

MINUTES  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
SEPTEMBER 23, 2014 – 7:00 P.M.  
TOWN HALL ANNEX – COMMUNITY ROOM 2

Chairman Sherrard called the meeting to order at 7:07 p.m.

I. ROLL CALL

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

Chairman Sherrard appointed Fitzgerald to sit for Munn.

II. APPROVAL OF THE FOLLOWING MINUTES OF September 9, 2014

MOTION: To adopt the Planning Commission minutes of September 9, 2014, as amended.

Motion made by Steinfeld, seconded by Zod, so voted 4 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 abstention (Kane).

III. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS

Matthew White of Angus MacDonald Gary Sharpe & Associates, asked to address the Commission later in the meeting regarding the Tollgate Plaza referral.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

1. Subdivision Regulation Amendments – No comment
2. Plan of Conservation and Development – The review process is still on-going.

V. NEW BUSINESS

1. Report of Commission – None.
2. Zoning Board of Appeals Referral for October 8, 2014 Public Hearing
  - a. ZBA#14-09 – Sayer-Crewe Addition, 37 Bay View Ave, Mystic

Staff reviewed the maps and the variance request.

The Planning Commission had no comment.

3. Zoning Commission Referral for October 1, 2014 Public Hearing
  - a. SPEC343 – Tollgate Plaza, 516-528 Gold Star Highway

Staff reviewed the map and the special permit application to increase a non-permitted use in the WRPD. She noted that the Commission had previously reviewed an application for a number of variances for this project. She reviewed the Commission's comments and noted that all of the variances were granted.

Matthew White, of Angus MacDonald Gary Sharpe and Associates, reviewed the map as he addressed the previously stated concerns raised by the Planning Commission. A letter from David Sullivan, a Traffic Engineer with Milone and MacBroom regarding circulation improvements was submitted. Plans were presented as he explained the new proposal to minimize cut-thru traffic by altering the traffic pattern. White also reviewed proposed improvements to protect water quality.

Staff believes that traffic circulation will be a concern with the Zoning Commission. She reviewed the special permit requirements regarding traffic.

Chairman Sherrard stated that variances were granted but this special permit application is a request to expand the non-conforming use in the WRPD. The Commission raised concerns about traffic flow, drainage, and about maneuvering cars on site in a safe manner. They noted that the traffic pattern is complicated by the addition of a drive-thru restaurant.

Staff noted that the revisions have just been received and the fire marshal has not yet reviewed this application.

**MOTION:** The Planning Commission is concerned that the Special Permit plan does not provide adequate or suitable vehicular circulation through the site and is concerned that it may cause traffic congestion and safety conflicts. The Commission recommends against granting this special permit unless these issues are adequately addressed.

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

The Planning Commission noted that it would like to have seen the Fire Marshal's input. It was noted that the owner is requesting 3 pumps instead of 2.

Property owner Nick Sahin is looking for additional input in improving the site, including vehicular safety.

4. Noank Zoning Commission Referral for Noank Zoning Regulation Text Amendment to Section 2.7

The Planning Commission had no comment.

5. New Applications - None

## VI. REPORT OF CHAIRMAN

Chairman Sherrard and Steinford, at different times, took a ride on the water taxi that was recently used to go between Groton and New London. The ride was a positive experience and parking will need to be addressed if taxis are provided in the future.

Chairman Sherrard attended a meeting on September 19, 2014 with Councilor Frink and Zoning Commission Chair Sue Sutherland, regarding an in-house working committee aimed at increasing revenue for the Town of Groton. He noted that \$200,000 has been earmarked to hire a consultant to look into this, in the hopes of enhancing the grand list. One person from the Planning Commission has been invited to participate in the meetings. Steinford referred to the deficit due to, in part, Pfizer down-sizing and inquired what Pfizer buildings will be taxed going forward.

An inquiry was made as to when construction will begin at Central Hall.

VII. REPORT OF STAFF

Staff stated that the new Planning Department Director, Jonathan Reiner, will begin on September 29<sup>th</sup>.

Chairman Sherrard inquired about current lawsuits. Staff will report back.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn at 7:54 p.m. was made by Sherrard, seconded by Zod, so voted unanimously.

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Jeffrey Pritchard, Secretary  
Planning Commission

Prepared by Robin Silsby  
Office Assistant II