

**MINUTES OF BUSINESS MEETING
HELD BY THE PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
SEPTEMBER 16, 2013**

ROLL CALL:

Members Present: Eric Prause, Chair
Andy Kidd, Vice Chair
Horace Brown, Secretary
Michael Stebe

Alternates: Susan Shanbaum
Julian Stoppelman (sitting)

Absent: Chirag Thaker
Anthony Petrone

Also Present: Mark Pellegrini, Director of Planning
Renata Bertotti, Senior Planner
Matthew Bordeaux, Environmental Planner
and Wetlands Agent
Ginger MacHattie, Recording Secretary

Time Convened: 8:25 P.M.

NEW BUSINESS:

HIGHLAND OAKS CORP. – for a 2 lot re-subdivision of an approved 6 lot subdivision on Abigail Circle, Residence AA zone – Re-subdivision (2013-044); Erosion and Sedimentation Control Plan (2013-047)

Re-subdivision (2013-044)

MOTION: Mr. Brown moved to approve the re-subdivision of an approved six-lot subdivision on Abigail Circle into two lots on Garth Road with modifications as specified in the staff memorandum from Raymond Myette, Design Engineer, dated September 16, 2013 to Renata Bertotti, Senior Planner. Mr. Stebe seconded the motion and all members voted in favor. The reason for the approval was the proposal meets the zoning regulations and is in keeping with the character of the neighborhood.

Erosion and Sedimentation Control Plan (2013-047)

MOTION: Mr. Brown moved to certify the erosion and sedimentation control plan for a two-lot subdivision on Garth Road with modifications as specified in the staff memorandum from Derrick Gregor, Assistant Town Engineer, dated September 16, 2013 to Renata Bertotti. Mr. Stebe seconded the motion and all members voted in favor.

JOSEPH FELICE – to construct a 48’ x 24’ garage within 100 feet of a wetlands at 129 South Main Street, Residence A zone – Inland Wetlands Permit – Determination of Significance (2013-032); Inland Wetlands Permit (2013-032)

Mr. Joseph Felice, 129 South Main Street, said he is proposing a two story garage with a storage area for antique vehicles and equipment. It has been designed by an architect to meet the zoning requirements. The wetlands are in blue and the garage is in green, he said.

In response to a question from Mr. Prause, Mr. Felice said a temporary garage is there now.

Mr. Bordeaux, referring to the plans, said the green line is the 100’ buffer. Most of the work will be done within the 100’ buffer.

In response to a question from Mr. Prause, Mr. Felice pointed out the existing driveway. He said he will be removing the temporary structure and building the garage.

In response to a question from Mr. Prause, Mr. Bordeaux explained that there was originally a question as to whether there are wetlands on the property. Town mapping shows wetlands on the site. A soil scientist was hired and determined there are no wetland soils on the property. The applicant chose to use the Town’s mapping. The garage is located over 125’ from the wetland soils.

In response to a question from Mr. Brown, Mr. Felice said the driveway is located in a right-of-way.

In response to a question from Mr. Prause, Mr. Felice said he has lived at this location since 1989 and has not experienced flooding; not even soggy ground.

Inland Wetlands Permit – Determination of Significance (2013-032)

MOTION: Mr. Stoppelman moved to find the proposed activity would not cause a significant impact to the wetlands and watercourses and will not require a public hearing. Mr. Brown seconded the motion and all members voted in favor.

Inland Wetlands Permit (2013-032)

MOTION: Mr. Stebe moved to approve the inland wetlands permit for five years with work within the upland review area to be completed one year from the beginning of construction. Mr. Brown seconded the motion and all members voted in favor.

MOTION: Mr. Stebe moved to amend the agenda to switch the order of Item #4, Taylor Tolland Group, and Item #3, VH, LLC. Mr. Kidd seconded the motion and all members voted in favor.

TAYLOR TOLLAND GROUP – Pre-application review to discuss a proposed zone change to convert a hotel to apartments at 20 Taylor Street.

Mr. Kent Mawhinney spoke on behalf of Taylor Tolland Group. The building has been operating as a motel for 8.5 years. He said its location is not the best for a hotel. When it was constructed, the newer hotels in the area were not in existence. The business climate in Connecticut has slowed. The owner changed from a Super 8 motel to a Beaumont Inn and Suites. The interior is large and expansive with a lobby, gas fireplace, gym, game room, conference space and gift shop. Still, the owner is not doing well and is the largest delinquent taxpayer in town.

Mr. Mawhinney said the owner is proposing changing over to apartments as a long-term solution. This property abuts the wetlands, which provide a buffer to the Big Y located in the area. The units have nice amenities and there is plenty of parking. There will be on site management and maintenance. The units would be studio or one bedroom units and would be something the Town could be proud of, he said.

In response to a question from Mr. Prause, Mr. Mawhinney said the building would have an identical footprint. Apartments would lay out nicely with very little change.

