy suggested moving the proposed building to the east and relocate the front row of parking. There seems to be a conflict between the entrance and exit of the bank and the restaurant at the same location. I think the exit is in the right spot.

Having it closer to the intersection would not be better as to a safety perspective. I would like you to explore possibly moving the entrance, specifically the right in, to possibly in front of the building. I would ask for an alternative that shows a separate entrance/exit configuration for this site.

Discussion.

Mr. Conroy further commented he would not necessarily try to protect a future development if that is not your intention. I see alternatives that could be explored that would solve the problem we're having.

Discussion.

Mr. Chaplinsky asked if the applicant could consider the island that is north of the drive thru location as parking for the restaurant. Explained. Mr. Dougherty said he would look at that.

The Town Planner stated the buffer does need additional work. We'll be meeting with them.

Mr. Chaplinsky made a motion to table. Mr. Kalkowski seconded. Motion passed unanimously on a voice vote.

B. DC Development and Construction, LLC, 7 lot subdivision application, 827 Meriden Avenue FF #232/S #1286.

Stephen Giudice with Harry Cole & Son represented the applicant and the owner of the property. It is right across from Poriello Drive.

The zone is R-20/25. It's a 4.28 acre parcel of land. It's lightly wooded with some open grass areas around this house here in this location(indicating). The topography of the property slopes from the easterly portion westerly and kind of southeasterly along the boundary line (indicating). It slopes moderately.

The surrounding properties are all residential and pretty much developed with the exception of the property in the back.

We do abut a CL&P easement. It's not on our property but it is right against it.

There are no inland wetlands on our property. We have connections to sanitary and drainage off the property (indicating) and we did go to the Conservation Commission and receive approval for that activity. We are working in the floodplain. We're not proposing any changes to the floodplain compensation.

Our proposal is for a 7 lot subdivision. The house was previously cut out from the property by way of a simple cut or first cut. Explained.

The lots range in area from 22,500 sf to 25,884 sf. All be accessed by a new road, a permanent cul de sac of 425 feet long. Madalyn Lane.

All lots serviced by public water, public sewer and natural gas.

Infiltration for the roof leaders, dry wells and the underground storm water collection system was discussed.

Street trees are proposed in accordance with the regulations.

We submitted plans and received comments from staff and we did address those comments. We did receive follow up comments this afternoon.

We are proposing sidewalks as required as part of the subdivision.

There are a few comments on the follow up we'd like to discuss with the commission but before we do that, I'll answer any questions you have.

Mr. Champagne discussed the size of the single family dwellings that are going in the subdivision. Mr. Giudice guessed they would be anywhere from 2200 to 3000 sf. The lots are sized for the zone.

The Chair asked Mr. Giudice to discuss Comment #9, regarding groundwater. Mr. Giudice said they went down 10 feet with test pits and didn't hit any water. The floodplain elevations were discussed. And, we don't anticipate any issues with groundwater but we have provided for, if necessary, footing drain connections by way of gravity or sump pump.

Discussion.

The Town Planner advised a copy of the supplemental checklist that was completed today was laid out for the commissioners and provided to the applicant. There are a couple of outstanding items I'm hearing the applicant would like to discuss.

Mr. Giudice brought up two issues on the checklist for discussion:

(1) Item 3 on the checklist is regarding additional plantings along Lot 1. It was requested as a buffer along this property line to residential property. We don't feel it's necessary to buffer between two residential properties. He explained the existing vegetation. We'd prefer not to provide the buffer.

Discussion.

(2) Item 6 on the checklist is next. During our original review we had a sewer connection for Lot 2 through an easement. Explained the town felt it was problematic for the future and wasn't something that was desirable. The question was asked why is the sewer to connect at this location.

After meeting with the applicant, we did propose to connect Lot 2 into the sanitary sewer system proposed in the road. We felt this connection to the sanitary manhole was a better connection.

Tonight, the comment is the staff has met with the Superintendent of the WPCA and the Acting Town Engineer and they feel now it's necessary to connect the sewers from this location all the way down the proposed road into the sanitary sewer system.

We felt what was proposed was acceptable. It flows downhill. There are issues with this connection. Explained.

We prefer to connect the existing manhole and we did receive wetlands approval for that.

Mr. Grappone explained why it was a better fit to go right out into Meriden Avenue.

Discussion of the connection on Meriden Avenue.

Mr. Chaplinsky made a motion to table. Mr. Macchio seconded. Motion passed unanimously on a voice vote.

C. Dean's Stove/Hearthstone Pub, release of \$1,000 E & S bond, 120 West Main Street SPR #1558.

Staff supports this. Mr. Chaplinsky so moved the motion which Mr. Macchio seconded. Motion passed unanimously on a voice vote.

D. Walmart, release of \$3,000 bond for trailers, 235 Queen Street SPR 1210.9.

Staff supports this. Mr. Chaplinsky so moved the motion. Mr. Kalkowski seconded. Motion passed unanimously on a voice vote.

E. Prayer House of all Graces, request for one year extension of special permit approval, 2095 West Street SPU #469.1.

Staff supports this. Mr. Chaplinsky so moved the motion. Mr. Macchio seconded. Motion passed unanimously on a voice vote.

