

PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
TOWN OF SOUTHTON
DECEMBER 1, 2015

The Planning & Zoning Commission of the Town of Southington held a public hearing and a regular meeting on Tuesday, December 1, 2015 at the Municipal Center Assembly Room, 196 North Main Street, Southington, CT. Chairman Michael DelSanto called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

The following Commissioners were in attendance:

Paul Chaplinsky	James Sinclair
Steve Kalkowsky *	Jennifer Clock
Susan Locks	Michael DelSanto, Chair

Alternates: Theodore Cabata & James P. Macchio

Ex-Officio: James A. Grappone, Assistant Town Engineer
Robert A. Phillips, Director of Planning &
Community Development
Mark J. Sciota, Deputy Town Manager/Town Attorney

(* Arrived where noted.)

Absent: James E. Morelli, Jr. Commissioner
Kevin Clements & Joe Coviello, Alternates

The Chair seated Mr. Cabata for Mr. Kalkowski and Mr. Macchio in for Mr. Morelli. We have a quorum.

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

4. Approval of Minutes

A. Regular Meeting of November 17, 2015

Mr. Sinclair made a motion to approve and Mr. Chaplinsky seconded. Motion passed unanimously on a voice vote.

5. Public Hearings

Mr. Phillips read the legal notice into the record.

(* Mr. Kalkowski entered the meeting.)

The Chair noted that now that Mr. Kalkowski is here we have some business to take care of. The Chair announced Mr. Kalkowski was recently appointed to the Southington Police Commission. We congratulate him on that. It's somewhat bittersweet as now he can no longer serve on this commission. I've known Steve for a lot of years and he has been my left hand man. Everytime I asked him to do something, he served on this board well for four or five years. He also served on the ZBA. He cares about Southington. His integrity is without match. He's done a wonderful job and we'll miss him sorely.

I'm happy he's moving on to bigger things. We wish him the best of luck.

Mr. Chaplinsky added it has been a pleasure to work with Steve. You served here and on the ZBA for close to ten years between both boards. Congratulations on that. You're a great mentor. Certainly your integrity is not to be matched by one. You've set the standard for us and I know the challenge before you at the Police Commission you're up for. Wish you the best of luck.

Mr. Kalkowski added it has been his pleasure to serve with all of you and the rest of the town staff. I'll miss these meetings. Looking forward to the new challenge.

(Applause, applause)

Mr. Kalkowski resigned this post for the record.

(Mr. Kalkowski left the meeting.)

The Chair took nominations to fill the vacancy. Mr. Chaplinsky nominated alternate commissioner James Macchio. Mr. Sinclair seconded. Hearing no other nominations, it was unanimous on a voice vote.

The Town Attorney swore Mr. Macchio in as a regular commissioner.

(Sworn, sworn)

Congratulations!

(Applause)

The Chair now advised there is a vacancy for Secretary on the board. Mr. Chaplinsky nominated Jennifer Clock. Jen as served as secretary of the republican town party for three years. Chairwoman of the marketing committee for two years on the Republican Party. On planning & zoning as an alternate for a couple of years and one year as a commissioner before this year being elected to the commission.

In her capacity on the planning & zoning commissioner she served on the open space subcommittee and is also the Chairman of the POCD which we'll talk about later. Great work there.

For the past sixteen months she has been a stay at home Mom. And, she'll be returning shortly to her role as director of operations at a local insurance firm.

It's with great pleasure I nominate Jennifer Clock for the position of Secretary of the Southington Planning & Zoning Commission. Mr. Macchio seconded. Hearing no other nominations, it was unanimous on a voice vote.

Congratulations!

(Applause)

We have six regular members and one alternate, Mr. Cabata, seated for Mr. Morelli.

The Chair recognized a SHS student in the audience and invited him to the podium. Colby Rogers is here this evening for civics class at the SHS. He is in 9th grade and in Mr. Hart's class.

