

**GLASTONBURY TOWN COUNCIL  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2020**

The Glastonbury Town Council with Town Manager, Richard J. Johnson, in attendance, held a Regular Meeting at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom video conferencing. The video was broadcast in real time and via a live video stream.

**1. Roll Call.**

***Council Members***

Mr. Thomas P. Gullotta, Chairman  
Mr. Lawrence Niland, Vice Chairman  
Dr. Stewart Beckett III  
Ms. Mary LaChance  
Ms. Deborah A. Carroll  
Mr. Jacob McChesney  
Mr. Kurt P. Cavanaugh  
Ms. Lillian Tanski  
Mr. Whit C. Osgood

**a. Pledge of Allegiance** *Led by Mr. McChesney*

**2. Public Comment.**

Ms. Carroll read the written comment received, as listed on the Town website:

***CJ Mozzochi of 227 Hebron Avenue***, stated that the CDC cannot determine whether or not a person contracted the virus while in school or somewhere else. Therefore, he rejects Dr. Bookman's statement that contact tracing indicates that the viral exposure is happening primarily at home, not school. Mr. Mozzochi concluded that all schools in Town should close immediately, until respected medical scientists say it is the proper time to reopen them.

Mr. Niland opened the floor for comments from attendees.

***Bruce Bowman of 62 Morgan Drive***, commented regarding the proposed affordable housing plan. Specifically, regarding the ad hoc steering committee, he asked that a seat (or seats) is offered to community stakeholders who are not currently serving on a Town commission, committee, or board.

***Anne Bowman of 62 Morgan Drive***, also appreciates that the Town is moving forward with a plan to create an affordable housing plan. She reiterated Mr. Bowman's concerns, stating that she believes that such a qualified person exists in town who can serve on the steering committee.

**3. Special Reports. None**

**4. Old Business. None**

**5. New Business.**

**a. Discussion and consensus on budget schedule FY21/22.**

Mr. Johnson explained that this budget schedule mirrors last year's schedule. Dr. Beckett expressed a preference for Wednesday night meetings. There was a consensus to select that day of the week to hold meetings. Mr. Niland added the March 17 date as their tentative final budget meeting. There was a consensus on that, too.

**b. Discussion and possible action concerning Capital Improvement Criteria.**

Mr. Johnson explained that this document went through a major rewrite a few years ago. The document was reviewed by the BOF and received no comments or recommended changes. There were no comments, changes, or objections from the Council.

**c. Discussion and possible action to schedule public information hearing on proposed location of a communication tower on Town-owned property off Oakwood Drive.**

*Motion by:* Ms. Carroll

*Seconded by:* Dr. Beckett

*BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby schedules a public information hearing for 8:00 p.m. on Tuesday, January 12, 2021 through Zoom Video Conferencing to hear public comment on potential use of the Town-owned property at 311 Oakwood Drive for construction and operation of a communications tower, as described in a report by the Town Manager dated November 25, 2020.*

*Result:* Motion passed unanimously {9-0-0}.

**d. Action to appoint members to Steering Committee for Affordable Housing Plan.**

Mr. Johnson explained that a public act, now statute, requires cities and towns to update a new affordable housing plan by June 2022. He noted that the steering committee is simply to help guide the public hearing process. The Council appointed councilmembers Tanski and Carroll to join the Steering Committee. Mr. Gullotta stated that he would also like somebody from the general public to join. The Council agreed to leave it up to Ms. Tanski and Ms. Carroll to find such a volunteer by January 2021. Mr. Gullotta explained that if nobody from the general public comes forward, then nobody from the public will be selected.

**6. Consent Calendar.**

**7. Town Manager's Report.**

Mr. Johnson reviewed the most recent COVID-19 statistics, noting that, as of November 19, Glastonbury is at the red level, along with most of the rest of the state, which continues to see percentages move up. The ribbon cutting ceremony for the newly completed trailhead is this Saturday at 9:00 A.M. in the boardwalk area. Mr. Johnson also provided the Council with letters of appreciation for Town staff. He then explained that there was an opportunity to refinance

clean water bonds when the state opened a window to refinance those bonds. Glastonbury is projecting savings of over \$850,000 in that funding over the next 10 years. He also noted that this was the shortest rating call from Moody's, at just 12 minutes. He provided a copy of the tax insert, which will be distributed in a few weeks. He then stated that the Minnechaug Golf Course just broke the 27,000-round mark.

