

**MINUTES OF BUSINESS MEETING
HELD BY THE PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
APRIL 18, 2016**

ROLL CALL:

MEMBERS PRESENT: Eric Prause, Chairman
Andy Kidd, Vice Chairman
Michael Stebe, Secretary
Timothy Bergin

Alternate Members: Teresa Ike (Sitting)
Patrick Kennedy
Julian Stoppelman

Absent: Jessica Scorso

Also Present: Mark Pellegrini, Director
Renata Bertotti, Senior Planner
Matthew Bordeaux, Environmental Planner
Karen Logan, Recording Secretary

Time Convened: 8:45 P.M.

JIN YOUNG PARK. – To amend Art. II, Sec. 22.02 and 22.04 to permit health and recreation facilities as a permitted and special exception use in the Special Design Commercial Business Zone. – Zoning Regulation Amendment (2016-022)

Mr. Kidd stated that he liked the application and felt it was reasonable. He went on to say that he didn't see a downside and liked the fact that the applicant would be using an existing building.

Mr. Prause agreed that the application met the original intent of the Special Design Commercial Business Zone.

Mr. Stebe indicated that the restriction on the square footage would provide the Commission with additional oversight for larger facilities and that the amendment is consistent with the purpose and intent of the Special Design Commercial Business Zone.

Zoning Regulation Amendment (2016-022)

MOTION: Mr. Stebe moved to approve the zoning regulations amendment at Art. II, Sec. 22.02 and 22.04 to permit health and recreation facilities as a permitted and special exception use in the Special Design Commercial Business Zone. Mr. Kidd seconded the motion and all members voted in favor.

The reason for the approval was the proposed amendment is consistent with both the purpose and

intent of the SDC zone and Manchester's Plan of Conservation and Development.

The zoning regulation amendment will become effective on May 5, 2016.

TOWN OF MANCHESTER PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION – To revise Art. I, Sec. 2 and Art. II, Sec. 18 to allow Inns as a special exception use in the Historic Zone. – Zoning Regulation Amendment (2016-026)

Zoning Regulation Amendment (2016-026)

The public hearing on this application was continued to the May 2, 2016 meeting

TOWN OF MANCHESTER DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS – Site improvements at Charter Oak Park. – Inland Wetlands Permit – Determination of Significant Impact (2016-032); Inland Wetlands – Determination of Regulatory Status (2016-032); Inland Wetlands Permit (2016-032); Erosion and Sedimentation Control Plan (2016-033); Flood Plain Permit (2016-034)

Mr. Derrick Gregor, Assistant Town Engineer for the Department of Public Works, presented the plan for site improvements at Charter Oak Park to replace aging infrastructure. He reviewed the location and particulars of the park. He noted that the entire site is aging and is in need of improvements. The proposed improvements include new pavement/parking areas; widening access/ingress to allow two-way traffic; new basketball and tennis courts; renovations of the existing restroom facility; timber rail and landscaping; new lighting; and a new playscape.

Additionally, minor drainage improvements are being proposed, as well as the installation of hydro outflow. Part of the proposed project will be the replacement of the 80-year-old water main and pipes, he said. The Department of Public Works is working with the Water Department to complete this portion of the project. The plan calls for construction to begin this summer; the park will be closed in August of this year to begin the infrastructure improvements.

The plan calls for the installation of silt sacks in catch basins and silt fence below disturbed areas during construction. Suitable locations will be established for temporary soil and material stockpiles surrounded by silt fence during construction. All sedimentation and erosion control devices will be installed in accordance with the 2002 CT Guidelines for Soil Erosion and Sediment Control prior to the start of construction and maintained or replaced by the contractor. Mr. Gregor indicated that the impact on the floodplain is minimal and impact on wetlands is approximately one tenth of an acre.

Mr. Prause thanked Mr. Gregor and asked him to summarize the direct impact on the wetlands. The direct impact on the wetlands would be the two riprap areas. Mr. Gregor responded by saying that generally the drainage patterns won't change much.

Mr. Prause asked what the range of risk would be for the new playscape; he wondered if any one type of playscape would have a greater impact on the wetlands than another. Mr. Gregor stated that he didn't anticipate any greater impact. The equipment is metal and plastic and the play surface is a pervious combined rubber.

Mr. Stebe noted that the playground area is currently paved, so the new playscape would have a

permeable surface, which would be an improvement environmentally. He asked if the playing courts would be lit. Mr. Gregor stated that the courts will be lit.

Mr. Bergin asked staff whether the Commission had approved other permanent structures as a non-regulated use in the past. Mr. Bordeaux replied that other than trails, the Commission had not approved any such structures. Mr. Bergin expressed his concern about approving the playground structure in an uplands review area in advance. Mr. Prause echoed this concern.

Mr. Kidd's opinion was that a playscape would be better than a paved parking lot and he did not have a problem with it.

Mr. Bergin clarified that he was not opposed to improving the park, but he would like the Commission to have more specifics regarding the playscapes.