A. Donald DeSorbo, special permit application for parent/grandparent apartment, 54 DeSorbo Drive, in an R-20/25 zone. SPU #557

Sev Bovino, Planner with Kratzert, Jones & Associates representing the applicant: Mr. & Mrs. DeSorbo at 54 DeSorbo Drive in an R-20/25 zone off of Jude Lane. It is served by public water and septic system. There is 22,532 sf.

The applicants want to build an in-law apartment attached to the existing home in the southwest corner of the existing house (indicating).

Some of the pool deck will be removed to make room for this addition. The addition is designed to be architecturally pleasing and function internally in a way to accommodate a wheel chair.

You have received the plans. I'll be glad to answer questions on the plans.

The proposed addition is 815 sf. The access to this can be through the front door as required and also through the rear door and the garage. The space proposed is a kitchen, living room, one bedroom and a bathroom. It's designed for wheel chair access. (Sheet A-2.1 of the plans)

Total number of parking spaces is required to be four. There are three in the garage and one outside. It's an existing parking spot right here by the drive. We're not proposing a new curb cut. We'll be using the parking spot already in existence.

This requested is based on Section 11-22 - parent, grandparent provisions. The applicant has no objection to the conditions the commission normally attaches to these approval and they have been added to the plan on the left side.

The health department signed off on the septic system. Also the applicant received a ZBA variance.

We believe that granting this application will be in harmony with the purposes and intent of the regulation and will not be injurious to the neighborhood or the public in generally.

We respectfully request your approval. Any questions I'll be glad to answer.

(Those speaking in favor of the application)

Joe LaPorte, 30 Prosperity Drive, Southington. I'm very familiar with this application and I worked with the DeSorbo's on it. The addition will conform with the other properties and houses in the neighborhood. It's a great benefit to them. It's been well thought out and Mr. Bovino did his homework on the design, et cetera.

I urge approval of it.

(Inaudible) I am a long time neighbor to the DeSorbo family. I'm here to speak in favor of their decision. I don't think it is

nothing to cause any problem to the neighborhood and I will go in favor this evening.

Thank you.

(Those speaking against the application)

No response.

(Rebuttal)

Mr. Bovino introduced a list of neighbors that are in favor of the application for the record. They basically live either across the street to the proposal, in the back of the proposal. Those are most affected by this application.

Also, a map that shows the neighborhood and the proposal as it relates to the neighborhood.

The Chair closed this public hearing.

B. Westcorp, LLC, special permit application for a 64 unit multifamily development in 3 separate buildings, Eden Avenue, in a CB zone (Map 100, Parcel 017) SPU #548.1)

Sev Bovino, Planner with Kratzert, Jones represented the application.

The subject property is located off of Eden Avenue. The buildings are in light brown color on the map. Forgione Drive is the access to this property. It is existing and that will be the future access which will be improved to town standards and to meet the needs of the community.

Land area is 3 acres. It's located in a CB zone served by public water and sewer.

This application is for a modification of the previously approved SPU for 86 units of elderly housing in one building. The current proposal is for a reduction to 64 units total and 41 in the large building for elderly and the additional 23 units would be housed in three separate buildings for regular condominium use with no age restriction. (Indicated)

The building for the elderly is in the same location but it has been reduced in length in both directions and one floor has been removed so it is 3 stories instead of 4 stories.

The building for the elderly will have a community room, elevators and sprinklers. The applicant feels this works better with the surrounding properties.

We will have appropriate parking, walkways internally and externally. Lighting is full cut off for the site. Benches and bike racks are located in the front of the building. No bike racks in front of the regular condo units as they have garages.

There's 38 units that are 2 bedroom and 3 will be one bedroom. The regular condo units are two bedroom units.

Expected clientele is young professionals for the regular condos.

Stop signs and stop bars throughout the area to slow down the traffic including at the exit of the project on Eden Avenue.

Sight distances are very good.

