

**MINUTES OF BUSINESS MEETING
HELD BY THE PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
OCTOBER 7, 2019**

ROLL CALL:

Members Present: Eric Prause, Chairman
Patrick Kennedy, Vice-Chairman
Timothy Bergin
Jessica Scorso

Alternate Member Sitting: Teresa Ike

Alternates: Julian Stoppelman
Bonnie Potocki

Also Present: Gary Anderson, Director of Planning
David Laiuppa, Environmental
Planner/Wetlands Agent
Nancy Martel, Recording Secretary

The Chairman opened the Business Meeting at 7:00 P.M.

THOMAS MIRANTE – To grade and excavate for a new garage, breezeway and front patio at 24 Trevor Court. – Inland Wetlands Permit – Determination of Significance (2019-095); Inland Wetlands Permit (2019-095)

Mr. Mike Bugnacki, MTS Builders, introduced himself as Mr. Mirante’s builder. After building commenced, Mr. Mirante sought to add an additional garage. Mr. Bugnacki explained the proposed changes and reported that the work area will be adjacent to the conservation easement. He reported the measures to be taken to protect the affected land and the timeline for the construction.

Mr. Prause questioned whether the work could be completed within a year and Mr. Bugnacki said it could.

Mr. Laiuppa stated the project was reviewed by the Conservation Commission, and one comment referred to the drainage off of the new structure. The Engineering Division advised that the drainage should be directed toward the wetland, and Mr. Bugnacki assured the Commission that it would not. Another comment from Engineering referred to the additional driveway space, concerning the grading.

Mr. Prause questioned how far into the conservation easement the driveway will disturb, and in which direction the rain water will flow off the new garage.

Mr. Bugnacki assured the Commission that, if anything, the driveway may affect 4 to 5 ft. The rain gutters will collect the water and deposit it to the inner section of the lot, away from the wetland resource, he noted.

Inland Wetlands Permit – Determination of Significance (2019-095)

MOTION: Mr. Kennedy moved to find the proposed activity at the above-referenced location as shown on the inland wetlands permit application 2019-095 will not have a significant impact on the wetlands and, therefore, will not require a public hearing. Mr. Bergin seconded the motion and all members voted in favor.

Inland Wetlands Permit (2019-095)

MOTION: Mr. Kennedy moved to approve the inland wetlands permit for activity associated with the proposed grading and excavation for a new garage, breezeway and front patio at 24 Trevor Court. Mr. Bergin seconded the motion and all members voted in favor.

The reason for the approval is that the proposed activity does not disturb the principal functions or values of the wetland system 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.

PPF WE 1339 TOLLAND TURNPIKE, LLC – Improve and expand pavement and modify existing circulation pattern to begin transition from a single tenant to a multi-tenant distribution/logistics facility at 1339 Tolland Turnpike. – Inland Wetlands Permit – Determination of Significance (2019-099); Inland Wetlands Permit (2019-099); Erosion and Sedimentation Control Plan (2019-100); Special Exception Modification (2019-101)

Ms. Valarie Ferro, President of Good Earth Advisors, introduced herself as a representative of Winstanley Enterprises, regarding proposed improvements to the former J.C. Penney Distribution Center. The purpose of the acquisition was to re-tenant and the applicant seeks to make modifications to the building for a tenant that will occupy at least one million square feet. Ms. Ferro reported the proposed changes to the property. She praised the cooperation and coordination of the Planning Department and other Town staff.

Mr. Jim Petropulos, President of Hayner/Swanson, Inc., Land Surveyors/Civil Engineers, introduced himself. Mr. Petropulos displayed the property, which is in the Industrial zone. He detailed the history of the building. In addition, he gave a comprehensive overview of the building's interior as well as the extensive exterior, including the docks and green space. Mr. Petropulos pointed out the storm water basin and explained the flow from the catch basin system into the detention basin.

The vision of Winstanley Enterprises is to break the single-tenant building into three tenant spaces, Mr. Petropulos explained. J.C. Penney will retain their current +/- 600,000 sf space, and the plans for Tenant A and Tenant B were detailed. Improvements to the parking area and perimeter road to improve circulation will be made and 20 new dock doors will be added, he noted.

Mr. Petropulos displayed and described the landscape plan, including new lighting. He reiterated that the current storm water system includes curbing and catch basins to capture flow and hard pipe it into the storm water basin. They will add 5 new catch basins at the direction of the Town Engineer, which will include deep sumps to filter out sediments from the paved surfaces. Erosion controls are in the plan, he reported. To assure that there is no construction spillage, the applicant proposes anti-tracking aprons at all the access points and silt fencing around the stockpile areas and the detention basin.

