

THE GLASTONBURY TOWN PLAN AND ZONING COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF TUESDAY, MAY 17, 2022

The Glastonbury Town Plan and Zoning Commission and Jonathan E. Mullen, AICP, Planner, and Rebecca Augur, AICP, Director of Planning and Land Use Services, 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 Zoom video conferencing. The video was broadcast in real time and via a live video stream.

ROLL CALL

Commission Members Present

Mr. Robert Zanolungo, Jr., Chairman
Ms. Sharon Purtill, Vice Chairman {participated via Zoom videoconferencing}
Mr. Michael Botelho, Secretary
Mr. Raymond Hassett {participated via Zoom videoconferencing}
Mr. Corey Turner
Ms. Laura Cahill, Alternate {assigned as voting member}
Ms. Alice Sexton, Alternate

Commission Members Absent

Vacancy

Alternate Vacancy

Chairman Zanolungo called the meeting to order at 7:05 P.M. He seated Commissioner Cahill and explained that both public hearings tonight will be continued to the June 5, 2022 meeting.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. Application of H374, LLC for a Section 12 Special Permit with Design Review to construct a delivery area on the west side of the existing building for grocer & to expand employee parking/delivery area utilizing 366 Hebron Avenue & 7 Linden Street – 400 Hebron Avenue – Town Center Zone, Residence A Zone and Town Center Village District Overlay Zone

Andrea Gomes, Attorney at Hinckley Allen, represented the applicant. She explained that the applicant initially filed a Section 12.9 Minor Change application in April with a request for a public hearing. However, after review by the Architectural & Site Design Review Committee (ASDRC) and town staff, they were informed that the applicant should have applied for a full Special Permit with Design Review application; the applicant complied. Two weeks ago, an informal preliminary presentation was made to the TPZ. The ASDRC convened again last week and issued a second advisory report on May 13. Attorney Gomes stated that they disagree with the ASDRC's conclusions, but the TPZ is the ultimate arbiter of the appropriateness of this application. While time is of the essence, the applicant continues to work with town staff to address their concerns.

Ms. Gomes explained that this proposal involves the parcel at 400 Hebron Avenue but also includes parcels at 366 Hebron Avenue and 7 Linden Street. The site is located off the Route 2/Hebron Avenue exit in a transitional area. In 2018, the Commission approved 400 Hebron Avenue as a mixed-use commercial building designed to house various retail tenants, including a bakery and two restaurants. The Hartford Baking Company is open and operating, while the rest of the building remains vacant. The 366 Hebron Avenue building has been vacant for 18 months. 7 Linden Street is currently improved with a single-family dwelling. The restaurants that were originally approved for 400 Hebron Avenue are no longer viable, as a result of the pandemic. The applicant secured a specialty grocer to occupy about 13,300 square feet of the existing building. They propose the demolition of 366 Hebron Avenue and 7 Linden Street, and the construction of an employee-only parking area for the grocer, consisting of 15 spaces and a small delivery and trash area on the west side of the building. All patrons will continue to park at the 400 Hebron Avenue parking lot. There will be two daily deliveries: one in the morning before store opening and one in the evening before store closing. There will also be an outdoor retail area consisting of seasonal items.

Jonathan Sczurek, P.E. of Megson, Heagle, & Friend, LLC, reviewed the engineering components of the site. The proposal is to construct a 750 square foot addition along Hebron Avenue, which will house and enclose the refuse area and the storage area for the grocer, as well as a canopy for delivery truck offloading. The stormwater for the paved areas will be directed into subsurface drainage structures. Overflows will tie into a new proposed storm drainage pipe that will flow into the existing parking lot and tie into the drainage system on 400 Hebron Avenue, which drains to Sycamore Street and further east. There are perimeter erosion controls around the site, and silt stacks will be placed in existing catch basins adjacent to construction activities.

Mr. Sczurek explained that since the informal meeting of May 3, they have eliminated the southerly curb cut on Linden Street. Now, the trash truck will come in via a single curb cut. They have also incorporated signage to mark the employee-only entrances, with Do Not Enter signs on the driveway, a No Right Turn sign on Hebron Avenue, and a stop sign at the Linden Street exit. Hardscaping has been incorporated along the right-of-way for all areas of truck turning movements. The Engineering Department is analyzing what they would like to have in the town right-of-way. All hardscape materials will match throughout the driveway. Also incorporated is a pedestrian walkway along the frontage of Linden Street. Site lighting remains the same as what was presented at the informal presentation. There will be very minimal changes to the 400 Hebron Avenue site. A cart corral will be constructed along the southwesterly entrance site of the store, and four bollards will be placed along the entrance walk. The parking area will have two cart corrals.

Mr. Sczurek then reviewed the parking plan. Existing parking on the site is 118 spaces. The approval required 130 spaces. However, a 10% parking waiver and a compact car waiver were granted, requiring only 106 spaces to be constructed. Currently, the site has 116 spaces (118 minus two for the cart corrals), and 15 new employee-only spaces will be constructed, for a total of 131 spaces. Ms. Gomes added that the 24 compact spaces which were previously approved will remain. The applicant would accept a condition of approval prohibiting the construction of a sit-down fine dining restaurant or an athletic club as the third and final tenant on site. She noted that the proposed grocer would utilize 80% of its floor area for retail purposes.

Commissioner Cahill stated that the first traffic report mentioned that the parking was based on the specialty grocery store but also an office/furniture retail store as the third tenant. She asked if the applicant is willing to keep that kind of tenant in the building because, otherwise, it would change their parking calculations. Ms. Gomes clarified that retail/office businesses have the same parking requirement. She feels reluctant to limit the applicant to solely an office/furniture retail use when all retail is calculated the same for parking. Commissioner Turner asked about the discrepancy between the square footage listed for 400 Hebron Avenue in two separate documents. Ms. Gomes clarified that parking is calculated on the gross floor area which eliminates non-retail space, such as mechanicals. This results in 3,956 square feet rather than 4,500 square feet.

