

MINUTES
GROTON ZONING COMMISSION
FEBRUARY 1, 2006 - 7:00 P.M.
TOWN HALL ANNEX – COMMUNITY ROOM 2

I. ROLL CALL

Present: Brandt, Haviland, Hudecek, Shirvell
Staff: Chambers, Goodrich, Murphy, Stanowicz

Chairman Hudecek opened the meeting at 7:03 p.m.

II. PUBLIC HEARING

Regulation Amendment to Sections 5.1-3 and 7.1-8, (Jeter, Cook & Jepson, Architects) – continued

Bruce Kellogg, an architect with Jeter, Cook & Jepson Architects, gave some history on the proposed Marine Science Magnet School. The school is the result of a proposal from the Connecticut State Department of Education for four regional marine high schools in the state. The school will be operated by LEARN. The focus of the curriculum is marine science, technology and resource management. A brochure for the school was distributed to the Commission.

Greg Smolley, an architect with Jeter Cook and Jepson Architects, distributed a set of maps to the Commission. These maps showed examples of setbacks for a site within the IA zone. He reviewed the FAA regulations regarding the flight paths and height issues. The flight pattern goes over the tree farm, and the approach to the runways will not affect the area where the school is proposed to be built.

Staff reminded the Commission that the amendment applies to the whole zone.

Staff presented a revision that calls for additional buffer requirements to protect a school use from adjacent, more intense uses.

Staff reviewed the outstanding comments from the CT DEP that schools should not be allowed in this zone. Staff said the DEP has modified its position to allow schools in this zone if the potential flood hazard impacts are addressed. Language to this effect was added to the proposed Zoning Regulation Amendment and presented for the record. The tidal wetlands and existing setbacks will also create buffer areas.

Staff read the following correspondence into the record:

City of Groton Planning & Zoning Commission is in favor of the amendment.

The Town of Groton Planning Commission had no comment.

Brandt asked for clarification of the 50 ft. buffer. Staff said if there was an outdoor play area near an industrial use, the Planning Commission may want the total 50 ft. buffer planted and screened to protect the use.

Shirvell asked why the regulations allow only 15% lot coverage for schools in a residential zone as opposed to the 25% lot coverage proposed for schools in an industrial zone. Staff said the Town permits more intensity in the industrial zone than in a residential area. Coverage as proposed in the Zoning Regulation Amendment is not as high as the

40% coverage allowed in industrial zones, and the buffer requirement adds more protection for the school use.

Chairman Hudecek asked for public comments. There were none.

MOTION: To close the public hearing on Regulation Amendment to Sections 5.1-3 and 7.1-8.

Motion made by Hudecek, seconded by Haviland, so voted unanimously.

The public hearing was closed at 7:30 p.m.

III. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF January 4, 2006

MOTION: To approve the minutes of January 4, 2006 as written.

Motion made by Haviland, seconded by Brandt, so voted unanimously.

IV. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS

Staff announced that Erin Chambers will be leaving to take a planning position in Iowa.

The SCCOG Annual Report was distributed to the Commission members.

An announcement for a public meeting on the topic of a needs assessment for the Senior Center is being held on February 16th, 6:00 p.m. at the Senior Center was distributed.

The Regional POCD is being updated by the SCCOG. A questionnaire was sent to all Planning and Zoning Commissions. The Commission completed the questionnaire and staff compiled a collective response to forward to SCCOG.

MOTION: To amend the agenda to move Old Business to next on the agenda.

Motion made by Shirvell seconded by Brandt, so voted unanimously.

V. OLD BUSINESS

1. Regulation Amendment to Sections 5.1-3 and 7.1-8, (Jeter, Cook & Jepson, Architects)

MOTION: To modify and adopt the proposed zoning regulation amendment to the Table of Permitted Uses in Section 5.1-3 of the Zoning Regulations and adopt the proposed amendment to Section 7.1-8 of the Zoning Regulations to allow the construction of a school within the IA-40 as shown in the revised regulation dated February 1, 2006.

Motion made by Haviland seconded by Brandt, so voted unanimously.

Hudecek asked staff to clarify how the Town regulates development in the coastal flood hazard areas. Staff explained that the coastal flood hazard areas are covered by other existing regulations.

V. NEW BUSINESS

1. Economic Development Strategic Plan

Hudecek, a member of the Economic Development Strategic Plan Steering Committee, said the draft plan has been well received and many people are interested in the slide show. Staff said it is on the website. Staff said that the plan focuses on the downtown Groton area also. Staff would like the input of the Commission by February 15th. The public information meeting date is March 30th. Discussion ensued on the difference between economic development corporations and commissions.

VII. REPORT OF CHAIRMAN – None.

VI. REPORT OF STAFF

Staff distributed a fact sheet and history pertaining to the potential development of the Allyn – Bohlander building site.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn at 8:17 p.m.

Motion made by Haviland, seconded by Brandt, so voted unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Richard Haviland