Drainage pattern will be maintained on the property. ZIRO will be achieved.

Proper notification was sent to property owners within 500 feet of the property.

We received staff comments and provided revised plans and written responses.

Large shade trees are proposed through the project in addition to low flowering shrubbery around the buildings.

The CB zone allows for this kind of use by special permit. The applicant sees a need in the community and feels the proposal is consistent with the purpose of the regulations.

Showed and explained the elevation of the building.

(Explained elevation)

Same architecture as the original proposal except one less floor and it's shorter.

Cupolas and stone along the base. Ceremonial entrance. Colonial look type of building. Walkout balconies were noted. In the back will be a walk out basement and they'll be able to have mechanic utilizes and equipment in the basement area. We'll fit it to the grades as the property drops off in the back.

Mark Lovley, President of Lovley Development, 710 Main Street, Plantsville. The colors will be tan with the brownstone. We feel this change fits more in with the neighborhood.

Same type of colonial architecture with the cupolas and the cultured stone. Same thing on the townhouses. They'll be different fronts with bump outs and stone. In the 6-unit building each will be a different color so it looks like downtown, too. Typical townhouse.

Ms. Clock asked for clarification on the age restriction and why is one unit age restricted and the others are not.

Mr. Lovley said the age restricted building will be 55 and up. It has the elevator and services for that type of clientele.

The others are townhouses with three levels with the garage underneath.

We're trying to get the young professional downtown with having a walking path to Center Street. And, with the elderly, too.

Access to the shopping plaza was discussed. The applicant is working with the town on municipal parking for this whole area, too. We are working for the cut through, eventually too, and Forgione Drive can go behind the Elks almost to Center Street.

Mr. Bovino said this is mixed use which we feel helps the neighborhood and provides housing opportunities for a different type of clientele. Main access is Eden Avenue. And, we're working on providing access to the north which is Columbus Avenue.

(Those speaking in favor of the application)

No response.

(Those speaking against the application)

No response.

The Chair closed this public hearing item.

C. Saucier Builders, Inc., special permit application for more than 3 garage spaces, 295 DeFashion Street, in an R-80 zone (SPU #559).

Mark Saucier, Saucier Builders, 81 Ashwell Drive, Plantsville, CT and Christopher Rochefort, 295 Defasion Street, Plantsville.

Mr. Saucier explained the owner wants to do a three car garage. The three car garage will be built into the hillside on the left side of the driveway. Fifty percent of the main level of the drive will be built into the hillside and then we did put a roof on that matches the existing house. The existing house is very ornate. A nice house. The garage will match the existing house.

Mr. Rochefort's parents own the property and they provided a letter saying what they intend to do with the use. Chris and his wife live with his parents at this residence. The parents own it. Their permanent residence is in Florida and they're back and forth.

They have multiple vehicles between the four of them and some boats, jet skis, et cetera. They're looking for additional storage.

Mr. Chaplinsky asked about the area above the garage. Mr. Saucier confirmed there is no living space. The dormers were added just for the aesthetics. We want to match the garage roof with the existing house. Same pitch, dormers and overhang.

We have no objections to making the area smaller above. The building department hasn't made any suggestions to that affect. The roofline is to keep the aesthetics. And, just storage. Living space is not allowed there and that is not their intention.

(Those speaking in favor of this application)

No response.

(Those speaking against the application)

No response.

The Chair closed the public hearing and the public hearing section of the meeting for tonight.

6. Business Meeting

A. Donald DeSorbo, special permit application for parent/grandparent apartment, 54 DeSorbo Drive, in an R-20/25 zone. SPU #557

Ready for action with the standard stipulations which are on the plan.

Mr. Chaplinsky made a motion to approve with the stipulations noted on the plan. Ms. Clock seconded. Motion passed 7 to 0 on a roll call vote.