Ms. Gomes explained that the specialty grocer uses approximately 27% of its space for back of the space operations, reducing the retail square area. Thus, the anticipated required 71 spaces is conservative. Approximately 18% of parking will be compact spaces, which they find appropriate because this will be a walkable amenity. Other businesses in town, such as Chick-fil-A and Panera Bread, also have compact parking waivers. In sum, their parking calculation is conservative and in line with other developments. Ms. Gomes explained that the Plans Review Subcommittee asked to look at what other grocers are doing. Both Whole Foods and Stop & Shop operate below what is strictly required by the parking regulations. Highland Market has 13 spaces above the requirement. The applicant is providing an additional 25 spaces on site, beyond what the regulations require.

Carmelo Rosa, the project Architect, reviewed the architectural components of the site. Per comments from the ASDRC, they have set the building back by 2.5 feet from the front of the facade and reduced the trash room from 19 feet to 15 feet. They have also continued the brick base along the west side of the addition. The large window facing Hebron Avenue will be removed and replaced by two smaller windows which will be translucent and backlit. The materials of the addition are in kind with what is there presently.

Tom Graceffa, the project Landscape Architect, pointed out that this is the fourth rendering of the landscape for this project. The neighbor to the south has indicated that they would like screening. To accommodate that request, the applicant proposes planting columnar oak trees and arborvitae and installing a six-foot solid PVC fence. The north side of the building has very few trees now. They have evolved the layout which provides understory trees. Per the request of the ASDRC, they will add shade trees. They also reduced the two large outdoor patios by about 400 feet each, so that will add a pedestrian feel to the overall streetscape. Per comments received from the ASDRC and town staff, the proposed gate has been removed and new signs will be installed for controlling traffic. Utility boxes on the east side of the building will be screened with six-foot high PVC lattice and additional shrubs to block the gas and electrical meters.

Mark Vertucci, Traffic Engineer, reviewed the truck turning movements into/out of the proposed delivery area and the garbage truck area. Their analysis considered the WB-62 truck, which is the largest designed vehicle that would enter the site. A garbage truck can enter via Linden Street and back into the dumpster area, pick up garbage, and back out in a similar manner as the WB-62 truck, exiting via Linden Street onto Hebron Avenue. They have received new counts and revised the traffic study from 2018, which was based off 2016 counts. The count data was conducted at two intersections: one at Hebron Avenue and Sycamore Street and the other at New

London Turnpike and Sycamore Street, during retail peak periods, which are the Friday afternoon peak hour and the Saturday midday peak hour. They found that the counts were either similar to, or in some cases lower, than the 2016 peak counts.

In considering two similar stores in Hingham, MA and Manchester, CT, the analysis found that the specialty grocer use generates traffic at a higher frequency than the industry standard, with about 151 entering/exiting trips in the Friday afternoon peak hour and 206 entering/exiting in the Saturday midday peak hour. However, it does not add a lot of traffic to the area because they took into account significant trip reductions expected from pass-by traffic and internal capture and multi-use credit, which total about 30% of traffic counts. The analysis showed that the Hebron Avenue at Sycamore Street intersection operates at an acceptable Level of Service C, while the New London Turnpike at Sycamore Street intersection has peak hour delays of Level of Service E and F. However, that is an existing problem which is not a result of this operation.

The proposed change in use is not anticipated to adversely impact roadways, contingent on the following improvements: widening Sycamore Street northbound at Hebron Avenue for a second turn lane, and the State DOT is evaluating a closed loop signal system re-timing project along Hebron Avenue, as well as a westbound left turn lane on Hebron Avenue. The DOT has reviewed the traffic analysis and determined that the projected traffic from this use will not impact state traffic. The applicant awaits comments from the Town Engineer on the revised study.

Ms. Gomes added that the specific improvements to the entire site have been in direct response to the comments received by town staff, various commissions, and the ASDRC. The applicant has a vested interest in working with the Town to build the best development possible. She reviewed how the proposal furthers the goals of Glastonbury's Plan of Conservation & Development (POCD).

Vice Chairman Purtill is concerned that the front door entrance along the Hebron Avenue frontage will be eliminated. She requested more information on the red awnings, the cart corral area, and the fence on Linden Street. Ms. Gomes explained that the proposal is to change the currently striped awnings on the north side of the building to red awnings. The applicant had originally proposed a gate along Hebron Avenue. However, the ASDRC questioned its format, design, and angle, and Town Engineering staff questioned its necessity. Therefore, they decided to remove it entirely and instead include appropriate signage to direct traffic to the appropriate parking.

Mrs. Purtill is concerned that there will be no front door. Ms. Gomes stated that the main entrance to the building was always along the southerly side of Hebron Avenue. Evan Schwartz, applicant, explained there are three front entrances along Hebron Avenue: two on each patio and a third door in the middle of the building. The two doors closer to the west side will enter the back of the house area, while the third front door would be on the vacant space which the retailer could evaluate for potential use. Mrs. Purtill countered that the Commission granted the 10% parking waiver because they sought to accommodate a door for pedestrians to enter from Hebron Avenue.