Mr. Niland noted that a resident suggested the construction of a sidewalk or crosswalk at the turn of the road by the new trailhead, in order to increase safety, especially during high traffic hours. Mr. Johnson said that is a good idea and will look into it. Mr. Osgood asked how far west the town's easement goes on the Main Street section of the sidewalk that is yet to be completed. Mr. Johnson stated that that is a state road, but he will look at the plan and come back with more information. Ms. LaChance asked if there were any updates on the water issue. Mr. Johnson stated that the consultants are moving forward with it, and he expects to have that information in January 2021. Mr. Cavanaugh asked about the For Lease sign outside of Chili's. Mr. Johnson replied that he has to check and see if they are planning on moving forward with Edge Fitness or not. Mr. Gullotta stated that three trees were wiped out a year ago from a storm. He asked when new trees will be planted. Mr. Johnson explained that they settled it for the maximum insurance, but he has to double check about the new trees.

**8. Committee Reports.**  
**a. Chairman's Report.**

Mr. Gullotta urged everyone to practice social distancing, to wear masks, and to exercise caution in the fight against the recent surge of COVID-19.

**b. MDC.**            *None*

**c. CRCOG.**

Dr. Beckett explained that they had a meeting a couple of weeks ago where they mainly discussed Hartford 400, which will celebrate Hartford's 400th anniversary in a few years. There are some major infrastructure proposals for reconstruction at I-91 and I-84 and traffic flow. He hopes that the public takes a look at the meeting proposals and lets their thoughts be known.

**d. Commission on Racial Justice and Equity – Report.**

Ms. Carroll explained that, this coming Monday, the commission will hold their second meeting. They are currently working to establish good practices and parameters within the group, and they need data from constituents both inside and outside of town. They have received one proposal from a local market research firm and are in the process of getting more quotes. They will update the Council when they determine who they are best served to partner with.

Mr. Osgood asked if it is appropriate to have a commission that the Council has not approved. Mr. Cavanaugh added that the Council just appointed a steering committee, and it seems appropriate to appoint this commission, as well. Dr. Beckett remarked that the public deserves to know what is going on and who is on the commission, so they should publicize it. Ms. Carroll agreed to send information on the list of commission members to councilmembers by tomorrow morning. She then requested that similar comments of concern be brought up in the moment, like

at the last Council meeting, so that another month is not wasted. Ms. LaChance stated that she does not want to slow down this process any further, and she trusts Ms. Carroll and Ms. Tanski's judgment. Mr. McChesney also trusts them and their organizational process and thanked them for their hard work. Mr. Gullotta summarized that the Council will vote on the issue in January and introduce the selected members at the Council's following meeting.

**9. Communications.**

**10. Minutes.**

**a. Minutes of November 10, 2020 Regular Meeting.**

*Motion by:* Ms. Carroll

*Seconded by:* Dr. Beckett

*Result:* Minutes were approved {8-0-1}. Dr. Beckett abstained, since he did not attend the meeting.

**11. Appointments and Resignations. None**

**12. Executive Session. None**

Meeting recessed from 7:45 P.M. until 8:00 P.M.

**PUBLIC HEARING AND ACTION ON PUBLIC HEARING – 8:00 P.M.**

**NO 1 APPROPRIATION AND TRANSFER OF \$400,000 FROM THE  
GENERAL FUND-UNASSIGNED FUND BALANCE TO CAPITAL  
PROJECTS-SELF CONTAINED BREATHING APPARATUS.**

Mr. Johnson explained that this is a proposal to replace the fire apparatuses for the Fire Department. By proceeding this calendar year, Glastonbury will achieve a savings of \$80,000. He noted that the BOF gave the action a favorable recommendation. Dr. Beckett stated that the Council originally bought these apparatuses all at the same time under a grant, so they are all expiring at the same time. Ideally, they would replace them a few at a time, but if they cannot, he suggested the Council establishes a sinking fund. Mr. Johnson stated that the BOF asked the same question. They will probably establish some type of phased replacement. With no comments from the public, the public hearing was closed.

