

**THE GLASTONBURY TOWN PLAN AND ZONING COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2023**

The Glastonbury Town Plan and Zoning Commission, with Shelley Caltagirone, Director of Community Development, and Gary Haynes, 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 Chair  
Mr. Raymond Hassett  
Mr. Emilio Flores  
Mr. Philip Markuszka  
Ms. Laura Cahill, Alternate {participated via Zoom video conferencing}  
Ms. Sharon Jagel, Alternate {seated as voting member}  
Mr. Dennis DesMarais, Alternate

**Commission Members Absent**

Mr. Corey Turner, Secretary

Chairman Zanolungo called the meeting to order at 7:02 P.M. He seated Commissioner Jagel in the absence of Secretary Turner.

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**PUBLIC COMMENT**

**Informal session for the purpose of hearing from citizens on Regular Meeting agenda or non-agenda items**                      *None*

**PUBLIC HEARING**

**1. Tabled recommendation to the Town Council (Zoning Authority) regarding an amendment to the Building-Zoning Regulations for Parking of Commercial and Recreational Vehicles in Residential Zone Section 7.1.b**

Ms. Caltagirone reviewed the revisions and provided information from other towns' text amendments. She explained that the definition of commercial vehicles has been simplified. They have also limited the text amendment to allow for the parking of one commercial vehicle outside but an unlimited number if the commercial vehicles are located inside a garage or barn. They have also removed mobile homes from the list of vehicles that can be parked as an accessory use. Screening of outdoor parking is required in the rear or side yard from both neighboring properties and the public right-of-way. Lastly, they suggest exempting farm equipment from these text amendments.

Vice Chair Purtill thinks that the unlimited number of vehicles parked in a garage or barn should be limited to one. Mr. Zanolungo contended whether it is stretching it too far, to regulate what is parked in people's garages. Commissioner Jagel pointed out that some commercial vehicles make a lot of noise, even if they are not visible. Therefore, noise must be taken into consideration as a factor.

Commissioner Hassett asked if there is a restriction on recreational vehicles. Ms. Caltagirone responded that the code refers to boats, trailers, and mobile homes. They would interpret a mobile home as a recreational vehicle. However, a mobile home is thought to be a more permanent fixture versus a camper or RV, which one drives. Thus, they have removed mobile homes from the accessory parking regulations and replaced them with just recreational vehicles. Alternate DesMarais asked if the language regarding temporary parking, vis-a-vis RVs, has been removed. Ms. Caltagirone replied yes, because that is a slippery slope, which is difficult to regulate.

Mr. Zanolungo has trouble with the idea of regulating what is in a barn or garage. Mr. Hassett asked where the ambiguities came from and why the Council forwarded the request for a TPZ recommendation. Alternate Cahill remarked that she has spoken with Council Chairman Gullotta, who informed her of some areas in Glastonbury where commercial vehicles cannot be parked. There was a concern of this being an equity issue for blue collar small business people. However, she believes that these proposed regulations go too far. Other towns, like Enfield and South Windsor, allow just one commercial vehicle, so she does not see the need for two. The Town can start with one and see how it fares. Additionally, she would strike all the references to trailers, RVs, and boats because they are individual choices, not driven by a business necessity - unlike a commercial vehicle.

Ms. Caltagirone clarified that the code currently allows for parking of recreational type vehicles, such as trailers and mobile homes, so they are not adding further parking for RVs on-site. Where the revision would add flexibility is that it would allow one to park an RV, boat, or trailer in a side yard with screening. She further clarified that the code allows for on-site parking of one commercial vehicle and one RV, boat, or trailer - which is an "or" not an "and." Ms. Jagel asked about enforcement of violations. Ms. Caltagirone responded that the Town sends a violation notice within 30 days to correct without penalty. If they do not comply, then the Town can assess fines of \$100 per day until the violation is corrected.

Mr. Zanolungo opened the floor for public comments.

**Brad Spencer of 520 Bell Street**, asked if vehicle weight is still a factor. Mr. Zanolungo replied that it is currently not a factor, but he wonders whether that is a hindrance. Ms. Caltagirone explained that Town staff did not have specific direction on whether it would be weight capacity or weight of the vehicle, so they did not add it to the revision. Mr. Spencer asked if the 1.5-ton restriction is the overall gross weight. Ms. Caltagirone replied that the 1.5-ton rating is the carrying capacity, not the gross weight of the vehicle. Mr. Spencer finds 1.5 tons for a commercial vehicle to be on the light side. In driving around just three streets in town, he uncovered 18 violations of this regulation. That percentage will greatly go up once they view the whole town.

The following comment was made via Zoom:

**Karl Wagener of 588 Neipsic Road**, is concerned about the proposed regulations, especially the section that allows parking of an unlimited number of commercial vehicles inside a structure. Such a change would effectively re-zone some residential neighborhoods into industrial ones. For him, the problem is not the visibility of parking on a neighbor's driveway, but the noise and dust caused by truck traffic, and maintenance. The size and character of the vehicles should be the decisive factors, not the use. The regulations should provide for town-initiated enforcement of violations because pitting neighbor against neighbor is inappropriate.

