

**MINUTES OF PUBLIC HEARING  
HELD BY THE PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION  
SEPTEMBER 19, 2016**

**ROLL CALL:**

MEMBERS PRESENT:	Eric Prause, Chairman Michael Stebe, Secretary Jessica Scorso Timothy Bergin
Alternate Member Sitting:	Patrick Kennedy
Alternate Members:	Julian Stoppelman Teresa Ike
Absent:	Andy Kidd, Vice Chairman
Also Present:	Mark Pellegrini, Director of Planning Matthew Bordeaux, Environmental Planner Karen Logan, Recording Secretary
Time Convened:	7:01 P.M.

Mr. Prause opened the hearing by introducing the members of the Commission. He noted that the agenda items 4 through 7 would be held until the end of the public hearing and that the second and third item would be switched in order. He then asked Mr. Stebe to read the legal notice for the first agenda item.

JIN YOUNG PARK (Continued from September 7, 2016) – Request a special exception under Art. II Sec. 22.04.08 for a health and recreation use in an SDC zone at 608 East Center Street. – SDC Special Exception (2016-092)

Attorney Stephen Penny of Penny, Botticello & O'Brien, P.C., in Manchester presented the application for the applicant. He reiterated the circumstances surrounding the applicant's request for a special exception for a health and recreation use in an SDC zone.

Attorney Penny addressed the zoning regulations affecting this request, citing permitted and special exception uses allowed. Attorney Penny went on to describe the surrounding properties, noting that the proposed martial arts business is an appropriate special exception use within the SDC zone.

The next speaker was Mr. Andrew Bushnell of Bushnell Associates, LLC, 563 Woodbridge Street, Manchester. He described the physical attributes of the site, including topography, layout, current parking and proposed realignment, and proposed landscaping. He stated that plans call for repurposing the existing walkways and curb cut. The parking plan calls for eliminating some of the impervious parking lot surface and adding enough parking spaces to accommodate future building renovations the applicant hopes to complete. Mr. Bushnell went on to state that there are no traffic concerns, as his review of traffic records from the past five years showed there had not been any accidents at this location.

Mr. Stebe asked what kind of tree a London Planetree was. Mr. Bushnell answered that it is a good sized hardwood street tree. Mr. Stebe replied that he wanted to ensure that the trees installed as part of the landscaping plan would not interfere with the traffic sight lines and Mr. Bushnell asserted that they would not.

Ms. Scorso asked if the existing curb cut would be adequate to accommodate the anticipated traffic flow during peak times. Mr. Bushnell noted that there was plenty of room for cars to queue up when exiting the property.

Mr. Kennedy asked if the applicant had any plans for special events that would draw high attendance. Mr. Bushnell stated that the applicant had no such plans at this time.

Mr. Prause asked what kind of structure was being planned for the future addition to the building. Attorney Penny stated that it would be an additional room that would be used for training.

Mr. Philip Veilleux, FLB Architecture & Planning, Inc., 19 Silver Lane, East Hartford was the next speaker. Mr. Veilleux described the proposed changes to the site and the renovations that were planned to the front façade. He noted that the plans called for the removal of the shed on the left side of the building as part of the renovation, while the shed on the right side of the building would be removed at a later date, adding that all of the windows would also be replaced. Additionally, plans call for the existing flat roof of the building to be replaced with a new, pitched roof.

Mr. Stoppelman asked why the applicant was not planning to remove both sheds during the proposed renovations. Mr. Bushnell replied that the owner had plans to use the shed temporarily as storage and the additional cost to remove it was prohibitive at this time.

Mr. Stebe asked if there was any texture to the proposed EIFS and Mr. Veilleux stated it would be a smooth, pebbled texture.

Attorney Penny addressed the Chair's question regarding the future addition by stating that the addition being planned was not financially feasible at the current time.

Attorney Penny concluded his presentation by citing each of the special exception criteria and demonstrating how the applicant's proposal met the requirements of each.

