

MINUTES
PLANNING COMMISSION
MAY 27, 2008 – 7:00 P.M.
TOWN HALL ANNEX – COMMUNITY ROOM 2

I. ROLL CALL

Regular members present: Munn, Pritchard, Roper, Sherrard, Steinfeld
Alternate members present: Fitzgerald, Kane
Staff present: Davis, Glemboski, Murphy, Gilot

Chairman Sherrard opened the meeting with roll call at 7:00 p.m.

II. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF meeting of May 13, 2008

MOTION: To approve the minutes of May 13, 2008 as written.

Motion made by Pritchard, seconded by Munn. Motion passes 4-0-1, 1 abstention (Steinfeld).

III. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS

Kane received a copy of Councilor Sheets' "moratorium" memo to the Council dated May 12, 2008, which she asked to be distributed to the Commission members. The Commission noted they would ask for an update under "Report of Commission" later in the meeting.

Staff received a communication from CONNDOT regarding project #58-307 for the I-95 improvements relative to traffic signalization at Exit 89. There is the potential for 3 lights to be installed; one signal at the southbound ramp, another signal at the northbound ramp, and a third light may be considered at the Sandy Hollow Road intersection.

IV. SUBDIVISIONS

1. Mill Pond Estates Subdivision, Gold Star Highway

MOTION: To grant a 90 day extension to Mill Pond Estates Subdivision, Gold Star Highway, for recording of mylars to September 3, 2008.

Motion made by Steinfeld, seconded by Pritchard, so voted unanimously.

2. Mystic Business Park Subdivision (Lot 11), 800 Flanders Road

Staff recommends a reduction in the performance bond to \$560.00, which would be 10% of the bond, and acceptance of the public improvements which include the monumentation and frontage sidewalk.

MOTION: To reduce a performance bond to \$560.00 and recommend acceptance of public improvements for the Mystic Business Park Subdivision (Lot 11), 800 Flanders Road.

Motion made by Pritchard, seconded by Roper, so voted unanimously.

3. North Woods Subdivision, North Road (5 lots)

The Commission set a public hearing date of June 10, 2008.

4. Mystic Weigh Subdivision Modification, Flanders Road

Atty. Bill McCoy, Heller, Heller & McCoy, represented the owners of the Mystic Weigh Subdivision. Mr. McCoy explained that the original subdivision approval noted that the recreational improvements to the Bel-Aire park were to have been completed upon the issuance of the 25th certificate of occupancy for the subdivision. Currently, 33 c.o.'s have been issued. The owners are requesting to modify the plan to have the park completed either by September 1, 2008, or when 45 c.o.'s have been issued, whichever comes first. Mr. McCoy said the materials for the park have been ordered and it will take about 9 weeks for them to get in and installed. The owners are working with the Town Parks & Recreation Department on the design of the park. The owners will post a bond for \$31,000, which includes a 15% contingency. They have also agreed to complete the public access path from the subdivision to the park, which was to have been completed as part of phase 2, but will now be completed with phase 1. The path will be bituminous to the detention pond, and then gravel to the park.

MOTION: To approve a subdivision modification for Mystic Weigh Subdivision, Flanders Road, with the following modifications.

1. The subdivision plan notes shall be modified to extend the period of completion of the recreational improvements for the "Bel-Aire Park" to the earlier of the forty fifth (45th) certificate of occupancy in the Mystic Weigh Subdivision or September 1, 2008.
2. The recreational improvements shall include the installation of the public access path from the subdivision to the park.
3. A bond for \$31,000 for the park improvements shall be submitted to the Office of Planning and Development prior to any additional certificates of occupancy being issued for this subdivision.

Motion made by Sherrard, seconded by Pritchard. Motion passes 4-1-0, 1 against (Roper). Roper felt the park improvements should have been done as planned.

5. Great Brook Resubdivision Modification, Gold Star Highway and Daboll Road

Doug DeSimone, a principal of the Great Brook Subdivision, requested a waiver of the regulations to have the last two building permits in phase 1 released before the completion of the road paving for the phase 1 of Great Brook Subdivision.

