

**GLASTONBURY TOWN COUNCIL  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 26, 2021**

The Glastonbury Town Council with Town Manager, Richard J. Johnson, in attendance, held a Regular Meeting at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of Town Hall at 2155 Main Street, with an option for attendance through 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  
Ms. Deborah A. Carroll  
Mr. Whit Osgood {excused}  
Dr. Stewart Beckett III  
Ms. Mary LaChance  
Mr. Kurt P. Cavanaugh  
Mr. Jacob McChesney  
Ms. Lillian Tanski

**a. Pledge of Allegiance** *Led by Dr. Beckett*

**2. Public Comment.**

***Roger Emerick of 580 Hopewell Road***, has formally filed an objection to the demolition of the historic Main Street buildings.

***Chris Haaf of 39 Strickland Street***, who is running for Council, spoke about the recent public forum held by TALK (Truth in Action with Love and Kindness), where he received a question about MIRA waste disposal. He believes that the single-stream method is not a good method. He noted that while this is a regional issue which the state has to solve, the Town should commit money towards educating residents on things like composting at home. He also stated that what happened with John Cavanna at the forum was wrong, and the organizers owe him an apology. Mr. Haaf then spoke to the topic of preservation of historic buildings, noting that the Town's efforts to save these buildings started way too late. He is in support of a village district.

***Corey Turner of 57 Fern Street***, and owner of Turner Home Improvement Contractors, LLC., stated that, initially, he was against the creation of a village district because of the concerns he had experienced with village districts in other towns. However, after more reflection and research, he is now in favor of a village district in Glastonbury. During the TPZ meeting, concern was expressed over the fact that there are currently no design guidelines. There was also

discussion about possibly expanding the ADRC (architectural design review committee) to the rest of town. He recommends that the Council refers the ADRC to conduct an architectural review of the Town Center Zone, and then allows them to write the guidelines before any discussion is had on changing zoning regulations. While he noted that the Main Street/Hebron Avenue proposal will not be affected by any forthcoming changes, he seeks a more well-thought-out process to make sure there are no unintended consequences going forward.

**Robert Hale of 832 Hopewell Road**, noted that in the minutes of the June 22, 2021 meeting, John Cavanna was misidentified as a ‘former’ Hartford Police Officer. He also noted that Sergeant Cavanna was guarding the President of the United States at the time of the TALK forum, which is why he was unable to attend. Mr. Hale then spoke to his objection to the demolition of the historic buildings on Main Street. During the Council’s last meeting, Mr. Cavanaugh proposed that the demolition delay ordinance be changed from 90 days to 120 days. He expects that would meet pushback from developers. Mr. Hale also noted that in one of his two letters sent to the Building Official, he suggested that the ordinance be amended to require that the applicant provide the address of the landowner and landowner’s agent or applicant.

**Ken Merrifield of 5 Willow Brook Drive**, lives off Spring Street and is in favor of the sidewalk construction to be discussed during tonight’s public hearing. He suggested that the Town ensures that there is adequate lighting for safety.

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

**Barbara Clannin of 308 Spring St. Ext.**, opposes the demolition of the buildings at 2277, 2289, and 2389 Main Street, Glastonbury. She would like to be included if a court of appeal is submitted to prevent these historic buildings from being demolished.

**Audrey Quinlan of 90 Candlelight Drive**, stated that historical buildings are part of town heritage. She asked that the Council save this heritage.

Mr. Niland opened the floor for comments via Zoom:

**Jill Durall of 73 Shagbark Road**, stated that there has been a departure from good commercial development in town to high density apartments. Traffic and parking issues in the center are constantly worsening. Current architectural designs are not consistent with the designs of previously approved buildings in the Town Center, and she finds them unappealing. Most residents do not desire a highly urbanized town center. While Glastonbury is now far removed from being a farm town, she asked that they attempt to retain town character as much as possible.

**Pamela Lockard of 10 Southgate Drive**, spoke to Mr. Haaf’s comment on education for waste disposal, pointing out that the town has already started doing that. She complimented the IT

department for the town website, where she was able to find an educational video on composting.

