

**MINUTES OF BUSINESS MEETING
HELD BY THE PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
OCTOBER 1, 2018**

ROLL CALL:

Members Present: Eric Prause, Chairman
Michael Stebe, Secretary

Alternate Member Sitting: Patrick Kennedy
Julian Stoppelman
Teresa Ike

Absent: Andy Kidd
Jessica Scorso
Timothy Bergin

Also Present: Gary Anderson, Director of Planning
Matthew Bordeaux, Senior Planner
Nancy Martel, Recording Secretary

The Chairman opened the Business Meeting at 7:00 PM.

NEW BUSINESS:

GORDON SIEGEL AND VINCENT BREGLIA – For replacement of the shingle roof, a new sign, removal of several trees, and planting of new trees and bushes at 139 Hartford Road. – Historic Zone Site Plan (2018-102)

Mr. Gordon Siegel, co-owner of 139 Hartford Road, introduced himself. Mr. Siegel displayed the shingle that is proposed for the roof. He explained there are currently architectural-style asphalt shingles, but the roof is leaking. The proposed shingles are an upgrade to the current roof, he noted, and they also plan to replace the copper valleys.

Mr. Prause noted there is a mention in the memo of Sierra Gray.

Mr. Siegel reported that the applicants had originally planned to use Sierra Gray for the architectural shingles, but after the application was submitted a roofer examined the roof and suggested the currently-proposed shingles.

Mr. Prause questioned the term “copper valley.”

Mr. Siegel explained that where the dormers meet are the valleys, which are currently copper and which will be replaced.

Mr. Prause asked about the function of copper valleys.

Mr. Siegel stated they are for water deflection.

Mr. Stoppelman asked if the proposed shingle was approved by the Cheney Commission, which Mr. Siegel affirmed.

Mr. Siegel explained that the proposal is also to replace the current sign displaying Mansion Inn Bed and Breakfast, 139 Hartford Road, with a simple hitching post design white sign with the number 139 on it. He reported there is a copy of the sign in the members' packets.

Mr. Stebe questioned whether the sign would replace the gate fence entirely and would just be the post.

Mr. Siegel explained that it will replace the gate fence.

Mr. Prause referred to the proposed change to plantings in the area.

Mr. Siegel noted there are several large trees around the garage that are rotted and must be cut down. He explained that this was discussed with the Cheney Commission and he informed them that his goal is to keep as many as possible from being removed. The plan is to plant fruit trees and arborvitaes as well as the privet hedge.

Mr. Anderson reported that one issue the Cheney Commission brought up was the hedges, and whether or not there would be a problem with sight distance.

Mr. Siegel stated that was discussed and reported the hedge will be set further back, so as not to interfere with the line of sight.

Mr. Prause questioned whether there was a letter from the Cheney Commission.

Mr. Anderson noted the PZC members have a letter from him.

Mr. Prause reiterated that the shingles proposed are different from the application.

Mr. Anderson reported the Cheney Commission was quite pleased with the change and felt the current proposal is an improvement.

MOTION: Mr. Kennedy moved to approve the Historic zone site plan for replacement of the shingle roof, a new sign, removal of several trees, and addition of new bushes at 139 Hartford Road. Mr. Stebe seconded the motion and all members voted in favor.

HIGHLAND OAKS CORPORATION – For a modification to the approved PRD Detailed Plan to accept 4 ft. wide sidewalks at Castle Hill and Collingridge Drive. – PRD Detailed Plan Modification (2018-110)

Attorney Leonard Horvath, 935 Main Street, introduced himself. Attorney Horvath reported that he is representing Highland Oaks Corporation. He detailed the location of Rieg Highlands, encompassing four cul-de-sacs. In 2002, Rieg Highlands was approved as a Residence AA subdivision by the Planning and Zoning Commission, according to Attorney Horvath. After the economic downturn, there was a large slowdown in the development, he noted. In 2015, the developer submitted an application for a new Planned Residential Development, which included the division of lots into double lots in order to build duplex homes as well as single-family homes, and the application was approved. Attorney Horvath explained that the 2015 submission was under the current regulations, and for some reason, a 5 ft. wide sidewalk was included. The original approval in August 2002 was for a 4 ft. wide concrete

sidewalk. Unfortunately, according to Attorney Horvath, the 5 ft. requirement in the new regulation was overlooked.