Mr. Bordeaux noted that staff had a few outstanding comments that were primarily minor and technical in nature.

Mr. Prause opened the hearing to the public for comment.

Mr. John Bowers, 310 Porter Street, Manchester, a member of the VFW, stated that the VFW can no longer maintain the building and he urged the Commission to approve the Special Exception request.

Mr. Stebe asked Mr. Pellegrini how and if this Special Exception, if granted, would affect the Manchester Green. Mr. Pellegrini felt that improving the building and reducing the impervious

surface of the parking lot were in keeping with the recommendations coming out of the study of the Manchester Green.

Mr. Kennedy moved to close the Public Hearing and Mr. Stebe seconded. All members voted aye and the motion passed.

MATTHEW AND JON REICHELDT – Request a special exception under Art. II Sec. 18.03.07 to allow a bed and breakfast at 131 Hartford Road, Historic Zone. - Special Exception (2016-097)

Mr. Stebe read the legal notice.

Mr. Jon Reichelt, 131 Hartford Road, Manchester presented the application for a special exception approval to operate a Bed & Breakfast at 131 Hartford Road. Mr. Reichelt discussed ways in which his application met the special exception criteria.

Mr. Pellegrini commented that the site plan for the location was dated and that the Planning Department had requested updated plans. He also noted that the applicant had appeared before the Cheney Historic Commission and they had endorsed this request.

Mr. Stebe asked whether the family's living quarters included a private bathroom and Mr. Reichelt indicated that it did.

Mr. Stoppelman mentioned the reference to the Shelter for Women on the first page of the plans he had was no longer current. Mr. Pellegrini reiterated his comment that the plans were outdated and his office had requested updated plans.

Mr. Prause observed that the plans showed six parking spots and wondered if the spaces would be marked. Mr. Reichelt said that because there was ample space for parking, the applicant did not have plans to delineate parking spaces.

Mr. Prause asked Mr. Pellegrini if the application was subject to only the special exception criteria for operating a Bed & Breakfast in the mansion area or if it was also subject to other general criteria. Mr. Pellegrini indicated that the application is subject to all applicable criteria.

Mr. Prause asked if there were any issues with public utilities or outstanding disputes with neighboring properties. Mr. Reichelt stated there were not.

Mr. Prause asked whether there was any problem with access for emergency vehicles. Mr. Reichelt stated that there was ample access off both Hartford Road and Forest Street.

Mr. Prause called for staff comments and there were none.

Mr. Prause opened the hearing to public comment.

Mr. Bruce Hamstra, 139 Hartford Road, Manchester and operator of The Mansion Bed & Breakfast offered his concerns about the driveway which serves three properties. He felt that the increased use

of the driveway would cause safety issues. Other than that concern, he supported the Commission's approval of the application.

Mr. Prause asked Mr. Pellegrini what the regulations were regarding signage for a Bed & Breakfast in the mansion area. Mr. Pellegrini noted that signage was not part of this application and would be dealt with in a separate application for the Commission.

Mr. Hamstra added that the current sign was erected on his property by the previous owner and he objected to the location of the sign.

The next speaker was Ms. Pamela West, who lived in the home at 131 Hartford Road for twenty years. She stated that the more people who are exposed to the beauty of this historic home, the better.

Mr. Kennedy moved to close the public hearing and Mr. Stebe seconded. All members voted aye and the hearing was closed.

THE PLAZA AT BURR CORNERS, LLC. (Continued from September 7, 2016) – To revise Art. II Sec. 24 (General Business Zone) and Art. IV Sec. 20 (Special Exceptions) to allow multi family housing in the General Business Zone and provide additional special exception criteria for review of such applications. - Zoning Regulation Amendment (2016-095)

Mr. Stebe read the legal notice.

