

ENFIELD PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
LIVE REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES
THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 14, 2023 – 7:00 PM
ENFIELD TOWN HALL - COUNCIL CHAMBERS
820 ENFIELD STREET - ENFIELD, CT

RECEIVED
ENFIELD TOWN CLERK
2023 SEP 18 AM 11:05
Sharon M. Bailey

Call to Order & Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call

Secretary 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 Linda DeGray, Francis Alaimo, and Alternate Commissioner Vinnie Grillo.

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

Also present were Laurie Whitten, Planner, and Rebecca Jones, Recording Secretary.

Approval of Minutes

- a. July 27, 2023

Motion to approve July 27, 2023 regular meeting minutes made by Commissioner Higley; seconded by Commissioner Lefakis and approved by a unanimous vote of 6-0-0.

Town Attorney Report

The commissioners are in receipt of the August 24, 2023 report.

Executive Session – Discussion on pending litigation

- a. Michael Parsons, et al. v. Planning and Zoning Commission, et al. (35 Bacon Road) Docket #LND-HHD-CV22-6154315-S.
- b. Planning and Zoning Commission, et al. v. Joseph C. Liquore, et al. (117 North Street) Docket #LND-HHD-CV19-6118652-S

Chairman Fiore noted that there were no decisions or votes were taken during this executive session.

Public Communication

Nikki Price, 1324 Enfield Street, changes to Enfield zoning ordinances were written by the commission themselves with workshops for residents to attend and give input. Now it is all done in private by staff. She asked if there will be workshops, and when the zoning ordinances are drafted, will they be given to the public for review and comment.

Chairman Fiore noted that they will not be updated by this Commission, and they will be taken up in January by the new commission. Public workshops will be held but any zoning ordinance updates have been put on the table due to various limitations.

Bond Release(s)

None.

Presentation

None.

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 (**CONTINUED TO SEPTEMBER 28, 2023**)
- b. **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. (**WITHDRAWN**)

Motion to accept withdrawal of PH #3070ZA made by Commissioner Higley; seconded by Commissioner Lefakis and approved unanimously by a 6-0-0 vote.

New Public Hearings

- a. **XMA# 23-01 – 5 Taylor Road and Map 110/Lot 3** – Application for a Zone Change from R-33 to BL; Town of Enfield, Owner/Applicant; Map 110, Lots 3&4; R-33 Zone.

Secretary Petronella read the legal notice into the record. Ms. Whitten reviewed the location of the site. The Town is seeking to rezone Nathan Hale School, which is 7.83 acres on two properties. It is currently zoned R33 and the BL zone will provide for a larger variety of uses. The Board of Education has no desire to utilize this building and the Town wants to put this back on the grand list. It is Ms. Whitten's opinion that this meets the POCD requirements in proposing mixed use and improvement of facility disposition plan. The Brownfield assessment includes redevelopment options. Contaminants have been found inside the building. Town Manager Ellen Zoppo-Sassu submitted a memo to the Commission for review.

Chairman Fiore expressed surprise about the Brownfield status. He confirmed with Ms. Whitten that the Town was notified of the Brownfield status the previous week. He also mentioned that another office has gone out and enlisted UConn to take a re-evaluation of the site. Further, Chairman Fiore would rather review the assessment before making the zone change. The balance is still owed on the building. The zone change seems premature and would rather wait for the Brownfield assessment results.

Commissioner Higley asked about the zoning of the Taylor Road plaza. Secretary Petronella confirmed that the \$101,000.00 balance is due to be paid off within the next year per the fee schedule.

The public hearing was opened for comment.

Susan Barry, 6 Taylor Road, spoke for the first time. Her home is zoned R33. All other lots are R33. It is too premature we don't know enough about the studies. We do not know the status of loan forgiveness and better alternatives. Subdivided instead of an abandoned building in 10 years. Beg to differ with the properties adjacent. Taylor Court separates the plaza from the neighborhood.

Karen LaPlante, 166 North Maple Street, spoke in opposition representing the Conservation Commission. She read a statement prepared by the Conservation Commission. Portions of the POCD were shared related to

amenities. There is a concern about increased truck traffic from industrial facilities in Enfield and East Longmeadow that will congest the area further.

Robert Buczowski, 21 Francis Avenue, spoke for the first time. He is against the zone change. He recommended other ways to develop the property including a pool, park or some type of housing comparable to other homes in Green Manor. He is also against it becoming a “Welfare development”. He feels that BL in residential areas does not work well, which is like the Jimmys Pub and Francis Avenue situation. He wants to increase the grand list to increase tax revenue while preserving neighborhood quality.

