

**GLASTONBURY TOWN COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2023**

The Glastonbury Town Council with Town Manager, Jonathan Luiz, in attendance, held a Regular Meeting at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers of Town Hall at 2155 Main Street, with the option for 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 {excused}
Mr. Lawrence Niland, Vice Chairman
Ms. Deborah A. Carroll {excused}
Mr. Kurt P. Cavanaugh
Mr. John Cavanna
Ms. Mary LaChance
Mr. Jacob McChesney
Mr. Whit Osgood
Ms. Jennifer Wang

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

2. Public Communication and Petitions pertaining to the Call.

Bruce Bowman of 62 Morgan Drive, believes that the Town needs to be more proactive on climate change. He discussed the plight of farmers whose farms lie on flood plains and expressed concerns about using unrestricted ARPA funds to cover losses without building resiliency to withstand the floods. He commended Chief Thurz on his efforts to proactively respond to climate change. He also noted that a business recently sought to erect solar panels but was unfairly burdened by the ASDRC with styles that would more than double the cost of the solar canopies. The ASDRC does not accept public comments, but he wishes to express concern about this.

3. Special Reports. *None*

4. Old Business.

a. Discussion and possible action regarding the Town contributing funding for the creation of a roundabout at New London Turnpike as part of State Project No. 53-189.

Mr. Luiz explained that the Town has unsuccessfully tried to get the DOT to agree to fully fund the roundabout. It is up to the Town to decide whether to commit any funds to construct that roundabout. Town Engineer Dan Pennington explained that this is the same project that was subject to a DOT public information hearing in June 2022. Since then, there have been staff level discussions on the project but no public discussions. The project requires removal of the existing ramp and two bridge structures to make the intersection more compact. It is a costly endeavor to rehabilitate bridge structures. The DOT seeks to eliminate this ramp because of the existence of the nearby Route 17 ramp. In order to do that, they need to reconfigure the volume and construct a left hand turn. There has been discussion about whether this should be a signalized intersection. The Town prefers a roundabout at this location. He has reviewed the preliminary engineering details of the roundabout design and sent in his comments to the DOT.

Mr. Pennington explained that the project has five significant benefits to the taxpayer. First, the elimination of the bridge rehabilitation structures. Another is the increased efficiency and better operation of this intersection. Right now, it is a five-legged intersection and does not have a green arrow left turn. Removal of a leg and conversion into a traditional four-legged intersection would reduce the timing and create better efficiencies throughout. The DOT would also replace the signal equipment. The roundabout is statistically safer and well supported by the DOT. Lastly, another benefit is that if this offramp is eliminated, then there would be potential to turn the area which is a state road into a developable parcel, adding to the Town's grand list.

Mr. Pennington noted that 80% of the project is being funded through federal transportation dollars. The DOT calculates the cost differential (between the signalized alternative and the roundabout alternative) at a little over \$1.6 million. They are asking the Town to fund 20% of the cost differential, which would be \$329,000. The DOT would fully fund the design and would also be willing to fund the construction of the project. Mr. Cavanaugh asked what would happen if this project did not happen but the DOT is in the design process of a roundabout. Mr. Pennington stated that it is a bit of a gamble on their part. Mr. Cavanaugh asked if there would be a cost savings if the Town handled the inspection and construction administration. Mr. Pennington explained that the roundabout is just one component of a larger project, so trying to divide duties is difficult. The DOT did not think that was a feasible alternative. Like Mr. Cavanaugh, Mr. Osgood also favors the roundabout.

Mr. McChesney asked who will own the land of what is being taken away. Mr. Pennington explained that, right now, it is a state-owned right of way. Absent any deal, it would continue to be a state-owned property. The Town could acquire it to add to the grand list, but no discussions have been had with the state regarding that parcel. Mr. McChesney favors having discussions with the state to acquire that property, in exchange for the Town having to pay more for the project. He worries that shunting traffic to that other exit is going to cause back up during certain times of the day. He is also frustrated that the DOT has been unwilling to work with the Town on this and other issues. They stand to save millions of dollars by forgoing the refurbishment of bridges - by just closing them down - yet, they are unwilling to pay that differential for a roundabout versus a signalized intersection. He supports a roundabout because a signalized intersection would cause bad traffic flow in the area, but he is frustrated with the DOT.