Mr. Adam Winstanley, principal of Winstanley Enterprises and owner of the Plaza at Burr Corners at 1131 Tolland Turnpike in Manchester, opened the presentation by discussing the ways in which the commercial real estate market has changed over the years and specifically how the need for large retail stores has diminished. He spoke of other developments he had completed in the state and how each had been successful.

He continued his presentation by discussing the ways in which the proposed regulation amendments would support the Manchester 2020 Plan of Conservation and Development objectives by increasing green space and repurposing existing large retail buildings to encourage mixed use and vibrant neighborhoods, while meeting the demand for housing.

Mr. Christopher Ferrero, Certified Planner and Vice President of Fuss & O'Neill, presented information on how allowing mixed use residential zoning could provide for mixed use centers or districts. He asserted that the fastest growing segment of the population demographic will be interested in renting rather than owning. This same demographic, he continued, would also be interested in public transit rather than private transportation. He discussed how allowing residential use in the General Business zone would support the Plan of Conservation and Development objective of reusing currently existing buildings, such as empty, large retail buildings, as well as providing increased green space for residents.

Mr. Ferrero then went on to discuss how the proposed zoning regulation amendments support the Plan of Conservation and Development. He noted that the priority of redeveloping and revitalizing

existing commercial centers would be accomplished by reducing the size of large retail stores and replacing some of that area with high density residential units, as well as increased green space. This would create a mixed use center along a transit corridor in an already developed and under utilized retail shopping center.

Mr. Ferrero went on to talk about the need to regulate density in a mixed use site. He talked about how density would need to be limited by the size of the site in the General Business zone, so that it would not be possible to build an 80' tall building on a small site. He also discussed the need for open space not only for the residents of the development, but also for the entire facility. The proposed requirement for open space is 250 sq. ft. per resident.

The proposed parking amendment primarily follows current regulations, with a reduction allowed for residents who live within a quarter mile of a transit node.

Mr. Ferrero continued by addressing various building design and architectural standards, which were primarily drawn from the standards developed by the Commission for the Form Based Zone. The proposed amendments provide the Commission with architectural standards which can be used in deciding on applications.

Finally, Mr. Ferrero reviewed the special exception criteria being proposed. He concluded that the proposed amendments and language had been reviewed and approved by CRCOG.

Mr. Bergin asked for clarification on the parking regulations and how the 1-1/2 parking spaces per residential unit came about. Mr. Ferrero replied that this would ensure that the developer had parking spaces for all the units. Mr. Bergin asked if retail parking spaces counted toward the 1-1/2 spaces for residents. Mr. Ferrero said that all space would be shared, but there would be enough parking allotted to meet both residential and retail parking demands.

Mr. Prause asked why special exception criteria were handled separately rather than incorporated into the general regulations. Mr. Pellegrini said that, if these criteria were inserted into the special exception criteria, it would apply to all zones. He noted that it was important to ensure specific standards for this type of use in the General Business Zone.

Mr. Prause asked how much of the building design standards were the same as the standards in the Form Based Zone. Mr. Ferrero replied that the language that was used was taken verbatim from the Form Based Zone regulations. Mr. Pellegrini added that there was some variation from the Form Based Zone, especially in respect to street based codes and transparency.

Mr. Stoppelman asked why the proposed regulations increased the allowable building heights up to 50'. Mr. Pellegrini responded that two recent building developers had requested variances to have buildings higher than 40', so staff decided to increase the height limit to 50'.

Mr. Stoppelman asked about a letter submitted by Ms. Mary Fish. Mr. Pellegrini explained that her concern was that some of the smaller General Business zones in town might end up with 6 story buildings. He went on to explain that the proposed amendments recognize these concerns with clauses about appropriate scale and all of the decisions are up to the Planning & Zoning

Commission's discretion.

Mr. Kennedy observed that some of the building height is tied to existing mass transit, and asked whether that would apply to any and all mass transit. Mr. Pellegrini replied that bus routes would be considered mass transit. Mr. Ferrero added that when the state's CTfastrak system becomes operational in any area, the local bus routes get adjusted.