Zach Zannoni, 6 Howard Street, spoke in support of the application. He explained that this is a multi-step process. The BL zone is a transitional area, similar to Hazard Avenue area. He believes Nathan Hale is currently a dump and is not meeting its fullest potential. He feels that moving toward commercial is important to consider. The amount of work to remediate the site to build single families likely won’t happen especially with the State’s push toward multifamily housing and mixed-use developments.

Gretchen Pfeiffer-Hall, 4 Somers Road, speaking as an individual. She lives 2 miles down the road and wants to agree with the speaker who lives next to the school. She believes that there is a misrepresentation as to how this property combines with properties on Hazard Avenue. There are escarpments that acts as a good buffer between that residential neighborhood and the businesses on Hazard Ave. She also noted that the Brownfield Assessment sounds scarier than it is. There was old material used when the building was constructed, which is now considered hazardous waste.

Commissioner Hilinski and was impressed with the upkeep of the neighborhood. It doesn’t make sense to have a building plopped in the middle of all that. Business area is not in the Taylor Road area, it’s on the Hazard Ave side. Chairman Fiore shared a statement from other town staff related to the Brownfield assessment.

Robert Buczowski, 21 Francis Avenue, spoke for the second time. He asked if he could address the type of housing that may be put in there. Single family housing is a good use for this. Just because State of Connecticut is pushing multi-family units, do we want to be like Hartford, Bridgeport or Bristol? Parks are much more desirable than that alternative.

Susan Barry, 6 Taylor Road, spoke for the second time. She did want to touch on the fact that Scitico Plaza has empty storefronts on Hazard Avenue already. She is also curious about wetlands surrounding that area and if IWWA has been consulted. She never sees police patrolling the property, which would help deter vandals.

Motion to close the public hearing made by Commissioner Higley; seconded by Commissioner Hilinski and approved by a 6-0-0 vote.

Chairman Fiore shared his thoughts. He is against the zone change at this time. He is bothered because this is the ‘cart before the horse’ scenario. There is an outstanding balance still owed to the state. There were many good comments from residents mixed use is the preference of the State of Connecticut at this time. He opined a good option would be to deny without prejudice. The town can bring it back when these studies are done. Another department needs to review how to do this in the correct way and bring it back to the Commission.

Secretary Petronella agreed with Chairman Fiore’s comments. He does not understand what the town’s urgency with this zone change is. He also suggested that they look at what St Adalbert’s and turned out to be a great project. Why can’t the same happen here? Commissioner Higley recommended that the town take a step back and ensure it’s in compliance with POCD and issues presented are resolved. Commissioner Lefakis noted that in reviewing the map, it looks like a residential area.

Motion to approve XMA# 23-01 – 5 Taylor Road and Map 110/Lot 3 made by Secretary Petronella; seconded by Commissioner Lefakis. was denied without prejudice unanimously by a roll call vote of 1-5-0.

Old Business

None.

New Business

a. CGS 8-24 – 40 Moody Road – Department of Public Works Site Improvements

DPW would like to add a fueling station to their facility. Maps were provided for review. Additional parking will be added, and the traffic flow will be changing. Commissioner D'Antonio asked if it will come back for the site plan review, which it will. He confirmed that there has been an increase in the town fleet necessitating this project.

Motion to approve CGS 8-24 – 40 Moody Road made by Secretary Petronella; seconded by Commissioner Hilinski and approved by a unanimous vote of 6-0-0.

**b. CGS 8-24 – 123 N. Maple St – Proposed concession stand and Storage container at the Annex. -
WITHDRAWN**

Other Business

a. PH# 3049 — 92 Main St – Request for Extension

Mr. Salas approached the Planning Department asking for an extension. Ms. Whitten noted that since the pandemic, there have been several supply chain delays causing requests for extensions. The Commission may want to look at extending the timeline for special use permit.

Motion to approve a 60-day extension from this date in relation to PH #3049 made by Commissioner Higley; seconded by Commissioner Hilinski and approved by a unanimous vote of 6-0-0.

Enforcement Reports

None.

Correspondence

None.

Commissioner's Correspondence

Chairman Fiore reminded residents that commissions in general have little control over the placement of solar farms. He recommended that anyone concerned reach out to their state representative.

Director of Planning Report

Ms. Whitten shared the timeline for special use permits and recommended it may be time to address the timing of the necessary steps in this process, including filing of mylars. Chairman Fiore opined 120 days may not be long enough. Commissioner Higley asked if staff could review what surrounding towns do. CRCOG will be presenting at the September 28th meeting. Ms. Whitten reviewed continuing education hours.

Opportunities/Unresolved Issues

None.

Administrative Approval Report

None.

Receipt of applications

None.

Adjournment

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

The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 PM.

Prepared by: Rebecca Jones

Respectfully Submitted,

John Petronella, Secretary