

MINUTES  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
OCTOBER 27, 2015 - 7:00 P.M.  
TOWN HALL ANNEX - COMMUNITY ROOM 2

Acting Chairman Pritchard called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

I. ROLL CALL

Regular members present: Pritchard, Munn, Steinford  
Alternate members present: Fitzgerald, Tarbox, Zod  
Absent: Sherrard, Kane  
Staff present: Glemboski, Silsby

Acting Chairman Pritchard appointed Fitzgerald to sit for Sherrard, Zod to sit for Kane and Steinford to sit as Acting Secretary.

For the record, Fitzgerald stated that he used to be employed by Electric Boat but does not feel this will impact his decision.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. October 13, 2015

MOTION: To adopt the Planning Commission minutes of October 13, 2015, as amended.

Motion made by Steinford, seconded by Zod, so carried 4-1 (Munn abstained).

III. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS - None

IV. SUBDIVISIONS

1. Mystic Weigh Re-subdivision Phase I and II - Acceptance of Public Improvements, Ensign Drive, Mariners Lane & Open Space

Staff reviewed the plans and stated that a memo dated October 21, 2015 has been received from the Public Works Director stating that all improvements are ready to be accepted for Phase 1 and II. Also received was a memo dated October 26, 2015 from the Director of Parks and Recreation recommending acceptance of an open space parcel from Mystic Weigh. Staff noted that a bench for school kids has been placed on site.

MOTION: To recommend acceptance of the public improvements for the Mystic Weigh Re-subdivision Phase I and II, including Ensign Drive and Mariners Lane.

Motion made by Pritchard, seconded by Fitzgerald, so voted unanimously

MOTION: To recommend acceptance of 15.98 acres of open space of the Mystic Weigh Re-subdivision.

Motion made by Pritchard, seconded by Steinford, so voted unanimously

V. SITE PLANS

1. Office Building Improvements, Electric Boat (SIT15-11), 9-23 Kings Highway

John Gilmore, P.E. and Vice President of Milone & MacBroom reviewed the 4.7 acre property, which is now owned by Electric Boat. As he reviewed the plans and photos, specifics were given about the proposal to convert the storage building into office space. Architectural plans have been submitted. Handicapped accessibility will be added at the front entrance and the sidewalk will be replaced. The perimeter of the building will not change. Repaving will be done. He stated that the exiting bituminous sidewalk will be removed and a new one installed to extend from the building to the street. He spoke about landscaping, islands, and trees. Except for a very small piece of land located in the City of Groton, most of the property is located within the Town.

Staff spoke about landscaping requirements, replacing trees, and creating a walkway out to Kings Highway. Drainage patterns will stay the same. There will be an increase in pervious area on site. Handicapped ramps will be installed. Any changes based on State permitting in the future would require Planning Commission review.

An inquiry was made about the Pfizer building, which will still be occupied on site. Discussion followed about the request to install a bituminous sidewalk instead of a concrete sidewalk. Additional inquiries were made about the condition of the existing sidewalk and the drainage system, which includes an off-site wetland area on the adjacent property. There will be no increase of impervious pavement. Maintaining the off-site wetlands area was discussed. Inquiries were made about future parking, fencing, and drainage. Town Staff is satisfied with the off-site existing natural drainage system and there is no increase in drainage with the proposal.

Gilmore expressed his preference in installing a bituminous sidewalk instead of concrete. Devin Xenelis, Manager of Engineering Facilities at Electric Boat, agreed. The pros of having a concrete curb adjacent to a bituminous sidewalk were raised by the Commission. Emergency access to the building was discussed.