B. Westcorp, LLC, special permit application for a 64 unit multifamily development in 3 separate buildings, Eden Avenue, in a CB zone (Map 100, Parcel 017) SPU #548.1)

Ready for action. Just an acknowledgement that the developer will work with town staff on development of municipal parking.

This site has the appropriate number of parking spaces.

Mr. Chaplinsky made a motion to approve. Ms. Locks seconded.

Mr. Chaplinsky thought it was great the applicant worked with staff to bring this downtown. The density is a little less. But we appreciate you doing that and doing what's best for the downtown. I like the idea of mixed use, some age and some non-age restricted units. It's really good for the downtown.

Mr. Sinclair echoed those comments. What the applicant has done by working with the town and coming in with a superior product we can all be proud of.

The Chair agreed. I think we need space for seniors but I love the idea of a mixed use area. If you want to see the downtown area thrive, you've got to populate it with people. And, to do so in a walking distance is always a plus. I think it's a nice plan. He'll work with staff to get some municipal parking. I would love to see crosswalks down to Columbus Avenue or a cross thru to Columbus Avenue to access the downtown area. Good job. Nice plan.

Motion passed 7 to 0 on a roll call vote.

C. Saucier Builders, Inc., special permit application for more than 3 garage spaces, 295 DeFashion Street, in an R-80 zone (SPU #559).

This is ready for action. The building department will work with them to make sure the addition does not exceed 1.5 stories.

Mr. Chaplinsky made a motion to approve. Mr. Sinclair seconded.

Mr. Chaplinsky commented we work to modify our regulations for these types of applications to allow more flexibility for residents to use their property more than they've been able to in the past. This is a plan that will complement the existing property and bring more value to the homeowner. I'm very much in support of this.

Motion passed 7 to 0 on a roll call vote.

D. Nadeem Khalid, site plan application for 3,000 sf building, 398 Main Street, in a B zone (SPR #1704)

Mr. Phillips said he has not heard from the gentleman. We have reached out several times but heard nothing.

The Town Attorney recommended denial without prejudice.

Mr. Sinclair made a motion to deny the application without prejudice. Mr. Cabata seconded.

Motion passed 7 to 0 on a roll call vote.

E. Standard Recycling Corp. site plan application to locate 2 clothing recycling bins, 235 Queen Street, in a B zone, (SPR #1707), tabled from November 17th

Mr. Phillips said he sent a notice to the applicant that this didn't meet the regulations because of statements made on the record of the last meeting. I haven't heard from him.

The Town Attorney recommended a motion to deny.

Mr. Chaplinsky made a motion to deny the application. Ms. Locks seconded.

Motion passed 7 to 0 on a roll call vote.

F. FRAL, LC, subdivision application for 17 lots, 996 West Center Street, Assessor Map 96, Parcels 72 and 73, in a R-20/25 zone (S#1310) tabled from November 17th

Steve Giudice, Harry Cole & Son, represented the application. I presented this application at the last meeting. It is a 12-acre parcel on West Center Street in an R-20/25 zone. We're proposing 17 building lots.

We discussed a few points at the last meeting. The main thing was open space. We have proposed additional open space over here (indicating) of approximately .33 acres additional to the .6 acres of open space at this location (indicating).

We have a fee simple access strip for access from the cul de sacs through our proposed open space into the town open space which surrounds our parcel. (Indicating)

Those are the major changes we made to the plan. We also incorporated a landscape buffer along all of the existing homes on West Center Street Extension.

We met with staff and addressed these issues and we made some minor revisions based on their comments.

These homes are half acre lots. Relatively flat topography. No wetlands located on site. They'll be serviced by public water. Soils are good for the disposal systems.

The northeastern border with the berm was discussed.

Discussion about the town owned open space.

Mr. Phillips noted stipulations:

1. Compliance with any state NDDB (Natural Diversity Data Base) action.
2. Provide standard driveway apron detail to be bituminous pavement.
3. Access easement over Lot 12 to be modified to include future sewer easement.