Mr. Kidd said this building is in the middle of a General Business zone and he is concerned about changing the zoning in only that area; that is spot zoning. He likes consistency and said there could be issues with residential zoning in the middle of a general business zone.

Mr. Mawhinney said the property to the east is all wetland and is not subject to any form of development. To the southwest is Big Y, to the west is a gas station and to the north is a car dealership.

In response to a question from Mr. Prause, Mr. Mawhinney said a recreation area would be placed on the east side of the building. There is a grass circle there now and it would be landscaped with brick work, trees and a barbecue area.

In response to some questions from Mr. Prause, Mr. Mawhinney said parking exceeds the zoning requirements. The business meeting rooms would be converted into apartment units. There would likely be between 49 and 54 units with a management office on site. He said security would consist of cameras and key fobs.

In response to a question from Mr. Brown, Mr. Mawhinney said office suites were considered; however, there is quite a bit of office space available in the area now. In addition leases for offices tend to go for five to ten years.

In response to a question from Mr. Prause, Mr. Pellegrini said the Plan of Conservation and Development labels this area as a Commercial Corridor. Residential units could be placed on the upper floors, but the ground floor would have to be commercial.

Ms. Bertotti said the existing use is a hotel, which is similar to a residential use. Guests require privacy and quiet. The proposal is similar to the current use.

Mr. Brown said, according to the assessor's map, the land to the south is occupied by a single family house and a large area of wetlands. The land to the southeast is all wetlands and the land to the east is wetlands and vacant land. Other than the self-storage units Taylor Street to the east is residentially zoned and occupied, he said.

In response to questions from Ms. Shanbaum, Mr. Mawhinney said the first floor has about 18,000 square feet, 3,500 of which is meeting space. The owner is concerned about the lack of demand for office space. He said professionals do not want families in their parking lot or back yard.

In response to a question from Mr. Prause, Mr. Mawhinney said the minimum size of a unit will be 450 sq. ft. The contractor the owner spoke with has done this before. The kitchens are all uniform and the plumbing sets up perfectly.

Mr. Prause said this is a creative idea. The general business zone is what concerns him.

Mr. Kidd commented that the wetlands on the south side are helpful. He said he did not like the notion of having something like this in the middle of a general business zone. He would like to be consistent and did not want to set a precedent.

The Planning and Zoning Commission took a brief recess at 9:27 p.m. and returned at 9:38 p.m.

VH, LLC – for a zone change from Rural Residence to Planned Residence Development and a preliminary plan of development for one single family home and 16 multi-family units at 594 Tolland Turnpike – PRD Zone Change and Preliminary Plan of Development (2013-040)

PRD Zone Change and Preliminary Plan of Development (2013-040)

MOTION: Mr. Stebe moved to approve the zone district change from Rural Residence zone to Planned Residential Development zone and the Preliminary Plan of Development for 16 multi-family units and an existing single family home with modifications as specified in staff memoranda from Raymond Myette dated August 27, 2013 to Renata Bertotti and from Nick Francione, Civil Engineer, dated August 27, 2013 to Renata Bertotti. Mr. Stoppelman seconded the motion and all members voted in favor. The reason for the approval was the proposed amendment is in keeping with Manchester 2020, the Town's Plan of Conservation and Development, which designates this area as Traditional Suburban on Character Map. This zone changes becomes effective on October 2, 2013.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS:

Lot Line Revision Report

Ms. Bertotti reported two lot line revisions that were administratively approved. They were Highland Park Market and St. John Street.

2020 Implementation Workshop

Mr. Pellegrini said the survey has closed and Kyle Shiel is compiling the results. A workshop will be scheduled to discuss this matter.

Mr. Stoppelman requested that Town staff investigate and report on medical marijuana from a zoning perspective.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

June 3, 2013 – Public Hearing/Business Meeting

MOTION: Mr. Brown moved to approve the minutes as written. Mr. Kidd seconded the motion and all members voted in favor except for Mr. Stoppelman, who abstained. The motion passed four to zero.

RECEIPT OF NEW APPLICATIONS:

ADELBROOK INC. – Special Exception Modification (2013-059) – for the construction of an outdoor playground at an existing school at 42 Prospect Street, Residence C zone.

CHR CAPITAL INC. – Special Exception (2013-062) – for the construction of a new 3 story building with parking in excess of 60 spaces at 469 Center Street, Business II and Design Overlay zones.

TOWN OF MANCHESTER PUBLIC WORKS DEPT. – Inland Wetlands Permit – Determination of Significance (2013-064); Inland Wetlands Permit (2013-064); Flood Plain Permit (2013-065) – for the removal of approximately 0.75 cubic yards of concrete from the existing weir linking the west and east Globe Hollow Reservoir at 358 South Main Street, Rural Residence zone.

The Chairman closed the business meeting at 10:05 p.m.

I certify these minutes were adopted on the following date:

Date

Eric Prause, Chairman

NOTICE: A DIGITAL RECORDING OF THIS PUBLIC HEARING CAN BE HEARD IN THE PLANNING DEPARTMENT.