

PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION
EAST GRANBY, CONNECTICUT
MINUTES
January 09, 2020

A meeting of the East Granby Planning & Zoning Commission was held on January 09, 2020. Members present when Chairman John Welsh called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. were David McNally, Amanda Thompson, Thomas Derlinga, David Brassard, and alternate member Katie Hastings.

PUBLIC HEARING

The legal notice was read. John Welsh recused himself from action on Application #19-15. Amanda Thompson took over as Acting Chair.

A. Grafix LLC/Special Permit – 8 School Street (#19-15) Addition/second floor apartments
(rec'd 12/10/19) (h/d 1/09/20) (d/d 3/10/20)

Present for the application were David Ziaks, engineer with Hesketh & Associates; Lori DiBattisto, architect for the project and Chris Aubin, applicant/owner of the Grafix LLC/SignsPlus.

Dave Ziaks explained that the site at 8 School Street was in the Village Center Zone on 1.84 acres. An existing business in Town, SignsPlus, plans to renovate and expand at this location. The existing building is 2488 sq. ft. The two story addition is proposed at 2493 sq. ft. The first floor is for the expansion of the business and the second floor will consist of two (one bedroom) apartments. The proposal meets the Village Center Zone regulations.

The impervious coverage remains the same. Landscaping is existing. There will be minor reconfiguring of the parking lot. ADA standards will be met and new lighting will be added. The site is connected to water and sewer. They have no issues with staff comments and agree to the revisions. Staff proposed eliminating one of the two new parking spaces as it was within the front yard setback. So with this change, the applicant will just eliminate both new spaces. The proposal had 13 spaces, two more than needed. So eliminating two would still meet the regulations and leave the grass area as is. As most of the employees are part time, there is more than enough parking. There was discussion on hours of operation with regard to any affects with the shared parking with the apartments.

Mr. Haynes reviewed his report dated 1/08/2020. Many of his conditions were carryovers from the Inland/Wetland approval.

Paul Oliva, resident and EDC Chair, spoke in favor of the project. There were no other comments. The public hearing on this application closed.

John Welsh resumed his position as Chair at this time.

B. Commission’s Regulation Changes/Village Center (#19-17)

(rec’d 12/10/19) (h/d 1/09/20) (d/d 3/10/20)

Mr. Haynes reviewed the few changes to the Village Center Regulations. Most of the revisions were from discussions at the Land Use Workshops. The main revisions allow for more multi-family with the retail uses. Percentages would be in place to keep it balanced. Mr. Welsh noted that a new development in Simsbury was mixed use with retail and apartments. He was curious what percent was retail and what percent was multi-family. Mr. Haynes would get that information for the next meeting to compare. Mr. Haynes’ proposal used 75% multi-family/25% retail. Mr. Welsh stated he preferred 50%. The 75% seemed too high. Mr. Haynes used the old 12 School Street proposal to demonstrate why the 75% was better.

Paul Oliva, resident and EDC Chair, spoke in favor noting that an increase in demographics in the Village Center would allow for retail to thrive. He totally supported the change. There were no further comments. The public hearing on this application was continued.

C. Commission’s Regulation Changes (#19-18) Commerce Park Transitional Zone

(rec’d 12/10/19) (h/d 1/09/20) (d/d 3/10/20)

Mr. Haynes explained the purpose was to create regulations for a new transitional zone which would allow for mixed use/ retail uses between the Commerce Park “A” Zone and the Village Center. This would allow flexibility for vacant property owners. If any proposal abutted a residential area, more restrictions and increased buffers would be required for protection. Mr. Haynes requested the hearing be continued for revisions and more specifics regarding the multi-family portion are needed.

There was discussion on buffer size and whether what was proposed was sufficient. Mr. Haynes did note that there are some natural wetland buffers already existing that would help with protections to residents.

Leslie Marques, a resident and EDC member, had concerns that the vacant property on Seymour Road would be affected by this proposal as a warehouse distribution center was a permitted use. Truck traffic is already a concern for that area and that this could increase. She asked the Commission to be cautious with adding that use near a residential area. There were no further comments. The public hearing on this application was continued.

**D. Commission’s Zoning Map Changes (#19-19)
Commerce Park Transitional Zone/Village Center**

(rec’d 12/10/19) (h/d 1/09/20) (d/d 3/10/20)

The zoning map changes displayed the proposed area of the new Commerce Park Transitional Zone and the expanded Village Center Zone. The hearing will be continued as the regulations should be adopted first or at the same time. There were no further comments. The public hearing on this application was continued.

CRCOG comments, which addressed all three of the Commission's applications, were read into the record. The public hearing portion of the meeting closed at 7:55 p.m.

DISCUSSION WITH APPLICANT AND/OR PUBLIC

None

MINUTES

A motion was made by David McNally and seconded by David Brassard to approve the minutes of 12/10/19 as submitted. Votes in favor were unanimous. Motion carried. (Katie Hastings did not vote as she was not present at the meeting.)