An elevation drawing was displayed and explained. With regard to the upland review area, according to Mr. Petropulos, the detention basin has made itself into a jurisdictional wetland over the years. A small area of perimeter road is being reworked in the upland review area.

Ms. Ferro pointed out the traffic memo from Fuss & O'Neill, who reviewed the plan and determined that no change of use is proposed, total vehicle trips are expected to decrease, and there is no expected impact to traffic. As part of the \$40 million improvement, there will be a complete re-landscaping, which she explained.

Mr. Adam Winstanley, a principal of Winstanley Enterprises, introduced himself. Mr. Winstanley explained the details of the building purchase and current and future investments. The plan is to modernize to attract new tenants, he said, noting that marketing the building has been difficult due to J.C. Penney's outdated systems which remain in the building. He noted the many improvements to the interior of the building as well as the exterior, including new asphalt. Mr. Winstanley reported that they have signed a Letter of Intent, and the tenant will commit to a 15-year lease term, creating approximately 700 jobs on three separate shifts.

Ms. Scorso requested clarification that Tenant B exists in the building.

Mr. Winstanley responded that Tenant B is vacant space currently and no work is being performed at this time. The demolition is quite substantial, factoring in block walls, large structures within the space, and removal of lighting.

Mr. Prause reported that, in the past, there was signage restricting access to certain entrances, and asked about the planned traffic flow.

Mr. Petropulos replied that the flow will be similar, with three access points, two on Pleasant Valley Road and one on Tolland Turnpike.

Mr. Winstanley explained that part of the inner road was previously blocked due to its use as a cut-through but the gate has been opened.

Mr. Prause requested additional information on the traffic analysis.

Ms. Ferro reported that the traffic generation is far less than the prior use. She paraphrased from the traffic report: The sight distance passed the analysis; crash analysis produced no issues; trip generation passed; all intersections are acting correctly; there is a previously-approved OSTA traffic generating permit; the intersections are well sized; and OSTA permitting was approved for 2,525 parking spaces.

Mr. Anderson reported one comment from the traffic engineer regarding the traffic signal with the intersection at Tolland Turnpike, though the Town did not request a no-turn on red at the location.

Mr. Prause noted the traffic changes are primarily due to a shift to tractor-trailer traffic rather than automobiles and questioned if that changes the storm water runoff plan.

Mr. Petropulos responded that it would not alter the plan.

Mr. Anderson reported that the applicant responded to a request for more information about landscaping as well as a photometric report. He reported two minor and technical comments from Engineering, as well as requests for information on the municipal water system.

In response to a comment from Mr. Prause, Ms. Ferro stated that the goal is to remain within the existing footprint as much as possible and they are well within the special exception criteria.

Inland Wetlands Permit – Determination of Significance (2019-099)

MOTION: Mr. Kennedy moved to find the proposed activity at the above-referenced location as shown on the inland wetlands permit application 2019-099 will not have a significant impact on the wetlands and, therefore, will not require a public hearing. Mr. Bergin seconded the motion and all members voted in favor.

Inland Wetlands Permit (2019-099)

MOTION: Mr. Kennedy moved to approve the inland wetlands permit for activity associated with the site improvements, pavement expansion and circulation pattern changes related to the transition to a multi-tenant facility at 1339 Tolland Turnpike. Mr. Bergin seconded the motion and all members voted in favor.

The reason for the approval is that the proposed activity does not disturb the principal functions or values of the wetland system 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 Plan (2019-100)

MOTION: Mr. Kennedy moved to approve the erosion and sedimentation control plan. Mr. Bergin seconded the motion and all members voted in favor.

Special Exception Modification (2019-101)

MOTION: Mr. Kennedy moved to approve the special exception modification for activity associated with site improvements, pavement expansion and circulation pattern changes related to the transition to a multi-tenant facility at 1339 Tolland Turnpike, with the modifications as specified in a staff memorandum from:

1. John DiBiasi, Assistant Town Engineer, dated October 7, 2019.

Mr. Bergin seconded the motion and all members voted in favor.

The reason for the approval is that the proposed modification meets the special exception criteria in Article IV, Section 20.

