

**MINUTES OF PUBLIC HEARING  
HELD BY THE PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION  
FEBRUARY 20, 2013**

**ROLL CALL:**

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

Alternates: Susan Shanbaum (sitting)  
John Chaput (sitting)

Absent: Horace Brown  
Anthony Petrone

Also Present: Mark Pellegrini, Director of Planning  
Renata Bertotti, Senior Planner

The Chairman opened the Public Hearing at 7:00 p.m. The Acting Secretary read the legal notice for the application when the call was made.

TOWN OF MANCHESTER PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION – for revisions to Article II Section 16 to move some uses that currently require special exception approval to permitted uses and revise the requirements for permitted and special exception uses – Zoning Regulation Amendment (2012-124)

Ms. Bertotti spoke on behalf of the applicant and explained that this is a proposed amendment to the Zoning Regulations in Industrial zones. She said the proposal is the result of a study done by the Economic Development Commission (EDC). After reviewing Manchester's real estate market, the EDC recommended streamlining the permitting process in the Industrial zone. The EDC identified certain uses it deemed should be permitted as-of-right as opposed to special exception uses. She said yard requirements were reviewed as well and it was recommended that outdoor storage be permitted as an accessory use in the Industrial zone.

Ms. Bertotti said when a use is a permitted use, an application is submitted to the Building Department, which has thirty days to render a decision. Within those thirty days the Zoning Enforcement Officer reviews that application for compliance with the zoning regulations. If the proposal meets the zoning regulations, it gets administratively approved and there is no additional cost or risk. When a use is subject to a special exception approval, then a public hearing is required in front of the Planning and Zoning Commission. She said it takes some time to get on the agenda to even be considered. In addition, there is an application fee and some inherent risk for the applicant because the special exception criteria include some intangible things, such as neighborhood compatibility.

Ms. Bertotti displayed a list of uses currently allowed under special exception that are proposed for permitted use, including restaurants, certain types of sports facilities, hotels and motels with

sixteen rooms or more, and self-storage facilities. She reminded Commission members that any development on four acres or more, requires sixty or more parking spaces, or has drive through service still requires a special exception. The intention is that larger impact development still be considered under special exception rules.

Ms. Bertotti referred to page 8 of Commissioner's text which has a set of criteria that is currently only applicable to special exception uses. Some of those requirements deal with distance from residential zones. She said in the past these requirements trigger requests for variances. The proposal is to delete the distance requirements that would trigger a variance request. Some requirements, such as those that deal with landscaping, buffering, and parking lot surface construction, will be applicable to all uses, which is under the General Requirements on page 4. Ms. Bertotti reviewed some proposed setback changes and the added permitted use of outdoor storage of material and products.

Ms. Bertotti said these changes meet the newly adopted Plan of Conservation and Development, Growth Management Principle 3, which says Manchester should incentivize adaptive reuse of vacant and underutilized sites and buildings.

Chairman Prause asked if any member of the public wished to speak either in favor of or in opposition to this application.

Ms. Christine Joyner, East Center Street, expressed concern about the DuBaldo property on East Center Street. This property was previously a Town garage. She wondered where the outside storage for this property would be located, as this property is on the corner of East Center and Harrison Streets. She is also concerned about the change over of the ECHN area.

Mr. Pellegrini said the Economic Development Commission endorsed the adoption of the proposed regulation amendments at its meeting on January 14, 2013. In addition, the Commission pointed out that this would expedite the tenanting and sale of industrial properties in Manchester by reducing up front expense and risk, and this would help Manchester's industrial properties become more competitive than the Hartford industrial market. This would be especially important with the retenanting of existing properties.

Ms. Bertotti explained that outdoor storage on a corner lot would be addressed by the definition of frontage, which applies to the shortest distance along a street. So, if a property is located along two streets, the shorter distance would be the frontage and the other would be the side yard. Mr. Pellegrini added that regulations have requirements for enclosing and screening any outside storage. It cannot be an open yard that can be visible from the street or other properties.

Mr. Prause recalled the workshop the Planning and Zoning Commission had on this item about a year ago and Commission members saw value in streamlining the process.

The Chairman closed the Public Hearing portion of the meeting at 7:17 p.m.

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