Ms. Wang asked if the slip lane is a standard process for a situation like this. Mr. Pennington noted that he forwarded a similar comment to the DOT when he reviewed the plans. In this offramp situation, those who are headed towards the center are allowed to bypass the roundabout and continue to sweep around. He commented that they need to look at the modeling for the roundabout to see if that is necessary. His preference would be to have a single lane approach, if possible. They need to thoroughly vet whether narrowing this to a single cue creates unreasonable delay. A single lane on New London Turnpike favors cyclists. A multiple lane approach at a signalized intersection would not have those shoulders. Mr. Cavanaugh asked if going down to a single lane would make it harder to navigate the roundabout. Mr. Pennington stated that it would make it easier. They can make the diameter larger than that on Hebron Avenue. Mr. Osgood finds that removing the abutments is an improvement to the roadway. There is no harm in asking the DOT if they would grant the Town that land as part of this process.

Mr. Niland asked if the DOT has a timetable for this project. Mr. Pennington explained that they are looking at a 2025 construction date. Mr. Niland asked if there is any access to the additional properties between the two bridges. Mr. Pennington does not know, but he will investigate it. Mr. Niland agrees with Mr. McChesney and Mr. Osgood about the roundabout itself. The signalized intersection could lead to traffic backing up to Route 17. Hopefully, this is something they can work through.

Motion by: Ms. LaChance

Seconded by: Mr. Cavanaugh

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby authorizes the Town Manager to execute the Project Authorization Letter concerning State Project No. 53-189, as described in a report by the Town Engineer/Manager of Physical Services dated September 8, 2023.

Disc: Mr. Luiz noted that the demand deposit is \$329,000. There are two appropriate sources of funding to use: \$206,000 in a capital account and \$150,000 of traffic calming money available in the CIP. Mr. Niland asked if they need to determine the source of funding today. Mr. Luiz recommends signing the letter, and on a future date, discussing where the funding would come from. Mr. Pennington pointed out that the \$329,000 is a hard cap. If it goes over that, the DOT has stated that they would not return to the Town to ask for more. Mr. Cavanaugh asked if there is any money in CIP for this project. Mr. Luiz explained that the \$206,000 was a CIP allocation with intent to perform preliminary design if the Council chose to move forward. Thus, that \$206,000 was specifically allocated in conjunction with this project when it was initially appropriated.

Ms. Wang noted that she sought to use the \$150,000 in traffic calming towards other potential traffic calming initiatives in other parts of town. She would like guidance from the Town engineering and fire departments on where and what the priorities are for traffic calming measures. Mr. Luiz pointed out that they await the Safe Streets and Roads For All grant, which would be used for traffic calming. Mr. Osgood asked if the \$206,000 would not have to go to the BOF, but the additional \$150,000 would. Mr. Luiz's opinion is that neither would need to go to the BOF for approval.

Result: Motion passed unanimously {7-0-0}.

b. Discussion and possible action concerning the use of American Rescue Plan Act grant funds to benefit Glastonbury farmers. *Tabled.*

Mr. Luiz explained that this grant program is modeled off the successful small business grant program which the Town implemented last year. A total of \$220,000 would be allocated from ARPA funds. Of that, \$40,000 is available as savings from the small business program. Each grant applicant could receive a maximum of \$10,000. Applications would be reviewed in the same manner that the small business grants were for ARPA. The draft recommendations for grant awards would go to the Council for review.

Mr. Cavanna asked to table this item.

Motion by: Mr. Cavanna

Seconded by: Mr. Cavanaugh

Result: Motion to table passed unanimously {7-0-0}.

c. Discussion and possible action concerning additional tax relief measures to benefit Glastonbury farmers.

Mr. Cavanna recused himself because he is a farmer.

Mr. Luiz provided a brief overview of the benefits that are currently available to Glastonbury farmers under PA 490 and the business personal property exemption. There is also a real estate exemption. The state statute allows municipalities to adopt a local ordinance that would allow specific types of farms to have 50% of the property practices associated with the farm business be abated. In 1992, Glastonbury adopted an ordinance

but only with respect to dairy farms. The ordinance includes recapture provisions in the event that the business is sold or no longer exists. He showed estimates of what applying 50% abatement would look like for farms and noted that the Town Attorney has reviewed this, as well.

Motion by: Ms. LaChance

Seconded by: Mr. Cavanaugh

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby directs the Town Manager and the Town Attorney to draft a revised version of Ordinance 18-31 that expands the types of farms that qualify for benefits in said ordinance, and that the revised ordinance be referred to the Town Council Policy & Ordinance Review Subcommittee for a report and recommendation, as described in a report by the Town Manager dated September 8, 2023.

Disc: Mr. Osgood asked what the total abated taxes would look like. Mr. Luiz replied, about \$9000 a year. Mr. Osgood finds this to be a more sustainable approach than just granting one-time subsidies using ARPA funds. Mr. McChesney finds this to be a good way to support local farms. These discussions are about compounding issues from prior years. He was also uneasy about a one-time solution, but he appreciates these types of long-term solutions. Ms. Wang asked about the total abatements they are currently offering under PA 490. Mr. Luiz does not have that but can put that together.

