ENFIELD PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES
THURSDAY JULY 27, 2023 – 7:00 PM
ENFIELD TOWN HALL - COUNCIL CHAMBERS
820 ENFIELD STREET - ENFIELD, CT

Call to Order & Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call
Commissioner Petronella took the roll and present were Commissioners Lewis Fiore, Virginia Higley, John Petronella, Kenneth Hilinski and Alternate Commissioner Christian D'Antonio and Nicles Lefakis. Absent was Commissioner Francis Alaimo, Kiran Majmudar and Alternate Commissioner Vinnie Grillo.

Chairman Fiore seated Commissioner D'Antonio and Commissioner Lefakis in Commissioners Alaimo and Majmudar's absences.

Also present were Laurie Whitten, Town Planner, Matt Davis, Assistant Planner, and Rebecca Jones, Recording Secretary.

Approval of Minutes
a. July 13, 2023

Motion to approve July 13, 2023 regular meeting minutes made by Commissioner Higley; seconded by Commissioner DeGray.

Commissioner DeGray clarified that the motion to table PH #3072 – 117 North St made by Commissioner Higley was seconded by herself.

Motion to approve the July 13, 2023 regular meeting minutes amended as stated made by Commissioner DeGray; seconded by Commissioner Higley and approved by a unanimous vote of 7-0-0.

Town Attorney Report
Commissioners are in receipt of a new report as of July 27, 2023.

Motion to move both items under New Business to be heard immediately following Presentations made by Commissioner Higley; seconded by Commissioner DeGray and approved by a unanimous vote of 7-0-0.

Public Communication
None.

Bond Release(s)
a. PH# 3007 – 11 Shaker Road- The Learning Experience

Chairman Fiore confirmed that this is not a public hearing for a bond release, but the file number is related to the original public hearing for this location.

Motion to approve PH# 3007 -11 Shaker Road made by Commissioner Petronella; seconded by Commissioner DeGray and approved unanimously by a roll call vote of 7-0-0.

Presentation
None

New Business

a. **CGS 8-24 – 800-820 Enfield Stret** – Higgins Park improvements and parking lot expansion

This was before the Commission for the band shell previously and the commissioners asked for a conceptual plan. All the requested future and current conceptual plans have been included in what is before the commission this evening. Chairman Fiore noted this must be voted upon before the other items on the agenda related to this project.

Reasons for positive referral include consistency with the 2023 POCD. Commissioner D'Antonio asked for clarification related to the timeline of the CGS referral and subsequent hearing related to this project.

Motion to issue an affirmative report for CGS 8-24 – 800-820 Enfield made by Commissioner Petronella; seconded by Commissioner Lefakis and approved by a unanimous roll call vote of 7-0-0.

b. **CGS 8-24 – 558 Enfield St** – Town lease of land to American Legion for parking lot expansion.

Ms. Whitten shared a GIS map of the property for commissioner's review. Ms. Whitten explained that the American Legion abuts Town property, which is mostly wetlands and swamps. It is not something the town will readily be using. The American Legion have run out of room on their current lot and need space for more parking. They would like to lease the land from the Town of Enfield and the portion is represented in pink on the GIS graphic. Chairman Fiore noted that one of the largest pump stations in town and the town will still have access to the area. Commissioner D'Antonio asked about the land to the south of the parking lot. Ms. Whitten is unsure if it has been leased or is unutilized.

Motion to make positive CGS referral made by Secretary Petronella; seconded by Commissioner Hilinski and approved by a unanimous roll call vote of 7-0-0.

Continued Hearings

a. **PH# 3071 – 210 Moody Rd** – Application for a re-subdivision; Top Knot, LLC, Applicant/Owner; Map 100/Lot 11; I-1 Zone

Motion to re-open the hearing made by Commissioner Higley; seconded by Commissioner DeGray and approved by a unanimous vote of 7-0-0.