*Motion by:* Ms. Carroll

*Seconded by:* Dr. Beckett

*BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby approves a \$400,000 transfer from the General Fund-Unassigned Fund Balance to Capital Projects-Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus for purchase of self-contained breathing apparatus for the Fire Service, as described in a report by the Town Manager dated November 25, 2020 and as recommended by the Board of Finance.*

*Result:* Motion passed unanimously {9-0-0}.

**NO 2 ACTION ON PROPOSED TEXT AMENDMENTS TO THE BUILDING-ZONE REGULATIONS REGARDING BUILDING HEIGHTS IN RESIDENTIAL, COMMERCIAL, TOWN CENTER, TOWN CENTER MIXED USE, AND ADAPTIVE REDEVELOPMENT ZONES AND PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE OFFICIAL ZONING MAP.**

Mr. Johnson explained the history behind this action, noting that the ad hoc group reviewed this matter and came back to the Council with a series of recommendations in January 2019. The Town Plan and Zoning Commission reviewed this, as well. He asked the Council, does the proposal satisfy what they hoped to achieve when they started this process?

Mr. Niland opened the floor up to the public.

*Carl Benker of 55 Hickory Drive*, is concerned about increasing building heights, stating that a small part of the PBD located in the southeastern part of town is not an appropriate place for high height buildings. A potential fourth floor in the town center zone would be a step in the wrong direction of what this town should pursue. He does not want Glastonbury's historic, rural downtown to become commercialized like West Hartford's downtown.

*Ceil Hansen of 16 Medford Street*, stated that she moved to Glastonbury from West Hartford almost five years ago because of the character of this town, which this action would threaten to change. Glastonbury is a treasure and adding more business-like buildings in the center of town would change its local feeling. She urged the Council to not change the character of Glastonbury.

Ms. Carroll read a written comment received, as listed on the Town website:

*Amy Luzi of 72 Northview Drive*, stated that increasing the building height on Hebron Avenue is not in the town's best interest. Glastonbury is not West Hartford. She suggested, instead, the developer place another story on the parking structure to solve the ever-growing parking problem in town. She also finds Glastonbury quaint and charming, and believes that its contextual feel should be embraced and maintained. Downtown is not an appropriate location for four story buildings, and she would even challenge that three stories are too high for Hebron Avenue.

With no further public comments, Mr. Niland closed the public hearing.

Dr. Beckett stated that all of those areas mentioned in the public comments are not included in this proposal. Mr. Johnson explained that the number of stories does not change. In regard to Mr. Benker's question about the small corner in the PBD zone, the only proposed change there is going from 35 feet to 35.5 feet in height. Mr. Osgood stated that what is proposed is consistent with what all of the public speakers have suggested. He also stated that it makes sense to regularize the heights of building stories in town.

Ms. Tanski agreed with that suggestion, adding that there is no good reason to have town zoning regulations be more complicated than necessary. She addressed one misconception that she heard from the public comment, clarifying that she has never been approached by a developer to pitch a project. The Council hears about proposals at the same time as the public, during public hearings, and there is no agenda to feed the pockets of developers. She explained that their differences are based on planning and what the vision of Glastonbury should be. She is in favor of preserving farm

spaces by having smart, vibrant business development in the town center, but this proposal does not address its original intended code.

Ms. LaChance also agreed about standardizing the floor height. Outside of that, however, she does not like any of the proposed changes. She countered Mr. Osgood's commentary about the public comment, stating that it was painted with a broad brush. She believes that this proposal would open up the town to creep, which could eventually change the town's character. She is not willing to sell out the character of Glastonbury for a few more tax dollars.

