

MINUTES  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
MARCH 22, 2016 – 7:00 P.M.  
TOWN HALL ANNEX – COMMUNITY ROOM 2

Chairman Sherrard called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

I. ROLL CALL

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

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. March 8, 2016

MOTION: To adopt the minutes of March 8, 2016

Motion made by Steinfeld, seconded by Kane, so voted unanimously, as annotated

III. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS

Pritchard referenced an upcoming Economic Development event entitled, “Getting to know your Groton” scheduled for Thursday, April 14, 2016. This event is open to the public and will be held at the Par 4 Restaurant in Groton from 5:30 pm to 7:30 pm. Contact the Mystic Chamber at 860-572-9578 for further details.

IV. SITE PLANS

1. Mystic River Ambulance (SIT15-18), 237 Sandy Hollow Road – Request for Extension or Action Required

Munn recused himself as he is a volunteer and Director for the Mystic River Ambulance. Sherrard appointed Tarbox to sit for Munn.

Russell Sergeant, Architect, reviewed plans for the 18 foot x 42 foot addition to accommodate a larger meeting room and one additional bedroom. He referred to cell phone towers on site, a wetland area, the septic system and parking. Sergeant explained the difficulty in putting in a sidewalk and requested a sidewalk waiver along Sandy Hollow Road.

Staff noted that a Wetland permit was granted in 1991. He spoke about sidewalks not being required at that time. All other elements of the site plan meet site plan regulations including the wetlands. Maps showing the sidewalk network from Route 1 all the way down to Sandy Hollow Road were reviewed.

Concerns were raised about the sidewalk network and the importance of having sidewalks. Discussion followed about a possible sidewalk agreement along Allyn Street. An inquiry was made about a pedestrian crossing on Allyn Street.

Steinfeld proposed a 5-year agreement for a sidewalk to be installed on Sandy Hollow Road and to put in a sidewalk on Allyn Street now. After some discussion, Steinfeld withdrew his proposal for a sidewalk agreement.

MOTION: To approve a waiver of section 7.5-2 regarding frontage sidewalks on Sandy Hollow Road for the following reasons:

1. Sidewalks are not recommended along Sandy Hollow Road by the Master Pedestrian, Bicycle and Trail Plan.
2. There will be no significant pedestrian movement to the site from Sandy Hollow Road

Motion made by Sherrard, seconded by Kane, so voted unanimously

MOTION: To approve the Mystic River Ambulance Site Plan subject to the following modifications:

1. A sidewalk shall be constructed along the property's Allyn St. frontage.
2. Necessary information concerning the Allyn St. sidewalk including, but not limited to, location, grades, elevations, and other details shall be provided on the site plan.
3. Technical Items as raised by staff shall be addressed

Motion made by Sherrard, seconded by Steinford, so voted 4-1-0 (Tarbox opposed)

2. Four Winds at Mystic, 0 Noank Ledyard Road – Request for Extension for One Year Start of Construction

Attorney Londregan and Clint Brown were present. An explanation was given as to why another extension is being requested. They noted that a permit for an extension from the Army Corp of Engineers has not yet been received.

Staff stated that plans have not yet been recorded. She referred to conservation easements and the Army Corp of Engineers. She recommended a 6-month extension to make sure that the plans get recorded within that 6-month period.

Attorney Londregan suggested a 6-month extension for recording plans and a 1-year Start of Construction Extension.

The draft motion was discussed and the importance of getting those plans recorded was noted. Clint Brown explained his concerns about the timing necessary to complete all of the provisions. Londregan would prefer to wait on recording the plans until after the report from the Army Corp of Engineers has been received. Concerns were raised as to the length of time it has taken to move forward on this project.

MOTION: To approve a request for an extension of time till November 26, 2016 for Start of Construction

Motion made by Sherrard, seconded by Steinford, so voted 4-1-0 (Kane opposed)

## V. OLD BUSINESS

1. POCD Draft Themes – Staff distributed the draft POCD to all members.

Staff suggested that the regularly scheduled Planning Commission meeting on June 28, 2016 be cancelled and to schedule a special meeting to hold a public hearing on the 2016 draft POCD on Wednesday, June 29, 2016 at the Town Hall Annex in Room 1 at 6:30 p.m. State referral requirements were noted.