Mr. Stebe indicated that he was inclined to bridge the gap and ask for an administrative review when Phase II is defined to determine whether it needs to come back before the Commission.

Mr. Prause asked Mr. Gregor to discuss the flood plain permit and what the concerns entail. Mr. Gregor stated that the only real work within the flood plain is the proposed batting cage and the chain link fence. He added that there were a couple of light posts along the path and the riprap aprons.

Mr. Prause called for staff comments.

Mr. Bordeaux took a moment to reiterate the decisions before the Commission. The agency has the authority to rule on the determination of significance, the wetlands permit and everything within the 100' review area. The question is, considering the function and value of the wetlands, whether this would qualify for non-regulated status and therefore would not require a permit.

Inland Wetlands Permit – Determination of Significant Impact (2016-032)

MOTION: Mr. Kidd moved to find the proposed activity at the above referenced location as shown on the Inland Wetlands Permit application 2016-032 will not have a significant impact on the wetlands and therefore will not require a public hearing. Mr. Stebe seconded the motion and all members voted in favor.

Inland Wetlands – Determination of Regulatory Status (2016-032)

MOTION: Mr. Kidd moved to find the proposed installation of playground equipment in the location identified on the plans be considered non-regulated in accordance with Section 3.2 as it will not disturb the natural and indigenous character of the land by the removal or deposition of material, alteration or obstruction of water flow or pollution of a wetland or watercourse. No permit shall subsequently be required for this activity. Mr. Stebe seconded the motion and all members voted in favor.

Inland Wetlands Permit (2016-032)

MOTION: Mr. Kidd moved to approve the inland wetlands permit. Mr. Stebe seconded the motion and all members voted in favor.

The reason for the approval was the proposed activity does not disturb the natural or indigenous character of the land by significant impact or major effect.

The approval is valid for 5 years. The work in the regulated area must be completed within one year of commencement.

Erosion and Sedimentation Control (2016-033)

MOTION: Mr. Kidd moved to certify the erosion and sedimentation control plan. Ms. Ike seconded the motion and all members voted in favor.

Flood Plain Permit (2016-034)

MOTION: Mr. Kidd moved to approve the flood plain permit. Ms. Ike seconded the motion and all members voted in favor.

PENTECOST INTERNATIONAL WORSHIP CENTER – Pre-Application Review to discuss the possibility of a church at 30 Bidwell Street.

Mr. Peter DeMallie, President of Design Professionals in South Windsor, presented the proposed plan for a church at 30 Bidwell Street. He noted that the church has outgrown its current building and they are seeking to build a new church. He detailed the location under consideration and described the surrounding properties. He spoke about the requirements for a house of worship, noting that the site met all of the requirements except the 200' of frontage; the site has 194' of frontage.

The size of the proposed building is approximately 11,200 sq. ft., and it will contain a 300-seat sanctuary, classrooms, offices, fellowship hall and kitchen. A two-way drive is proposed from Bidwell Street with no access to Wilfred Road. A covered portico is proposed to be built for passenger drop off. 120 parking spaces are proposed and the parking lot and entire parcel would be landscaped.

Mr. Prause asked if the abutting neighbors had been contacted. Mr. DeMallie said they had not yet spoken with the neighbors.

Mr. Prause asked if the proposal was in compliance with the eight foot (8') residential buffer. Mr. DeMallie indicated that it was in compliance.

Mr. Pellegrini said the site met the basic regulations and requirements for a place of worship: It is on an arterial street, it is in the proper zoning district, it is just shy of the required frontage, and the lot is large enough. The questions for the Commission would be more about neighborhood compatibility, traffic impact and circulation and utility capacity.

Mr. Prause asked why the church chose this particular property. Mr. DeMallie replied that there are not a lot of properties available that are large enough.

Mr. Kennedy noted that the church would be busy at a time during the week when the college and

most businesses were not operating, so he didn't feel there would be a big impact on traffic patterns.

Mr. Stoppelman asked if there were any existing structures on the property. Mr. DeMallie replied that there were no structures on the property.

Mr. Prause stated that the proposed church met the special exception criteria fairly well, but he suggested they discuss their proposal with the abutting neighbors.

Mr. Kidd noted that he thought it seemed a reasonable proposal. He echoed the suggestion that they contact the abutters.

Ms. Ike suggested that the applicant might want to make sure their signage would fall within the regulations. Ms. Bertotti confirmed that there are regulations regarding signage in residential zones.

WINSTANLEY ENTERPRISES, LLC – Pre-Application Review to discuss a zoning regulation amendment for the General Business Zone.

Mr. Chris Ferrero, a planner from Fuss & O'Neill, introduced himself and presented the proposed project for Mr. Adam Winstanley of Winstanley Enterprises. He spoke about transit oriented development at Burr Corners and Mr. Winstanley's plans for the site. One of the key components to the changes at Burr Plaza was the prospect of having a Fastrak station stop at Burr Plaza. He cited the future land use portion of Manchester's Plan of Conservation and Development, noting that the Plaza at Burr Corners falls neatly into that category, being along a major transit corridor.