**Nicholas Korns of 73 Shagbark Road**, addressed the composition of the Racial Justice and Equity Commission (RJEC), noting that one of the members is not a resident of Glastonbury, which they must be, according to the Town Charter. Because the Commission will likely make recommendations to the Council, he does not believe it appropriate for a non-resident to serve. He asked that the member be replaced by a resident of town.

**Laurie Mazzamurro of 458 Matson Hill Road**, does not understand why the historic buildings on Main Street are to be demolished. Destroying the aesthetic part of town for more apartments seems unnecessary. She is sad to see beauty destroyed and monstrous buildings put up in their places.

**Jennifer Wang of 84 April Drive**, thanked the Council for their support of the resolution on the public health crisis of racism last summer, which led to the creation of the RJEC. The Commission's September 30 meeting had a great turnout, where they discussed the community survey results. She urged the Council to allow Ms. Carroll and Ms. Tanski to continue as co-chairs, to commit their work by the January 2022 deadline.

**David Houston of 8 Buttonball Lane**, stated that he and his wife live in a 200-year-old house, and they are saddened by Glastonbury's loss of its historic character. Many of the buildings north of Hebron Avenue are modern strip malls, and there is too much traffic downtown. Other towns, such as Wethersfield, have taken preservation of historic buildings seriously. He is opposed to the demolition and building of more apartments on Hebron Avenue and Main Street.

### **3. Special Reports.**

#### **a. Historical Society presentation – Curtis/Gaines property.**

Executive Director of the Historical Society, Robert Laughlin, thanked those who have expressed concern about the demolition of four historic buildings downtown which have adapted and survived over centuries. Three members of the Historical Society Board have conducted extensive histories of the buildings in question, which they will present tonight.

Susan Motycka noted that, yesterday, a woman from Palmer, Alaska came to the museum seeking information on her ancestor, Daniel Wright. His family is one of the earliest in Glastonbury. Daniel inherited his grandfather's land, which was desirable acreage in town. In 1740, he built a colonial on 2281 Main Street. Today, it is one of the oldest 18th century buildings in that Main Street area. Mr. Gaines purchased the building in 1830, and in 1849, the Gaines House became a modern hotel with a large public room. In 1921, the post office moved into the Gaines building until 1937. Sam Willard became the next owner. In 1954, Mr. Willard

converted the first floor into two stores. His tenants have always been small specialty shops. Ms. Motycka concluded by stating that it is a wonderful building with a fascinating history. She asked the Council to please save it.

Mike Berdan reviewed the history of the Curtis House, located on 2389 Main Street, which he had previously stated was built sometime between 1889 and 1904. He has since narrowed it down to sometime between 1889 and March 31, 1882, when Judge Gasley died in his home. After his death, his son Henry, who had served as a prosecuting attorney in town and represented Glastonbury in the state assembly, also died and so did his newborn baby. The house was then sold to the Curtises, who had no children, but Minnie continued to live there until her death in 1957. Today, it is owned by Carolyne Gatesy who runs the office center. The home was built in a late Victorian vernacular cottage style. While it is not as architecturally significant as the Wright-Gaines property, nor is it on the National Register of Historic Places, that does not mean that it is expendable. The building contributes to the eclectic, but generally harmonious, Town Center streetscape. Mr. Berdan concluded by stressing that the proposed demolition and conversion to a parking lot is not 'smart growth.'

Steve Bielitz interviewed the merchants of the sites marked for demolition, noting that many of them have worked in Glastonbury for many years. He has heard some people say this is a dead part of town, but they could not find a parking space last Saturday. He spoke with Mrs. Willard, the widow of Mr. Willard, who owned the building from 1954. In passing conversations, Mrs. Willard was told that the site was possibly a part of the Underground Railroad. Mr. Bielitz also interviewed Steve Wilson from Evet's Glass Works, whose section goes down into the tunnel. Mr. Wilson also said that he had been told in conversations that this was part of the Underground Railroad. Nothing was really written about this theory, as the Underground Railroad was a mostly oral tradition, but Mr. Bielitz looked for evidence that the building predates the Civil War. He concluded that the first floor existed prior to 1840. He showed photographs of the building, showing features of the site which predate that year.

