

PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION
Regular Meeting
April 2, 2013

The Planning & Zoning Commission held a regular meeting on Tuesday, April 2, 2013. Chairman Michael DelSanto, called the meeting to order at 7:00 o'clock, p.m.

The following Commissioners were present, viz:

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

Alternates: Susan Locks
Ryan Rogers

Ex-officio members present were as follows, viz:
David Lavallee, Assistant Town Planner
Robert Librandi, Acting Town Planner
James A. Grappone, Acting Town Engineer
Mark J. Sciota, Deputy Town Manager/Town Attorney

Absent: Jennifer Clock, Alternate
Randall Gage, Alternate

A quorum was determined.

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

A Moment of Silence was observed for the passing of John Weichsel.

John Weichsel served as Southington's first town manager for 44 years. He passed away last Friday at the age of 80. He was hired in 1966 and retired in 2011. I read a quote in the Hartford Courant from former town councilor Andy Meade who actually served for close to 30 years himself and I am going to steal from him. It really surmised what John Weichsel was all about.

He said John should be praised for his vision, honesty, professionalism and ability to do an excellent job in guiding the town operations above any political infighting. I admire his intelligence and his integrity. The good conditions of our parks, school system, finances and building are all a result of his working with the Council. He left the town in tremendous shape.

(Moment of Silence keeping Mr. Weichsel's family in our thoughts and prayers.)

MICHAEL DELSANTO, Chairman, presiding:

Approval of Minutes

Regular Meeting of March 19, 2013

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

Business Meeting

A. Southington Industrial Associates site plan application for proposed 5,000 square foot building and associated parking for the purpose of manufacturing and/or processing of goods, 96 Industrial Drive Lot #8) SPR #1634.

Stephen Giudice, Harry Cole & Son, represented the applicant. I presented this application at the last two meetings. It's an industrial building on Industrial Drive. It is built for speculation. We have received staff comments and we've addressed them adequately.

If you have any questions for me, we're ready for action.

Mr. Librandi indicated the item was ready for action.

Mr. Sinclair made a motion to approve. Mr. Chaplinsky seconded. Motion passed 7 to 0 on a roll call vote.

B. Southington Industrial Associates, site plan application for proposed 12,680 square foot building and associated parking for the purpose of manufacturing and/or processing of goods, 127 Industrial Drive (Lot #16) SPR #1635.

Stephen Giudice represented this application as well. We're in the same situation as the last application. This is also ready for action unless you have any questions.

Mr. Librandi indicated the item was ready for action.

Mr. Sinclair made a motion to approve which Mr. Chaplinsky seconded. Motion passed 7 to 0 on a roll call vote.

C. Nick Robertson, site plan application for proposed 8,000 square foot industrial building, 357 Captain Lewis Drive (SPR A#1636)

Sev Bovino, Planner with Kratzert, Jones representing the applicant. At the last meeting we presented the application. It is located at 357 Captain Lewis Drive at the end of the cul de sac. It intersects with Industrial Drive at the northwest quadrant of the intersection. It is an 8,000 sf building. We received engineering staff comments. We addressed the comments on the maps and the maps have been revised and resubmitted for review and approval.

We received comments from the planning staff a week prior and they were addressed. He read some of the comments which were addressed.

Mr. Grappone and Mr. Librandi indicated this item is ready for action.

The location of the dumpster was discussed in response to a comment by Mr. Conroy. Mr. Grappone felt it was a good compromise as far as the location.

Mr. Sinclair made a motion to approve. Mr. Kalkowski seconded. Motion passed 7 to 0 on a roll call vote.

D. Lovley Development, site plan application for proposed 1850 square foot Dunkin Donuts restaurant with drive-thru service with associated parking, utilities and landscaping, 1096 West Street SPR #1637.

Andrew Quirk, professional engineer and principal with Kratzert, Jones represented the applicant. This is a proposal for the relocation of the Dunkin Donuts franchise presently within the Mobil gas station to a standalone Dunkin Donuts facility at the corner of Corporate Drive and West Street.

The site consists of a lease area along Corporate Drive and West Street. It's leased from the Briad Group within the Homewood Suites Hotel currently under construction. The site is bordered by Corporate Drive to the north, West Street to the east and the hotel site to the south and west.

