

PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
TOWN OF SOUTHTON

MARCH 3, 2020

MINUTES

The Planning & Zoning Commission of the Town of Southington held a regular meeting on Tuesday, March 3, 2020 at the Municipal Center Assembly Room, 196 North Main Street, Southington, CT. Robert Hammersley, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:00, p.m.

The following Commissioners were present:

Robert Salka, Jeff Gworek, Susan Locks, James Macchio, Christina Volpe & Peter Santago

Alternates: Theresa Albanese & Caleb Cowles

Staff: Robert Phillips, Director of Planning & Community Development
James Grappone, Ass't Town Engineer

Absent: Joe Coviello & Stuart Savelkoul, Alternates

A quorum was determined.

The Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag was recited by everyone in attendance being led by Vice Chairman Robert Salka.

A Moment of Silence was observed by everyone in attendance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Regular meeting of February 18, 2020

Mr. Salka made a motion to approve which was seconded by Mr. Santago. Motion passed unanimously on a voice vote.

7. PUBLIC COMMENT FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

The Chair advised that this a place in the agenda where the public can address the commission.

(No speakers tonight.)

The Chair further advised this item would be on the agenda at a future date and try to focus in on a topic, i.e.: Greenway Commons, to get the public to come and give us their thoughts as to what they'd like to see there.

8. BUSINESS MEETING

A. Green Earth Roofing Solutions, LLC, site plan application to construct a 23'9" x 107'3" solar canopy/carport and 120 x 12 shed, property located at 959 Meriden Waterbury Turnpike (Close Harbour Seafood), owned by 42 Simms Road Associates, located in a B zone, parcel size 1.25 acres (SPR #1702.2)

Richard Close, 835 Moss Lane, Cheshire, owner presented. Todd from Greeneearth lives on the other side of Springfield and there's an accident and he should be here momentarily. I can answer any questions that you might have.

What we are doing is as you look at the building, to the right, we are putting a solar canopy with solar panels on the canopy and the roof. I work for Harte Auto Group and we've done this at some of dealerships.

It works really well and we are excited to do it at the restaurant. We have big electric bills with the restaurant. It certainly subsidizes and helps with the cost. It will cover the outside seating. Explained.

I think it will help our business and be a great asset.

The Chair asked if the energy from this would be used to offset the energy costs for the restaurant. Mr. Close confirmed.

Mr. Salka asked what percentage of the energy would the solar panels be replacing? Mr. Close said they are eligible to put double the size currently proposed, but that would mean another solar panel on the right hand side and we didn't want to abuse the property as it would be like walking in a big parking garage. We compromised with an 85,000-kw system. I know right now the electric bill is about \$2,300/month. Todd can give you more information on the numbers.

Ms. Albanese asked if the canopy would be over the floodplain? Mr. Close said no. A couple of staff questions my architect received last night and I got them this morning. I went to the engineering office this morning and I talked to planning. The architect is working on the floodplain. I did print the 100-foot floodplain off of the GIS site. I have a picture and for planning I will have it overlaid on our plan. (Passed around the picture showing the 100-foot floodplain.)

Mr. Cowles asked if the carport will obstruct any established parking spaces. Mr. Close said that was a comment from planning and there is one where it is over the line and we have to adjust the line. We have 30' between the concrete columns and should come up with a 9' spot. We'll be fine.

Mr. Cowles asked the use of the shed on the property. Mr. Close explained it would be used for storage of extra chairs and is unrelated to the solar.

Screening of the shed was asked about. Mr. Close said he didn't have any plans. It looks pretty good. It is one of those prebuilt units at Home Depot. It'll be in the back of the lot where employee parking is. Good looking.

Ms. Volpe asked about the sidewalk waiver. Mr. Phillips explained it was already granted with a previous application.

The Chair asked the staff for comment on the status of this application. Is it ready for action?

Mr. Grappone said it is ready for action but you could stipulate:

- The floodplain wasn't shown on the original map and we would like that on the revised map.
- The steel base and steel tube columns were noted and we would like to stipulate that that would be designed by a structural engineer.

Mr. Phillips said after speaking with the owner, the main concern is that there would be a loss of parking spaces. They're a premium there. They indicated there wouldn't be a loss and with the revised plan there is a column in Space #41. They should have restriping done to show they're not going to lose a parking space. Our stipulation would be to maintain the existing parking on site.

