

THE GLASTONBURY TOWN PLAN AND ZONING COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF TUESDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2022

The Glastonbury Town Plan and Zoning Commission with Jonathan E. Mullen, AICP, Planner, 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 J. Zanolungo, Jr., Chairman

Ms. Sharon Purtill, Vice Chairman

Mr. Michael Botelho, Secretary

Mr. Raymond Hassett

Mr. Corey Turner

Mr. Emilio Flores

Commission Members Absent

Ms. Alice Sexton, Alternate

Ms. Laura Cahill, Alternate

Alternate Vacancy

Chairman Zanolungo called the meeting to order at 7:13 P.M.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. Proposed amendment to Section 4.13 of Building-Zone Regulations regarding the reduction in amount of existing commercial square footage that must be maintained on a site with existing development that is adding residential use

Mr. Mullen provided a synopsis of the discussion from the October 4, 2022 Town Plan and Zoning Commission meeting regarding this text amendment. There was interest from the Commission to prioritize reductions in the amount of commercial space to be retained in developments that preserve historic buildings, include a green space or park element, and incorporate solar and/or geothermal energy. Commissioners also asked staff to clarify what qualifies as “pursuit” of LEED certification, and whether benefits could be combined. Mr. Mullen stated he identified several LEED certification requirements that could serve as public benefits integrated into a project in exchange for a reduction in the amount of commercial space that must be retained. These requirements include short-term bike storage, EV charging stations, and parking spaces dedicated to car share programs. He chose these requirements to be public benefits because they seemed appropriate for the Town Center. Mr. Mullen assigned percentage reductions that seemed reasonable for each one. He then indicated that benefits could be combined to reach a maximum reduction of 75% and retention and replacement apply only to commercial projects adding on a residential component.

Mr. Mullen posed the following questions:

- Is the Commission comfortable with a maximum percent reduction of 75%, as drafted?
- Is dedicated public parking an appropriate public benefit?
- How could the Town ensure that a developer will provide public benefit?

He noted that the Commission is not under any deadline to act on this tonight, so the public hearing can remain open.

Commissioner Turner understands why Mr. Mullen picked certain aspects of the LEED certification because they are a public benefit. He felt that the proposed reduction percentages for each of the LEED requirements (which add up to 45%) were excessive compared to the previous draft of the regulation which provided for only a 10% reduction for pursuit of LEED Silver certification. He also finds that a potential 75% reduction in commercial space is too large. Commissioner Flores pointed out that doing all these things to attain a 75% reduction is a significant hurdle, so the opportunity will not present itself often. Vice Chairman Purtill is concerned about unimaginable scenarios unfolding, as a result of such a large potential reduction. She asked to run some examples to visualize what this change would look like. Chairman Zanolungo asked to send all the requirements for LEED certification to the Commission. Mr. Mullen agreed to do both.

Mrs. Purtill asked what the requirement is right now. Mr. Mullen replied that if a mixed-use project with a residential component is proposed on a property with existing commercial space, that project cannot result in a reduction of a commercial space. Mrs. Purtill asked about the parking requirement. Mr. Mullen stated that, right now, it is one parking space per one bedroom unit; 0.5 space for a studio; and two spaces for a two bedroom. Any new mixed-use development would have to provide the amount of parking that is required for both the residential and commercial space. Parking is the limiting factor for most of the Town Center area.

Commissioner Hassett asked what the main purpose was for establishing the Town Center Zone. Mr. Mullen explained that the goal was to make a more vibrant Town Center area capable of having mixed use development. Mrs. Purtill added that it was to spur development, to allow for taller buildings, to flip the parking to the side or back of the building, and to bring developments closer to the street. Secretary Botelho noted that they also sought to increase walkability. Mr. Mullen pointed out that it went from units per acre to Floor Area Ratio (FAR), which allows for more density. The Town Center is one of the only zones to allow multi-family units without creating a Planned Area Development (PAD). Mr. Turner pointed out that with increased density and the push to more mixed use, developers will likely be forced to put in parking garages on these sites to be able to accommodate parking.

Mr. Zanolungo asked if a developer could pursue a mixed-use 8-30g project with the public benefits and qualify for a commercial space reduction under the proposed regulation. Mr. Mullen stated that the Town of Greenwich has reviewed several mixed-use CGS 8-30g projects, which applies to the residential only, and the commercial defers to the Town's zoning regulations. Mr. Turner asked, if the developer took a commercial property and went completely residential, then it falls under 8-30g. However, if they decided to pursue a mixed use, then it would get complicated. Mr. Mullen stated that is correct. The retention and/or replacement of commercial space would be subject to the Town's regulations. They would have to calculate to figure out

which percentages apply to that applicant. The commercial regulations could not be pushed aside.