The lease area consist of approximately 29,000 sf in addition to an access are along the south and west out to Corporate Drive.

The parcel is in an I-1 zone and it's served by public sewer and water.

A recent text amendment by this commission as approved to allow an accessory restaurant use to the principle hotel use with a separate building.

The proposed site plan calls for the closing of the franchise within the Mobil gas station and relocation to this proposed site. There will be an 1850 sf proposed stand alone restaurant with a drive thru pick up window with associated parking and loading on the site.

The site has been configured in a way to maximize the drive thru queue while providing safe vehicular circulation and enhancing the streetscape along West Street.

The layout before you calls for the patrons to access the site from Corporate Drive. They would come down the access easement from the hotel thru the parking access strip and then to the site.

Patrons walking up can park either in the ten spaces closer to the hotel to the south or they can park in the ten spaces adjacent to the front entrance.

Those using the drive thru pickup window would circulate along the north side of the building to the menu board and circulate around to the pickup window and then back through the circulation to the parking lot out to corporate drive.

The site has been designed for an SU-30 delivery vehicle and those vehicles would be able to enter the site. There is a dedicated loading space per your regulations adjacent to the dumpster location and they can exit back out to Corporate Drive. The site has been designed with all the appropriate radii.

All the walkways have been designed for pedestrian access. There is a striped crosswalk from the hotel main entrance and a sidewalk with a crossing to the entrance and internal sidewalks for those parking within the site parking area.

With regards to zoning, the site conforms to your regulations. Specifically the proposed building will be 40.5 from Corporate Drive ROW and 100' from West Street ROW exceeding the 40' front yard setback.

The restaurant required 15 parking spaces and we've proposed 20, including one handicapped accessible space adjacent to the front entrance of the building.

All site lighting is full cut off with building lighting mounted on the building, as well.

We have provided a detailed landscaping plan including the required street trees along West Street and Corporate Drive as well as blue spruces and boxwoods to form a hedge and screening of the drive thru queuing area. There is attractive shrubs on the perimeter base of the building, as well.

ZIRO has been achieved by the hotel storm water management plan that was approved and they have a detention basin to the west of the site. The storm water calculations assume this leased area would have 75% impervious coverage and this plan calls for 56% coverage. We are well under what was included in that design.

The required grease trap will be provided. Sanitary sewer grinder pumps out to the force main system that exists on Corporate Drive.

Water service provided from Corporate Drive, as well, via the existing 12" main.

Town sidewalks are proposed as per the hotel site plan and its part of the site plan approval along West Street. They're included on this site plan.

We received town comments and have been working very closely with the town staff throughout the design process. Specifically, comments regarding sedimentation and erosion control have been addressed. Pavement, striping, landscaping, sewer and water service. There is additional traffic information in the process, as well.

Explained previous layout and answered questions from the commissioners.

Conflicts between the drive thru queue and those exiting were discussed. A proposed stop bar, stop sign and No Right Turn were pointed out and discussed. Three levels of safety.

He showed and explained the architectural renderings. This is a New England colonial style building. Explained elevations noting awnings, windows and screening of the freezer section and the utilities.

We believe this provides an optimal location for the Dunkin Donuts relocation. The dedicated queue and the circulation has been optimized to try to alleviate any traffic concerns on site. I'll take questions.

Mr. Kalkowski questioned the loading area. What are the time frames for delivery and are you expecting to get a 40' trailer backing in there? Mr. Quirk said normally there would be the 10 x 25 loading area (here) is for off peak hours. They get delivery before the peak and the second is after ten. And, the dedicated space allows the operations to continue while loading and unloading. As far as trailer deliveries, they try to do things with box trucks. They may once a week have a trailer unload on site.

Mr. Champagne discussed having a stop sign for the Dunkin Donut traffic (lower right of the plan) so they have to stop and let people come out of the hotel. There'll be congestion coming out of the hotel in the morning and afternoon.

Discussion of hotel exiting traffic. Mr. Quirk agreed they could add a stop sign and stop bar where discussed.