Applicant and representatives were present for discussion. A brief review of the scope of the project was provided. The site is 21.2 acres of a partially developed lot. This plan would create 2 additional properties. The applicant is proposing an open space dedication of 9.2 acres. They have put together preliminary specs and are waiting on Town Engineering response.

Chairman Fiore asked about IWWA status. Wetlands did not complete their review and are meeting in early September. There is an automatic extension of the application should the PZC timeline lapse before IWWA acts. This meeting will allow the commissioners time to discuss the open space issue and allow the applicants to adjust their plans accordingly.

Chairman Fiore is looking for conservation easement on the land on the east side near the barn and is not interested in the wetlands on the west side. The Town won't do anything about that and nothing can be developed on it. He is interested in conservation easement and a fee in lieu of for the remaining acreage that is not met by the easement.

Commissioner DeGray asked about the barn and confirmed it will be used for storage. Per Chairman Fiore's request, Mr. Davis explained the difference between open space and a conservation restriction. Chairman Fiore also confirmed there have been no investigation on the property for rare wildlife of endangered species. Commissioner Hilinski asked for an explanation regarding the fee in lieu of process.

The public hearing was opened for comment.

Jeff Mitchell, property owner, spoke for the first time. He feels like all the open space requirements have been met by the engineering firm and does not agree with the fee in lieu of.

James Sakonchick, spoke for the first time. He is representing the interests for a prospective buyer for lot 3. He stated that the zoning requirements allow 66% impervious coverage on a lot of this size. The open space and/or buffer requirement is not impeding overall use. The commission should consider this for economic development.

Chairman Fiore asked staff to opine about the permissibility of discussing a lot that has not yet been acted on or approved. It was decided that Mr. Sakonchick could only speak about the open space portion of the application.

Ms. Whitten shared a portion from the subdivision regulations confirming that it is the commissioners' decision about what is best for the town relating to the open space decision. Secretary Petronella opined that while the current open space offer is not attractive, the developer is trying to add to the tax base and generate business. Commissioner D'Antonio asked about the buffer to the road, which is 50 feet.

Motion to table the public hearing made by Commissioner Higley; seconded by Commissioner DeGray and approved by a unanimous 7-0-0 vote.

b. **PH #3072 – 117 North St -** Application for home occupation, truck parking and earth material storage; Joseph Liquore, Applicant/Owner; Map 93/Lot 15; I-1 Zone

Notice was received from Mr. Liquore's attorney that he has withdrawn this application. Staff and Chairman Fiore are discussing a possible executive session in September. No vote to remove is required as this has been officially withdrawn.

c. **PH# 3070ZA - 140-148 Hazard Ave** – Application to amend Section 5.50.1 regarding driveways in the BP Zone; Trinity Health of New England – Johnson Memorial Hospital, Applicant. **(continued to September 14, 2023)**

New Public Hearings

a. **PH# 3073 – 329 Hazard Ave** – Application to convert single family home to a two-family home and offices; Our Town Home Buyers, LLC; Applicant/Owner; Map 83/Lot 256; HVBL Zone

Secretary Petronella read the legal notice into the record. Applicant/owner was present for discussion. The property is a historic home that was previously illegally converted to a multi-family home. The current plan is to convert the property into a two family with office space in the front of the building. Ms. Whitten opined that this project meets the intent of the Hazardville overlay zone and requirements of the BL zone.

Commissioner DeGray thanked the applicant for their thoroughness in their application. Chairman Fiore recognized Georgeianna Driver, Assistant Town Planner, for her work on this application. Secretary Petronella recommended waiving the site plan requirement for this application. Commissioner D'Antonio asked about the expansion of parking and parking landscape requirements. Ms. Whitten shared updated comments from the Engineering Department. The parking expansion would be loose gravel. The application indicated that the lot would be striped, but it was suggested by Secretary Petronella to add 4 foot sign posts with unit numbers.

