

PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION
EAST GRANBY, CONNECTICUT
MINUTES
August 25, 2020

A special meeting of the East Granby Planning & Zoning Commission was held via ZOOM on Tuesday August 25, 2020. Members present when Chairman John Welsh called the meeting to order at 7:12 p.m. were David McNally, Thomas Derlinga, David Brassard and with alternate members Katie Hastings and Mark Ricketts.

Before the public hearing, Mr. Welsh noted for the record, the passing of former Commission member William Skinner who served for six years.

PUBLIC HEARING

A. Timothy Brignole/Revised Special Permit (#20-01)

103 (113-115) Hartford Avenue – Winery & Vineyard

(rec'd 2/13/20) (h/d 3/10/20 cont'd to 8/25/20)

Timothy Brignole, Guy Hesketh & Attorney Carl Landolina were present to review the application with the Commission. Mr. Hesketh reviewed the changes on the plans since the last meeting which included the removal of the grass rear parking area near Gatehouse Road, the drainage analysis was re-done in response to comments from the Town Engineer, changes to the outdoor food & wine service area, added an outdoor lighting schedule, and added a note regarding patrons dogs must be leashed. He explained the changes to the drainage calculations.

He discussed the parking of cars on existing septic systems for house #113 & #115 which was a concern in staff comments. This will be looked into during construction and fill will be added if needed and an approval from F.V.H.D. will be obtained. He reviewed the grading plan. No further work will be done in the area by the pond but the silt fence will remain as precautionary. Mr. Hesketh noted he had received staff reports both dated 8/25/20. Based on those comments, he reviewed for the Commission the site lighting, the interior uses of the building and the revised labeling, the outdoor food service area, and room capacities. Mr. Brignole explained the current layout (# of tables & seating) to meet COVID guidelines. There was a discussion on seating capacities both by regulation and Fire Marshal guidelines.

There was discussion on what was approved for parking on the original approval in 2014, the increase approved in 2018 and what was being requested with this application. Totals (permanent & temporary) – 116 spaces in 2014, 179 spaces in 2018 and 335 spaces currently for 2020. Mr. Haynes noted that he suggested the removal of Phase 6 parking as too close to the houses in the area. Mr. Brignole responded that he built an 8 foot fence and added arborvitaes to that area. Any issues or complaints have been eliminated and he is requesting that Phase 6 remain. It would be the last parking area utilized.

Mr. Haynes stated that with the last approval by the Commission, there were to be no generators used for food trucks and food trucks are only to park at the two approved locations. He recommended in his report that should not be changed. Mr. Brignole explained that some of the newer food trucks do not have the capability of an electrical hook-up as they are designed with their own generators which are very quiet. He wanted to be allowed to have a generator-operated food truck on an occasion. He stated he also used a shielding system for noise. He has installed 4 different types of electrical outlets for the food trucks. Mr. Brignole stated that he is trying to comply. There is a “hiccup” once in a while and he doesn’t want to be in violation. The Fire Marshal has visited regularly and has found no issues with the food trucks.

Mr. McNally brought up the issue of handicapped parking. He was concerned that there weren’t enough spaces and noting that there can be special incidents. He questioned that the parking in Phase 6 be special parking for those who need to drop off and pick up elderly etc. who could do so and park nearby.

They reviewed the outdoor service area again as to what was originally proposed and the changes made and why. Mr. Haynes reviewed point by point his report dated 8/25/20 and his recommended conditions of approval.