Nicole Lintereur, Town Assessor, explained that PA 490 is a state program. The Town does not have any say in the matter. They have no way of pulling up what their market value would be versus what they are being taxed on. Ms. Wang noted that these tax exemptions are currently available, and she supports increasing that without having a large impact on their tax base. What is proposed also seems reasonable. Mr. Niland would like to minimize the amount of paperwork for the Town. He favors this and also the one-time grant through ARPA funds.

Mr. Cavanna rejoined the discussion to point out that this applies to all Schedule F farms, not all farms under PA 490.

Result: Motion passed {6-0-1}, with Mr. Cavanna abstaining.

d. Discussion regarding the Naubuc School Classroom Reconfiguration project.

Mr. Cavanaugh stated that this was his request. There has been discussion from the BOF about this. The Council approved a \$3.2 million authorization in CIP. They were told that anything over that, the BOE would cover. The project came in \$11,800 over the requested amount, which the Superintendent asked Mr. Luiz to authorize funding. In Mr. Cavanaugh's view, it was inappropriate of Dr. Bookman to take advantage of their new manager to acquire that money. After that, the BOE added expenses. Mr. Zeller of the BOF sent a letter, asking why these items were not included in the original request, which would have totaled \$3.85 million. Had that happened, a referendum would have possibly been required. Additionally, taxpayers were shortchanged by \$230,000 because it was not included in their original application to the State DOE, which allows for reimbursement. The BOE Facilities Director said that the Town only gave them \$3.2 million, but that is all they had asked from the Council.

Mr. Osgood worries about forgoing state reimbursement for education projects. He finds it important to avoid this problem, going forward. He proposes transparency, by having a full accounting of these projects and their total budgets. Mr. Niland clarified that the elevator project of \$210,000, which was added on after the \$3.2 million request, was not needed at the time. Even if it were included in the original proposal, it was not reimbursable. The \$85,000 request for technology was already part of the BOE's FY 23-24 budget and

was also not reimbursable by the state. The cabinet update may have been eligible, which would have been \$76,000 back to the taxpayers. This was all paid for by the BOE's 1% fund, which the Council has no purview over. What they have is a long-overdue and much-needed project.

Mr. McChesney shared concerns regarding the overages, which were just addressed. This whole conversation has troubled him. If a person has grievances or concerns, they should bring it up directly at the BOE meetings so that members can respond. If they are to insinuate bad motives of the people in the budgets they request, then there should be an opportunity for those accused to be able to respond immediately.

PUBLIC HEARING:

NO. 1 ACTION ON PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO SECTIONS 2 AND 7 OF THE BUILDING ZONE REGULATIONS TO MODIFY REQUIREMENTS FOR PARKING COMMERCIAL AND RECREATIONAL VEHICLES, BOATS, TRAILERS AND MOBILE HOMES IN RESIDENTIAL ZONES. (PUBLIC HEARING TO BE CONTINUED TO THE SEPTEMBER 26, 2023 TOWN COUNCIL MEETING).

Motion by: Ms. LaChance

Seconded by: Mr. Cavanaugh

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby sets a public hearing on September 26, 2023, concerning the proposed amendments to Sections 2 and 7 of the Building Zone Regulations to modify requirements for parking commercial and recreational vehicles, boats, trailers, and mobile homes in residential zones to the September 26, 2023 Town Council meeting.

Result: Motion passed unanimously {7-0-0}.

5. New Business.

a. Action to adopt Affirmative Action Goals for fiscal year 2023-2024.

Mr. Luiz explained that the Human Relations Commission has approved these proposed goals, so it is time for the Council to review them. He has asked the Human Resources director to begin to review the plans.

Motion by: Ms. LaChance

Seconded by: Mr. Cavanaugh

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby adopts 2023-2024 Affirmative Action Goals, as described in a report by the Town Manager dated September 8, 2023, and as recommended by the Human Relations Commission.

Result: Motion passed unanimously {7-0-0}.

b. Action concerning amendment to Section 4.13 of the Building Zone Regulations regarding Commercial Space Retention/Replacement for Mixed Use Projects in the Town Center Zone (set public hearing).

Removed from the Consent Calendar and added onto New Business, at the request of Mr. Osgood.

Motion by: Ms. LaChance

Seconded by: Mr. Cavanaugh

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby schedules a public hearing for 8:00 p.m. on Tuesday, September 26, 2023 in the Council Chambers of Town Hall with the option for Zoom Video Conferencing to consider proposed amendment to Section 4.13 of the Building Zone Regulations regarding Commercial Space Retention/Replacement for Mixed Use Projects in the Town Center Zone, as described in a report by the Town Manager dated September 8, 2023.