Motion to replace site specific condition 6 to read "parking spaces will be made identifiable via a numbered sign at the head of each parking stall" made by Commissioner Higley; seconded by Commissioner Hilinski and approved by a unanimous vote of 7-0-0.

Commissioner D'Antonio asked about additional soundproofing between units, which is within the purview of the Building Department.

Motion to close the public hearing made by Commissioner DeGray; seconded by Commissioner Lefakis and approved by a unanimous 7-0-0 vote.

Motion to waive the site plan requirement made by Secretary Petronella; seconded by Commissioner Hilinski and approved by a unanimous 7-0-0 vote.

Motion to approve PH# 3073 – 329 Hazard Avenue with conditions including the previously amended condition 6 made by Secretary Petronella; seconded by Commissioner Hilinski and approved unanimously by a roll call vote of 7-0-0.

b. **XSU# 3075 – 800 - 820 Enfield St** – Application to improve Higgins Park with expanded parking, lighting and exercise stations; Town of Enfield; Applicant/Owner; Map 28/Lot 113 and Map 29/Lot 2; TD-1 + BG

Applicant representative was present for discussion. The current site plan was shared. A map was shared that showed the future tree coverage across the site. The driveway stub located near the entrance to the old Higgins School would be replaced with clay brick paver patio and a forced seat wall with under glow LED lights and ornamental trees. There will also be a copper beech tree planted. The crosswalk will get shifted and a new sidewalk will be added by the driveway. Chairman Fiore confirmed vehicles can still access the lower parking lot via the North Main Street entrance. Drainage systems will be left alone, and underground detention systems will be utilized going forward.

A gentler slope will be created between Enfield Express and the parking lot in order to get from the upper parking lot to the lower parking lot. There will be a sidewalk that will connect this all on the field side and another sidewalk that will take you from Town Hall behind Coldwell Banker to Enfield Express. There is a proposed employee patio to be installed at Enfield Express. Some striping will be fixed and there will be regrading in front of the band shell. A drain will also be installed to address the standing water that is currently surrounding the band shell.

Entry sign detailed was shared. The archways from Higgins School will be recreated in the creation of the sign. The sign is made of concrete and brick masonry with granite capstones. Per the representative, there is some 'other equipment' that will be allocated for the park including fiber optics and security. No further explanation regarding the security was given. Commissioner Hilinski asked about possible encroachments for the parking on the north side. The curb shown on the map is not a new barrier but is being recreated. There will be more parking added at the Enfield Express but the short parking spaces are being replaced and adding a landscape island.

Commissioner Lefakis confirmed that the Town does not own Coldwell Banker yet. The dumpster will be located much farther away from the building. Chairman Fiore confirmed no more EV stalls will be added although the Town received a grant for either 7 or 9 more EV stalls. He confirmed with staff this is not to be considered new construction but renovation. Ms. Whitten requested clarification related to the removal of trees per a specific map as one plan

indicated that trees would be removed, and another indicated the trees would remain. She also asked about the access from the Subway Plaza. She also asked about the flow of traffic at Enfield Express.
Commissioner D'Antonio opined that there was little thought put into the preservation of green space. The applicant representative reviewed the proposed green space additions and noted that it was the Town's original goal to maximize parking for Enfield Express and Town Hall. Commissioner D'Antonio further opined that trees in the middle of a parking lot are not of the same quality as those in a park. It was then revealed that it was requested that the space needs to be preserved for yearly fireworks and other events. Planting trees in the middle of the park would hinder these events. Chairman Fiore noted that the project should not revolve around a once yearly event and confirmed the architect received guidance from the Town related to this aspect of the project. Secretary Petronella asked about the proximity of the band shell to the abutting apartment complex. The band shell location was put close to the parking lot for ease of access for bands and their equipment.

Ms. Whitten noted that the firm was hired to do the engineering plan for the parking lot and opined it was not their task to focus on tree relocation. She expressed concern related to the three drive aisles at Enfield Express. Commissioner D'Antonio asked what the goal was for parking, which was to create as much parking as possible.