Mr. Bielitz noted that he found evidence in the cellar of the Wright-Gaines House to suggest that the building may even predate 1740. A dendrochronology could prove how old the place is. He showed photographs of the site, with beams that date the entrance door of the tunnel to about 1850. He noted that the site stored rum during the Caribbean trade of the 19th century. He hopes to have the state archaeologist check out the site. Mr. Bielitz concluded by stating that people who have no legacy or sense of history have no sense of place. New people come into town, and they see its value. He mourns the loss of many historic buildings throughout town. He asked to save these buildings and to halt all demolitions of buildings constructed prior to 1880.

Mr. Cavanaugh stated that the Glastonbury Town Center redevelopment happened when he was 10 years old. A lot of history was destroyed, and he is glad that their work has generated public

interest. While he hopes it will not happen, he cautioned that there may be a legal battle at some point. He asked that the public stay engaged and continue the good work. Mr. Gullotta echoed Mr. Cavanaugh's request that the public join the Council as they work diligently to try to keep this part of Glastonbury. The idea to preserve other parts of town led to the village district idea. He asked that the public voice their opinions during those public hearings so that developers know what they would like to see, and support, in terms of development.

**PUBLIC HEARING NO 1: ACTION TO CONSIDER PROPOSED NEW SIDEWALK CONSTRUCTION INCLUDING: SPRING STREET, BANTLE ROAD, HOUSE STREET (COMPLETE SECTIONS LINKING TO MULTI-USE TRAILHEAD), MAIN STREET/ROUTE 17 (OVERLOOK ROAD TO ROUTE 17/MAIN/BUTTONBALL).**

*Action was tabled to November 23, 2021 meeting*

Mr. Johnson explained that this year, there were four recommendations for the sidewalk matrix. They sent out notices to the properties abutting each of the routes. He suggested continuing action until the Council receives a report from the TPZ.

Mr. Pennington presented on each section of the proposed new sidewalk construction:

**Spring Street:** Mr. Pennington explained that they propose roughly 1200 feet of new sidewalk on the south side of Spring Street. Many minor details will be integrated into the plan. Grades throughout are relatively flat, so there is no need for retaining walls or extensive grading. It is a standard construction otherwise and requires no utility relocation. Pavement is not centered in the right of way, so they request statements from five property owners: four of the easements are in place, and they await a response from the fifth. If the easement is not acquired, the walk will be closer to the curve. If it is acquired, they will straighten out the sidewalk.

**Bantle Road:** Mr. Pennington explained that this is essentially a continuation of the Spring Street project. The proposal would consist of another 1200 feet of new sidewalk, completing the loop between Griswold Street, Bantle Road, Spring Street, and Main Street. Construction is fairly standard. Some small trees and brush will need to be cleared. Once again, the pavement is not centered within the right of way, so they are taking measures to ensure that the sidewalk can be constructed within the right of way. Instead of easements, they propose that the curve line get bumped out about three or four feet.

*Jennifer Demorro of 167 Spring Street*, lives on the corner of Spring Street and Bantle Road. She is concerned that Mr. Pennington wants to make the sidewalk flush, so she suggested that the runoff goes into the catch basin on the other side of Spring Street. That way, they could make a

raised sidewalk all the way through while possibly projecting the water into the existing catch basin.

Mr. Pennington responded to the comment, explaining that, right now, there is no curb there. If they find a low point that could hold a catch basin, or pipe it into an existing catch basin, they could do that. However, they need to ensure that it would not trap water and constitute a major reconstruction of the entire street.

Mr. Niland asked who would hold responsibility for snow removal of the sidewalk. Mr. Pennington stated that it would be the responsibility of the abutting property owners. Across the street is the state right of way, so the Town would be the responsible body for removing snow and ice there. Ms. Tanski asked what the ballpark numbers are for the cost of these projects. Mr. Pennington stated that they are almost equal in length, and both are in the \$160,000 range.