Disc: Mr. Osgood explained that this was a significant change to the public ordinances, which should be reviewed by the Council before sending it to a public hearing. He asked about the small business definition and how that relates to the Town's ordinance. Additionally, there was a discussion regarding the maximum reduction in commercial space. What is proposed in the public hearing is 50%, which some have expressed is too high. He would like a discussion on that number before sending it to a hearing. Mr. Luiz noted that Ms. Caltagirone, Director of Community Development, can answer these questions. Ms. Caltagirone clarified that the text amendments in the Council's packet are the same ones that were forwarded on March 24. She has not made any revisions since then. There was discussion about reducing the boundary from 50% to a lower number, but when she reviewed the minutes, she did not see a consensus on that or a vote on how much to reduce it.

Ms. Caltagirone noted that the small business definition was also presented to the Council at the March 24 hearing. The Town had previously used a definition for a grant program, but she suggested something different. In reviewing the minutes, she did not see discussion of the definition, but she can review to see if she missed that. Mr. Osgood asked how that definition relates to the ordinance. Ms. Caltagirone explained that one of the public benefits suggested for the draft text amendments was if a property owner gave preference to local small businesses, that they could receive a small percentage reduction in commercial space. Mr. Osgood would like to change the 50% maximum to 30% or 40%, and send that to the public hearing. Mr. Niland pointed out that they can work out that number at the public hearing. Mr. Luiz clarified that the Council would do that after the close of the public hearing.

Result: Motion passed unanimously {7-0-0}.

- c. **Action on a proposed change of zone from Rural Residence Employment to Residence A and a PAD for 30.32 acres at 1555 New London Turnpike, Lot S-1A Feldspar Ridge, and 50 Feldspar Ridge for approximately 182 dwelling units (set joint preliminary hearing).**

Removed from the Consent Calendar and added onto New Business, at the request of Mr. Osgood.

Motion by: Ms. LaChance

Seconded by: Mr. Cavanaugh

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby schedules a Joint Town Council/Town Plan & Zoning Commission public hearing to review a Preliminary Development Plan for proposed change of zone from Rural Residence to Residence A and a Planned Area Development (PAD) to construct approximately 182 dwelling units on 30.32 acres at 1555 New London Turnpike, Lot S-1A Feldspar Ridge, and 50 Feldspar Ridge for 8:00 p.m. on Tuesday, September 26, 2023 in the Council Chambers of Town Hall, 2155 Main Street, and/or through Zoom Video Conferencing, as described in a report by the Town Manager dated September 8, 2023.

Disc: Mr. Osgood thought that this was a fairly significant project, so it is good for the public to fully understand what is going on. He asked what the inclusionary zoning ordinance requires for all new multifamily dwellings. Ms. Caltagirone explained that 10% of all rental units would need to be affordable to families making 80% of the AMI. The number of affordable units may not meet that requirement, but this is

a preliminary proposal. Mr. Osgood asked about the zones of the properties that surround this piece. Ms. Caltagirone stated that the land along Uplands Way is Residence A.

Result: Motion passed unanimously {7-0-0}.

6. Consent Calendar.

- a. Action concerning amendment to Section 4.13 of the Building Zone Regulations regarding Commercial Space Retention/Replacement for Mixed Use Projects in the Town Center Zone (set public hearing).**

Removed from Consent Calendar and Added to New Business Item 5(b)

- b. Action on a proposed change of zone from Rural Residence Employment to Residence A and a PAD for 30.32 acres at 1555 New London Turnpike, Lot S-1A Feldspar Ridge, and 50 Feldspar Ridge for approximately 182 dwelling units (set joint preliminary hearing).**

Removed from Consent Calendar and Added to New Business Item 5(c)

7. Town Manager's Report.

Mr. Luiz presented his Town Manager's Report.

Ms. LaChance appreciated seeing comments from the public about how nice and caring the police are. Mr. McChesney noted that the Chamber of Commerce is seeking volunteers to help with the apple harvest festival. He also encouraged all to check out the new board game collection at the library. Ms. Wang noted that the satellite recycling station is so frequently used that some people are being turned away. She asked if that is a common occurrence. Mr. Luiz stated that they are grappling with the success of the program. Because of fund cuts, they are working on how to meet the demands. Ms. Wang asked about piloting food waste diversion programs at various town events. Mr. Luiz stated that the Sanitation Department will attempt to have recycling and composting bins at those events. Ms. Wang asked if the Fire Department will be managing the effort for recruiting volunteers for post storm management. Mr. Luiz will look into the volunteer recruitment effort.