Mr. Chaplinsky said he thought the stop sign comment was a good one. Just commenting from the West Street Subcommittee side, I think that the overall site appearance is a very nice site plan. Aesthetically it looks like what we would expect to see on this corridor. Pitched roofs and full cut off lighting is in harmony with the vision we were looking for. This happens to be in what is going to be the interchange commercial zoned area and I think the drive thru is appropriate in this area. I will be supportive.

Mr. Librandi advised an updated traffic study has not yet been received. Once we get that we should be in good shape. We're requesting a table.

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

E. Premier Development, release of \$1,600 E & S Bond, 691-713 West Street S #1066.2.

Mr. Librandi said it is ready for action. Mr. Chaplinsky made a motion to approve which Mr. Kalkowski seconded. Motion passed unanimously on a voice vote.

F. Lovley Development, Inc., release of \$50,000 maintenance bond, Whispering Pines, 733 Prospect Street S #1248/S #1252.

Staff supports this. So moved by Mr. Sinclair. Mr. Chaplinsky seconded. Motion passed unanimously on a voice vote.

G. Lovley Development, Inc., release of \$80,000 public improvement bond, Estates at Glen Eagles, 593 Flanders Road S #1287.1.

Staff supports this. So moved by Mr. Sinclair. Mr. Chaplinsky seconded. Motion passed unanimously on a voice vote.

H. Lovley Development, Inc. reduction of subdivision bond to a new amount of \$82,000, Estates at Glen Eagles, 593 Flanders Road S #1287.1.

Staff supports this. So moved by Mr. Sinclair. Mr. Chaplinsky seconded. Motion passed unanimously on a voice vote.

I. DBF, LLC, release of \$50,000 E & S bond, Pine Hollow Estates, EE #132.

Staff supports this. So moved by Mr. Sinclair. Mr. Chaplinsky seconded. Motion passed unanimously on a voice vote.

Administrative reports

West Street Subcommittee

Mr. Chaplinsky asked Mr. Lavallee to talk a little bit about the draft we have on hand. (Passed around)

Mr. Chaplinsky noted this document should incorporate some of the changes suggested by the commission and other members of town staff.

Mr. Lavallee agreed a great deal of those comments were incorporated. Very helpful in forming this. As said before, there is a look that you want and this is the way to get it. You want something that is also going to tie in with sustainable development, too. A mixed use that has a place in that zone. Queen Street has a lot of curb cuts and a lot going on. If we can consolidate curb cuts and have one general area to focus on to get into a development, that's the goal of the subcommittee. I think we have upheld the goal of the subcommittee. If anything stands out when you got through it, let me know and we can discuss it.

Mr. Chaplinsky said the general feel of the new West Street business zone regulation is to provide an area for business development that is something between what you see on Queen Street and maybe our CB zone. Uses that aren't on Queen Street we want to try to attract here so we have two unique areas of business activity.

The look and the feel is similar to an application we saw earlier today with respect to the aesthetics: colonial look and feel. It's consistent with what the subcommittee was looking for. We tried to include verbiage that allowed for walking spaces and green spaces and tried to allow for incentives for builders to allow less parking and not more blacktop and some additional parking that would be flexible parking options which offers more green space and will add to the character of the zone.

We're also looking for interconnectivity between parcels so we do minimize curb cuts. We are looking to gain easements to the rear of the parcel so at some point we can work on getting an access road that is parallel to West Street that will connect and service all these parcels in the future.

That's all in her. Most all comments submitted have been addressed. The majority of them that had any substantial bite to them have been included.

I'd like to suggest we refer this out. We have the public hearing scheduled and get public comment back and then have further discussion to decide how we want to take this.

Mr. Conroy thanked Mr. Chaplinsky for including some comments he offered. But he had questions on the ones not added.

- Section 405.3 low impact development elements. Is there any incentive for that or is there any requirement that uses these and how we are measuring how well and how much of this technology is being used. Mr. Lavallee said best management is expected as a standard.
Discussion.

Mr. Chaplinsky said he felt the way the regulation was written was to be subjective and strongly suggestive without mandating every small item required and allowed staff to work with the builder to do what was in the best interest of this zone understanding what it is the subcommittee and the commission is looking for. But still giving the commission a chance at site plan to also review and make comments and also reject their opinions on it. There is opportunity for each application to come in and have healthy dialogue.