COMMUNICATIONS

The Commission received:

- IWC Minutes for 1/06/20
- CRCOG comments for Applications #19-17, #19-18, & #19-19
- Staff comments on Applications #19-15, #19-16
- Elevations & floor plans for Application #19-15 by Grafix LLC
- A letter of request for an extension for Application #19-13 by Ross Express which was read into the record.

OLD BUSINESS

A. Zoning Enforcement Report – None. It was noted by Chairman Welsh that our Building Official/Zoning Enforcement Officer has left to accept a position elsewhere. He wanted to wish him well and thank him for his 5 years of work noting that it had been a pleasure to work with him.

B. Planner Report - Planner Report –
a. Administrative Site Plan Approvals – None

C. CRCOG Regional Meeting Report – (next meeting 1/16/20)

NEW BUSINESS

A. Ross Express/Revised Site Plan – 38 Kripes Road (#19-13)
(rec'd 10/08/19) (d/d 12/10/19 - extended)

An extension request has been received. This application will be presented at the next scheduled meeting on February 13, 2020.

B. Grafix LLC/Special Permit – 8 School Street (#19-15) Addition/second floor apartments
(rec'd 12/10/19) (h/d 1/09/20) (d/d 3/10/20)

A motion was made by David McNally and seconded by David Brassard to approve Special Permit Application #19-15 by Grafix LLC for an addition and second floor apartments for

property at 8 School Street subject to the conditions noted in staff report dated 1/08/20 as well as any additional items noted during the public hearing. Votes in favor were unanimous. Motion carried. (John Welsh did not vote as he had recused himself from action on this application.)

C. Timothy Brignole/Revised Site Plan (#19-16) 103 (113-115) Hartford Avenue – Winery
(rec'd 12/10/19) (d/d 2/13/20)

Carl Landolina, an Attorney representing the applicant, stated that he had been before the Commission a few months ago for discussion and to get some direction on the previous approved site plan. He reviewed the current site plan which is very similar to the last approved application.

Based on comments from the Fire Marshal and the Commission, the new plan showed 3 possible locations for a food truck. The locations are away from the residences and allow for easier access to the building and do not block handicapped access. Only one food truck at any given time would be on site. Mr. Welsh asked why the food trucks were an integral part of a winery tasting room. The Commission didn't approve a restaurant. It was their understanding that the food trucks were for special events, not 365 days a year. Mr. Landolina stated that the current regulations allow them and it does not state only for special events. After some discussion and concerns that one of the locations may be too close to the building, the Commission noted that two spaces would be enough for flexibility with only one food truck allowed at a time. The Fire Marshal will be contacted to review the locations. Mr. Landolina requested the application be continued to allow for time for a review by the Fire Marshal. It was also recommended that no generators be allowed, electrical access for the food trucks be made available, and the hours for the food trucks be the same as that of the retail store.

There was also discussion on the number of picnic tables to be allowed in the former tent area. Mr. Welsh recommended that area be limited to 48 patrons. Mr. Haynes noted that the number of tables has increased each year and that the parking may not be adequate. Mr. McNally stated that 48 was too low but 150 as proposed was too high. Mr. Landolina stated he would discuss the options with his client. Several Commission members stated their frustration with the never-ending concern with the applicant not following the rules. Mr. Landolina commented that a revised Special Permit application will be submitted shortly to address other issues including parking.

As to the new barrel "sign", Mr. Welsh stated that the sign is either to be relocated as to not be visible or properly screened, otherwise it is an unapproved sign. Mr. Haynes recommended continuing this application to coincide with the special permit, that generators be prohibited and that food trucks be limited to one at a time. Mr. Landolina will submit a letter of extension for this application. The special permit application should be received at the February meeting and both applications shall be discussed at the March 10, 2020 meeting.

D. Commission's Regulation Changes/Village Center (#19-17)
(rec'd 12/10/19) (h/d 1/09/20) (d/d 3/10/20)

No action taken. The hearing has been continued on this application.

E. Commission's Regulation Changes (#19-18) Commerce Park Transitional Zone
(rec'd 12/10/19) (h/d 1/09/20) (d/d 3/10/20)

No action taken. The hearing has been continued on this application.

F. Commission's Zoning Map Changes (#19-19)
Commerce Park Transitional Zone/Village Center
(rec'd 12/10/19) (h/d 1/09/20) (d/d 3/10/20)

No action taken. The hearing has been continued on this application.

G. Alternate Vacancy

Mr. Welsh explained that Jennifer Frank, who had been elected to an alternate seat, had resigned. As the other elected alternates are Republican, the third position goes to a Democrat. Mark Ricketts name was given to the Commission by Democratic Party Chair Michael Malloy. A motion was made by John Welsh and seconded by Amanda Thompson to appoint Mark Ricketts as an alternate to the Commission. Votes in favor were unanimous. Motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by David McNally and seconded by Katie Hastings to adjourn the meeting at 8:48 p.m. The votes in favor were unanimous. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosalie McKenney
Land Use Administrative Assistant