DEBORA INGRAHAM – Preparation of a crushed stone pad for installation of an 8 ft. x 14 ft. shed at 258 Parker Street. – Inland Wetlands Permit – Determination of Significance (2019-102); Inland Wetlands Permit (2019-102)

Ms. Debora Ingraham, 258 Parker Street, introduced herself. She stated that she has purchased an 8 ft. x 10 ft. shed for placement in her backyard. She stated that she plans to avoid the sewer pipes and intends to place the shed in the best possible location.

In response to a question from Mr. Prause, Ms. Ingraham pointed out the wetlands on a map of her property.

Mr. Laiuppa stated that he visited the site and the mapping is based on NRCS soil mapping. The shed will be placed in the location of an existing paved driveway. He reported that the actual wetlands are between 50 and 75 ft. behind the house. The plan is to cut out the existing driveway, Mr. Laiuppa noted, and place a level stone base to support the shed.

Mr. Prause sought confirmation of the location to be utilized, which Ms. Ingraham detailed.

Mr. Laiuppa clarified about the wetlands on the property and further described the land.

Mr. Bergin asked for more information about where the grading change will occur, which was provided.

Mr. Laiuppa reported that Engineering discovered a lateral sewer pipe behind the house and the applicant will work in concert with Engineering to determine the best location for the shed.

Inland Wetlands Permit – Determination of Significance (2019-102)

MOTION: Mr. Kennedy moved to find the proposed activity at the above-referenced location as shown on the inland wetlands permit application 2019-102 will not have a significant impact on the wetlands and, therefore, will not require a public hearing. Mr. Bergin seconded the motion and all members voted in favor.

Inland Wetlands Permit (2019-102)

MOTION: Mr. Kennedy moved to approve the inland wetlands permit for activity associated with the installation of an 8 ft. x 10 ft. shed at 258 Parker Street. Mr. Bergin seconded the motion and all members voted in favor.

The reason for the approval is that the proposed activity does not disturb the principal functions or values of the wetland system 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.

TOWN OF MANCHESTER PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT – Construction of a splash park and associated site work at 126 Olcott Street. – Erosion and Sedimentation Control Plan (2019-092); Special Exception Modification (2019-093)

Mr. Jeff LaMalva, Town Engineer, introduced himself, stating that he is representing the Public Works Department for a project to construct a splash park at 126 Olcott Street, Verplanck Elementary School. Mr. LaMalva displayed the site plan, and detailed the location and layout of the proposed splash pad. He further explained the features of the splash pad.

According to Mr. LaMalva, the utilities will include the installation of a 2” water service and electrical service off of Olcott Street. The pad will be drained to an 8” storm drainage pipe leading to an infiltration system that will connect to the existing storm drainage system in the parking lot. Mr. LaMalva remarked that the Board of Directors did not want to simply waste the water. He reported on the various systems they researched, leading to the ground water infiltration system, which will allow the water to be recharged into the ground and ultimately reused. Mr. LaMalva detailed the surrounding amenities, including the walkways and seating areas along with landscaping. The actual amenities will depend on the bids that are received for the project.

Mr. LaMalva reported the total disturbed area of the project is approximately 30,000 sq. ft. He pointed out silt fencing, a top soil stockpile, and silt sacks. He stated that the project will be done in three phases:

1. Rough grade the pad site. Bring utilities in close to the pad.
2. The vendor will install the piping, pad, and controller.
3. The Town will do the walkways, landscaping, timber rail, and amenities.

The goal is to complete the project by the end of the 2020 school year, according to Mr. LaMalva. The splash pad will operate on the same schedule as the Town pools.

Mr. Prause questioned an area depicted and whether it will be grass, to which Mr. LaMalva replied that it will be mulch and landscaping. Mr. Prause commented that he would prefer to see more grass. He also asked if there are details for the shade structures and Mr. LaMalva explained that the particular brand has not been chosen. Mr. Prause also remarked that the splash pad will only be operational after the end of the school year and questioned whether it could be open on the weekends before school is dismissed.

Mr. LaMalva stated that there will be a park identification sign, which he presumed would be the standard Town sign. After questioning by Mr. Prause, Mr. LaMalva explained the infiltration system in detail.

Ms. Scorso questioned whether concrete will be the only surface, which Mr. LaMalva affirmed.

Mr. Bergin assumed the park will not be staffed by the Department of Leisure, Families and Recreation. He questioned how it will be turned on and whether there would be emergency access onto the site.

Mr. LaMalva stated that it would be controlled within a cabinet for a set time. The portable toilets will be seasonal. There will be direct emergency access, he added.