Mr. Winstanley addressed the Commission and talked about some of the projects his company has completed. He noted that they focus on underperforming shopping centers in Connecticut and how to repurpose them. Because of internet shopping, many retailers are downsizing. Mr. Winstanley's proposal is to downsize Pilgrim Furniture and move them to the eastern end of the plaza. With the western end of the plaza vacated, he would demolish that end of the plaza and build an apartment building. He envisions a five- or six-story apartment building with parking underground. This would increase green space and add attractive landscaping. Currently residential use is not allowed in the General Business Zone.

Mr. Winstanley spoke about the retailers in the plaza that are interested in downsizing. He felt that a mixed use center at Burr Corners would take advantage of the transportation hub and provide flexible housing solutions for residents seeking one- and two-bedroom apartments.

Mr. Pellegrini noted that in looking at the plan of development, there are a lot of General Business zoned properties in town and a lot of them are in areas that have been identified as potential mixed use districts. The General Business Zone allows most uses except residences, he said. The questions to consider are whether density would be regulated, and how design and scale would be controlled. This is an opportunity that the Commission should consider.

Ms. Stoppelman asked Mr. Winstanley if he owned the property on the corner where the building was demolished. Mr. Winstanley replied that he did and the reason the property was torn down was because it was vacant. He continued that he was also planning to tear down another office building

because the space is not leasable.

Mr. Stoppelman stated that he would like to see form-based design rather than General Business. The two main streets are heavily trafficked.

Mr. Kidd stated that he thought this idea made sense. He agreed that adding residential areas builds the retail. He asked if Mr. Winstanley had considered offering owner-occupied residences instead of just apartments. Mr. Winstanley responded that at this moment in time, condo projects are not performing that well. He stated that he would commission consultants to study the issue. If the study recommended some condos, he would consider adding them.

Mr. Kidd noted that he agreed with Mr. Pellegrini that having someone who is interested in this project and area would go a long way towards jump starting Manchester's Plan of Conservation and Development. He asked whether some of the concepts of the form-based zone would be incorporated if the Commission were to modify the General Business Zone regulations.

Ms. Bertotti stated that she would definitely recommend using some of the concepts from the Town's Form Based code, such as the parking formula, which probably would address this type of mixed use development nicely.

Mr. Kidd suggested that perhaps an overlay would be the way to go. He stated he supported this idea.

Mr. Kennedy had mixed feelings. He said he could see the decline in brick and mortar retail and some adjustments needed to be made. His reservation was that in moving away from commercial property, the Town would lose tax revenue. He didn't think Fastrak was all that relevant. He cautioned the Commission to make sure that mixed use is actually what the Town gets and it is safeguarded. He would be willing to move forward with it.

Mr. Prause noted the evolution of zoning and how it has changed over the years. It started out that businesses were with businesses and residential was with residential. Now it is really more of a market driven integration. It is an intriguing concept and there's a lot of opportunity there, he said. He asked if there were any other comments.

Mr. Stoppelman asked if Mr. Winstanley had any feeling about the Chuck E. Cheese. Mr. Winstanley noted that it is one of the top Chuck E. Cheese locations in the United States. He mentioned that they are holding the site on the corner of Buckland and Tolland Turnpike.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

- Administrative Approvals – Jane Brenner – Lot line revision (2016-028) – 100 and 125 Hampton Drive

RECIPT OF NEW APPLICATIONS

TOLLAND TURNPIKE ASSOCIATES LIMITED PARTNERSHIP – Erosion and Sedimentation Control Plan (2016-049) – To fill and grade 362 Tolland Turnpike.

REDSTONE HOLDINGS, LLC – PRD Zone Change and Preliminary and Detailed Site Development Plans (2016-050); Erosion and Sedimentation Control Plan (2016-051) - For zone change from General Business to PRD zone and plan approval for construction of 27 units in two apartment buildings at 169 Red Stone Road.

BOB’S DISCOUNT FURNITURE – Special Exception Modification (2016-052); Erosion and Sedimentation Control Plan (2016-053) - Request a special exception modification under Art. II Sec. 9.14.02 (a) and (b) for construction of a new parking area at 428 Tolland Turnpike.

SHANTOK MOTORS MANCHESTER, LLC – Special Exception (2016-054) - Request a special exception under Art. II, Sec. 24.02.01 (h) to allow used auto sales and auto repairs at 22 Spencer Street.

The Chairman closed the business meeting at 11:00 p.m.

I certify these minutes were adopted on the following date:

June 6, 2016 _____
Date

Eric Prause, Chairman

NOTICE: A DIGITAL RECORDING OF THIS BUSINESS MEETING CAN BE HEARD IN THE PLANNING DEPARTMENT.