Ms. Gomes reiterated that the layout of the grocer is such that those doors lead to the back of the house which cannot be used. There is the potential for the easterly door, but the grocer has set up their business to welcome patrons to enter along the southerly portion. They do not think that will affect the walkability or access. Mrs. Purtill believe that people will cut through the employee parking lot. She expressed concern that the Commission does not have a rendering of the interior floor plan. Ms. Gomes noted that the ASDRC did discuss the front door. Mr. Schwartz stated that restaurants and specialty grocers do not want customers walking into the back of their establishment because they seek proper flow. Those doors are back doors, not front doors. Part of the requirement for front doors is egress.

The Commission recessed for 10 minutes to address audio issues at Council Chambers.

Ms. Augur stated that 54 public comments were received in writing and through the Town website, of which 53 voiced support for this application. One comment was from an abutting property owner who expressed concerns about screening, drainage, and traffic.

The following comments were made in-person, at Council Chambers:

Tom Gullotta of 221 Kenney Street, is concerned about the increase in traffic on this site. The small addition will be a loading dock on Hebron Avenue. The left turn is already difficult, and the back-ups will be exacerbated. He also finds the proposal an eyesore, which is counter to the very purpose of a village district. He asked to take the ASDRC's decision seriously and noted that the chairman of that committee will speak tonight. This is the Town's opportunity to get the development right, so that they are not stuck with a disaster for the next 50-100 years.

Brian Davis of 2162 Main Street, Chairman of the ASDRC, has been a design architect for over 40 years. He noted that the following things make a development important: location, visibility, and gateway tendencies. This site on Hebron Avenue ranks high on all those markers. When it was approved a few years ago, it was consistent with good planning and design properties in several ways. Unfortunately, the revised proposal lacks in many aspects:

- All doors and windows have been blocked off and replaced with fake windows.
- All structures will be replaced with a loading trash/parking facility.
- The strip mall proportions of buildings are proposed to be longer and bigger.
- The character of the building is inconsistent with architectural guidelines.

While the ASDRC sympathizes with the proposal regarding current market conditions, they cannot recommend a proposal that fails to reinforce existing building patterns and creates an adverse impact on the district for years to come.

Gerry Satin of 101 Clinton Street, is also the owner of 9-11 Linden Street. While he welcomes the new specialty grocer, he does not welcome the aggravation and conditions that have affected his tenants on 9-11 Linden Street. Prior to this development, he never had water in his backyard. Once the driveway was put in, his yard gets flooded every spring. While his communications with Mr. Schwartz have been cordial, several of his concerns were never relayed by staff to Mr. Schwartz in the past. He is also concerned about the traffic, not on Sycamore Street, but on Clinton Street, and the further exacerbation of the parking there. He asked how far up the sidewalks will go on Linden Street. The garbage in the morning is loud. He asked what the time

window will be for loading and unloading. He requested that the Town try to keep the traffic at a minimum.

Cassandra Angelo of 77 Clinton Street, stated that there is much at stake for so many people. While they do not want traffic patterns to change, she behooved everyone to stay civil. All have different interests, but they are still a community.

Travis Logan, Community Manager at One Glastonbury Place, stated that One Glastonbury Place supports the application. The proposed use is complementary to the existing uses of the area. The proposed grocery store will be a dynamic retail establishment which will be a walkable amenity and will further develop the economic goals of Glastonbury.

Sue Pitler of 56 Douglas Road, stated that she and her husband chose to retire in Glastonbury three years ago. She likes the idea of the new grocery store and being able to walk to it rather than driving to West Hartford or Manchester. She supports the application.

Matt Somberg of 340 Hebron Avenue, is the next-door neighbor to this property. He was initially concerned about the deliveries, but the times do not conflict with normal business hours. He is comfortable with the design. In the last seven years, there has been a lot of development in the area, including his project. While he understands that the constant construction has taken a toll on the neighbors, the end result will enhance the area and the town. The applicant's intentions are to bring a well-respected national grocer to town, which should be supported.

Sean Kenny of 42 Orchard Lane, finds that the building is a vast improvement to what was there originally. The proposed tenant will be a great amenity which everyone will use. He asked that naysayers be careful what they wish for because if this application does not proceed, a far worse development could go on the site instead.

Paul Finney of 48 Sycamore Street, is the last remaining owner-occupied resident of a house on Sycamore Street. His house is over 200 years old. He fully supports the proposal. He has no concerns with the parking, noting that all the parking numbers are based on maximum use. While traffic is a concern, the applicant will mitigate it with synchronized timing and by installing a right turn on Sycamore Street. The two buildings proposed for demolition should have been torn down years ago. The suggestion that 366 Hebron Avenue should be preserved for use as office space is unrealistic because there is much open office space in town of a higher caliber. 7 Linden Street has been an eyesore. He addressed the comment comparing the area to a loading dock, noting that Stop & Shop has a big loading dock which has been beautifully camouflaged. He asked the Commission to push forward this project.

Kurt Cavanaugh of 45 Johnny Cake Lane, stated that the ASDRC did not like the project from the beginning. They felt considerable pressure to provide a review by tonight's deadline. However, the public hearing has been extended again, which he finds questionable. He is tired of seeing cuts on Hebron Avenue. He asked to take the ASDRC's report seriously because they put a lot of hard work and consideration into this application.

The following comments were made remotely, via Zoom:

Bruce Bowman of 62 Morgan Drive, asked to address the poor audio quality of this meeting via Zoom. He made a series of suggestions to make the project more environmentally sustainable: 100% use of native plantings; utilization of construction materials with a low carbon footprint; no new natural gas installations; and permeable pavements to meet the excess water runoffs.

Vishal Shelar of 38 Linden Street, does not see the necessity of this grocery store because there is already a convenience store within a 12-minute walking distance of his house. He agreed with Mrs. Purtill's concerns and expressed concerns about the traffic study. Taking a left turn is difficult, and he does not see how a large delivery truck can do it without causing congestion. He is concerned that allowing this on Linden Street will lead to more traffic and risk potential accidents.

