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MINUTES  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
AUGUST 13, 2013 – 7:00 P.M.  
TOWN HALL ANNEX – COMMUNITY ROOM 2

I. ROLL CALL

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

Chairman Sherrard called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. and seated Fitzgerald for Munn.

II. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES of July 9, 2013

MOTION: To approve the minutes July 9, 2013, as amended

Motion made by Steinford, seconded by Pritchard. Motion passed 3-0-2, 2 abstentions (Kane, Sherrard).

III. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS

Steinford said he attended the Town Council public hearing on the proposed blight ordinance last week.

IV. SITE PLANS

1. Thames Edge at Fairview Phase 1 Modification (#SIT13-06), 231 Lestertown Road & 0 Military Highway

Clint Brown, DiCesare Bentley Engineers, represented the applicant. He explained the proposed minor modifications, including a name change, to Phase I.

Mr. Brown detailed a revised parking layout north of the existing facility that will allow parking to be closer to the facilities, and will eliminate the need for a large retaining wall to the west.

The existing creamery building will be relocated next to the barn, and integrated into the facility. Some residential units will have larger garages to accommodate two vehicles. A small retaining wall would be added on the uphill side of the plaza. The clubhouse size will decrease by 400 square feet. Bituminous concrete aprons rather than concrete will be provided. Some units were proposed to be a walkout to the lower level. There is not much of a market for those larger units and units were made smaller, so the grading was changed. Floor plans stay basically the same, incorporating universal design elements. The utilities remain the same.

Staff addressed the proposed changes. The revised parking layout is better, saving some trees on the site. Staff would request a construction sequence on the plans for the moving of the creamery. There is currently a pedestrian walkway to the creamery and staff requested that the applicants maintain a pedestrian access to the

creamery's new location. The new design of the walk-out units required revised grading and incorporated some stairs near the community green; the original plan had no stairs in this area.

The Commission asked staff if the title change must be approved. Staff said a technical item will be added for the applicant to include "previously known as..." in the new title of the plan.

**MOTION:** To approve a site plan modification for Thames Edge at Fairview, Phase I, (formerly Fairview Estates, Phase I) with the following modifications:

1. A detailed construction sequence for moving the creamery shall be placed on the plan.
2. A pedestrian access to the creamery shall be shown on the plan
3. All staff technical items shall be addressed.

Motion made by Sherrard, seconded by Steinfeld. Motion passed unanimously.

V. OLD BUSINESS

1. Subdivision Regulation Amendments

Staff said they had nothing prepared for tonight; Pritchard gave some notes to staff tonight, and they hope to have something for review at the next meeting.

2. Plan of Conservation and Development Update

Chairman Sherrard said the next meeting of the POCD Steering Committee is Thursday night, August 15<sup>th</sup>, and everyone was welcome to attend.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

1. Zoning Commission Referral for September 4, 2013 Public Hearing

a. Special Permit #335, 27-29 West Main Street (CAM)

Staff explained the changes proposed. A portion of the lower level will be converted from retail to restaurant use. There are two apartment units and a palm reading business upstairs. Five parking spaces were to be provided in a previous approval for upstairs. Two spaces were provided on site, and two were provided by validation. There was no mention of the location of the fifth space in any approvals. The existing uses require 33 spaces. The proposed use would require 63 spaces if 100%. The owner noted in the application that they have two on-site spaces and one non-exclusive parking space in the Mystic Art Association parking lot, and is on the waiting list and scouting for additional spaces. Staff has received no further information from the applicant regarding the parking requirements. A public hearing is scheduled for September 4<sup>th</sup>.

Staff and the Commission discussed parking issues in downtown Mystic, and the scale of the use and changing from retail to a restaurant.

**MOTION:** The Planning Commission strongly and unanimously recommends against approval of Special Permit #335 for the following two reasons, as outlined in Section 6.3-2, Design Objectives of the Waterfront Design District.

1. The submitted parking plan is not adequate to support the proposed activity.
2. This would further negatively impact the existing viable commercial, residential and cultural aspects of the downtown area.

Motion made by Sherrard, seconded by Steinfeld. Motion passed unanimously. .

2. Report of Commission

Steinfeld said there were only four people who spoke at the Town Council public hearing for the blight code.

3. New Applications

- a. Advance Personal Training (SIT #13-05), 2906 Gold Star Highway

Staff explained the location in the former Barber Appliances building, near Welles Road.

VII. REPORT OF CHAIRMAN

Sherrard asked about the status of the Central Hall project. Staff said they have been working with the Town attorneys and the applicants to get this finalized. The owners are trying to modify the public coastal access easement, but staff is working to keep the easement in accordance with the Certificate of Permission and the approved plan. The Commission advised staff that any changes to the coastal access plan must come back to the Planning Commission for their approval.

VIII. REPORT OF STAFF

Staff told the Commission about the staffing cuts in the Planning Department. A clerical position and the Manager of Planning Services position were cut.

Staff updated the Commission on the proposed blight code. He hopes the Town Council will adopt the code at their meeting tonight.

Staff said that the POCD schedule may be slowed down, due to the staff reductions.

Staff will be sending the CIP letter out later this month. The Streetscape Phase II plans will be coming to the Commission in the next couple of months.

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IX. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn at 8:04 p.m. was made by Pritchard, seconded by Steinford, so voted unanimously.

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Jeffrey Pritchard, Secretary  
Planning Commission

Prepared by Debra Gilot  
Office Assistant III