The public hearing was opened for comment. No one spoke for or against this application.

Motion to close the public hearing made by Commissioner Higley; seconded by Commissioner DeGray and approved by a unanimous vote of 7-0-0.

Motion to approve XSU# 3075 – 800 - 820 Enfield St made by Secretary Petronella; seconded by Hilinski and approved by a roll call vote of 6-1-0.

Old Business

a. **PH# 3063 – 25 Hazard Ave-** Application for a site plan modification and freestanding canopies; Chick-fil-A, Inc., and Paramount Commons at Enfield, LLC, Applicants; Paramount Commons at Enfield, LLC, Owner; Map 45/Lot 8; BR Zone. (PH closed 7/13/23)

Staff prepared draft conditions. Chairman Fiore noted this application has been a long time coming and thanked staff for their dedication in completing this application.

Motion to approve PH# 3063 – 25 Hazard Ave with 30 listed conditions made by Secretary Petronella; seconded by Commissioner Hilinski and approved by a roll call vote of 7-0-0.

b. **SPR #1918 – 161 Post Office Road –** Application for retail development; Garrett Homes, LLC applicant and Mitchell Wojnar, owner; Map 68 Lot 232; BL Zone.

Applicant and representatives were present for discussion. Chairman Fiore asked if the re-subdivision paperwork has been filed with the town, which it is in process. He opined if the lot does not yet exist, this application should be denied without prejudice and heard at a later date. Applicant attorney asked if the commissioner could discuss some concerns in order to revise their application appropriately. The largest remaining item is the deliveries and the width of the driveway. The entrance radius has been reduced, the drive aisle widths have been reduced and sidewalk has been added along the front of the store. Chairman Fiore confirmed with staff that this is the first time they have seen the most recent plans.

Revised plans were reviewed with the commission. Changes have been made to the drive aisles. The truck turning radiuses were discussed. The turning movement will be contained within the drive aisles. Chairman Fiore noted that there is no confirmed store in the location yet and the type of truck traffic can change dramatically given the type of tenant. Applicant attorney confirmed this application will be a Dollar General store. The tenant owns 80 other Dollar

General stores across the region and has dealt with the drive aisle issues in other locations. Applicant stated that he is unsure as to how he is supposed to regulate the size of the delivery trucks other than making the request to Dollar General themselves. Chairman Fiore provided other design options aside from those proposed by the applicant. He opined that it is a cookie cutter building and remains concerned regarding truck traffic. Commissioner Hilinski expressed concerns about traffic during dismissal time. Traffic report was given but was done on a Saturday and needs to be done on a weekday afternoon between 2:00 and 3:30 pm. Bigger trucks will be delivering once per week per the applicant. Mr. Davis noted that there has been no contact with the applicant since the last PZC meeting. He also offered alternative options to the parking lot concerns. Chairman Fiore opined that given the amount of changes requested, that the application should be denied without prejudice and re-filed. The applicant decided to withdraw his application and re-submit.

Other Business
None.

Enforcement Reports
None.

Correspondence
None.

Commissioner's Correspondence
Commissioner DeGray asked about the closure of TireMax on Enfield Street.

Director of Planning Report
There has been discussion about Pizza Palace at the last Town Council meeting. It was alluded to that PZC approved parking on the side streets and state highway. PZC does not approve anything off-site unless it is part of the Thompsonville regulations or the abutting property. Chairman Fiore stated that off-street parking was never allowed to be counted towards his parking. There will be a possible executive session related to the 117 North Road held.

Opportunities/Unresolved Issues
None.

Administrative Approval Report
None.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn made by Commissioner Higley; seconded by Commissioner Degray and approved by a unanimous vote of 7-0-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:50 PM.

Prepared by: Rebecca Jones

Respectfully Submitted,

John Petronella, Secretary