Roger Emerick of 580 Hopewell Road, urged the Commission to not approve anything that involves demolition. He will be filing an objection to the demolition of 7 Linden Street. The house is in perfect condition and could be utilized for either a business or low-income housing. He is against the gross urbanization of the Town Center and believes that the Town's POCD goals cannot be met if they continue to promote demolition and urbanization. The Town needs a stable population to preserve the class and character of Glastonbury.

Greg Ferro of 4 Glastonbury Place, asked if safety will be impacted in the area once the road is widened. The intersection of Sycamore Street and Hebron Avenue is already dangerous for pedestrians. He asked what plans are in place to increase its walkability and safety.

Casey Neff of 235 Stanley Drive, is concerned about the traffic. It is already challenging to make the left-hand turn onto either Sycamore Street or Linden Street off Hebron Avenue. Dedicating one of the turns to a left lane only will push all the other traffic into a single turn lane, which will come to the roundabout. If that area is not further studied and a better plan devised, congestion will drive residents to go to the surrounding residential streets. He also expressed concern about parking, noting that the parking for Trader Joe's in Manchester is very popular. He has seen lines of 20 cars at the intersection of a six-lane road. This location will be popular also, and they are underestimating the parking needs which will cause further congestion.

Kathryn Cross of 17 Linden Street, is glad that a reputable national chain grocer is coming to town, which will be a massive improvement over the empty building that is currently there now. The Schwartzes have been great neighbors and have tried to consider their concerns. She has confidence that the applicant will do their best to take everyone's interests at heart.

With no further comments, Chairman Zanolungo closed the public hearing.

At the June 7 hearing, Secretary Botelho would like the applicant to show the differences between the revised proposal and the original proposal. Mrs. Purtill pointed out that this is the ASDRC's first application, so it is the first application to have not gone before the Plans Review Subcommittee. She is concerned that the ASDRC does not endorse the plan. The prints of the plan are very small and hard to read. She noted that not only have the doors been removed and the patios been reduced, but all the windows are opaque. She worries that the site will look like a fake movie scene. In 2005, the Commission went to great lengths to ensure that the CVS application did not have that. She does not want fake windows on Hebron Avenue.

Commissioner Hassett would like to see the actual layout of the interior and how it will be impacted by the removal of the doors. He also requested that the traffic engineer conduct measurements on both the distance and time differentials between the end of the circle and the entrance/exit ramps for deliveries. He would like an idea as to what the timing would be for a truck to get out of a location and head west on Hebron Avenue towards the roundabout. He would also like to know the number of anticipated deliveries. Most supermarkets have multiple deliveries coming in throughout the day which include trucks of varying sizes. He asked what the period of time is going to be for the deliveries, and what will be the use and frequency of it.

Commissioner Turner remarked that the Town Center Village District stresses walkability, but there is no current access from Hebron Avenue. However, a bigger concern for him is residents from the nearby apartment complexes cutting through the employee parking lot instead of walking all the way around the building. To avoid this, there must be pedestrian access from Linden Street to the front of the building on the parking lot side.

Commissioner Cahill expressed various concerns regarding traffic. She noted that there is a plethora of articles on the various parking and traffic problems created by this specialty grocer in other towns. She is not convinced that it is a good addition at this site. She asked who will pay for the widening of Hebron Avenue at Sycamore Street. Ms. Gomes replied, the applicant. Ms. Cahill believes that the tenant would add to the existing traffic woes at that particular location. She pointed out that the applicant is also the owner of Eric Town Square which continues to experience parking issues. She asked what the applicant will do if people start parking across the street at the medical office buildings. Her concern is less about meeting the parking regulations, which the applicant has stressed, and more about the intensity of the use.

Ms. Cahill agreed with comments made by Mr. Davis and Mr. Cavanaugh regarding the ASDRC. That commission was established under state law and is comprised of talented experts in their fields. Their recommendation against this proposal is strong and must be taken seriously. She agrees that the proposal does not fit with the Town Center Village District and entirely changes the use of the site. It is inconsistent with the existing buildings and streetscapes. She shared Mrs. Purtill's concerns about the fake windows and no front door. She also would like to see a layout of the site interior. She has problems with the extension of the low strip mall roof which does not fit with the village district and does not think that the applicant has paid enough attention to the village district requirements. She asked that the applicant address every one of the ASDRC's concerns.

Attorney Gomes reiterated that the applicant would incorporate the notes and comments received tonight and return before the Commission on June 7.

Motion by: Commissioner Cahill

Seconded by: Commissioner Turner

MOVED, that the Glastonbury Town Plan and Zoning Commission hereby continues the public hearing to the June 7, 2022 Regular Meeting.

Result: Motion to continue the public hearing passed unanimously {6-0-0}.

2. Application of Manchester/Hebron Avenue, LLC (Richard Hayes, Jr.) for a “set-aside development” pursuant to CGS Section 8-30g concerning the construction of an apartment building containing 74 units, with parking and other site improvements – 1199 Manchester Road - Planned Business & Development Zone & Rural Residence Zone – Attorneys Timothy Hollister & Andrea Gomes – Wes Wentworth, P.E. – Alan Lamson, AIA AICP

Attorney Andrea Gomes of Hinckley Allen presented on behalf of the applicant. She explained that the application materials were submitted on April 18 and were updated on May 12 with 2022 affordable income limit data. They have also included a recent study on income-restricted housing, which shows that affordable housing does not negatively impact property values and can actually increase them. Also included is the Commission’s 2005 denial of her client’s application to construct a CVS at the site in question. The Commission’s denial was not based on any concerns of public health or safety. For this proposal, the applicant went through administrative review in February, Plans Review Subcommittee in May, and a report is anticipated from the ASDRC in the coming weeks. Town staff comments have been received, which they are reviewing.

