

**GLASTONBURY TOWN COUNCIL
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2023**

The Glastonbury Town Council with Town Manager, Jonathan Luiz, in attendance, held a Special 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

Ms. Jennifer Wang, Vice Chairman

Ms. Deborah A. Carroll {participated via Zoom video conferencing}

Mr. Kurt P. Cavanaugh {excused}

Mr. John Cavanna {excused}

Mr. Larry Niland

Ms. Mary LaChance

Mr. Jacob McChesney

Mr. Whit Osgood {excused}

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

2. Public Communication and Petitions pertaining to the Call.

3. Special Business as contained in the Call.

a. Public Hearing and Action on Public Hearing to consider an application by the Glastonbury Housing Authority for a change of Zone from Planned Employment Zone to Residence A Zone – 55 Nye Road.

Ms. Caltagirone explained that there are two motions tonight because the proposal calls for a double rezoning. She noted that the project has received strong support from all the commissions and boards that have been a part of the process.

Ryan Scrittorale of Alfred Benesch & Company, explained that they seek approval for the proposed rezoning and final development plan. The property is 11.31 acres and located in a former medical office building, with parking to the west. There are wetlands and a conservation easement, which will remain untouched. They seek to rezone the site to Residence A then to Planned Area Development, with a final site plan approval. This would allow for a density of 10 units per buildable acre. A portion of the property is already zoned Residence A. The site is located within biking and walking distance to the Town Center and existing trails.

Mr. Scrittorale reviewed the proposed site plan, which will still provide one-way circulation throughout the main corridor. The recreational facilities have been moved to the southeast corner. These will include a half basketball court and a passive recreational area which could

become a community garden. On the northeast corner, there will be a community center building with a small outdoor patio. An aerial overview of the site was presented to show how it will blend in with the surrounding area. He then reviewed the parking plan, which consists of 106 spaces with 11 EV charging spaces and 7 handicap spaces. There are also 15 additional spaces which could be proposed for parking later on, if it is deemed necessary. They are maintaining open space on the property as a wooded area.

Ryan Deane, the project landscape architect, listed the materials that will be used onsite and noted that 361 new trees will be planted. Site lighting will consist of only one light fixture, which is a newer version of what is currently used downtown. Rocco Petitto, the project architect, explained there will be 64 units in 19 buildings, consisting of 24 single-bedroom units, 28 two-bedroom units, and 12 three-bedroom units. He noted that their funding source, CHAPA, has stringent requirements for energy conservation. In addition to meeting these requirements, Mr. Petitto stated that they are also looking into adding a solar component to lower the energy usage.

Ms. Wang asked to point out where the 15 extra parking spaces would be, if they were to be constructed. Mr. Scrittorale explained that they are scattered throughout the site. Ms. Wang asked if two-way traffic can go through the community plaza. Mr. Deane replied, yes. Ms. Wang asked if that crosswalk would be raised at all. Mr. Deane stated yes, by about eight inches. Ms. Wang asked if shade has been considered for the picnic tables next to the basketball court. Mr. Deane noted that the ASDRC was concerned about locations for shading; in this area, there will be added trees.

Ms. Wang asked about the energy efficiency measures and the mechanicals. GHA Executive Director Neil Griffin explained that it is an all-electric site. The HERS 42 rating is a combination of insulation and various packages to achieve that high efficiency. He explained that they are trying to get 70% of the site lighting and common lighting to be run on solar. This is being evaluated for cost feasibility. Ms. Wang asked about the utility costs. Mr. Griffin stated that there is only one utility, which is electric, and they are all tenant-paid utilities. Each unit gets a utility allowance, which is updated annually. Ms. Wang asked about exterior maintenance and landscaping. Mr. Griffin stated that there are no tenant responsibilities for maintenance.

Mr. Niland noted that the number of affordable units is 51 of the 64 total units. He asked about the different amount of credits per AMI. Mr. Griffin explained that the credits are more about the units that are affordable, not the level of AMI. He stated that all 64 units will count towards the Town's new numerator and denominator because it is a tax credit property. Mr. McChesney asked about the blue area next to the seating. Mr. Griffin explained that it is a passive recreation area, which could become a community garden. He noted that it is unlikely to become a playground area because it is hard to insure.

Mr. Gullotta opened the floor for comments from the public.

Shawnee Baldwin of 57 Nuthatch Knob, is pleased to see that solar panels will be added, as well as access to biking trails, and consideration of a community garden. She suggested adding geothermal energy and large windows for passive lighting, as well as native plants. She approves the affordable and sustainable nature of this project.

DJ McBride of 263 Spring Street Extension, quoted Mr. Osgood who had stated that the Town needs to properly utilize local zoning ordinances to control development. Mr. McBride agrees with the sentiment, and believes that this proposal embodies this sentiment.