Mr. Flores is comfortable with the 75% reduction possibility for LEED certification; Mr. Turner is not, and Mr. Botelho would prefer a cap at 50% or 60%. Mrs. Purtill pointed out that the minimum amount of commercial space to be retained or replaced is 3,000 square feet. She asked what that would look like. Mr. Mullen replied he will have that at the next meeting. Mr. Zanolungo is fine with a 10% reduction for public parking. Mr. Mullen asked if the Commission would like to leave in the affordable housing language as a public benefit. He noted that inclusionary zoning regulations have been drafted and were sent to CROG for review. There is a requirement that all multi-family developments need to have 20% affordable housing, as affordable to those earning either 60% or 80% Area Median Income (AMI), and be deed restricted for 40 years.

There were no comments from the public.

The Commission agreed to continue the public hearing until the November 1, 2022 meeting. Mr. Mullen will return with updates and more examples.

2. Application of Claudio Vecchiarino for a Section 12 Special Permit with Design Review for a building addition & parking lot improvements – 52 National Drive – Planned Employment Zone

Jim Dutton of Dutton Associates explained that the proposal is for a 3,000 square foot warehouse addition to assemble traffic control systems. He noted that there was a discrepancy on the original site plan. The Architectural and Site Design Review Committee (ASDRC) asked to eliminate two parking spaces and to reconfigure the sidewalk. However, that would result in not enough parking for the applicant's intended use. The building was built in the early 1980s before there was consideration of stormwater quality; they are proposing water quality enhancements. The building will have a metal frame. They have complied with all the ASDRC's recommendations but one, which they cannot do; they cannot reduce the two parking spaces and reconfigure the sidewalk. Instead, they kept the two parking spaces and reconfigured the sidewalk to allow for more plantings including two trees instead of one.

Mr. Dutton noted that they will buffer the giant transformer in front of the building. The landscape architect, Robert Schlesinger, joined via Zoom. He pointed out two typos in the plan regarding the number of shrubs: there are 3 instead of 53 Arctic Fire Dogwood and 4 instead of 29 compact American cranberry bushes. The applicant has integrated the ASDRC's comments by adding more evergreens along with clusters of flowering and shade trees. There are habitat shrubs up front, and the number of ornamental rocks has been reduced.

Mrs. Purtill stated that 22 parking spaces are required but the applicant is providing 25. She has a problem with overriding the ASDRC's recommendation to remove two additional parking spaces. Mr. Dutton clarified that the reason the ASDRC made their recommendation was because there was an error on the plan. The number of spaces was based on a plan that said 30 parking spaces, but they have only 25 spaces. Mrs. Purtill stated that the applicant still has three extra spaces. The applicant should return to the ASDRC with the correct information and then return to the TPZ.

Commissioner Hassett asked if the ASDRC also suggested a change to the sidewalk. Mr. Dutton clarified that the sidewalk is in-between what the ASDRC wanted and what they are proposing. The ASDRC wanted more green space, so the applicant reconfigured the sidewalk to put in two trees and some plantings along the building. However, they came up with that idea after the ASDRC made their recommendation. Claudio Vecchiarino, the applicant, reiterated that the calculations were wrong, but he caught that only after the meeting. He currently has 22 employees and is in the process of hiring another four or five. To have those two parking spots would help his business. He has gone before the ASDRC three times and has done his best to accommodate their requests.

Mr. Turner understands that this has been a drawn-out process. He asked if the applicant would be willing to return to the ASDRC. Mr. Vecchiarino replied no, not unless this commission forced him to. For an advisory committee, they were very tough to deal with. Mrs. Purtill remarked that the applicant has presented incorrect information. The ASDRC meets again on November 22. Commissioner Hassett asked when construction is anticipated. Mr. Vecchiarino stated that it should have started three months ago. He would start right away because this is affecting his business. Pushing this out another two to three months would be detrimental. He needs the space.

Mr. Flores finds it a stretch to say that these two spaces are impacting the neighbors. If the applicant says that they are vital to his business, then he does not find it useful to use another committee to delay potential hirings in town. Mr. Dutton stated that the ASDRC is a new entity, so there is a learning curve. Mrs. Purtill suggested approving the application without the two spaces, with a condition of approval to return to the ASDRC for review with the correct parking information. Mr. Hassett added that the landscaping plan needs to be amended as well, with the typos that Mr. Schlesinger pointed out tonight.

Mr. Dutton explained that they have added windows to the building and treatment to the warehouse addition. The required parking is calculated using the building floor plan. On a resale of this building, he suspects that they will ask for more parking. All in all, only about 1,000 square feet of impervious area has been added on to this site, which sits on a wetland. Mr. Turner pointed out that while the applicant presented information that was not totally correct or updated, they have already been to the ASDRC three times. Sending them back a fourth time is ridiculous. Mr. Mullen did the configurations and confirmed that the applicant's parking calculations comply with the Town's regulations.