Mr. DeSimone explained that completing the final topcoat for the road in phase 1 would not make sense due to construction vehicles having to enter the site through phase 1 for phase 2. Mr. DeSimone said the topcoat for phase 1 and binder for phase 2 won't be done until September 1st. The developers also still need to complete 200 ft. of sidewalk directly in front of phase 1 lots currently being worked on, and some landscaping. The Town holds a bond for all the improvements. If the developers put the topcoat on now, it will be all ripped up with the construction

vehicles entering and leaving the site. Mr. DeSimone said there is a provision on the plan that phase 3 cannot start until 50% of c.o.'s are issued in phases 1 and 2, as part of erosion control plan.

Staff said the construction trucks for phase 2 and 3 will need to come through phase 1 based on the subdivision approval and wanting to limit disturbance to existing homes on Gales Ferry Road. Staff had no concerns.

MOTION: To approve a waiver to Section 5.4(1) of the Subdivision Regulations to release the two remaining building permits in Phase I in the Great Brook Resubdivision, Gales Ferry Road and Daboll Road.

The Planning Commission understands it is the intent of the developer to complete the final coat of phase 1 and binder coat of phase 2 by October 1, 2008.

The Planning Commission notes that the main construction entrance for the entire subdivision was required to be off of Route 184 and Daboll Road and through phase 1, thus making final acceptance of the public improvements for Phase I not practical at this time.

Motion made by Sherrard, seconded by Roper, so voted unanimously.

V. SITE PLANS

1. Groton Ambulance Association, 217 Newtown Road

Debbie Marshall-Baker, an engineer with the Town's Department Public Works, explained the request for a new garage next to the existing parking lot at the ambulance association. Three parking spaces will be removed. The reduction in parking will not affect the site as the parking was initially parking for a classroom, which no longer exists. Eight spaces are needed. The drainage changes were detailed.

Staff said the amount of impervious surface will be increased, but it will still be well under the limits. A spill containment kit will be kept onsite. No vehicle maintenance will be performed on site.

MOTION: To approve a site plan for Groton Ambulance Association, Inc., 217 Newtown Road, with the following modifications:

1. A note shall be added to the final plan stating "A spill containment kit shall be kept onsite and a list of Best Management Practices and Spill Procedures shall become part of the employee manual for the site."
2. All staff technical items shall be addressed.

Motion made by Sherrard, seconded by Roper, so voted unanimously.

2. Taco Bell, 195 Route 12

Attorney Bernie Pellegrino with the Pellegrino Law Firm, and Huseyin Sevincgil, an engineer with MHF Design Consultants, presented the application for the demolition of the existing building and reconstruction of a new prototype Taco Bell.

Mr. Sevincgil explained the existing site conditions. The existing driveways will remain. There will be no major variation of the existing building. A new dumpster area will be provided. Mr. Sevincgil showed the architectural renderings to the Commission.

Staff said the applicants are proposing 880 s.f. of seating for the new restaurant. Staff detailed the drainage and parking. The drive-thru and signage will remain the same. The stacking was explained. The applicant proposes to move the trash enclosure from directly behind the restaurant to a corner of the site. An outside grease dumpster is currently used. Ledge Light Health District prefers the grease waste to be outside. The site is not in the WRPD but there is a detention basin on the site. Staff reviewed and recommended design modifications for the grease dumpster by using a roof enclosure or filter pad or other best management practice.

The covering of the grease dumpster was discussed.

Mr. Sevincgil said the signage will remain. The dumpster is enclosed. Any spillage will go into the parking lot and not to the adjacent site. The site entrance was discussed. A bike rack on the site was suggested.