Mr. Salka made a motion to approve this application with the stipulations by staff. Mr. Macchio seconded. Motion passed 7 to 0 on a roll call vote.

B. Torrey S. Carne Co., site plan modification application to construct a 3,206-sf addition on property located at 480 Summer Street, owned by 492 Summer LLC, et al, located in an I-2 zone, parcel size .75 acres (SPR #1771.1)

Sev Bovino, Planner with Kratzert, Jones & Associates presented on behalf of the applicant. He oriented the commission with the map on the screen showing the addition in red.

The proposed addition is 3,260 sf. Served by public water and sewer. I-2 zone.

The addition is required/needed because of business expanding and they need room for the expansion of the business.

The total building size with this addition will be 16,848 sf.

The allowed coverage on the property per the regulations is 50%. This will make it 49.4% which is pretty much the end of any more building at this site.

The height of the addition is the same as the existing building. Block building. It's stepped back a little bit so when you look from the street the look will be the same.

The white fence there now will remain and everything will be the same except that we will be extending the driveway and grading in the back.

There is a proposal for a privacy fence here (indicating). There is an existing chain link fence and the ZBA stipulated that the privacy fence would be added at that location and we are doing that. It is not doing much because the property here is quite a bit higher than our property (indicating) so that no matter what you do, if you are on the second floor of that building you will be able to see over it. But we are proposing that.

The lights will be recessed, full cutoff fixtures.

No additional curb cut is proposed.

All appropriate notes and details are on the plans.

We received staff comments and we addressed them. Any questions?

Mr. Cowles asked with the added square footage are we adding more staff members? Mr. Bovino said no new employees. They just need more space for operations. No impact to parking as we have the appropriate parking based on the regulations.

Ms. Albanese asked about the handling of the additional impervious cover. Mr. Bovino noted there is underground storage at the back of the building proposed. We provided ZIRO calculations to the town engineer. This area is mostly stone. (Indicating) A drainage system runs under the building to the street. We don't expect any problem. It is a 3:1 slope, not that steep.

Clarification of the response dates noted.

The Chair asked if this was ready for action or if there were any outstanding items.

Mr. Grappone said he didn't see any responses to engineering comments. Mr. Bovino said he didn't receive any comments. Mr. Grappone noted an email sent earlier this week, March 2nd. There are about a dozen or so comments. (Enumerated)

Mr. Phillips said his comments were satisfied.

Ms. Volpe said she would like to table it to see a little bit more preparedness next time and see all the things and make sure everything is addressed and dealt with properly.

Mr. Macchio, noting he wanted engineering comments on the memo dated March 2nd, 2020 responded to, made a motion to table. Ms. Volpe seconded. Motion passed unanimously on a voice vote.

C. Schimenti Construction, site plan application for dumpster, restroom trailer, office trailer, temporary fencing and storage container for home yard set up for construction remodels, property located at 600 Executive Boulevard South, owned by Target Corporation, parcel size 14.82 acres (SPR #1790.1)

Mr. Phillips noted the applicant was not present this evening. However, this is something they were approved for maybe two years ago. Just essentially it is a situation where they are going to be storing temporary storage trailers while they do an interior complete remodel. They've indicated the project will start in April and conclude in mid-June. I've confirmed with them if you approve, it will have the stipulation that they be completed and removed by July 1st, 2020. They indicated that would be fine.

Discussion.

Mr. Salka made a motion to approve this application with staff comments and the additional stipulation that all of the equipment and debris be removed by July 1st, 2020. Ms. Locks seconded.

Discussion of previous applications. This is unrelated to them and this is a new thing.

Discussion of the location of the restrooms. Ms. Albanese questioned the proposed location. Ms. Volpe was concerned about the increased congestion with this location for restrooms especially for children involved. Ms. Albanese noted a sight visibility issue, too. These are customer bathrooms. N additional port-o-lets on site. The health department on February 27th approved with no issues with the temporary set up.

Discussion.

Discussion of having the restrooms moved to the left side instead of the right side as proposed. Traffic was discussed. Fire access was noted and discussed.