Mr. Niland is skeptical that they would achieve their goals with this proposal. He noted that they have not had a single person from the public express their support for these changes. This action could have unintended consequences that could cause irrevocable harm to the character of the town. He also explained that the COVID-19 situation has made a lot of buildings in town vacant, so they are in no rush to approve this action. The affordable housing issue can be combined with the newly formed steering committee.

Dr. Beckett clarified that he originally proposed this action with the intention of creating a walkable distance to the library, like other towns have, as a possibility for affordable housing. However, two years later, it came up that they do not have places for so many different things. He noted that if this proposal does not pass, he is fine with that. Ms. Carroll stated that the consistency and story heights are the only logical pieces of this proposal. They have a lot of vacant space in town and new office spaces are being built, so there is no shortage of available business space right now. They need to preserve the character of Glastonbury, and this proposal does not speak to that. She also agreed with Mr. Niland that this is the wrong vehicle for the affordable housing piece.

Mr. McChesney stated that no one in town has been enthusiastic about this, so the Council should not continue with this proposal. He agreed that this idea stemmed from Dr. Beckett's admirable goal of increasing affordable housing in town, and that discussion should continue. He agreed with other councilmembers that the steering committee is the proper place for that conversation to be held. He also agreed with Ms. LaChance that creep is a concern they need to be hyper aware of. The Council should only make a change if it is necessary.

Mr. Cavanaugh echoed Ms. Tanski's comments about the developers. He also stated that if the Council continues with this proposal, they are going to have three different kinds of Main Streets. He then reiterated his opposition to holding this public hearing via Zoom, stating that if they had held off on the meeting to discuss it in-person, they would have heard from a lot more than just three speakers. He agreed with other councilmembers about equalizing the heights, but he has concerns about the other parts of the motion.

**Motion by:** Ms. Carroll

**Seconded by:** Dr. Beckett

*BE IT RESOLVED, the Glastonbury Town Council hereby approves amendments to the Building Zone Regulations as follows:*

*Text Amendments: Sections of the Building-Zone Regulations regarding building heights: 4.1.9, 4.2.9, 4.3.9, 4.4.9, 4.5.9, 4.6.10, 4.7.10, 4.8.10, 4.13.6e, 4.14.10, 4.15.10, 4.16.3b-3, 4.16.4.c, 4.17.2 (d) and 4.18.4e. These amendments also include a new section, 4.19 - Planned Business and Development Overlay Zone.:*

- 1) *Establish 14.25 feet per floor throughout all zones;*
  - 2) *Increase permitted floors from 2.5 to 3 floors in Planned Travel Zone;*
  - 3) *Increase the permitted number of floors from 2.5 stories to 4 stories for all permitted uses in the Planned Employment and Planned Commerce zones;*
  - 4) *Establish Overlay Zone in the Planned Business and Development Zone (North Main Street area) and increase the number of permitted floors in the PBD Overlay Zone from 2.5 to 3;*
- Zoning Map: Amend Zoning Map to establish a Planned Business Development Overlay Zone to include the following Main Street properties: 3039, 3040, 3041, 3025, Lot W-2, 3017, 3011, 2997, 3000, 2963, Lot W-10A, 2955, 2941, 2915, Lot W-14, 2952, 2944, 2928, 2934, 2900, 2875, 2865, 2855, 2851, 2847, 2839, 2833-2837, 2831 and 2838-2868;*

*all as described in a report by the Town Manager dated November 25, 2020 and as recommended by the Ad Hoc Working Group and Town Plan and Zoning Commission. Said amendments shall be effective January 4, 2021.*

**Motion by:** Mr. McChesney

**Seconded by:** Mr. Cavanaugh

*BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby amends the motion to exclude all portions except the equalization of the floor heights.*

**Result:** Motion to amend the motion passed {8-1-0}. Mr. Osgood voted against.

**Result:** Amended motion passed {8-1-0}. Mr. Osgood voted against.

Meeting adjourned at 9:05 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

**Lilly Torosyan**

**Lilly Torosyan**  
**Recording Clerk**

**Thomas Gullotta**  
**Chairman**