MOTION: To approve a site plan for Taco Bell, 195 Route 12, with the following modifications:

1. The grease/oil storage waste container shall either be kept indoors, placed in a roofed enclosure, or placed on a filter media deck unless an alternative method for spill management/containment is approved by the Office of Planning and Development. Details of the storage method and a list of Best Management Practices and Spill Procedures for the outdoor storage of this waste shall be approved by the Office of Planning and Development and shall be added to the final plans and become part of the employee training manual for the site.
2. All staff technical items shall be addressed.

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

The Commission took a five minute recess and the meeting resumed at 8:32.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

1. Review of revised Planning Commission By-laws

Staff said they still need to research some items that were discussed previously. The Commission discussed ex-officio members, alternates, appointments to the Commission, and representation on other committees. Staff will

review and incorporate their comments into a revised document, annotated with revision dates.

MOTION: To table discussion of the revised Planning Commission by-laws to a June meeting.

Motion made by Roper, seconded by Sherrard. Motion passes unanimously.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

1. Report of Commission

Roper said the Regional Planning Commission met and Dick Guggenheim reported that the funding for Route 11 may not be appropriated.

Roper said the Regional Planning Commission will perform a multi-modal study for a multi-modal center in New London, but there are issues that need to be resolved first, including the ownership of the train station.

Steinford said that he contacted Public Works about the CIP project for the sidewalk on Route 1 past the 99 Restaurant. Plans are expected back from the State this week, and the sidewalk will be completed this fall.

Kane said he attended a meeting of the Phase II School Design Committee. The committee discussed renovating the Cutler and West Side middle schools and not doing anything with Fitch Middle at this point. Demographics and the effect on the racial makeup of the schools will be discussed at the next meeting.

Roper attended the Regional Planning Commission and said that Bill Haase, the Stonington planner, discussed the need for approval of the RFQ to perform a traffic study. The Mystic Seaport received funding to perform a traffic/transportation study, which is hoped to be able to relate to a larger regional multi-modal system in the future.

Regarding Councilor Sheet's communication via Commissioner Kane, staff said this matter was on the Council's meeting agenda he just received. This was a referral to the Town Council to be discussed on Thursday. The Commission decided to simply note that Councilor Sheets' communication to the Council was received.

2. Zoning Board of Appeals referral for June 11, 2008 public hearing

ZBA08-07, 147 Noank Road, Thomas Tramont/Owner

Staff explained the referral. The Commission had no comment.

VIII. REPORT OF CHAIRMAN

The Chairman said that he will not be at the second meeting in June, and as it is approaching the summer season, asked members to let him know if they are not able to be at a meeting. Mr. Munn said he will not be at the August meeting.

IX. REPORT OF STAFF

Staff said the Town Council has established a “re-use” task force for the former Noank School and will be asking for a Planning Commission member to serve on the task force.

Staff said he talked to Comcast about the need for any overhead cable lines installed during the winter to be run underground, especially in the Mystic area. Work orders are being issued to correct these situations.

Staff informed the Commission about the news article regarding the recent failure of the Appointments Committee to reappoint a Zoning Commission member. The Appointments Committee voted 2-1 not to reappoint Commissioner O’Neill, a long standing (16 years) member of the Zoning Commission. Staff said that some Council members raised issues and concerns due to O’Neill’s vote on a particular project. Staff said the minutes are available, and there was a subsequent newspaper article in The Day. Commissioners may want to follow this matter.

Staff updated the Commission on the outstanding Fitch High School modification.

Staff said he served on the committee to choose a consultant for a Parks & Recreation master plan. The commission selected Norris Designs from Colorado, who will be using Brian Kent, landscape architect, locally.

Staff said there will be a joint meeting of the Town Council and the Board of Education tomorrow night, and the agenda is extensive. The discussion of the Phase II may be on the agenda. He asked members to check the agenda if anyone is interested in attending the meeting.

Staff is working on a schedule with Kendig Keast Collaborative to coordinate with the Planning Commission on the regulation update.

X. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn at 9:13 p.m. made by Roper, seconded by Pritchard, so voted unanimously.

Jeffrey Pritchard, Secretary
Planning Commission

Prepared by Debra Gilot
Office Assistant II