There were no comments from the public.

Mr. Dutton reviewed the architectural components, explaining that this is a simple metal building of 3,000 square feet. The windows for the proposed addition match the windows on the existing building. Mr. Botelho asked if it is similar to the adjacent building. Mr. Dutton replied no, this was a steel frame building with brick. The proposed windows will match as close as possible. There are six windows in the back, and for security purposes, they have kept the windows high. The ramp has an awning canopy over it, for forklift use. During sales meetings, parking will overflow. Mrs. Purtill stated that the ASDRC wanted a minimum of two trees and gravel along the foundation. Mr. Dutton clarified that it is not gravel but decorative stone. By putting the stone there, it gave room for water to be stored. Two trees are there, and plantings will be added along the face of the building to create a considerable amount of screenings.

Mr. Botelho asked if there is a reduction in the parking from what was there before. Mr. Dutton explained that, before this building, they had 35 spaces. That has now dropped to 25 spaces, and they narrowed the entrance with parallel parking. Mr. Mullen stated that the applicant has retail space here which is not a permitted use in the Planned Employment Zone, so it would be categorized under warehousing wholesale. Mr. Dutton clarified that he called it retail but it is more like a display area. Mr. Botelho stated that if the applicant believes the parking is necessary, he is not going to dictate how to conduct his business.

There was one public comment via Zoom:

Jeffrey Pitler 56 Douglas Road, is concerned about reducing the parking spaces further. Going from 35 to 25 spaces significantly reduces the amount of runoff, so it fulfills the original intent behind a parking reduction.

Motion by: Secretary Botelho

Seconded by: Commissioner Hassett

MOVED, that the Town Plan & Zoning Commission approve the application of Claudio Vecchiarino for a Section 12 Special Permit with Design Review – Construction of a 2,864 square foot addition and parking lot improvements – 52 National Drive – Planned Employment Zone & Flood Zone, in accordance with the plan set entitled “Proposed Building Addition Map E5 Street 4680 Lot S0003A 52 National Drive, Glastonbury, Connecticut” prepared by Dutton Associates dated 01/24/2022 and revised 09/12/2022, and

1. In compliance with the conditions set forth by the Conservation Commission / Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Agency, in their recommendation for approval to the Town Plan and Zoning Commission and the Wetlands Permit issued at their Regular Meeting of April 14, 2022.
2. In adherence to the Sanitarian’s memorandum dated October 12, 2022.
3. All construction shall be performed in accordance with the following:
 - a. 2002 Connecticut Guidelines for Soil Erosion and Sedimentation Control, as amended.
 - b. The Connecticut Stormwater Quality Manual, as amended.
 - c. All stormwater discharge permits required by the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) pursuant to CGS 22a-430 and 22a-430b.
 - d. Section 19 of the Town of Glastonbury Building-Zone Regulations, as amended, the Town of Glastonbury Subdivision and Resubdivision Regulations, as amended, and any additional mitigation measures to protect and/or improve water quality as deemed necessary by the Town.
4. The property owner shall comply with the long-term maintenance plan and schedule depicted on the approved plans to ensure the performance and pollutant removal efficiency of all privately owned stormwater management systems.
5. Revisions to the plans shall reflect the correct parking plan and landscaping plan.
6. This is a Section 12 Special Permit with Design Review. If unforeseen conditions are encountered during construction that would cause deviation from the approved plans, the applicant shall consult with the Office of Community Development to determine what further approvals, if any, are required.

Result: Motion 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 Minutes of the October 4, 2022 Regular Meeting**

Motion by: Commissioner Turner

Seconded by: Commissioner Botelho

Result: Minutes were accepted {4-2-0}, with two abstentions from Vice Chairman Purtill and Hassett who decided not to vote since they were not present at the meeting.

3. **Application of Karin Knobel, Graphik Sign Solutions, LLC for a Section 12.9 Minor Change to allow for a change to the approved sign package at the Shops at Main – 2955 Main Street, Carpionato Group, owner**

Attorney Hope the proposal to allow for a change to the approved sign package for PhysicianOne Urgent Care. She explained that the urgent care is in a three-tenant building with the east elevation facing Main Street. They seek to change the awning color from tan to blue, which is one of the branding colors of the tenant, and balances out the existing building which already has blue awnings for Aspen Dental. The ASDRC has provided a favorable recommendation for the blue awnings.

Additionally, the applicant requests a modification to the monument sign. In 2017, the TPZ approved it to have a consistent dark brown backing with white lettering for each of the tenant spaces. The urgent care wants to maintain the white letters but change the background to red. The purpose is to allow for patients to quickly locate the site and not delay care. This is consistent with all their other locations. While the ASDRC did not provide a favorable recommendation for the sign component, the applicant still felt it important to bring forward to the TPZ.