Dan Boughton of 35 Checkerberry Lane, echoed Ms. Baldwin's comments. He appreciates the efforts that the Town is putting into the project and hopes that consideration is given to native plants and renewable resources. He also believes that community gardens, composting, and rainwater connection are important to incorporate, and would like environmental considerations to be a high consideration for all projects going forward.

Rob Dakers of 15 Trifiro Circle, urged support for the proposal which he believes will provide critically-needed additional affordable housing options.

Lisa Eldridge of 108 South Mill Drive, noted that the original pollinator list had only 13 native plants, which is less than 30% of all the plants. She checked the latest list but did not see any changes. She would like to see more native plants for the pollinators.

Rick Eldridge of 108 South Mill Drive, would like to see more solar incorporated into this project. He believes that it is an opportunity to pay a little more upfront but save money in the long run. He also supports the community garden idea.

Agnes Gagnon of 20 Olde Village Road, stated that she went to the town office today and received information that there would not be a public meeting tonight. She thought this application was going to be about a zoning change, but it has gone further into the proposal itself. She stated that she had attended a prior public hearing on a zoning change and was surprised to learn that this is a two-step process. She supports affordable housing, but wants to ensure that the Town has double-checked the regulations.

Pam Lucas of 145 Moseley Terrace, is happy that the Town is using ARPA funds to build projects of future resiliency. This development will be a life-changer for its residents and those to come. She thanked everyone who has enabled the project to get this far and asked the Council to approve it.

Ms. Wang read into the record the one written comment received:

David O'Connor of 1140 Main Street, believes that the overall design and attention to green areas and environmental concerns make this project a model for future affordable housing projects in Glastonbury and in the state, as well. He hopes that it gets the attention it deserves.

The Council recessed for five minutes.

Mr. Gullotta asked about additional energy efficiency initiatives. Tom Arcari of QA+M Architecture emphasized that most of the materials they are providing have low-embodied energy. There will be a solar system on the building to support most of the common services, but they have not explored expanded solar at this time because of technical reasons and cost reasons.

The technical reasons are that it is difficult to have a specific solar system for each particular resident because each resident would have their own meter. He pointed out that while they are not exploring a geothermal system for this development, every house will be heated and cooled by air-source heat pumps, which are extremely efficient. As part of the HERS 42 designation, they will provide high-level insulation to every home, thereby reducing the loads onto residences. In order to fund this development, there is a very tight financial pro forma. He stated that they are doing their best to get the most sustainable features available for the GHA.

Mr. Gullotta asked about the native plants. Mr. Deane explained that any plant that he adds will be fully native. He believes that the natives they have should be counted as native plants because studies show that none of the pollinators are deterred by that. He stated that 74% of their plantings are natives or natives.

Mr. Gullotta solicited further comments and questions from the public, but seeing there were none, Mr. Gullotta closed the public hearing.

Motion by: Ms. Wang

Seconded by: Mr. Niland

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby approves, with an effective date of January 1, 2024, the application of Housing Authority of the Town of Glastonbury for a Change of Zone from Planned Employment to Residence A for 55 Nye Road, in accordance with the plan set entitled Glastonbury Housing Authority 55 Nye Road, prepared by Benesch and QA+M Architecture, dated October 13, 2023, with a final revision date of December 14, 2023, on file with the Community Development Office and as described in a report by the Director of Community Development dated December 8, 2023.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby finds the following:

- 1. That the site is bordered on two sides by Residence A zoning, and it is separated from the bulk of the PE zone by a conservation easement area to the east and south, making it a suitable site to be re-zone to residential use.*
- 2. That the site is also within biking and walking distance to Town Center and existing walking and biking trails, conditions that are suitable for residential development.*

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

b. Public Hearing and Action on Public Hearing to consider an application by the Glastonbury Housing Authority for a change of zone to Planned Area Development and adoption of a Final Development Plan for a 64-Unit Affordable Housing Community – 55 Nye Road.

Mr. Gullotta opened the floor for public comment.

DJ McBride of 263 Spring Street Extension, worries that a tree will fall onto Nye Road and block all residences inside that property. He asked to add another road to Old Trail Road, as well as to implement an HOA program to remove residents who mistreat their properties. He also

suggested covering parking with solar panels. He believes that the rubric they should use for projects like this is to ask whether they would want to live in the development, and the answer here is yes.

Mr. Griffin explained that they looked into other roadways, including Old Village Road, but were unable to obtain the rights to make another road to access the property. Therefore, that option was eliminated. He noted that tenants who do not comply with the lease requirements receive lease warnings; if that does not work, then they receive pre-termination notices; if they still do not comply, then they are serviced eviction notices.

Mr. Gullotta solicited further comments and questions from the public, but seeing there were none, Mr. Gullotta closed the public hearing.