Erosion and Sedimentation Control Plan (2019-092)

MOTION: Mr. Kennedy moved to approve the erosion and sedimentation control plan as presented. Mr. Bergin seconded the motion and all members voted in favor.

Special Exception Modification (2019-093)

MOTION: Mr. Kennedy moved to approve the special exception modification for construction of a splash park and associated site work at 126 Olcott Street. Mr. Bergin seconded the motion and all members voted in favor.

The reasons for the approval are that the proposed modification meets the special exception criteria in Article IV, Section 20.

WALTER LANDON – Pre-application review for a zone change from Residence A to Planned Residential Development zone at 321 Oakland Street and 27 Lillian Drive.

Mr. Joseph Boucher, Towne Engineering, introduced himself as representing Walter Landon and said he was there to get preliminary feedback from the Commission on a potential Planned Residence District project at the above addresses. Mr. Boucher stated that the properties were purchased within the last year and are currently zoned as Residence A. The surrounding properties are primarily apartment complexes, with 71% of the area multi-family.

The property is 4.18 acres, according to Mr. Boucher, with 4,200 sq. ft. of wetlands and 15,000 sq. ft. of slopes greater than 15%, leaving a net of 3.7 acres. A density of 10 units per acre is allowed. He stated that a conceptual plan calls for 37 possible units in 6 buildings, leaving the wetlands undeveloped as a buffer between the site and other apartments. Mr. Boucher explained this is only a conceptual plan and the applicant is seeking a zone change only. Mr. Landon is not intending to develop the property himself.

In response to a question from Mr. Stoppelman, Mr. Boucher said no improvements would be done before marketing.

Ms. Potocki questioned how the proposed zone change fits with the Town's Plan of Conservation and Development and what criteria it meets.

Mr. Boucher responded that Pg. 47 of the Plan of Conservation and Development states, "Because of the lack of available land, opportunities for new housing developments will likely depend on redevelopment and infill projects. Additionally, Manchester's built neighborhoods will require attention and care to keep them healthy and vibrant." He reiterated that this is a multi-family project in a multi-family area.

Ms. Potocki pointed out a change in demographics and speculated about where the nearest school will be, which Mr. Boucher said would need to be looked at.

Mr. Anderson reported that the most recent referendum provides for Keeney, Buckley and Bowers to be rehabbed. He noted that either Buckley or Bowers would be the closest school.

In response to a question from Mr. Kennedy, Mr. Boucher pointed to and discussed the single family homes surrounding the property. Mr. Kennedy reminded Mr. Boucher that the single family homes may prove difficult in a potential zone change.

Mr. Anderson clarified that, per Town regulations, a Planned Residential Development (PRD) zone and a preliminary plan are applied for in conjunction. The map cannot be changed without a preliminary plan.

Mr. Boucher stated that they have reviewed the requirements and will have a preliminary plan.

Mr. Bergin commented that the area is appropriate for higher-density housing. He concurred with Mr. Kennedy's point that there will be single-family homes that are closer to the street and encouraged the applicant to be mindful of proximity, buffering, sight lines, and height.

Ms. Potocki questioned the number bedrooms and the capacity of the main on Oakland Street to provide sewer and water based on the occupancy.

Mr. Boucher acknowledged that they have not yet spoken with the utility companies. They will work with the Eighth District on the sizes needed.

Ms. Potocki asked Mr. Anderson what elements must be reviewed by the Commission for the zone change.

Mr. Anderson responded by reading the regulations for a PRD zone.

Ms. Potocki questioned what natural features will be preserved, which Mr. Boucher detailed. Noting the Town's Sustainability Task Force, Ms. Potocki also questioned the amount of impervious surface that will be added, to which Mr. Boucher responded.

Following a question from Mr. Stoppelman, Mr. Boucher pointed out the location of the house on the property and the surrounding properties.

Mr. Anderson explained that the Town typically requires a traffic statement for the Traffic Engineer, who will review the traffic impact.

Mr. Prause commented that a frequent complaint is that there are already too many Planned Residential Developments in this area. He noted that the apartments can be attractive but there can also be a negative connotation associated with multifamily projects.

KIMLAR, LLC – Pre-application review for subdivision, site plan, and possible zone change at 699 and 719 Middle Turnpike East.

Mr. Larry Shipman introduced himself and reminded the Commission of the previous Planned Residence District application that the Commission denied recently for this site. Mr. Shipman sought additional feedback from the Commission, noting that they would agree to increasing the landscaping and reducing the height of the buildings. He reported that the density will be less than the 10 units per acre permitted in a PRD zone.