Attorney Horvath reported the above-referenced section is the last to be built upon in Rieg Highlands. He explained there are 1.8 miles of roads in and through the subdivision but only 16% is actually part of the Collingridge Drive and Castle Hill section. The 4 ft. sidewalk stopped on Castle Hill, and if the plan of development for the PRD was followed, the sidewalk itself would have been widened to 5 ft. all through to Collingridge Drive. According to Attorney Horvath, the utilities were installed between 2002 and 2009 with a 4 ft. sidewalk on the plans, before the PRD was approved. If the developer were required to widen the sidewalks from 4 ft. to 5 ft., many of the utilities would have to be moved and the 5 ft. sidewalk would be incongruous with the neighborhood, Attorney Horvath stated, adding that this was reiterated in a letter from Mr. Bockus, Director of Public Works.

Mr. Prause requested clarification of the map submitted.

Attorney Horvath explained the details of the map, referring to the sidewalks. He noted that a contractor installed a 4 ft. sidewalk in late August or early September. The contractor had nearly completed the sidewalks, he explained, when an inspection revealed the PRD map had a 5 ft. sidewalk.

Mr. Prause questioned the pictures of the utilities presented.

Attorney Horvath stated that the pictures were taken recently throughout the PRD to demonstrate how close the utilities are to the sidewalks, which are only 4 ft.

Mr. Prause reiterated that the sidewalk issue is throughout the PRD, not isolated to just Castle Hill.

Attorney Horvath stated the problem is on Castle Hill and Collingridge Drive. He stated that the issue has been recognized as an error either in 2015 or 2018.

Mr. Stebe stated his view that the problem is that the developer cannot add sidewalk, and said it is his understanding that sidewalk cannot be added toward the street, only toward the properties.

Mr. Bordeaux explained that is how the plans were approved, but as long as the improvements are within the Town's right of way, the snow shelf could be just about anywhere. After speaking with the Town Engineer and the Public Works Director, he reported, this would not be a situation where another foot could be added. Depending on the Commission's decision, those sidewalks would have to be removed and a 5 ft. sidewalk placed, according to Mr. Bordeaux.

Mr. Stebe stated that everywhere else was completed prior to the width change in the zoning regulations and is currently 4 ft. wide.

Attorney Horvath concurred, noting the 4 ft. sidewalks have the appropriate spacing between the curbs and the utilities.

Mr. Stebe noted that changing the sidewalks throughout the development to 5 ft. would not be cost effective; the PRD regulations had been reset when it was approved.

Attorney Horvath explained the sidewalks are currently installed with the drainage and handicapped accessible ramps.

Mr. Prause questioned Mr. Bordeaux about his memo, which stated he would have a recommendation from the Department of Public Works.

Mr. Bordeaux stated he received a memo from the Director of Public Works, which he read as follows:

“I have reviewed the letter dated September 27, 2018, from Attorney Leonard Horvath regarding the request for a waiver of the public improvement standards requirement to install 5 ft. wide sidewalks on Castle Hill and Collingridge Drive. Since the sidewalks on adjoining roads were constructed in earlier phases of this subdivision and are 4 ft. wide, I support the waiver request to maintain uniformity within the subdivision.”

Mr. Prause requested clarification if the increase to 5 ft. in the public improvement standards is to allow for more traffic or easier use of the sidewalks.

Mr. Bordeaux speculated it may be due to the increase in the size of strollers.

Mr. Prause stated he would be concerned if this issue was on a large arterial street, but since it is at the end of a cul-de-sac, there would not be a great amount of traffic.

Mr. Bordeaux explained that the issue arose either because the public improvement standards were revised to require 5 ft. sidewalks for new subdivisions, or because the applicant requested a zone change to PRD, which specifies 5 ft. sidewalks.