Ms. Gomes explained that the subject property is approximately 2.4 acres, unimproved, and mostly wooded. The site is in a transitional area, with residential uses to the south and several commercial uses located to the north. A gas station is located to the northwest of the site along Hebron Avenue. The proposal is for the development of a multi-family residential building consisting of 74 units. The application is filed under Connecticut General Statutes Section 8-30g as a set-aside development, meaning that 30% (or 24 units) will be formally restricted for households earning less than 80% of the area median income.

A Section 8-30g application can only be denied by a municipality for public health or safety concerns that cannot be addressed by reasonable changes to the site plan, and it is incumbent upon the Town to provide a valid basis for denial. Ms. Gomes noted that there is a need for affordable housing in Glastonbury, and over the decades, there has been very little perceptible increase in affordable housing options in town. This application would help implement the new affordable housing plan draft of the town. She also reviewed Public Act 21-29 (the Zoning Enabling Act) regarding affordable housing, which was passed by the State legislature in October 2021.

Wes Wentworth, P.E. and soil scientist at Wentworth Engineers, LLC, explained the existing conditions on the site. Topography ranges from elevation 408 on the north to a low point of 352 on the east. Soils on-site are sand and gravel which are excellent for development. They will not intercept a static groundwater table, ledge, or bedrock. The proposal is for an L-shaped building in the central portion of the property. Two-way access will be provided on Hebron Avenue and the southeast corner of the site on Manchester Road. A review was conducted and determined that plans are compliant to the relevant building and safety codes.

A total of 85 parking spaces are proposed, of which four are ADA compliant. The site is served by public water and sanitary sewer. High efficiency, LED, full cutoff lighting will be located throughout the site. There is no light trespass to any abutting properties. The applicant is considering installing electrical vehicle charging stations and HVAC heating and cooling units

for the proposed building. Mr. Wentworth then reviewed the storm drainage plan. The impervious and parking areas will be collected by a pipe catch basin which will discharge into an underground detention chamber system. There will be no increase in storm runoff peak flows, and an erosion control plan is in place. The slope will be stabilized to a 2-to-1 grade before building construction even starts. He concluded that this plan will not have any significant impacts to public health or safety.

Alan Lamson, project Architect, explained the architectural components of the site. He noted that this will be a 4.5-story, L-shaped building, with five stories in the top elevation in the north. He reviewed the rear and front elevations. The roof will contain fiberglass shingles, and the windows are double-hung and energy efficient. The design is carried around all four sides of the building. On the top elevation, the main entrance to the building is located at the inside of the L-shape. The covered portico will provide weather protection to those entering and exiting the building. There will also be a secondary egress at the east end and northwest corner of the building. While only two staircases are required, the applicant has provided three for convenience. The side elevation facing west towards the gas station is five stories high. The grade ascends a full story, so across the back, it is only visible at four stories.

Mr. Lamson reviewed the sample floor plan. The building will contain 74 units, of which 9 are efficiency studios of 540 square feet in area; 52 are one-bedroom units, which range from 680 to 780 square feet; and 13 are two-bedroom units, which range from 970 to 1,000 square feet. Each type of unit is evenly dispersed throughout the building, and every unit has either an outside balcony or an outside patio. The first floor contains 10 units. The main entrance contains several features including the center staircase, elevator, and a bicycle storage area for the tenants and a bicycle rack outside, as well as a fitness area, mail area, and a maintenance room. A large storage area will be used for utilities. There is a foundational retaining wall for the embankment behind it which extends to the second-floor level. This section is below grade.

The second floor contains 16 units. The center of the floor plan contains common spaces and areas such as a maintenance room, a community room, perhaps a business center, and a meeting room. Because each floor is accessible by elevator, all the remaining units will be designed to be accessible. No one floor has the majority of the accessible units. The 24 affordable units will be pro-rated among all the floors and among all the accessible units. The plan can be designed and constructed with no safety concerns. Additionally, the building will have sprinklers.

John Alexopoulos, project Landscape Architect, reviewed the planting on site. He explained that their strategy was to provide as many native plants as possible. There is a wide variety of evergreens versus non-evergreens in both shrubbery and trees. They will provide as many trees as possible in the parking area. There is a utility line on the east side which restricts any large trees there, but that area is completely planted as well. On the rear of the site lies the southern boundary with one residence, which is already populated with white pine, oak, and a lot of undergrowth trees; that vegetation will not be disturbed during construction. They have also added Fraser Fir throughout the site. There will be no view from residences of any of the units into the building, and no resident in the building would be able to see any activity in the yard or adjacent building. The slope on the south and west side will be covered with a grass conservation mix of perennials which will allow good pollination.

Steve Mitchell of Mitchell Traffic Engineering, LLC, explained that the building has two driveways which are full movement. The access pattern allows for site entry/exit in the most direct manner. Traffic counts were conducted in August 2021. Traffic guidelines of pre-pandemic conditions were developed using DOT information. Expansion of counting volumes was between 12-60% of various traffic movements. Mr. Mitchell reviewed the site-generated traffic, showing four different calculations of ways to project traffic. They looked at the two peak hours in the morning and afternoon. Traffic level of service at the big intersection is excellent, rated at either A or B. Level of service for the driveways is mixed at A, B, and C. The DOT requires a calculation of the sightline for the average operating speed of the road. They measured the 85th percentile speed at the driveways, with the highest was on Manchester Road, which could accommodate speeds of over 60 mph to the south and over 54 mph to the north.