Mr. Niland thanked all who worked on this project, which will become a model for affordable housing. Mr. McChesney agreed. He believes strongly in the use of native plants, though he supports the applicant getting credit on the cultivars. Ms. LaChance is impressed with the amount of work that was done in such a short time frame and appreciates the addition of the basketball court. Ms. Wang likes the sustainability features and finds the scale community-oriented and the aesthetics wonderful. She cautioned that long-term maintenance of community gardens is an issue and sees potential for partnerships with community garden groups. She also suggested looking into solar tubes to install on roofs. She supports this development as a meaningful step towards addressing the state's housing crisis. Mr. Gullotta remarked that this is probably the first affordable family housing in town since the 1980s. He finds tonight to be a momentous evening because they are taking a step towards providing much-needed workforce housing.

Motion by: Ms. Wang

Seconded by: Mr. Niland

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby approves, with an effective date of January 1, 2024, the application of Housing Authority of the Town of Glastonbury for a Change of Zone from Residence A to Planned Area Development and adoption of the Final Plan of Development for 55 Nye Road, in accordance with the plan set entitled Glastonbury Housing Authority 55 Nye Road, prepared by Benesch and QA+M Architecture, dated October 13, 2023, with a final revision date of December 14, 2023, on file with the Community Development Office, as described in a report by the Director of Community Development dated December 8, 2023, and:

- 1. In compliance with:*
 - a. The conditions set forth by the Conservation Commission in their recommendation for approval to the Town Plan and Zoning Commission in memo dated November 13, 2023*
 - b. The favorable recommendation set forth by the Architectural and Design Review Committee on November 14, 2023.*
 - c. The conditions set forth by the Town Plan and Zoning Commission in their recommendation for approval on November 21, 2023.*

2. *In adherence to:*
 - a. *The Health Department memorandum dated December 8, 2023.*
 - b. *The Engineering Department memorandum dated December 8, 2023.*
 - c. *The Police Department memorandum dated November 13, 2023.*
 - d. *The Fire Marshal and Fire Department memorandum dated December 8, 2023.*

3. *With the following conditions:*
 - a. *Prior to the issuance of a Building Permit, the applicant will submit the Affordability Program for approval by the Town Plan and Zoning Commission, demonstrating that 80% of the units will be affordable to households earning 80% of Area Median Income or less, and record the relevant restrictive covenants on the land record.*
 - b. *Prior to issuance of a Building Permit, the applicant shall file a motion of approval and approved plans on the land records of the Town Clerk.*
 - c. *Prior to issuance of a Building Permit, the applicant shall file (2) paper copies and digital copy of stamped and sealed finalized approved plans to be filed in the Office of Community Development.*
 - d. *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.*

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby finds that the 55 Nye Road Planned Area Development meets the requirements of Section 4.12.5 (a-f) – “Findings Required” of the Building-Zone Regulations in that it fulfills the following criteria:

- a. *That the standards and conditions of Section 12 of these Regulations have been met.*
- b. *That the developer has provided, where appropriate, for the sustained maintenance of the development in general, and for the open space in accordance with Section 4.12.3j above.*
- c. *That utilities, drainage, and recreational facilities have been so laid out as not to duly burden the capacity of such facilities, such other facilities presently connected therewith, and such facilities proposed by the adopted Town Plan of Development and officially adopted master utility plans.*
- d. *That the streets and drives will be suitable and adequate to carry anticipated traffic and increased densities will not generate traffic in such amounts as to overload the street network in the area.*
- e. *That the existing or proposed utility services are adequate for the population densities and building intensities.*
- f. *That the development will be in keeping with the general interest and spirit of the Glastonbury Building-Zone Regulations and comprehensive plan.*

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby finds:

1. *That the 55 Nye Road Planned Area Development will allow for the development of affordable housing and diversity of housing and support the Housing and Sustainability policies of the Town Plan of Conservation and Development as follows:*
 - *Housing-b: Provide affordable housing for individuals and families and senior housing / housing for the disabled, to include rental and owner-occupied units.*
 - *Housing-d: Support projects that use Universal Design to create new housing units that provide living spaces that work for people of all abilities and promote intergenerational interaction.*
 - *Housing-i: Promote energy efficient housing designs, construction techniques and “green buildings” using the standards and rating system of the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) of the U.S. Green Building Council.*
 - *Sustainability-a: Encourage Sustainable Development projects that minimize impacts on the natural environment, i.e. land, water, air, through use of renewable energy, waste reduction and recycling practices.*
2. *That the proposed rezoning will allow for affordable housing development that implements the Town’s Affordable Housing Plan.*

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

4. Adjournment.

Motion by: Mr. McChesney

Seconded by: Mr. Niland

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Glastonbury Town Council hereby adjourns the Special Town Council meeting of December 14, 2023 at 8:13 p.m.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Lilly Torosyan

**Lilly Torosyan
Recording Clerk**

**Thomas Gullotta
Chairman**