

**PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION
EAST GRANBY, CONNECTICUT
MINUTES
January 12, 2021**

A meeting of the East Granby Planning & Zoning Commission was held via ZOOM on January 12, 2021. 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, Daniel Velcofsky and with alternate member Katie Hastings.

PUBLIC HEARING

The legal notice was read. Chairman Welsh chose to switch the order of the public hearing as he expected the first two items to be lengthier. No one had an objection.

C. Joseph Bisson Special Permit Application (#20-09)

Fill @ 59 Old County Road

(rec'd 12/08/20) (h/d 1/12/21) (d/d 3/09/21)

Mr. Bisson explained the history of the house. The clean-up of the yard that was done and the need for the fill as the yard was unusable at this point. His goal was to make the yard level with the neighboring properties. The retaining walls need to be replaced. He wants to make the yard nicer and more functional. The engineer designed map was reviewed by the Commission. Town Engineer and staff comments were reviewed. Two letters from an abutting neighbor, Thomas Loveland had been received. The plan had already incorporated earlier email comments dated 10/02/20 from the Town Engineer.

Mr. Haynes recommended limiting fill deliveries to Monday-Friday from 9am-3pm to avoid work traffic and school bus times. Mr. Bisson stated that there would be one or two trucks a day. Mr. Brassard estimated that with the amount of fill needed, approximately 7 truckloads would be necessary. Amanda Thompson wanted to be sure the other abutting neighbors were aware of the work. Mr. Bisson reiterated that there would be nothing above the abutters' grade so no issues should occur for neighbors.

Under public comment, Mr. Loveland wanted to be sure the Commission had received his comments. His concerns were for clean fill, no drainage pipes onto his property and what the grades would be as he didn't want any issues with his septic. There were no further comments. The public hearing closed on this application.

A. Wiles+Architects Special Permit Application (#20-07)

120 Unit Apartment Complex – 13 Nicholson Road

(rec'd 12/08/20) (h/d 1/12/21) (d/d 3/09/21)

George Wiles, Architect for the project, was present along with Civil Engineer Skip Alford, Landscape Architect Matt Popp and owner Joseph DeMattia. Mr. Wiles reviewed the application noting the location of the property and its existing conditions. There were wetlands

on the west, north and east sides. The property is 10.5 acres with 1.5 acres of wetlands in a conservation easement along the west side.

He reviewed the proposal for five (5) buildings with three (3) stories each for a total of 120 units. Sixty units would be one bedroom (670 sq. ft.) and 60 units would be two bedroom (986 sq. ft.). He reviewed the parking design (207 cars), water/sewer availability, landscaping, ingress/egress, outdoor facilities (gazebo/rain garden) and the storm water management was explained. He reviewed the photo-metric study with zero site lighting spilling offsite.

He reviewed the aesthetics outside with balconies, pitched roofs, dormers and lots of “green space”. He also explained the interior floor plans with indoor community space on each floor, large walk-in closets for storage and laundry facilities within each apartment. The construction would include sprinklers, one hour firewalls, energy efficiency and meet sound transmission ratings. No basements were planned.

Mr. Welsh noted that the hearing on this application would be continued as the Inland/Wetlands Commission had not yet approved the application. Mr. Haynes reviewed his, the Fire Marshal’s and the Town Engineer’s comments from their reports. This included sightline concerns with the western-most driveway, missing information for contour lines and spot grades on the plans, revisions to the E&S controls and curbing details/locations. He recommended the sidewalk be continued along Nicholson Road. There was discussion on the distance from the closest abutters on Harvest lane to the closest building on the site which was estimated to be 100-200 feet away. Mr. Alford noted there is a natural extensive wetlands buffer. An aerial photo was displayed to show distancing between the abutters and the project. Amanda Thompson requested Mr. Haynes review why this project would be beneficial to the Town and the history/reasons for developing the Commerce Park Transitional Zone.

Under public comments, several residents stated their main concerns were for the location of this project, additional traffic, but mostly the impact on emergency services and especially schools. The hearing on this application was continued to the next meeting.

B. School Street Square LLC Special Permit Application (#20-08)

Apartment/Retail Complex – 12/14 School Street

(rec’d 12/08/20) (h/d 1/12/21) (d/d 3/09/21)

Chris Alford, Civil Engineer for the project, explained the location of the proposal and the existing conditions. The property is in two parcels and is 3.1 acres in the Village Center Zone. The proposal was for two apartment buildings with a total of 36 units with some retail/office space along School Street. There would be one owner - all rental units. Buildings would be on water/sewer with 70 parking spaces and sidewalks.. He reviewed the storm water management plan and the landscaping. He briefly reviewed the lighting plan. The architectural plans showed a New England Colonial style for the two identical 10,270 sq. ft. buildings. There would be no basements with 3 stories (8 units on 1st floor, 8 units on the 2nd floor and 4 on the 3rd floor) with laundry facilities within the units.