Mr. Giudice said the easement was proposed over Lot 12.
(Indicated)

Mr. Chaplinsky made a motion to approve with the three stipulations. Mr. Sinclair seconded.

Mr. Sinclair commented the applicant really went above the call of duty with open space. He noted the drainage would be in the open space.

But to the staff: Is that the real intent of the regulations? The Chair responded it is on the list for the continuous improvement subcommittee after the first of the year. And, Jim, thanks for volunteering. It's forward thinking of you. We are looking to look at our regs to try to be more open space friendly.

Motion passed 7 to 0 on a roll call vote.

G. Queen Street LLC, site plan modification for proposed diesel pump (one) and pavement and drainage improvements, 464 Queen Street, in a B zone (SPR #1564.2)

Sev Bovino, Planner with Kratzert, Jones represented the application.

The property is located on the west side of Queen Street next to Weischsel Drive. (Indicated)

This is an approved site plan and what was proposed in the past was a diesel pump to be placed on the canopies here (indicating). The decision was made to place it on the westerly side of the property to allow trucks better access to the pump as they're worried about the height of the canopies. That's the only change, the diesel pump from here (indicating) to this location (indicating).

The tank location was approved and they received a building permit and are currently working on it.

Mr. Chaplinsky noted John Weichsel Drive is to the north. Is there an existing easement that allows folks to go to John Weichsel Drive from this parcel? Is there a curb cut there? Mr. Bovino pointed out the curb cut location. Mr. Chaplinsky felt it was important for this parcel for people to come in/out of Weichsel Drive.

Mr. Bovino said he was asked by staff to allow the trucks to enter here (indicating). Explained.

To the north is the HHC access point and Mr. Bovino said he has no access to that. Their driveway will be right here (indicating). I don't know if they'll relocate it or leave it.

Mr. Chaplinsky asked if this property owner would be willing to provide an easement in the event that a future access way is desirable. A goal is to try to interconnect parcels on Queen Street. Discussion.

Mr. Bovino said it makes sense. He didn't ask the client as it never came up. It is a different kind of use to go through a gas station. I mean, if you want an easement, we'll provide an easement. Discussion.

Mr. Sciota said it would be the town would get the easement and its assigns. When the next site plan comes in it gets assigned.

Interconnections were discussed.

Mr. Bovino said it could be stipulated, a 24' wide easement. Just along the northerly boundary. It would not hurt us and it would work best for the future traffic. It's the northwest corner of our property.

Mr. Phillips added two other stipulations:

1. Compliance with engineering comment #9 on memo dated 11/20/15 related to obtaining the requirement of street encroachment permit for sidewalk installation along the front.

2. Compliance with engineering comment #5 to change the existing drywell to a catch basin. It's in an aquifer protection area.

Mr. Bovino said the plans have been changed to show the catch basin. Explained.

Mr. Chaplinsky made a motion to approve with the Town Planner's stipulations and also the stipulation that there is a cross easement provided to the town for the northwesterly portion of the property with the exact location to be agreed upon with staff. And, also that there is access on to John Weichsel Drive as far as a curb cut for the future.

Mr. Bovino clarified with the easement; our client will have a right to go to their driveway. Mr. Sciota clarified you are giving an easement to the town or its assigns. If they choose to do a modification to put that in, you're right. It goes back and forth.

Mr. Cabata noted going forward, I know the idea is to have everything connect but something to think about would be do we really want traffic going through gas stations when you have people parked and going through the lanes. Something to think about in general.

Discussion.

Ms. Clock seconded. Motion passed 7 to 0 on a roll call vote.

H. Appointment of representative to CRCOG, tabled from November 17th

The Chair announced the representative would be Ted Cabata. Ted's Dad served in that role for many years and did a fantastic job. I'm sure he'll take the role with gusto and pride.