Munn returned to the meeting.

MOTION: To cancel the Planning Commission June 28, 2016 meeting and schedule a Planning Commission special meeting on Wednesday, June 29, 2016 at 6:30 p.m. in Room 1 for the 2016 Draft POCD public hearing

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

2. Zoning Commission Referral for Public Hearing on April 6, 2016
  - a. REGA16-01, Proposed Zoning Regulation Text Amendment to Sections 6.2 (Downtown Development District); 6.3 (Waterfront Design District); 7.1-36 (Drive-Through Facilities); 7.2-5 (Off-Street Parking and Loading); 7.4-4 (Buffer Areas) and 7.5 (Sidewalks). (Town of Groton Zoning Commission, Applicant.

MOTION: The Planning Commission recommends approval of the proposed Zoning Text Amendment application REGA16-01, Sections:

- 6.2 (Downtown Development District);
- 6.3 (Waterfront Design District);
- 7.1-36 (Drive-Through Facilities);
- 7.2-5 (Off-Street Parking and Loading);
- 7.4-4 (Buffer Areas) and
- 7.5 (Sidewalks).

Motion by Sherrard, seconded by Pritchard, so voted unanimously

## VI. NEW BUSINESS

1. Town of Stonington Referral for Public Hearing on April 6, 2016 – Zoning Regulations Amendment – To revise its brewery definition.

The Planning Commission had no comment.

2. Zoning Board of Appeals Referral for Public Hearing on March 23, 2016
  - a. ZBA16-03 – Spicer Mansion Three Season Porch, 15 Elm Street

Russell Sergeant and Brian Gates were present for this referral.

Staff reviewed the specifics of the variance request for Spicer Mansion and maps were presented. Information was given about the balconies, above grade basement access, and zoning regulations. He stated that the variance would be a structural expansion of a non-conforming use. Special Permit #228 was approved 18 years ago. The Hotel/Motel will have food service for staying guests only. He explained that this request is an increase in the structural component of the building and not an increase in the “use”. It was noted that the applicant has received a Certificate of Appropriateness from the Historic District Commission.

Inquiries were made about the non-conformity, zoning, and the porch on the west side. Gates reviewed maps and spoke about windows. He noted that the Ocean House is the management company for the Spicer Mansion.

The Planning Commission had no comment.

3. Report of Commission

An inquiry was made about the New Central Hall in terms of the Coast Guard being notified of potential spills. Staff will address this with the applicant.

4. New Applications

A new application has been received regarding Groton Village Condos located at 10 Fort Hill Road.

VII. REPORT OF CHAIRMAN

The Commission thanked Ray Munn for his many years of service upon having recently received the lifetime achievement award presented by the Connecticut Federation of Planning & Zoning Agencies.

VIII. REPORT OF STAFF

Staff stated that a notice was sent to the Planning Commission about the upcoming land use academy basic training workshop scheduled for May 16, 2016 and May 23, 2016 at the regional planning agency in Norwich, CT.

Staff noted that amendments to the zoning regulations are still ongoing. The Zoning Commission will be holding a workshop on Wednesday, March 30, 2016 at 5:30 p.m. in Room 2 at the Town Hall Annex. Planning Commission members are welcome.

Fitzgerald referred to the Executive Session that was held at the last Planning Commission meeting. He inquired about alternate members not being allowed to sit in during the Executive Session and how this could potentially hinder taking a formal vote if a regular member was not present for the vote. Discussion followed about the importance of having regular members and alternate members present during executive sessions.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn at 8:27 p.m. was made by Sherrard, seconded by Kane, so voted unanimously.

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Jeffrey Pritchard, Secretary  
Planning Commission

Prepared by Robin Silsby  
Office Assistant II