Mr. Mitchell noted that the roadway sidewalk network is incomplete in this area. The accommodation of pedestrians and the location of sidewalks were mentioned as concerns by town staff. While the applicant is unwilling to construct a sidewalk to nowhere, they are willing to coordinate with the Town to accommodate safe pedestrian access at the site. The DOT has verified that a pedestrian crossing can be installed. The State will work with the Town to determine what is suitable for that location. He concluded that the proposed development will not impede or adversely affect the roadway, nor will it create a public safety concern.

Ms. Gomes noted that the Conservation Commission had various comments, questions, and concerns which the applicant is reviewing. They will evaluate those items in advance of the next public hearing.

Ms. Augur stated that 44 comments were received via mail and website: 37 do not support the application, three support it, and four comments were either duplicates or unclear about their position.

The following comments were made in-person, in Council Chambers:

Diana Wind of 101 Hurlburt Street, is concerned about taking away more habitat for wild animals, such as bears, fox, deer, and coyotes, which as a result, migrate into residents' backyards. She is also concerned about the safety risk this development poses to children in the area. There is a speed sign on her street which regularly hits 60 mph, and the police have not addressed this issue.

Jim Miselis of 413 Woodhaven Road, does not support this development. Very few buildings in town are five stories high, and it far exceeds the maximum building height permitted by the proposed site's zoning district. He does not believe that this apartment complex serves the community, and he finds the high density to be bad planning and inappropriate for a residential area. He also takes issue with the developer listing that 30% of the units will be affordable housing. No low-priced units are offered, only moderate. That is just an enticement to the TPZ to get this built. There is only one elevator in the building because the applicant seeks to squeeze as many units as possible into this dense development. He is concerned that the proposal will negatively affect his neighborhood and the general surrounding area.

Larry Niland of 3271 Hebron Avenue, is against the proposal, stating that the applicant has no altruistic interest in affordable housing. The site is located on a small parcel of land in a dangerous intersection. None of the amenities in the area are particularly affordable. There is no affordable grocery store or bus line. The proposed parking plan provides for only one parking space per unit, and there is no safe parking around for overflow. Proper fire rescue equipment is sparse and, in the event of an emergency, it would take 15 minutes for the fire department to reach the site. Traffic moves way too fast in this area already. He takes issue with the fact that there is almost no actual affordable housing proposed here while safety and traffic concerns are exacerbated.

Eric Felkel of 464 Stanley Drive, opposes the development. The deep and steep excavation required creates a safety issue, and the development is simply too big and aggressive for the site. Stanley Drive is a big neighborhood full of children who play at the cul-de-sac because it is safe. He questions the safety of the engineering and slope combination being so close to the surrounding homes. The building will stick up about two stories above the slope, and there will be no trees to block it. He urged the Commission to reject the application.

Cynthia Vodopivec of 464 Stanley Drive, is a professional engineer specializing in environmental health and safety. She is concerned that the apartment complex oversteps the boundaries of what is reasonable to develop adjacent to a quiet cul-de-sac. The magnitude of earth removal is excessive which will have health and safety repercussions. She calculated that in a four-month timeframe, the 75,000 cubic yards to be excavated will result in 80 dump trucks a day, for a total of 12,000 round trips. She also calculated the health concerns that will be generated from the emissions by the dump trucks. There will also be noise and dust in the area for over a year. The project has already removed hundreds of mature trees, and the proposed plans do not replace existing vegetation, nor do they maintain an adequate buffer. While a 2-to-1 slope is acceptable on highways, it should not be acceptable on abutting residential neighborhoods. She urged denial of this application.

Charles Ekstrom of 86 Cricket Lane, stated that they have gone through this before in 2005, turning away the same developer when he tried to put a CVS in that location. At that time, they were only going remove 800 dump trucks of fill. The fire department owns only one ladder truck which could reach the top floors of the building in the event of a fire. There will also have to be construction from the site along Manchester Road to tie into sewers. He is firmly opposed to the application and urged the Commission to reject it.

Elwira Kelly of 76 Sturgeon River Road, believes that adding 70+ apartments would create a major hazard at the already busy intersection. She understands the need for affordable housing opportunities in Glastonbury but disagrees with Attorney Gomes' statement that affordable housing does not impact - or even positively impacts - the value of nearby homes. Plenty of articles and research state the contrary. She asked the Commission to please scrutinize the data.

Terri Deehan of 219 Hurlburt Street, does not understand how a building of such a large size on a small plot of land is safe and good for the community around it. She urged the Commission to scrutinize the application to the greatest extent possible.

Bill McDonald of 219 Hurlburt Street, remarked that as a former TPZ commissioner of a different town, he would deny this application. Section 8-30g allows developers to bypass planning and zoning, and if it were not for this statute, they would not be here tonight. He is not against affordable housing, but the proposal is too large for the site and parking is insufficient. The five stories height is for the profit of the developer only. He is concerned about the removal of 75,000 cubic yards over four months, and the fact that the traffic study was done during the height of the summer and not a normal time. While he supports the need for affordable housing in town, this is not the site for it. He urged the Commission to deny the application, then asked a series of questions:

- Has a photometric survey been conducted on the development?
- Has any environmental testing been done on historical leakage from the adjacent gas station?
- Has an independent engineer evaluated the site layout?
- Is the slope deemed appropriate?
- Will blasting be used? If so, how will it impact the neighboring houses?
- Can the applicant guarantee that this development will not impact people's wells?

Rosemarie Moskow of 472 Stanley Drive, finds the development to be inconsistent with the existing residential area and community. She has concerns about the ecosystem which would be impacted. Traffic is already bad, especially in the winter, and this would only exacerbate safety risks.