Mr. Lavallee said the incentive is a quality development sustainable in terms of lower maintenance.
Discussion.

Mr. Chaplinsky said it has to be economically feasible for the developer and feasible for the town in what we are looking for. Feasibility is the eye of the commission.
Discussion.

Mr. Conroy said if the only incentive is reductions in detention, I'm fine with that. There are other ways this can be done. Incentives for coverage. Removal thresholds. A lot of things. It would require another level of effort but I am satisfied with the retention incentive.

- 405.4 the permitted uses. We had this initially strictly s a CB zone. A mirrored version of the CB zone. I felt the uses in 401.11 and 401.12 were a very good match with the exceptions that made their way into this draft.

I wasn't wild about some of the uses in Section 401.13. I don't think some uses allowed would fit in that section. Particularly the special exceptions. I don't think some of those would do well --- at least not as we are proposing it. I suggest you look at that and weigh that.

- 405.5, article D. I know one of the main goals of this was to try to encourage consolidation of some of the smaller parcels into larger multi-use parcels. I'm not sure the 5% lot coverage bonus is enough to get that done when you are talking about combining numerous or larger parcels to get very large parcels.

I thought a sliding scale might be more effective. Discussion.

- I am encouraged by the site appearance guidelines. That's right on. New England style is something we want to encourage. I'm not sure how we enforce that or encourage that beyond saying it.

Attorney Sciota noted you could put suggestions in for the type of materials being used. We don't have a board you go to. There are materials you can put in (wood or clapboard).

- 105.9 - Parking. Section B. I think this is another area where we might encourage the consolidation of parcels. Parking parameters sometimes can be overkill. This is a spot where we can also may be put in an incentive for consolidated parcels.

Discussion.

Mr. Chaplinsky pointed out the requirement was changed from gross square footage to net square footage. Mr. Conroy stated that was a good idea.

Thank you.

This will be referred out to the regions and the public hearing will be set for May 7th, 2013 at 7:00 pm. We can put it on the website and start the process.

Receipt of New Applications

Mr. Librandi had none to report.

Other Comments/Concerns

Mr. Kalkowski advised the continuous improvement subcommittee is looking at a couple of things.

(1) We had an attorney approach us regarding getting clarification on our current RV and boat storage regulations. Currently, the regulations state the storage must be in a rear yard 5' from the property line. The word 'storage' is causing the point of contention right now. We'd like to propose to clarify the language and the intent. My opinion is the intent is we want these things in

the rear yard irregardless of whether they're parking them or storing them. We have some different opinions on the committee.

The spirit of what we're trying to achieve is keeping these RVs and boats in the back of the properties, towards the back. We'd like some feedback from you. We are considering allowing side or rear yard. But 5' from property.

Secondly, we reviewed some other regulations and some allow temporary parking of an RV in the front yard, the driveway, to allow for unloading, loading, preparing it for winter storage. But only on a temporary basis.

We'd like to consider that as well and clarify this particular regulation. We'd like feedback on that.

(2) Around the special exception process. We had a lot of discussion on that. We would like to consider potentially pulling back the appropriate special exception process into our SPU process. Before going too far down the path, we'd like feedback whether you feel that is a good use of our time and something supported.

Attorney Sciota advised some are discretionary. Many years ago there was a realignment of duties between the PZC and the ZBA. You can look at it again and see if there are some applications you'd rather keep with the PZC instead of the ZBA.

Mr. Chaplinsky stated he was very supportive of the special exceptions. I'd prefer to look at those here. I look for recommendations on the ones that would be appropriate.

And, on the RV thing, I feel strongly that the RV language, whether parked long term or short term should be in the rear.

Discussion.

I also believe there is some functionality that should be allowed in the front of the house to prep them and get them ready. There should be a time period that says no more than X number of days in front of the rear setback.

Discussion.

Mr. Sinclair echoed those comments. The only thing is when we allow something temporarily; I worry about enforcement with "temporary".

Adjournment: Mr. Sinclair made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Kalkowski seconded. Motion passed unanimously on a voice vote.

(Whereupon, the meeting was adjourned at 7:50 o'clock, p.m.)