**Main Street/Route 17:** Mr. Pennington explained that this is the signalized Route 17/Buttonball Lane intersection. The proposal calls for the construction of 600 feet of sidewalk on the east side of Main Street to the signalized intersection. Apart from a small retaining wall, it is a fairly standard construction. The primary component of this project is the pedestrian safety crossing improvements at the signalized intersection, which is a very long crossing distance. They propose removing the crossing ramps and instituting a concurrent pedestrian phase, which will allow pedestrians a safe passage in a two-stage process while allowing non-conflicting vehicular movements. They also hope to encourage drivers to slow down by removing the curb area so that the radius will be a little more perpendicular to Main Street. Mr. Pennington noted that this is a state-owned and maintained signal. The DOT approves of the plan, but they have yet to clarify details of the cost-sharing arrangement. The project cost is roughly \$60,000.

**Donna Taylor of 29 Ledgewood Drive,** stated that the actual problem is that drivers fly down Route 17 and pass on the right. The solution is to make right turns permissible at Main Street only.

Mr. Gullotta noted that he and others had suggested a roundabout there, but the State said no.

Mr. Pennington explained that the phasing of the pedestrian movement should help increase safety, but he acknowledged that speed is an issue. Dr. Beckett asked if there is a way to put an island so that the southbound traffic on the right-hand lane on Route 17 must take a right on Main Street heading north, instead of going straight through. Mr. Pennington stated that he can approach the department about that.

Ms. Carroll believes that the two-stage crossing will make a huge difference for pedestrian safety, and she hopes that drivers will comply. Mr. Cavanaugh asked if the flashing crosswalk

sign at the Tannery would be appropriate here. Mr. Pennington explained that there is no vehicular traffic signal at that location, which is a midblock crossing. This is a signalized intersection, so they can signalize the pedestrian movement the same way they do on all the Main Street intersections towards the East Hartford border. That is a safer way to accomplish what they are trying to achieve. Ms. Tanski thanked Mr. Pennington and Town Staff for this project which was a long time coming.

**House Street:** Mr. Pennington explained that this is the intersection with Salmon Brook Drive. The proposal is to construct a short 600-foot section of the sidewalk which exists on either side. This would allow pedestrians to continue to utilize the sidewalks straight through. There is a private walkway in the apartments, which they plan to remove. There is also a public sidewalk on the right of way, which requires an easement from the property owner, who has expressed that he is amenable to it. There are no grading issues or retaining walls proposed, and no utility relocation is required.

**Peter Parrotta of 177 Stony Hill Drive in Rocky Hill,** owns the house next to the project. He thanked Mr. Pennington for working with him, stating that this project has been much needed for 50 years. They discussed the issue of runoffs, which they will continue to work on solving. He will not withhold easements to the Town.

**Jennifer Jennings of 34 Cranesbill Drive,** asked if there is any opportunity for a pedestrian walkway coming out of One Glastonbury Place. Mr. Pennington stated that they could refresh the existing markings. Ms. Jennings suggested also adding a stop sign there.

Mr. Niland opened the floor for comments from Zoom:

**Travis Logan, Community Manager at One Glastonbury Place,** asked if the project will affect their sidewalks at all. Mr. Pennington stated no, they would not be impacting existing sidewalks. Mr. Logan then asked if there are any plans to put in sidewalks on Hebron Avenue heading easterly. Mr. Pennington stated that there are no plans to do that currently.

**The Council agreed to continue the public hearing at their next meeting on November 23, 2021.**

4. **Old Business.** *None*
5. **New Business.**
  - a. **Action on proposed amendment to Building Zone Regulations – Town Center Village District Zone (schedule public hearing).**

**Motion by:** Ms. Carroll

**Seconded by:** Mr. Cavanaugh

*BE IT RESOLVED, the Glastonbury Town Council hereby schedules a public hearing for 8 p.m. on Tuesday, November 23, 2021 in the Council Chambers of Town Hall, 2155 Main Street, Glastonbury and/or through Zoom Video Conferencing on proposed amendment to the Building Zone Regulations to add section 4.19 – Town Center Village District (Overlay Zone) and related Text and Map Amendments, as described in a report by the Town Manager dated October 22, 2021 and as recommended by the Town Planning & Zoning Commission.*