Mr. Zanolungo suggested dialing back this text amendment to consider just the one commercial vehicle for now. Ms. Cahill and Mrs. Purtill concurred. Ms. Jagel pointed out that there are several moving parts here: the definition of a commercial vehicle itself, and, within that category, there is size, length, and noise to consider. Mr. Haynes suggested looking at the dimensional requirements of the examples that Secretary Turner had provided at the last meeting. Mr. Zanolungo would like to define what a commercial vehicle is, and then ensure that people can park their commercial vehicle in their driveway, if it is being used for work. Mr. Hassett is concerned by the fact that this matter was brought forth because of the complaints of just one or two people, who raised the issue to the Council, to change their regulations. He would like clarity from the Council on what exactly they are asking for: a policy change or just a review.

Mr. Zanolungo asked how matters like this were handled in the past. Ms. Caltagirone responded that, in the past, there was a subcommittee seated with both TPZ and Council members, to review legislation. She asked if the Commission would like that subcommittee to be re-formed and have this matter be brought over there. The Commission agreed to proceed that way. Mrs. Purtill noted that surrounding blue collar towns have more restrictive regulation, likely because this is more of an issue there. Mr. Haynes stated that is correct.

Mr. Zanolungo read the following correspondence into the record:

An email from **Noreen Cullen of 30 Delmar Road**, who finds commercial vehicles to be an unwelcome intrusion into residential neighborhoods because of the noise and dust that they generate.

Mr. Turner emailed a response to Ms. Cullen, noting that as of August 2022, all trucks will be required to have vehicle backup sound.

With no further comments, Mr. Zanolungo closed the public hearing. The Commission directed Town Staff to discuss with the Council to gather more information.

## **2. Application of Rob Liflander for a Section 4.11 Flood Zone Special Permit & a Section 12.9 Minor Change – solar carport installation – 769 Hebron Avenue – Planned Employment & Flood Zones – Gemma Power, owner**

Rob Liflander of Peregrine Renewable Energy, LLC, explained that they were hired by Gemma Power Systems, LLC to design and build a solar carport. Their new plan includes a solar carport

with a level roof, lowered support columns (from 13 feet to 10 feet in height), and an improved landscaping plan. The Architectural and Site Design Review Committee (ASDRC) had recommended that the carport structure be either tube steel or timber. However, the cost to do that would be prohibitive. As a compromise, they lowered the canopy height to 10 feet, flattened the slope, and will be powder coating it to match the trim of the building. When the applicant discussed a potential timber framed structure with a manufacturer, he learned that in order to cover the parking spaces, they would have to construct two separate structures and install posts on either side of each parking space. One member of the ASDRC connected with David Hooke of TimberHomes, LLC in Vermont, but he provided Mr. Hooke with incorrect dimensions, which yielded a lower project cost. Mr. Liflander stated that it is untenable for the property owner to have a post on the outside of every parking spot and that the cost of the timber framing would be too high.

Mr. Liflander has contacted a few different carport structure companies in New England that provide tube steel structures. Mr. Hooke provided a range from \$68-102 per square foot, for a total of about \$350,000 for the proposed structure in tube steel. Mrs. Purtill is concerned that if they vote on the I-beams tonight, then they will continue to see more of that type of structure in town. Mr. Liflander stated that the purpose of the landscaping along Hebron Avenue is to screen it from the street. By lowering the roofs of the solar carport, adding shrubs in the middle, and the trees on the ends reaching maturity of 25 feet, he believes that proper screening will be provided. Mr. Zanolungo asked about the color of the powder coating. Mr. Liflander's preference is an earth tone or forest green to match it to the architecture of the building.

Mr. Zanolungo noted that they sent this proposal back to the ASDRC because one of the support piers was 3 feet by 3 feet in the front and 3 feet by 8 feet in the back. Mr. Liflander explained that they would like to keep each of the columns the same height so that the southernmost pier would be 3 feet wide and one foot tall and each pier moving down the slope would be taller so that the last column would be 3 feet wide by 5 feet. Mr. Haynes explained that the ASDRC unanimously preferred the tubular steel over the I-beam structure, but half the committee understood that it was cost prohibitive. Mr. Liflander added that it would add a minimum of \$200,000 to the project. Mr. Hassett asked if these are charging stations for vehicles. Mr. Liflander replied no, separate structures will be installed for EV charging stations in the future.