Mr. Shipman stated that they could reduce the number of units to 28 or to 26 if the 719 property became a small single family or a duplex building lot. Additionally, he explained, there will only be one entrance to the property at a lighted intersection and emergency access at the rear of the property. He stated that the property is in a community corridor, which incorporates single-family, multi-family residences, and retail business, and is on a bus stop.

Mr. Bergin requested clarification on the traffic plan for the development.

Mr. Shipman explained the plan in detail, acknowledging that they will comply with the Town's recommendations.

Mr. Kennedy questioned whether denser, multifamily housing was a good use of this site.

Ms. Potocki expressed her concern about the effect on schools. She questioned the height of the surrounding homes.

Mr. Shipman stated that they did not expect many children in the development and explained the design of the buildings. He noted that there are a couple of colonials and capes nearby.

Mr. Prause was encouraged about the reduced scale of the project. After a comment from the applicant, Mr. Prause said he assumed the neighbors might be more receptive of single family homes.

Ms. Potocki asked about the market value of the apartments and Mr. Shipman reported that, while he is uncertain, they may be between \$1,100 and \$1,500 per month.

Mr. Bergin suggested screening of the State of Connecticut building.

Mr. Stoppelman stated that he understands the objections to Planned Residential Developments and questioned what type of housing would make sense.

Mr. Anderson reported that the Plan of Conservation and Development does propose the need for diverse housing and this site falls within the Community Corridor Character designation. The current zoning, Neighborhood Business, does not allow single family homes. Conversely, the current zoning allows other opportunities that may not be as appropriate as a housing proposal.

Mr. Kennedy offered that changing the zoning to the surrounding residential zoning may be more acceptable.

Mr. Prause acknowledged that, based on the Plan of Conservation and Development, this is a Community Corridor. That is true for a small portion that fronts on Middle Turnpike East, but the remainder of the property is more suburban. He noted that there are apartment complexes in the area, but the request is to fit this into a traditional suburban style. He reminded the applicant that this was a pre-application item for the purpose of informal feedback only.

Mr. Anderson suggested the applicant meet with the neighborhood residents in an effort to appease their concerns.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS:

Mr. Anderson informed the Commission that Town has been recognized by the Connecticut Economic Development Association (CEDAS) for best practices in Land Use and Economic Development, a new certification. The designation considers topics such as communicating with the public, coordinating between applicants and Town Staff, organizational capacity and existing policies and programs. He said Town staff works hard to make the permitting process as smooth as possible for applicants, Boards and Commissions and the public and thanked the Commission for doing its part. He also mentioned valuable training for Conservation Commission and Inland Wetlands Agency members.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

September 16, 2019 – Public Hearing/Business Meeting

MOTION: Mr. Kennedy moved to approve the minutes from the public hearing and business meeting of September 16, 2019. Mr. Bergin seconded the motion and all members voted in favor.

Ms. Ike referred to the vote to extend the meeting past 11 P.M, noting it was at the end of the public hearing, and questioned if it should have been at the beginning of the business meeting. The matter will be looked into.

RECEIPT OF NEW APPLICATIONS:

165 ADAMS ST LLC – Special Exception Modification (2019-098) – Under Art. II, Sec. 16.15.02 (a) and (b) for a walk-in cooler and storage closet on eastern wall (rear) of building and fenced-in back space (poured concrete) running along the property line at 165 Adams Street.

PPF WE 1339 TOLLAND TPKE, LLC – Inland Wetlands Permit (2019-099); Erosion and Sedimentation Control Plan (2019-100); Special Exception Modification (2019-101) – Improve and expand pavement and modify existing circulation pattern to begin transition from a single tenant to a multi-tenant distribution/logistics facility at 1339 Tolland Turnpike.

DEBORA INGRAHAM – Inland Wetlands Permit (2019-102) – Preparation of a crushed stone pad for installation of an 8 ft. x 14 ft. shed at 258 Parker Street.

MANCHESTER HISTORICAL SOCIETY – Historic Zone Site Development Plan (2019-104) – For air conditioning of existing office and display spaces, requiring up to 16 condenser units on the roof at 175 Pine Street.

A discussion was held between Ms. Potocki and Mr. Anderson about plans for Center Springs pond and the Public Improvement Plan, as well as between Mr. Stoppelman and Mr. Anderson about the plans for the Parkade.

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

The Chairman closed the business meeting at 9:50 P.M.

I certify these minutes were adopted on the following date:

October 21, 2019
Date

Eric Prause, Chairman

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