**Result:** Motion was passed unanimously {8-0-0}.

**b. Action on funds required to implement the written agreement between the Town of Glastonbury and Glastonbury Police Officers Association (GPOA) effective July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2025.**

Mr. Johnson provided an outline of the holiday changes, noting that Juneteenth has been added and Lincoln's birthday has been consolidated with Washington's birthday. Mr. Cavanaugh stated that the last item, Educational Incentive, jumped out at him. Mr. Johnson explained that it was enacted in the 1970s with the intention to encourage police officers to get college degrees. Over the years, it has largely become an antiquated benefit. In most contracts, it is being sunsetted. He clarified that it is different from tuition reimbursement, which is still in place. Mr. Niland hopes that this will incentivize people to join the police department.

**Motion by:** Ms. Carroll

**Seconded by:** Mr. Cavanaugh

*BE IT RESOLVED, the Glastonbury Town Council hereby approves the funds required to implement the written Agreement between the Town of Glastonbury and Glastonbury Police Officers Association effective July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2025, as described in a report by the Town Manager dated October 22, 2021.*

**Result:** Motion was passed unanimously {8-0-0}.

**c. Discussion and possible action to authorize Town Manager to work with Town Attorney to develop proposed amendment to Building Zone Regulations – Historic Preservation.**

Mr. Johnson explained that the presentation made by the Historical Society tonight created the question as to whether Town Center Zone regulations should be amended to apply for historic preservation. They would like to see how others have approached this, then return to the Council with a funding recommendation for design guidelines and options to encourage historic



preservation. He noted that this is simply exploratory. It does not commit the Council or the TPZ to any future action.

Mr. Gullotta emphasized the word exploratory. He is curious to see what the options are, with the full understanding that the Council does not have to accept what comes back to them. Ms. LaChance wants to look at what the worst-case scenario, in terms of apartment buildings, would be, if they were to choose to go down that road. Ms. Tanski believes that it makes sense to be proactive about historic preservation. She also believes that incentivizing owners is likely the best approach to take. She asked that, when they flesh out details, to clarify what their definition of “historic” is.

Mr. McChesney asked if the Town Manager will return with what other communities have done. Mr. Johnson explained that they typically reach out to see if others have already gone down this path. They will look at how other communities with historic properties like Glastonbury have taken that approach, and they will provide the Council with suggestions they may want to consider.

**Motion by:** Ms. Carroll

**Seconded by:** Mr. Cavanaugh

*BE IT RESOLVED, the Glastonbury Town Council hereby authorizes the Town Manager to work with the Town Attorney to develop proposed amendment(s) to the Building Zone Regulations – Town Center Zone to encourage and support historic preservation, as described in a report by the Town Manager dated October 22, 2021.*

**Result:** Motion was passed unanimously {8-0-0}.

**6. Consent Calendar. None**

**7. Town Manager’s Report.**

Mr. Johnson explained that the Connecticut Youth Services Association has recognized Glastonbury’s Creative Experiences Program, run by Jason and Jessica. Also recognized for a web marketing association award is Kathryn Paquette from Marketing and Moses Kibara from IT.

Mr. Johnson forwarded his expense report for July, August, and September, which the Council accepted.

**Motion by:** Dr. Beckett

**Seconded by:** Mr. Niland

*BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby recognizes the Town Manager's Expense Report for the months of July, August, and September 2021.*

**Result:** Motion passed unanimously {8-0-0}.

Mr. Johnson then spoke to the demolition delay ordinance, which at the last Council meeting, was suggested to be extended from 90 days to 120 days and to include a posted sign. He clarified that this applies to buildings over 75 years old. Dr. Beckett suggested a cutoff at buildings constructed in the year 1900 or prior because the 1950s strip mall shops might not need to be preserved. Mr. Cavanaugh stated that those applications may not receive any objections anyway. There was Council consensus to move the demolition delay ordinance to 120 days.

Mr. Johnson stated that Goodwin University sent over information about the continuation of their South Meadows River Trail system. They ask if Glastonbury could send in a letter supporting their grant application for DEEP funding. Dr. Beckett voiced support for sending the letter. The Council agreed by consensus. Mr. McChesney stated that the Spooky Story Stroll was the highlight of his year, and he has heard the same from many other parents. He thanked the Parks and Recreation department and library staff for holding the event.