Under public comment, many neighbors in the area spoke of the issues they have had since the winery opened. Bob Lawton stated that he was opposed to the extent of this current application. 335 parking spaces is outrageous especially for a farm & tasting room. The lighting should be on only when they are open as this is near a residential area and generators should be prohibited. He complained about the noise from the decks and stated that approving the outdoor food area would be like approving a restaurant. This is in an agricultural zone. The refill station is “an outdoor bar” and it shouldn’t be approved. Others that spoke, Caryn Christensen, Keith Daleb, David Tobin, Tanya Hansen all stated that they agreed with Mr. Lawton’s comments. Mr. Daleb suggested that the building security lights be set as motion detectors so they are not on all the time. Mr. Tobin also stated his concern for the simulated bird noises. The neighbors also had issue with the use of the upstairs as overflow for the tasting room. They noted that this should be temporary due to COVID but afterwards, the upstairs should revert back to the special events room only, especially due to the noise from the decks. Caryn Christensen complained about dogs not on leash and people down by the pond area which is also on her property. She feels she has no privacy.

Carl Landolina, Attorney for the applicant, reviewed some of the points brought forward by the public or staff. He stated that 6 spaces of the 15 temporary parking spaces in Phase 6 were approved with the last application. That phase would be the last one used and requested the Commission consider keeping them. Use of the decks has always been a part of the original application. The regulations for capacity and noise only apply to indoors. The decks have always been used. The use of the bird noises requires a permit yearly from the Department of Agriculture. This has been allowed by the State for the last two years and the State Statute overrides the Commission. The cooking area was already approved and is in fact smaller than originally approved. As with any business, you start

with what you originally proposed and you make modifications based on what works and what doesn't in order to be a successful business. The 2nd floor has been used for many public events such as yoga, glass painting, etc. It's not just being used due to COVID restrictions.

Mr. Brignole stated that the bird calls were necessary to keep the birds from eating the berries. The only other choice is a cannon. He placed the bird noises in the area he thought would have the least effect on the neighborhood. He stated that the people who rent in the houses at #113 and #115 have dogs and they have the right to walk their dogs unleashed on the property. He had no issue with stating winery patrons must keep their dogs leashed. He stated that all the previous lighting complaints were with regards to the parking lot areas and all that issue was resolved. He needs the lighting on the building for security. There was further discussion with the Commission on the lighting issues and complaints, the use of the 2nd floor and the public's concern with the capacity.

There were no further comments. The public hearing closed on this application. The public hearing portion of the meeting closed at 9:40 p.m.

DISCUSSION WITH APPLICANT AND/OR PUBLIC

None

MINUTES

A motion was made by Thomas Derlinga and seconded by David Brassard to approve the minutes of 7/28/20 as submitted. Votes in favor were unanimous. Motion carried.

COMMUNICATIONS

- Application #20-05 – revised site plan for 8 School Street by Grafix LLC (officially rec'd for 8/11/20 meeting)
- Administrative approval for the relocation of Walnut Drive
- Staff report for Application #20-05 by Grafix LLC
- Revised maps for Application #20-01 for the Brignole winery/vineyard at 103 Hartford Avenue
- Application #20-06 by the Commission for Zoning Map change for the 129 acre "Nanni" piece
- Comments from the FVHD for Application #20-03 (this application to be withdrawn/rejected as incomplete. Will be re-submitted at a future date.)
- Newer revised plans for Brignole Winery
- Newer revised drainage calculations for Brignole Winery dated 8/24/2020
- Email concerns from Caryn Christensen dated 8/25/2020
- Email from Mr. Hayden regarding a phone complaint with the simulated bird noises dated 8/25/2020
- Revised comments for Brignole Winery from the Town Engineer dated 8/25/2020
- Revised comments for Brignole Winery from Gary Haynes dated 8/25/2020
- Email from Mark & Tanya Hansen regarding the lighting at the winery
- Email from Bob & Susan Lawton regarding the winery

OLD BUSINESS

A. Zoning Enforcement Report – no report

B. Planner Report –

a. Administrative Site Plan Approvals: Walnut Drive relocation – Mr. Haynes gave a brief overview that the approval was required by the State for the E&S controls which were reviewed and approved by the Town Engineer.