Bianca Stanescu of 158 Timrod Trail, opposes the project on the grounds that it will further destroy the historical character of Glastonbury. The Town did not allow her to build a second story on her detached garage, so this five-story development should be unacceptable. She noted that in addition to the 2005 CVS development, a magnet school was proposed to be built, but it was declined based on the reasoning that 15 buses would cause traffic by the firehouse. The Town took it to a referendum, and if need be, they will do so again for this application. There is no bypass on Hebron Avenue and Manchester Road. In the case of an accident, the fire department will have to travel around for 15-20 minutes to get to a burning home. For the safety and preservation of the charm of this town, she asked the Commission to turn down the proposal.

Moise Carelus of 457 Stanley Drive, opposes the application. Five years ago, he moved to Glastonbury from Long Island, which is known for its strip malls and condominium developments. Their cul-de-sac is filled with children playing every day, and very few cars come and go. The proposed development does not belong in the area. Affordable housing is important but doing it in a way that negatively affects the safety and health of neighbors is not a good idea.

Kristen Mule of 412 Manchester Road, works with children with autism. She is confused about how traffic experts could predict how many times people will pull in and out of the site in a day. She opposes the application.

Bohdan Pokora of 20 Sachem Drive, opposes the application. The Town went through this process with the 1.5 story CVS project. People did not want to live near a gravel quarry for four months during construction. After the Council denied the project, it was litigated in favor of the Town. The judge suggested that the developer use the site for a less grand use. This proposal is now even bigger, which is inconsistent with the judge's advice. If the development proceeds, it

will set a dangerous precedent. He tried contacting Representative Jill Barry, but she has not responded. He asked, if this statute allows the developer to build whatever he wants, wherever he wants, then why are the neighbors and commissioners even deliberating anything?

Andre Harriott of 465 Stanley Drive, took issue with Ms. Gomes' statement that affordable housing could increase surrounding home values. Research and experience have found the opposite to be the case. He and his neighbors on Stanley Drive are considering moving if this development proceeds. When a cluster of houses are sold at once in a concentrated area, competition increases, resulting in decreased home values. He is worried about this. He also expressed concern about the scope of the parking area and what will happen when it snows.

Marlene Harriott of 465 Stanley Drive, asked the applicant if he would want this kind of development in his neighborhood.

Mo Kenneally of 65 Sachem Drive, stated that because of the strong opposition to this development, he has met many neighbors he never knew before. It is an invasive and misleading application, which the community will fight to prevent from proceeding forward.

Sara Bass of 5 Knollwood Drive, lives on a mountain. Every time there is a crash because of drivers speeding down Hebron Avenue, she hears it. The applicant did not mention anything about how much dirt will be taken down and how many dump trucks will go by. The slope is steep, and the intersection is dangerous. The dump trucks are too many, and many children play in the area with homes close to the road. She cannot imagine that this development will not result in serious loss of lives.

Bobby Kemple of 29 Grey Rocks Court, noted that all the expert opinions are based off a 2005 survey which is not relevant today because it is outdated. If the development is built, he believes that it will be the ugliest building in town.

Cionie Slangen of 93 Martin Terrace, has been living in Glastonbury since the early 1970s. While she supports affordable housing, this is not the place for it. As a senior citizen, she does not support seniors having to pay for the increase in taxes. She proposed the Naubuc Green Apartments as an alternative location for affordable housing. She also worries about the increase in population when it comes to education.

The following comments were made remotely, via Zoom:

Amy Dement of 188 Pond Circle, is opposed to the application because it presents a safety issue. She contends with the traffic expert's report that the development will not negatively impact traffic safety. There is no bus line in the area, so cars are a necessity. The lack of a crosswalk or pedestrian warning signs at that intersection is a safety issue. People also speed down that hill, making it dangerous for children and families. While she believes in the need for more affordable housing, there are serious safety issues with this proposal.

Crystal Lyle of 75 Church Hill Road, moved to Glastonbury in October because she wanted her children to roam freely in their yard without traffic worries. This development poses a threat to that. She will no longer see trees but the roof of a hotel-like structure. She asked to address the

safety aspect of the driveways because in the middle of winter, cars will slide down into traffic. The notion that this will be an affordable housing development is laughable because nothing on that side of town is affordable. She strongly opposes the application.

Jason Lathe of 2289 Hebron Avenue, highly opposes this plan, finding the location unsuitable for an affordable housing development. He asked why they would introduce an urban setting in their residential area and if property taxes will be lowered as a result.

Mary LaChance of 281 Cedar Ridge Drive, echoed Mr. Niland's comments opposing this application. She has witnessed accidents at that intersection. However, because this is a Section 8-30g application, the Town can only deny it based on health and safety concerns. To this end, she finds the possibility of uranium in the groundwater concerning. While this property will be on public water, the neighborhoods around it are on wells. Properties that have significant issues with uranium and wells in town are concentrated around houses that were built recently. If she were in this neighborhood, she would sue. She also cited insufficient parking on the site, which could create dangerous conditions when people scatter to find parking options. While she supports affordable housing, she believes that the developer is using that as a cover to shove in this inappropriate and unsafe development. She urged the Commission to deny the application.

Roger Demers of 188 Pond Circle, opposes the development due to concerns about uranium in the groundwater. He asked if the removal of 75,000 cubic yards of earth could cause migration of uranium. He also asked what plans are in place to mitigate the health and safety risks and inquired about a reserve fund for neighbors who find uranium in their wells. He urged the Commission to deny the application based on the serious safety issues it poses.