Mr. Kennedy asked how many places in town have General Business Zones that are more than a half mile from a bus route, because the allowable building height is subject to the distance from mass transit. Mr. Ferrero said that actually the bigger criteria with regards to building height is the size of the existing facility, so smaller retail centers will have building heights limited.

Mr. Stebe asked how large the Plaza at Burr Corners is in square feet and Mr. Ferrero answered that it is 283,000 sq. ft.

Mr. Prause called for public comment and there was none.

Mr. Prause called for staff comments and Mr. Pellegrini stated for the record that he and Ms. Bertotti had worked extensively with Mr. Ferrero and Mr. Winstanley because of how this proposal fits with the 2020 Plan of Conservation & Development. The only outstanding modifications were editorial in nature and would not affect the amendment substantively. CRCOG supported the proposed regulation changes. The Planning Department received a letter from Ms. Mary Fish who was supportive of the general approach, but expressed concerns about allowing taller structures in smaller business zones.

Mr. Prause said he understood how moving to mixed use would address the issue of empty retail space and the proposal made a lot of sense.

Mr. Stebe asked staff how the proposed regulations would line up with the Form Based Zone in the Broad Street area. Mr. Pellegrini replied that the basic similarity was to encourage mixed use cited in the Plan of Conservation & Development. Now the regulations were catching up with the plan, he said. He added that all these uses would be subject to the Commission's discretion and approval.

Mr. Winstanley added that when Burr Corners was originally developed, the value of the property was twice what it is today, so Manchester's grand list has lost value. Adding a residential component would increase the value of the development. There is too much parking at Burr Corners right now, he said. Eliminating some of the parking and adding the residential component would increase property value and therefore, the grand list. Many hours of thought and work went into this proposal and it would create a better overall economical environment for the Town of Manchester, Mr. Winstanley said.

Mr. Stoppelman stated that he supported this type of development and he felt it was important for the Commission to control future development. He finished by adding that maybe a market would come back for the development.

Mr. Winstanley said that he had tried, but the climate was not conducive right now. This template for

mixed use is the future, he said.

Mr. Prause noted that he liked the percentage of open space for residents and retailers because it provided flexibility. He went on to ask what the rationale was for the change of square feet of open space requirements above a certain floor. Mr. Ferrero responded that that was taken directly from the regulations for high rises.

Mr. Stebe suggested that the word “and” be replaced by the word “or” in the section of the regulations on building height. Mr. Ferrero agreed and noted that was an easy fix.

Mr. Prause asked that the proposed amendments use the word “feet” or the abbreviation “ft.” instead of the single apostrophe.

Mr. Kennedy moved to close the public hearing and Mr. Stebe seconded. All members voted in favor and the public hearing on this application was closed.

TOWN OF MANCHESTER PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION – To repeal Article II, Section 8 (Comprehensive Urban Development Zone) and replace it with a new Article II, Section 8 (Comprehensive Urban Development Zone). - Zoning Regulation Amendment (2016-099)

TOWN OF MANCHESTER PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION – To revise Art IV Sec. 9 to add design requirements for private driveways and parking requirements for shopping centers or malls. – Zoning Regulation Amendment (2016-100)

TOWN OF MANCHESTER PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION – To revise Art IV Sec. 13 (Signs) to add provisions for signs for theaters. – Zoning Regulation Amendment (2016-101)

1.TOWN OF MANCHESTER PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION – To revise Art. I Sec. 4 to add provisions for minor modifications to approved plans. - Zoning Regulation Amendment (2016-096)

Mr. Kennedy moved to open the public hearings on the final four agenda items and continue them to a special meeting to be held on September 29, 2016. Mr. Stebe seconded the motion and all members voted in favor.

The Chairman closed the Public Hearing at 9:26 p.m.

I certify these minutes were adopted on the following date:

October 17, 2016 \_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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Eric Prause, Chairman

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