C. CRCOG Regional Meeting Report – (no meeting til September)

NEW BUSINESS

A. Borghesi Building (#20-04) Revised Site Plan/7 Connecticut South Drive

Barnes Aerospace Addition (rec'd 7/14/20) (d/d 9/08/20)

Rob Borghesi and Dennis Ryder were present to discuss the application. Mr. Borghesi explained that the plan was to add a 31,485 sq. ft. addition at 7 Connecticut South Drive into an existing grass area. He reviewed the information regarding the location of loading docks, traffic circulation, detention basins and parking requirements. Mr. Haynes reviewed his report dated 8/07/20 and the Town Engineer's comments dated 8/03/20. He recommended approval subject to conditions 3.2, 3.3 & 3.4.

A motion was made by David McNally and seconded by Thomas Derlinga to approve the revised Site Plan Application #20-04 by Borghesi Building for an addition at 7 Connecticut South Drive with conditions recommended by staff in a report dated August 7, 2020. Votes in favor were unanimous. Motion carried.

At this time, John Welsh recused himself for any action on this application and David McNally took over as Acting Chair.

B. Grafix LLC (#20-05) Revised Site Plan/8 School Street

(rec'd 8/11/20) (d/d 10/13/20)

Chris Aubin, owner of the company was present to answer any questions. Mr. Haynes explained that the previous approval for this location by Mr. Aubin for an addition with 2nd floor apartments was too costly to construct. The new revised site plan was for a 48'x32' addition to the rear of the building. He discussed the parking, traffic flow, and building style within the Village Center. He reviewed his report dated 8/24/20 and his conditions of approval.

A motion was made by Thomas Derlinga and seconded by David Brassard to approve the revised Site Plan Application #20-05 by Grafix LLC for an addition at 8 School Street with conditions recommended by staff in a report dated August 24, 2020. Votes in favor were unanimous. Motion carried.

John Welsh resumed his position as Chair.

OLD BUSINESS

D. Timothy Brignole/Revised Special Permit (#20-01)
103 (113-115) Hartford Avenue – Winery & Vineyard
(rec'd 2/13/20) (h/d 3/10/20 cont'd to 8/25/20)

Mr. Welsh felt it best to take one phase at a time as to the parking requests. He found the parking overwhelming. A motion was made by John Welsh and seconded by David McNally to approve revised Special Permit Application #20-01 by Timothy Brignole for the winery/vineyard at 103 Hartford Avenue (ref. maps dated revised 8/20/20) with conditions as recommended by staff in a report dated August 25, 2020 as follows: Revise Item #1 to change the parking analysis to 132 permanent and 107 temporary and to add only 60 spaces for Phase 3. Items #2, #3, #4, #5, #6, #7 to remain as written.

Mr. Welsh stated he thought it best to plan for the future and phase in the parking more slowly. More spacing can be added later. Mr. Derlinga felt this would only cause a problem down the line and clearly the applicant would be back here again soon. Let the business be successful.

Mr. McNally further discussed his idea of keeping Phase 6 for special parking. He felt this was very important. He also noted that he agreed with the “no generators” condition. Mr. Ricketts agreed with obtaining a light intensity plan and thought the idea of motion sensors was a good one. Katie Holmes stated that the winery does need to be a good neighbor, she saw the need to support local businesses for them to make it.

Mr. Welsh offered to revise his original comment on item#1 to increase Phase 3 from 60 to 72 spaces. More discussion ensued and Mr. Welsh stated he felt it was reasonable to approve for parking - Phase 1, Phase 2 and 72 spaces in Phase 3 with the elimination of spaces in Phase 4, 5, & 6. Mr. Derlinga wanted to revise that to 100 spaces in Phase 3. Mr. Welsh agreed to withdraw his motion with respect to item #1 to revise the total number in Phase 3 to 90 spaces and with the elimination of Phases 4, 5, & 6. Mark Ricketts seconded that revision.

The votes in favor were 5 (Welsh, Ricketts, Brassard, Derlinga & Hastings). Opposed 1 (McNally).

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Thomas Derlinga and seconded by Mark Ricketts to adjourn the meeting at 10:40 p.m. The votes in favor were unanimous. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosalie McKenney
Land Use Administrative Assistant