Ms. Tanski noted that there has been trouble with parents and schools regarding the Bell Street construction and Stallion Ridge. She asked if there is a process of the Town notifying schools when there will be planned disruptions in transportation due to street construction. Mr. Johnson explained that, generally, when there is road construction or road work that could disrupt bus circulation, they reach out to the transportation department. This was just brought to his attention, so he will find out more soon.

**8. Committee Reports.**

**a. Chairman's Report.**

Mr. Gullotta stated that the past two easy years have not been easy but having an efficient town government run by a good Town Manager and School Superintendent helps. He urged everyone to exercise their right to vote at the election on Tuesday, November 2.

**b. MDC.**            *None*

**c. CRCOG.**        *None*

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

Ms. Carroll stated that they await the final results of the RJEC community survey from their research partner, GreatBlue. The Commission hopes to work with a national nonprofit to conduct more focus groups. While their September meeting experienced streaming issues, they are working to get a new video to go with the information that is currently posted. Regarding the comment made by Mr. Korn about the non-resident member, Ms. Carroll explained that commission membership is approved in January, and the commissioner in question is an open choice member who has a child in Glastonbury schools and is deeply invested in town in many ways. Ms. Tanski agreed, stating that membership was discussed during formation of the Commission, and they found it appropriate to include that member. She added that the Commission strives to be open and transparent, and all member bios can be viewed through a link from the Town website.

Ms. Carroll stated that a final report with recommendations to the Council is due January 2022. She does not know whether she and Ms. Tanski will be back on the Council following the upcoming elections, but she asked that fellow councilmembers keep them on as co-chairs of the RJEC until they submit the report. Ms. Tanski thanked the Council for supporting the RJEC. She stated that, as someone who has been on both sides of the racial line, the Commission's work is meaningful for many residents. Glastonbury has already gained the support of groups throughout the state, receiving substantial grant assistance to continue work through the next couple months to get recommendations to the Council.

**Motion by:** Dr. Beckett

**Seconded by:** Mr. Cavanaugh

*BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby moves that Ms. Carroll and Ms. Tanski will stay on as co-chairs of the Commission on Racial Justice and Equity until the final report is submitted to the Council in January 2022.*

**Result:** Motion passed unanimously {8-0-0}.

**9. Communications.**

- a. Letter from CT Siting Council regarding tower sharing at existing telecommunications facility located at New London Turnpike (a/k/a 299 Paxton Way).**
- b. Letter from CT Siting Council regarding tower sharing at existing telecommunications facility located at 115 Birch Mountain Road.**
- c. Letter from CT Siting Council regarding modifications to existing telecommunications facility located at 175 Dickinson Road.**

**10. Minutes.**

- a. Minutes of October 12, 2021 Regular Meeting.**

**Motion by:** Ms. Carroll

**Seconded by:** Mr. Cavanaugh

**Result:** Minutes were accepted unanimously {8-0-0}.

11. **Appointments and Resignations.** *None*
12. **Executive Session.**
  - a. **Potential land acquisition.**
  - b. **Personnel Matter – Town Manager.**

**Motion by:** Ms. Carroll

**Seconded by:** Mr. Cavanaugh

*BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby enters into executive session to discuss a potential land acquisition and personnel matter - Town Manager at 9:07 P.M.*

**Result:** Motion passed unanimously {8-0-0}.

*Present for the Executive Session item were council members, Mr. Tom Gullotta, Chairman, Mr. Lawrence Niland, Vice Chairman, Dr. Beckett, Ms. Deb Carroll, Ms. Mary LaChance, Mr. Jake McChesney, Ms. Lillian Tanski, and Mr. Kurt Cavanaugh, with Town Manager, Richard J. Johnson.*

No votes were taken during the Executive Session, which ended at 9:20 P.M.

Meeting adjourned at 9:21 P.M.

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Lilly Torosyan**

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

**Thomas Gullotta**  
**Chairman**