Tyler Booth of 938 Manchester Road, urged the Commission to deny the application. As a clinical social worker, he is acutely aware of the lack of affordable housing in Glastonbury. He is also aware that affordable housing is only meaningful if it is safe and surrounded by basic infrastructure. This site is both unsafe and unpractical for underserved individuals. He reiterated concerns related to insufficient parking, dangerous traffic, fire safety issues, the lack of sidewalks, no safe entrance to the building, and the lack of affordable stores/amenities within a walkable distance to the site. He finds the proposal to be a disingenuous attempt to take advantage of an affordable housing statute.

John Liversidge of 364 Bell Street, is opposed to the application. He supports affordable housing but not at this site. He watched the traffic study being conducted last year. The surveyors pulled their equipment two days before school started when many people were on vacation. Therefore, the traffic data is a poor reflection of true normal conditions. When school starts, there are about four different peak traffic hours on Hebron Avenue. Making a left hand turn at that intersection is a disaster waiting to happen.

Shawn Rasmussen of 87 Cricket Lane, reiterated concerns raised about possible uranium in the groundwater, the sheer volume of excavation, the lack of guest parking, the difficulty of emergency fire service access to the site, and a 30-foot incline in the property lines. The developer has seen an opportunity and is trying to make as much of it as possible. He opposes the application.

Mirela Ferizaj of 71 Sturgeon River Road, is a new resident from Texas. She loves her property and the peaceful nature around it. She cannot imagine this five-story building next to her home. She is concerned about the safety risks for her teenagers who drive and play in the backyard. Affordable housing is needed in town, but this is not the appropriate space for it. She suggested building small homes for low-income residents instead to help them build equity. Otherwise, they will live in apartments that they will never own.

Lisa Muscanell-DePaola of 224 Bell Street, is a professional engineer. She is concerned about groundwater levels and would like the measurements to be taken again. She asked what will happen if groundwater is encountered during construction. She asked about the excavation support system to allow for construction of the retaining wall. She is also concerned about potential vibration of this activity. She tried to contact other apartment complexes to see if there is actually a need for additional apartments in Glastonbury. She and her husband are considering moving if this development goes through.

Peter DePaola of 224 Bell Street, echoed all the concerns voiced today. He supports the idea that affordable housing developments should be in more urban areas with affordable amenities and public transportation access. While he fully supports affordable housing opportunities in town, this location does not make any sense. The design is big, ugly, and gaudy. If the application is approved, he asked if the building height could be lowered to two stories. While he supports the applicant's decision to install three staircases, having only one elevator is insufficient for a building of that capacity and design.

Andrew Morrill of 376 Weir Street, finds the traffic analysis to be skewed. He asked why the applicant has to propose a five-story building to benefit from a loophole in the system. The proposal is for the benefit of the developer, not the Town. He hopes that the DOT will scrutinize this application as much as possible. While he supports affordable housing, he asked why the developer cannot stay within the confines of an appropriate development.

Jason Welchman of 1028 Manchester Road, opposes the development and the state statute which enabled the application. He believes that having to prove a safety concern makes no sense. The minority here will benefit while the majority suffer, which is neither fair nor democratic. He asked to present the damaging nature of this statute to the State of Connecticut so that these laws change, and developers stop taking advantage of the system.

Ellen Harriman of 107 Knollwood Drive, opposes the application for all the previously mentioned reasons. In addition, there is no outdoor recreational space for the residents. This is an extremely busy road, and it would be unsafe to cross over Hebron Avenue to go to Buckingham Park for any kind of recreation.

Melody Wade of 1069 Manchester Road, just bought her home three months ago. In the two years prior, she lived in an apartment complex in town that had inadequate parking. The parking proposed by this application is also inadequate. The traffic reports presented do not take into consideration the fact that many people do not live alone, so there will be more than one car per unit.

With no further comments, Chairman Zanolungo closed the public hearing.

Ms. Cahill noted that under a CGS Section 8-30g statute, expert testimony is needed to deny an application. She asked if the Town should consider seeking out such experts. Ms. Augur explained that town staff are considered experts. The applicant is currently responding to town staff's initial comments. They anticipate that there will be more staff review of additional materials. However, if the Commission would like additional testimony from a non-town staff member, such as a geologist, they could arrange that.

Attorney Gomes reiterated that the applicant would incorporate the notes and comments received tonight and return before the Commission on June 7.

Motion by: Commissioner Cahill

Seconded by: Commissioner Turner

MOVED, that the Glastonbury Town Plan and Zoning Commission hereby continues the public hearing to the June 7, 2022 Regular Meeting.

Result: Motion to continue the public hearing passed unanimously {6-0-0}.

REGULAR MEETING

1. **Informal session for the purpose of hearing from citizens on Regular Meeting agenda or non-agenda items** *None*
2. **Acceptance of the Amended Minutes of the May 3, 2022 Regular Meeting**

Motion by: Commissioner Cahill

Seconded by: Commissioner Turner

Result: Minutes were tabled {4-0-0}. Commissioners Hassett and Purtill, who were participating remotely via Zoom, were no longer present to vote.

3. CONSENT CALENDAR

- a. Scheduling of Public Hearings for the Regular Meeting of June 7, 2022: **to be determined**
- b. Request of Dependable Construction, LLC for final subdivision approval for the Stallion Ridge Open Space Subdivision's Lots 5 to 24

Motion by: Commissioner Turner

Seconded by: Commissioner Cahill

Result: Consent calendar was approved unanimously {4-0-0}.

4. **Chairman's Report** *None*
5. **Report from Community Development Staff** *None*

Motion by: Commissioner Turner

Seconded by: Commissioner Cahill

MOVED, that the Glastonbury Town Plan and Zoning Commission adjourns their regular meeting of May 17, 2022 at 12:30 A.M.

Result: Motion was passed unanimously {4-0-0}.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lilly Torosyan

Lilly Torosyan

Recording Clerk