He discussed the screening design with fencing and landscaping to reduce visibility to the homes on Schoolhouse Landing. A plan had been approved in 2008 with three buildings. This new design is less intensive and reduces the coverage from 44% to 34%.

There was discussion with the Commission on “flipping” or rotating the buildings/parking for better privacy to/from Schoolhouse Landing but in doing that the wetland area became an issue. Amanda Thompson also suggested reversing side with the third floor windows so that they did not face Schoolhouse Landing. Mr. Alford stated that the buildings were 150 feet away and screening was discussed further.

Mr. Haynes reviewed his comments as well as those submitted by the Town Engineer. He noted that the property was currently in two parcels that must be merged before maps are signed and filed if approved. The plans had lots of missing information and the storm water management plan needed to be revised. Amanda Thompson also recommended relocating the dumpster area.

Under public comments, many residents of Schoolhouse Landing were opposed to the development. They cited major concerns for the size of the proposal, impact on home values, privacy issues for the homes that abut the area, strong objections to the additional traffic on School Street, and child safety for school bus drop off. Traffic and privacy were the main objections.

Mr. Welsh noted that the hearing on this application would be continued as the Inland/Wetlands Commission had not yet approved the application. The public hearing on this application will be continued to 2/09/21. The public hearing portion of the meeting closed at 9:46 p.m.

DISCUSSION WITH APPLICANT AND/OR PUBLIC

None

MINUTES

A motion was made by David McNally and seconded by Thomas Derlinga to approve the minutes of 12/29/20 as submitted. Votes in favor were unanimous. Motion carried.

COMMUNICATIONS

The Commission received:

- IWC Minutes for 1/06/21
- Town Engineer and Staff comments on Applications #20-07& #20-09 both dated 1/11/21
- Staff comments dated 1/12/21 for Application #20-08
- Fire Marshal comments for Applications #20-07 & #20-08
- Re-subdivision Application #21-01 by Arnold Bernstein for 102 North Main Street.
- 2 letters from Thomas Loveland regarding Application #20-09 for 59 Old County Road.
- A joint email from residents at Schoolhouse Landing regarding Application #20-08.
- Any other items mentioned as received during the public hearing.

OLD BUSINESS

A. Zoning Enforcement Report – No report.

B. Planner Report - Planner Report

a. Administrative Site Plan Approvals – 122 Rainbow Road/Pride canopy: Mr. Haynes stated that it was a minor change in the orientation.

C. PZC’s Zone Change Application (#20-06)

CP “A” Zone to CP Transitional Zone/Assessor’s Lot# 11/Map 17
(rec’d 8/25/20) (h/d 12/08/20 cont’d to 12/29/20)

A motion was made by Amanda Thompson and seconded by Thomas Derlinga to approve Zone Change Application #20-06 as it is in conformance with the Town Plan of Conservation and Development with an effective date of 2/06/2021.

Mr. McNally had wanted the Commission to consider withdrawing the application and having further discussion. Mr. Welsh reviewed the history and work that has gone into the creation of this zone and corresponding regulations. This zone does not restrict but gives a property owners more flexibility. It is all in keeping with the recommendations of Plan of Conservation and development. Many Commission members commented that they were in agreement with this zone change proposal as the property is too close to the Village Center and many residential developments. Votes in favor were 5 (Welsh, Thompson, Brassard, McNally, & Velcofsky). Opposed one (Derlinga). Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Wiles+Architects Special Permit Application (#20-07)

120 Unit Apartment Complex – 13 Nicholson Road
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No action taken. Hearing continued to 2/09/2021.

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[D. Election of Officers](#)

A motion was made by Daniel Velcofsky and seconded by David McNally to approve with staff conditions Special Permit Application #20-09 by Joseph Bisson for fill for property at 59 Old County Road. Votes in favor were unanimous. Motion carried.

B. Election of Officers

A motion was made by David McNally and seconded by Daniel Velcofsky to elect the current slate of officers for the 2021 calendar year. Votes in favor were unanimous. Motion carried.

John Welsh noted that members had been sent a copy of the CRCOG regional meeting schedule. As with the last few years, the members will rotate and take turns attending the meetings. David Brassard volunteered for the first meeting in March.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Thomas Derlinga and seconded by Daniel Velcofsky to adjourn the meeting at 10:09 p.m. The votes in favor were unanimous. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosalie McKenney
Land Use Administrative Assistant