MOTION: Mr. Kennedy moved to approve the PRD Detailed Plan Modification to accept 4 ft. wide sidewalks at Castle Hill and Collingridge Drive. Mr. Stebe seconded the motion and all members voted in favor.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

Mr. Bordeaux reminded the Commission of a prior workshop regarding the lack of definitions in the regulations addressing agriculture. He explained that he received feedback at the workshop from members of the agricultural community and held subsequent meetings addressing draft motions to deal with agritourism. Mr. Bordeaux submitted a draft motion to better define issues not currently found in the regulations, and to provide guidance to the agricultural community who are seeking to improve the economic viability of their agricultural operations, but also to ensure that neighbors in the area are considered in the event that activities exceed standard agriculture operations.

Mr. Bordeaux explained to the Commission that he is seeking feedback and asked the members to contact him. Ideally, at the next meeting, he hopes to hear what the Commission would like to do next. Mr. Bordeaux reminded the Commission that a text amendment would require a public hearing.

Mr. Prause noted that it has been some time since the meeting with the members of the agricultural community and questioned the process in the last few months.

Mr. Bordeaux stated there has been a great deal of research. He explained he had discussions with Staff many times. Some of the residents attending the meeting were clearly to be more impacted, he noted, as agricultural activities are only permitted in the Rural Residential zone and agritourism activity would be an accessory to an actual agricultural activity. Mr. Bordeaux noted that he has had an opportunity to meet many members of the agricultural community and has had an opportunity over the years to develop relationships with them.

Mr. Prause reiterated that many of the major stakeholders have been involved. He questioned the Commission members' opinions of the next steps.

Mr. Anderson suggested reviewing the information and discussing it at the next meeting.

Mr. Stebe agreed with Mr. Anderson's suggestion and plan to have it as an administrative report at the next meeting.

Mr. Prause speculated on whether to have a workshop that is more open to the public, or whether it should be managed with the Planning Department and the Commission.

Mr. Anderson agreed that could be considered. He noted Mr. Bordeaux has followed up with some of the members of the agricultural community, though it has not been a public item for several months. The public piece should be part of a public hearing, he said.

Mr. Stoppelman reported that he had received an e-mail from CRCOG stating they are having an open house on October 10th and October 11th on "complete streets". He noted Mr. Anderson has the information which can be forwarded to the members who are interested.

Mr. Prause questioned the term "complete street."

Mr. Anderson explained that there is a complete streets policy in Manchester which was drafted approximately a year ago by Mr. Bordeaux and a complete streets team led by Director Gates and community members. The idea behind complete streets is that streets are for everyone, not just cars; they are for people of all ages and all transportation methods. He explained that streets are part of the public realm.

Mr. Anderson reported there is a new Environmental Planner and Wetlands Agent, David Laiuppa, with a great deal of experience.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

September 5, 2018 – Public Hearing/Business Meeting

MOTION: Mr. Kennedy moved to approve the minutes as written. Mr. Stebe seconded the motion and all members voted in favor.

September 17, 2018 – Public Hearing/Business Meeting

MOTION: Mr. Kennedy moved to approve the minutes as written. Ms. Ike seconded the motion and all members voted in favor.

RECEIPT OF NEW APPLICATIONS:

BIG Y FOODS, INC. – Inland Wetlands Permit (2018-106); Erosion and Sedimentation Control Plan (2018-107); Special Exception Modification (2018-108) – For construction of a convenience store with associated gas station and related improvements at 176 Tolland Turnpike.

HIGHLAND OAKS CORPORATION – PRD Detailed Plan Modification (2018-110) – For a modification to the approved PRD Detailed Plan to accept 4 ft. wide sidewalks at Castle Hill and Collingridge Drive.

ASSOCIATION OF MUSLIM COMMUNITY – Special Exception (2018-111) – Request a special exception under Art. II, Sec. 5.02.02 for a place of worship use at 35 Oak Street, 46 Cottage Street, and 50 Cottage Street.

MOTION: Mr. Kennedy moved to adjourn the business meeting. Mr. Stebe seconded the motion and all members voted in favor.

The Chairman closed the business meeting at 7:47 P.M.

I certify these minutes were adopted on the following date:

October 15, 2018
Date

Eric Prause, Chairman

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