I. 8-24 Referral or road abandonment stub north of Cherry Street Map 028, Parcel 069, MR #502).

Mr. Sciota explained this came from the town departments. This is a stub of a town road which has been used as someone's driveway for the last many years. It has not need to the town. As usual, we sent the request to the town agencies first and nobody stated it was good for the town and in fact it was a detriment more than anything else.

The engineering department contacted the affected property owners and there is no objection from them.

It's been to the council and they're sending it to you for a recommendation on the abandonment of the road.

The property owner will assume all maintenance, i.e.: plowing, shoveling.

Mr. Sciota stated this strip of land will be given one half to each of the property owners. If someone doesn't have an access way that is off this road, they'll have an easement over it.

Mr. Chaplinsky made a motion to send back a favorable 8-24. Ms. Locks seconded. Motion passed 7 to 0 on a roll call vote.

7. PLAN OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Ms. Clock reported the second public input meeting was held. Thank you for attending. We got some pretty good feedback. We're pretty much in the final stages. The next meeting is December 17th and we're going to review comments and wrap the process up.

Then it goes to this board for presentation at the January 19th meeting. From there it goes to town council.

We've been working on this for a year and a half and we've made wonderful progress. The plan is still on line for your access. We'll still take comments but we are final reviewing everything on December 17th.

Mr. Phillips added we've taken your second meeting of the month and dedicated it to this. If you could really familiarize yourself with the plan on your own time so we can go through it quicker when we get to the meeting.

The Chair agreed. Read through it, write down questions, highlight it and come in here ready to rock on the 19th. We don't want to come in ill prepared for the presentation.

Read the plan. It's excellent. Know it. Learn it. Let's talk about it intelligently and respectfully on the 19th.

Eventually the PZC will have a public hearing and then referral to the council which is a 65-day process. We don't want to get too close to the date the plan expires.

Hard copies will be supplied if you want them. Let staff know.

8. ITEMS TO BE SCHEDULED FOR PUBLIC HEARING

None.

9. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

None.

10. RECEIPT OF NEW APPLICATIONS

O'Reilly Automotive Stores on 944 Queen Street.

A zone change and special permit for multiple buildings on one site for Cranberry Cove, LLC. It's at the corner of West Center Street (102). It's a mixture of retail. It's all in a flood zone. It's right on the trail. It's for seven buildings, five retail and two restaurants. It's industrial right now and they want to change it to business.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Mr. Chaplinsky noted there is no second meeting in December. Because of the long lapse in time, he'd ask the board's approval to go ahead --- I agree with the comment about subdivisions and open space. I'd like to work with Rob between now and then and throw a couple of ideas out at the January meeting for how we could incorporate more open space into subdivisions. I think it is time to take a hard look at that and require more open space on the subdivisions.

Discussion.

Ms. Clock offered her help, as well.

The Chair said this is our last meeting. I know I had asked Mr. Cabata and Mr. Clements to reach out to Mark. Mr. Sciota advised he is available. The Chair said both should sit down with Mark before they come to meetings. It's informative and quick.

Mr. Sinclair needs to have his Southington.org email back up and running.

If anyone thinks they are not going to be able to make a meeting, let me know. Sometimes we run into quorum issues. Let either me or staff know if you are not going to make a meeting. Just send an email and let us know.

I want to wish everyone a Happy New Year! And, a happy holiday and Merry Christmas!

Lastly, we're going to get to work come January. We have subcommittee stuff coming up. Paul is going to head up our continuous improvement subcommittee now that Steve is gone. We're going to do things differently. I may be serving on some of them. Different people doing different things. We have a lot to work to do.

Enjoy your time off. Enjoy the holidays.

Mr. Sciota reminded everyone if something does come up a special meeting can be called. Although, we don't anticipate that.

On behalf of the staff, we wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

11. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Chaplinsky made a motion to adjourn which Ms. Clock seconded. Motion passed unanimously on a voice vote.

(Whereupon, the meeting was adjourned at 8:10 o'clock, p.m.)