Mr. Phillips cautioned about telling them where they're going to be doing their operations. They should be the experts at what they need to do. Having said that, if there are reservations for any reason at all and there is no approval coming, then I would recommend a table. I wouldn't want to have a stipulation telling them how to set up.

Ms. Albanese again stated it is a sight line issue. It is a very busy area.

Motion passed 7 to 0 on a roll call vote.

D. 8-24 referral for the purchase of 136 School Street for open space for the purchase price of \$160,000 (MR #529)

Ms. Volpe made a motion to approve. Mr. Macchio seconded.

Mr. Phillips pointed out a map showing the locations for Items D & E. Mr. Salka explained he is part of the Open Space and Land Acquisition Committee appointed by the town council. On both of these applications we have an \$82,600 grant from the state which will go towards the purchase of these two pieces of property.

The properties together are about 5.5 acres. Where they're located are strategic to leaving Marion the historical district that it is. A lot of wildlife in the area with a nice brook going through it.

It is an ideal situation. I know a lot of us ran on supporting heavily the purchase of open space. This is one small step, but an important first step, towards that. I am in 100% support of it as is the Open Space and Land Acquisition Committee, obviously.

Mr. Phillips again stated there is state funding for this. It helps with the local contribution.

In response to a question by Ms. Albanese the 8-24 process and funding was discussed. Mr. Salka pointed out there is a \$2 million pot as a result of a referendum last year. And, this went before the committee and they negotiated with the town attorney. The town council has approved it. And, then it is referred to the PZC. If we approve it, it is pretty much a done deal.

Mr. Phillips said the referral process is when there is an improvement in property or acquisition or roadway, et cetera, the planning function of the PZC, they have to refer it to you for your review. If you don't respond in 30 or 35 days, they consider it an approval. But if you approve it, it is a simple

majority vote on the council. If you don't pass a favorable recommendation, it becomes a supermajority vote at the town council. (Section 8-24 of the Connecticut General Statutes)

Ms. Volpe commended Mr. Salka on this. This is some of the most historic property in our town. It was the former area of the birth of industrialism in Southington when they had the Bolt Manufacturing business. This is also some of the first farming area parcels in our town. So, you are doing something for Southington's heritage by preserving this. I am very proud to vote yes on this.

Mr. Santiago said this is a great thing.

Mr. Salka spoke about the open space in Southington. The land trust has 300-something acres and what we have coming before us, there is going to be some more open space during this next year.
Discussion.

Ms. Albanese commended the planning department, Mr. Lavallee who put in for the grant. Kudos to him. He is aware of the grants when they come out and they don't come out often. If we can get on top of this every year, that's great.

The Chair said the open space plan which is a supplement to the POCD of 2015, talks about presenting important linkages of open space. To quote: The key to successfully balancing economic growth and preservation is to make a responsible, strategic land use decisions. These decisions will endure the success of the community and preserve the many intangibles that we have and continue to make Southington a desirable place to settle. He echoed every comment today. Preservation of open space is probably the most important responsibility that we have and one I take very seriously. I look forward to continuing that growth. This town council has taken a positive step to add another 5.5 acres to over 550 acres the town currently has. These two parcels provide a corridor for wildlife throughout this area allowing wildlife to travel from one point to another.

Motion passed 7 to 0 on a roll call vote.

E. 8-24 referral for the purchase of 1205 Marion Avenue, for open space for the purchase price of \$105,000 (MR #530)

Mr. Salka made a motion to approve Item E. Basically, the same comments as above. Mr. Macchio seconded. Motion passed 7 to 0 on a roll call vote.

F. Request for release of \$1,000 E & S bond, Valvoline, 86 Queen Street (SPR #1781)

Ready for action. Mr. Salka made a motion to approve Item F. Mr. Santiago seconded. Motion passed unanimously on a voice vote.

8. ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

Nothing this evening.

9. ITEMS TO SCHEDULE FOR PUBLIC HEARING

- None at this time

Just a reminder we have the Lincoln College item for public hearing at the next meeting.

11. RECEIPT OF NEW APPLICATIONS

- Olive Branch Enterprises, LLC, site plan modification to add outdoor patio, property located at 1217 South Main Street (Sliders), owned by Olivia Marina, LLC, in a B zone, parcel size .76 acres (SPR #1796)

12. ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Salka. Second by Mr. Santago. Motion passed unanimously on a voice vote.

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