**MOTION:** To approve the site plan for Office Building Improvements Electric Boat, 9-23 Kings Highway (SIT15-11) with the following modifications:

1. A note shall be placed on the plan that states "Any modification to this plan imposed by another Federal, State, or Local agency shall require additional review by Town Staff or the Commission, whichever is appropriate".
2. A note shall be placed on the plan that states "Any new outdoor lighting shall be full-cut off design". New lighting shall be shown on the final site plan.
3. All Fire Marshal requirements shall be met.
4. Technical items as raised by staff shall be addressed

The Planning Commission finds that the upgrading of the landscaping, the use of planters along the building frontage, and the significant natural perimeter landscaping of the parking lot meets the intent of Section 7.4 of the Zoning Regulations.

Motion made by Pritchard, seconded by Zod, so voted unanimously

VI. OLD BUSINESS

1. POCD Draft Themes

Staff noted that the Development Theme should be received by the Town sometime next week, at which time Staff will review the document and then forward it to the Planning Commission.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

1. Town of Stonington Referral for Public Hearing on November 4, 2015 - PZ1520RA - Subdivision Regulations

Discussion about referral requirements and notifying nearby towns was brought up.

The Planning Commission reviewed the referral and had the following comment:

MOTION: To provide information in Section 3.5.4 regarding the referral requirements to an adjacent town for subdivision applications under CGS 8-7d(f)

Motion by Pritchard, seconded by Zod, so voted unanimously

2. Town of Stonington Referral for Public Hearing on November 17, 2015 - Regulation Amendment

The Planning Commission reviewed the referral and had no comment.

3. SolarCity Corporation, 1240 Poquonnock Road - Connecticut Siting Council Petition No. 1195 for Solar Electric Generating Facility

Staff reviewed plans and explained the proposal. Comments from the Siting Counsel were distributed. Comments need to be received by the Siting Counsel by November 13, 2015. Staff requested that Commission members review the proposal and submit comments to her.

Michael Singer of Brightfields Development LLC and SolarCity gave an overview of the proposal along with Len Mediavilla of Groton Utilities. Singer stated that Groton Utilities customers will be using some of the solar energy as well as what is used on the grid. There will be almost no stormwater impact. The construction period will run approximately 3 to 4 months. Information was given about the acreage being used, existing fencing, and location to the nearest residence. There will be no storage on site.

Inquiries were made about the flooding that occurs on Poquonnock Road and safety precautions due to the proximity to the water supply. Tarbox noted the importance of installing a buffer.

Staff stated that this area is located in the Water Resource Protection District. Impervious surface calculations were noted. Discussion followed about run off.

Town Staff to address concerns prior to comments being submitted to the Siting Counsel.

4. Report of Commission

Fitzgerald inquired about coastal access from the bridge to the railroad tracks in Mystic near the Trolley Barn. Concerns were raised about the lack of signage.

Steinford expressed concerns about signage not being controlled throughout the Town and the lack of enforcement. He plans to contact the Planning Director about his concerns.

Munn attended a land Use Academy Advanced Training at UConn on October 24, 2015.

Tarbox inquired about church signs. Discussion followed about sign ordinances being content neutral. Staff noted that sign regulations need to be updated.

5. New Applications

- a. Gabriele's Karate (SIT15-13), 1028 Poquonnock Road
- b. Long Meadow Landings (SIT15-14), 45 South Road

Staff noted the new applications above and gave a brief summary of the proposals.

VIII. REPORT OF CHAIRMAN

Pritchard gave a recap of the Committee of Chairpersons meeting he attended on October 19, 2015. He stated that Sherrard attended the Council of Governments (COG) meeting that same night. The next COG meeting will be held in January 2016.

IX. REPORT OF STAFF

Staff stated that a special meeting for the Market Analysis and Zoning Audit Focus Group will be held on October 29, 2015 at 6 p.m. at the Groton Public Library. All members are invited to attend. She informed the Commission that a Planner I has been hired for the Planning Department and will be starting on November 9, 2015.

X. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn at 9:15 was made by Steinford, seconded by Zod, so voted unanimously.

  
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Margil Steinford, Acting Secretary  
Planning Commission

Prepared by Robin Silsby  
Office Assistant II