Mr. Cavanaugh noted that the Fire Commission was not included in the quarterly report from the Fire Department. He asked if that was an oversight or deliberate. Mr. Luiz does not know but will look into it. Mr. Cavanaugh supports a volunteer fire department for as long as possible. If there are issues, they should be brought to the Council because a larger discussion should be had before this issue gets out of control. Mr. Cavanna agreed. A full-time paid fire department would be a huge cost to taxpayers. He would like to see the Council involved on creative approaches to prevent that. Mr. Luiz pointed out that the subcommittee of the Fire Commission is working on recruitment and retention issues.

Mr. Osgood noted that the state will review some traffic lights and Mr. Luiz had mentioned Oak Street. He is unsure whether that is the one on Oak Street and Hebron Avenue, but he hopes so because the traffic light there forces people to use Wickham Road, which is a larger residential street. Mr. Osgood also finds it wrong to allow parking RVs and commercial vehicles on driveways as of right. It is important to relate to the TPZ that the Council did not endorse this ordinance, but simply asked to review it. Mr. Cavanna is happy to see that item moving forward because it is wrong to move forward on affordable housing while an archaic ordinance prevents a generational resident working a blue collar job from parking his work car in his

driveway. Mr. Niland complimented the Public Works department for removing the large branch on Hebron Avenue.

8. Committee Reports.

- a. **Chairman’s Report.** *None*
- b. **MDC.** *None*
- c. **CRCOG.**

Mr. Niland stated that there is a CRCOG housing forum coming up, which Ms. Wang will attend. There are also several funding opportunities, which he has forwarded to the Town Manager for review. CRCOG was designated as an economic development district (EDD).

d. Policy & Ordinance Review Committee report and recommendation – Bamboo Ordinance.

Mr. Luiz stated that the committee met recently to discuss the problem of bamboo, which was recently discovered adjacent to, and spilling into, town-owned property. The Town Attorney has developed a bamboo ordinance. The subcommittee moved this along to the full council. Mr. Cavanna asked if the ordinance is strong enough to allow the Town to abate bamboo and bill the homeowner. Mr. Luiz stated that, in his previous experience, there was a case of a homeowner’s bamboo spilling onto school property, and it worked out well. In some instances, however, people will not be as forthcoming with paying for it. In that instance, the Town would be prepared to do the work and seek legal remedies for payback, or place a lien on the property. Mr. Cavanna stated that bamboo is everywhere now, and it is important for the Town to quickly get this under control.

Motion by: Ms. LaChance

Seconded by: Mr. Cavanaugh

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby schedules a public hearing for 8:00 p.m. on Tuesday, September 26, 2023, in the Council Chambers of Town Hall at 2155 Main Street, Glastonbury and/or through Zoom Video Conferencing to consider a proposed new ordinance entitled “Bamboo Ordinance.

Result: Motion passed unanimously {7-0-0}.

9. Communications.

- a. **Letters from CT Siting Council regarding notice of intent to modify an existing telecommunications facility located at 1007 Chestnut Hill Road.**

10. Minutes.

- a. **Minutes of August 1, 2023 Regular Meeting.**

Motion by: Ms. LaChance

Seconded by: Mr. Cavanaugh

Result: Minutes were approved unanimously {7-0-0}.

11. Appointments and Resignations.

- a. **Resignation of Linda Edelwich from the Youth & Family Services Commission (U-2023).**
- b. **Resignation of John Tanski from the Water Pollution Control Authority (R-2025).**
- c. **Appointment of Larry Newquist to the Water Pollution Control Authority (R-2025).**

Motion by: Ms. LaChance

Seconded by: Mr. Cavanaugh

Result: Resignations and appointment accepted unanimously {7-0-0}.

12. Executive Session.

- a. **Discussion of the selection of a site or the lease, sale or purchase of real estate.**

Motion by: Ms. LaChance

Seconded by: Mr. Cavanaugh

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby enters into Executive Session for the purpose of discussion of the selection of a site or the lease, sale or purchase of real estate. Attendees to include Council Members and Town Manager, at 8:57 p.m.

Result: Motion passed unanimously {7-0-0}.

The Council came out of Executive Session at 9:12 p.m.

Motion by: Mr. Niland

Seconded by: Mr. Cavanaugh

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby adjourns the meeting at 9:13 p.m.

Result: Motion passed unanimously {7-0-0}.

Respectfully submitted,

Lilly Torosyan

Lilly Torosyan

Recording Clerk

Thomas Gullotta

Chairman