F. Request for release/reduction of \$41,000 subdivision bond, Mountain View Farms S #1241.

The Town Planner explained staff is recommending for a reduction from \$41,000 down to the new amount of \$14,000. This was bonding staff was holding for a water loop and that has been completed and accepted by the water department.

Mr. Chaplinsky made a motion to reduce per staff comments. Mr. Macchio seconded. Motion passed unanimously on a voice vote.

G. Request for release of supplemental water loop connection fee in the amount of \$2,375, CT Land and Homes S #1281.

Staff supports this. This is a supplemental fee because we had some bonding to cover the water connection but there was two ways the applicant could go. Mr. Tranquillo and I took the caution with the higher option and requested the developer fill the gap between the bonding we had and the higher option to protect the Town. The job is now done and this is ready for release.

Mr. Chaplinsky made a motion to release which Mr. Kalkowski seconded. Motion passed unanimously on a voice vote.

H. Town of Southington, 115 Water Street FF #233 - Floodplain filling application for the temporary disturbance of the floodplain as part of sanitary sewer main repair/replacement project.

Mr. Grappone, Acting Town Engineer, presented. I come before you for a request for floodplain filling for 115 Water Street. We have an existing sanitary sewer situation which is located here (indicating). It goes through the footprint of an existing building right now.

We have videotaped this as part of our evaluation. It is an interceptor sewer, 15 inch made of clay in pretty bad shape. Explained.

We are working with the property owner for rerouting the sewer around the building and connecting back into the existing building where it will flow normally by gravity.

We're preparing bid specs and working on easements. We hope to bid the job within a two week period. We worked with wetlands and got a favorable floodplain recommendation. Explained they wanted some rip rap down here (indicating) which is at the end of the parking lot.

This is a minor temporary floodplain filling as a result of construction.

After some general discussion, Mr. Rogers made a motion to approve. Mr. Champagne seconded. Motion passed 7 to 0 on a roll call vote.

ITEMS TO SCHEDULE FOR PUBLIC HEARING

None

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

None

RECEIPT OF NEW APPLICATIONS

None

P & Z SUBCOMMITTEES

Mr. Gage reported the Blue Ribbon Parks Committee met and had some discussion but I was absent. I understand things are progressing with finding the need for youth groups and recreational facilities.

Mr. Macchio reported on the Turf Field Committee. We have met twice since our last meeting. (January 18 & 30) We will meet again on February 13th.

The committee reviewed field trips that were taken by the committee to other fields (Berlin, Durham, Cheshire, AIG and Newington).

We are looking at and will make recommendations to the Town Council: here's the field and here's what we can do with it sod wise, or turf field looking at usage and maintenance and how much to maintain.

Discussion.

We also looked at other multiple events the field could be used for. A business plan for the Town Council. We're looking at all costs of sod and the turf.

We need to have an advisory board to constantly be looking at this field. Explained it's the best.

Fundraising is being discussed.

Mr. Champagne reported on the Open Space Committee. They met on January 19th with a lot of activity around the community gardens. We've asked UCONN to help as manage that as they've expressed an interest in doing so.

We've looked at one piece of property we are negotiating on. There is another piece that is up in the air

In April we're looking at Earth Day and actually having an event at the Primus Property. Tours generating off the linear trail. Explained.

We're looking at some of the heavier wooded areas to manage some type of harvesting and we're working with a forester on that.

Mr. Kalkowski reported on the Continuous Improvement Subcommittee. They had their meeting on January 30th with four things proposed on the Agenda:

- Sign regulations regarding LED signs for fueling stations.
- Paved versus processed stone for parking lots and public parking areas.
- ATV regulations. We need to have definitions. And, we want to do that with a Town Ordinance, as well.
- Bond in lieu of site compliance specifically around the granting of extensions. Maximizing the number of extensions and the timeline around the extensions.

And, I asked the committee to come prepared also to discuss other items.

Some other items: separation distances for liquor stores, medical marijuana and regulations around that and tightening up or formally documenting what would be administrative approvals for in the field approvals.

Mr. Chaplinsky said his committee (West Street Subcommittee) has not had a meeting since the last PZC meeting. March 29th (5:00 to 8:00 pm) and April 12th (6:00 to 9:00 pm) are going to be two dates for public input sessions here in Council Chambers.

Mr. Conroy added the Process Review Committee is meeting and we have a meeting scheduled next week.

The Chair reported on the Economic Development Strike Committee. We met last week. We talked about the downtown area, North Main Street and how to promote the downtown area. Lou Perillo is working hard coming up with marketing events to try to market the town. It was discussed we might possibly take a tour of some of the available developments throughout town. I think P & Z should be invited to that, as well.

We went over some of our STEAP Grants. Also, the Beaton & Corbin Assessment area.

Additional Comments:

Mr. Chaplinsky asked for an update on the Ideal Forge site. Attorney Sciota explained at this point the grant aspect of it; we have signed the paperwork for approximately \$3 million. Lou Perillo and I are supposed to have a meeting up at the state in the next couple of weeks with Mr. Schlessinger. I'll tell you more at that point. The State DECD has given the grant for remediation of the site.

Attorney Sciota will give an update the first meeting in March.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Chaplinsky made a motion to adjourn which was seconded by Mr. Rogers. Motion passed unanimously on a voice vote.

(Whereupon, the meeting was adjourned at 8:07 o'clock, p.m.)