Ms. Jagel asked if the ASDRC recommended that the column heights be 10 feet. Ms. Caltagirone clarified that the ASDRC had requested for it to be as low as possible, not necessarily 10 feet. Mr. Zanolungo stated that the height will be 10 feet at Hebron Avenue and 14 feet off the ground as it moves away from Hebron Avenue. Ms. Caltagirone added that the ASDRC did not specify, so the recommendation was probably a 10-foot maximum at any point along the street elevation of the overall structure. Ms. Jagel asked what kind of vehicles might be around the 10-foot range and could run into safety issues. Mr. Haynes clarified that the travel ways for the parking lot are not encumbered by the structure, apart from the corner which will be 14 feet high and angled up, so box trucks should have clearance.

Commissioner Markuszka asked about the longevity of this structure. Mr. Liflander replied that powder coating should last at least 20-30 years. There might be some weathering after time. Ms. Cahill noted that the only other carport in Glastonbury is at the police station, so they have to ask

whether they want carports in town because it will open up the door to future applications. Mr. Liflander noted that people who are starting families are thinking about climate change. This is a draw for young people to move to town.

Mr. Zanlungo opened the floor for public comments.

**Brad Spencer of 520 Bell Street**, noted that all the bridges in town were powder-coated and lasted about 25-30 years before needing to be redone. Solar energy is the future. Some may find the carport to be an eyesore, but it will help the environment, and it is located on Hebron Avenue, so he is not bothered by that visual concern.

Ms. Jagel asked if there was an effort to put the solar panels on the roof of the existing building. Mr. Liflander replied that it was discussed. Gemma Power Systems wanted the solar carport to be a showpiece for the company. They did not put it on the roof because they thought it would be used as a patio, but they are considering doing so now. Mr. Hassett noted that the motion specifies lowering the canopy to a maximum of 10 feet on the south, but there is nothing limiting the height on the north end. Ms. Jagel pointed out that it will be flat, so there will be a level roof. Commissioner Flores added that the grade underneath it changes, not the roof.

With no further comments, Mr. Zanlungo closed the public hearing.

**Motion by:** Commissioner Hassett

**Seconded by:** Commissioner Markuszka

MOVED, that the Town Plan & Zoning Commission approve the application of Rob Liflander for a Section 4.11 Flood Zone Special Permit & a Section 12.9 Minor Change – solar carport installation – 769 Hebron Avenue – Planned Employment & Flood Zones – Gemma Power, owner, in accordance with the plans on file with the Office of Community Development and in compliance with the following conditions:

1. Compliance with the administrative approval for Wetland Regulated Activity in letter of approval dated March 13, 2023.
2. Adherence to:
  - a. The Health Department memorandum dated July 10, 2023.
  - b. The Engineering Department memorandum dated July 12, 2023.
  - c. The Police Department memorandum dated July 11, 2023.
  - d. ASDRC Review Committee Report dated 8/22/23:
    - Level canopy flat (in relation to building)
    - Step level the foundation
    - Powder coat carport same color to match trim of the building
    - Lower canopy as low as possible (maximum height 10 feet high)
3. Prior to issuance of a Building Permit, the applicant shall file the motion of approval and Sheet #3 Site Plan on the land records of the Town Clerk. Sheet #3 shall include the commission's preferred Landscape Plan alternative to be integrated into the Site Plan.

4. Prior to issuance of a Building Permit, the applicant shall provide (2) paper copies of the finalized, approved plans to be filed in the Office of Community Development.
5. 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.
6. Prior to issuance of a Building Permit, the applicant shall receive approval from the Fire Marshal on the proposed height of the solar carport.

Mrs. Purtill asked that, if the Town is to encourage solar carports, then they must be mindful of the financial cost it poses for applicants. Otherwise, they will not be installed in Glastonbury. Because the powder coating and landscaping help the look and durability, she will approve the I-beam structure.

***A friendly amendment was made by Vice Chair Purtill, seconded by Commissioner Marz, to strike bullet #5 under 2D.***

***Result of Amendment:*** Amendment was approved {4-2-0}, with Commissioners Hassett and Jagel dissenting.

***Result of Motion:*** Amended motion was approved {4-2-0}, with Commissioners Hassett and Jagel dissenting.

## **REGULAR MEETING**

### **1. Acceptance of the Minutes of the September 5, 2023 Regular Meeting**

***Motion by:*** Commissioner Hassett

***Seconded by:*** Commissioner Markuszka

***Result:*** Minutes were accepted unanimously {6-0-0}.

### **2. CONSENT CALENDAR**

- a. Scheduling of Public Hearings for the Regular Meeting of October 3, 2023:
  - i. Application of Joseph Lavertu for a Section 6.11 Accessory Apartment Special Permit - 84 Bell Street - Rural Residence Zone

***Motion by:*** Commissioner Markuszka

***Seconded by:*** Vice Chair Purtill

***Result:*** Consent calendar was accepted unanimously {6-0-0}.

### **3. Chairman's Report     *None***

### **4. Report from Community Development Staff     *None***

The Town Plan and Zoning Commission adjourned their meeting at 9:24 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Lilly Torosyan*  
Lilly Torosyan  
Recording Clerk