Mr. Botelho asked if there is also a sign where the urgent care is located. Ms. Hope replied yes, there will be wall signs. Mrs. Purtill asked if those have red in them. Mr. Mullen stated yes, but those plans do not specify color background or lettering, and they are already approved. This concerns only the monument sign. Mr. Botelho asked about the sign size. Ms. Knobel explained that the monument sign was originally approved with a large panel at the top, a medium-sized panel directly below, and eight smaller panels below that. Whether the sizes change or not is up to the owner.

Mr. Zanolungo asked if any of the other tenants have expressed an issue with the sign. Ms. Hope replied no. The owners, the Carpionato Group, have no problem with changing their monument sign to make this change. Mr. Flores asked if the other tenants have seen this rendering. Ms. Knobel of Graphik Sign Solutions does not believe so, but the decision is the landlord's to make. Mr. Hassett stated that the Town is increasingly encountering the issue of branding. The monument sign is meant to serve its function without branding. If he were one of the tenants, he

would be upset if this branding is allowed while his is not. From a continuity standpoint, he has a problem with it. He also does not like the aesthetics of the monument sign.

Attorney Hope acknowledged that it is a deviation from the master plan. However, the red color captured their needs to maintain visibility and the landlord was comfortable with it. Her clients felt that because of this particular use, it was justified. Mr. Turner agreed with Mr. Hassett. This is not an emergency or safety situation. Several of the other companies on the sign have a brand, and if he were them, he would be upset. He is fine with the awnings but will not vote for the red coloring on the sign; Mr. Flores concurred.

Lynne Rosen, CEO of PhysicianOne Urgent Care, explained that urgent care is not their brand. From her perspective, this is a safety issue, not a branding issue. They are a step between primary care and the emergency room, and the location is a busy intersection. They are thankful to move across the street to a better location but need to be seen easily. Mrs. Purtill stated that the red sign is on the building which one sees driving by, so patients will be able to locate the site. Mr. Zanolungo asked if that signage is visible. Ms. Hope stated that a honey locust tree stands right in front of the tenant space.

Motion by: Secretary Botelho

Seconded by: Commissioner Hassett

MOVED, that the Town Plan & Zoning Commission approve the application of Karin Knobel for a Section 12.9 Minor Change for modifications to an approved sign package – 2955 Main Street – Planned Business and Development Zone, in accordance with plans on file with the Office of Community Development; and as this is a Section 12.9 Minor Change, if unforeseen conditions are encountered during construction that would cause deviation from the approved plans, the applicant shall consult with the Office of Community Development to determine what further approvals, if any, are required.

Discussion: Mr. Botelho asked to separate the motion into two amendments: one for the awning and the other for the monument sign. The Commission agreed to proceed this way.

Amendment by: Secretary Botelho

Seconded by: Vice Chairman Purtill

MOVED, that the Town Plan & Zoning Commission approve the application of Karin Knobel for a Section 12.9 Minor Change to allow for a modification to the approved sign package to change awnings from tan to blue – 2955 Main Street – Planned Business and Development Zone, in accordance with plans on file with the Office of Community Development; and as this is a Section 12.9 Minor Change, if unforeseen conditions are encountered during construction that would cause deviation from the approved plans, the applicant shall consult with the Office of Community Development to determine what further approvals, if any, are required.

Result: Motion passed unanimously {6-0-0}.

Amendment by: Secretary Botelho

Seconded by: Commissioner Hassett

MOVED, that the Town Plan & Zoning Commission approve the application of Karin Knobel for a Section 12.9 Minor Change to allow for a modification to the approved sign package to allow a red background on the tan sign – 2955 Main Street – Planned Business and Development Zone, in accordance with plans on file with the Office of Community Development; and as this is a Section 12.9 Minor Change, if unforeseen conditions are encountered during construction that would cause deviation from the approved plans, the applicant shall consult with the Office of Community Development to determine what further approvals, if any, are required.

Result: Motion failed unanimously {0-0-6}.

4. CONSENT CALENDAR – NO ACTION

- a. Scheduling of Public Hearings for the Regular Meeting of November 1, 2022: **to be determined**

5. Chairman’s Report

Mr. Zanlungo stated that this is Mr. Botelho’s last meeting. Commissioners thanked him for his 13 years of service and will miss his expertise. Mr. Botelho thanked his fellow commissioners, town staff, as well the public for their passionate but civil involvement in their deliberations. He is proud of the bipartisan way the TPZ conducts their business and will miss serving on the commission.

6. Report from Community Development Staff *None*

Motion by: Commissioner Botelho

Seconded by: Commissioner Hassett

MOVED, that the Glastonbury Town Plan and Zoning Commission adjourns their regular meeting of October 18, 2022 at 9:50 P.M.

Result: Motion was passed unanimously {6-0-0}.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lilly Torosyan

Lilly Torosyan

Recording Clerk