

**PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION  
EAST GRANBY, CONNECTICUT**

**MINUTES  
October 11, 2022**

A meeting of the East Granby Planning & Zoning Commission was held on Tuesday, October 11, 2022. Members present when Chairman Thomas Derlinga called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM were David Brassard, Charlie Allen, Amanda Thompson, Daniel Velcofsky, and John Welsh and alternate members Mark Ricketts, Jay Tran, and Todd Zessin.

**PUBLIC HEARINGS**

**A. Town of East Granby Planning and Zoning Commission Zone Text Amendment to Include Cannabis Uses in Commerce Park B Zone - Application #22-08 (rec'd 09/13/2022) (h/d 10/11/2022) (d/d 12/15/2022)**

The legal notice for both public hearings on the agenda was read.

A motion was made by Daniel Velcofsky and seconded by David Brassard to open the public hearing regarding Application #22-08, Zone Text Amendment to Include Cannabis Uses in the Commerce Park B Zone. The votes in favor were unanimous. Motion carried. John Welsh abstained.

Town Planner Robin Newton provided a brief overview for the record regarding the zone text amendment application, describing it as a Commission application to allow cannabis uses under the new recreational cannabis law passed in 2021. According to Ms. Newton, definitions from the statute were used as part of the definitions in the new regulation. Much of the regulation comes from a previous draft by the Commission. New elements include additional standards such as provisional licenses; an operational plan with hours of operation and security and access; signage and odor management; and monitoring and mitigation.

In reply to a question raised at a previous Commission meeting regarding cannabis regulation in the surrounding communities, Ms. Newton noted that Suffield has allowed recreational cannabis uses, Granby currently has a moratorium, Windsor has prohibited them, and no information was available regarding Windsor Locks.

There was no public comment.

A motion was made by Daniel Velcofsky and seconded by John Welsh to close the public hearing regarding Application #22-08. The votes in favor were unanimous. Motion carried.

The public hearing was closed at 7:06 PM.

**B. Meadow Street Partners LLP – Zone Change from Commerce Park A to Commerce Park Transitional Zone – Application #22-09  
1 Gateway Boulevard  
(rec'd 09/13/2022) (h/d 10/11/2022) (d/d 12/15/2022)**

A motion was made by David Brassard and seconded by Daniel Velcofsky to open the public hearing regarding Application #22-09, Zone Change from Commerce Park A to Commerce Park Transitional Zone for 1 Gateway Boulevard. The votes in favor were unanimous. Motion carried. John Welsh abstained.

Ken Vincunas of Meadow Street Partners LLP spoke about potential plans for the parcel and noted that Meadow Street Partners' other property at 2 Gateway Boulevard and their additional new acquisitions directly across Rainbow Road are already zoned Commerce Park Transitional. He commented that as a developer, he feels that the transitional zone is ideal for the whole area. With development being planned behind 2 Gateway Boulevard, he believes that there will be a demand for uses that are not currently available in the area, including retail. He commented that while a large warehouse could be possible at 1 Gateway Boulevard, he envisions development that would better serve the community, such as high-end retail, a drugstore, or a bank. Over time, he would like to create a four-way intersection to serve all of the parcels and provide many of the retail uses that he feels are lacking in East Granby.

Amanda Thompson asked for confirmation regarding the reason for the requested zone change since the uses allowed in both zones are similar. Ken Vincunas replied that the Commerce Park Transitional Zone would provide the same uses as Commerce Park A but would also include retail, residential, and restaurant options. He commented that the high visibility and high traffic of the area does not particularly suit industrial uses.

Thomas Derlinga asked if Mr. Vincunas had any potential tenants for the location. Mr. Vincunas replied that it is a bit too soon for potential tenants but he is currently working with an engineering firm to develop concepts for the site. He mentioned that Walgreens, Sherwin-Williams, Chase Bank, Firestone, and restaurants would be ideal possibilities for the property.

John Welsh sought confirmation regarding retail uses that are prohibited in the Commerce Park Transitional Zone. Robin Newton verified that the Commerce Park Transitional Zone allows mixed-use, retail, personal service establishments, and restaurants but prohibits automotive uses including gas stations, car washes, etc.

David Brassard asked about the clearing of the property that has occurred, and Ken Vincunas confirmed it was done to help promote the property.

John Welsh inquired as to whether 1 Gateway Boulevard would be developed independently of the applicant's other properties in the area if the zone change was granted, or if the applicant plans on presenting a master concept plan for all of the properties at one time. Mr. Vincunas replied that the timing of development for these sites is most likely to be different, since 1 Gateway Boulevard is ready for immediate development without affecting the intersection. He feels that with the addition of the anticipated four-way intersection, development on Rainbow Road will be more involved and require the input of other parties, including DOT.

Thomas Derlinga opened the floor to public comment.

Sandra Johnson, Economic Developer and Director of Marketing and Commercial Real Estate for East Granby, commented that from her perspective the property's alignment with 2 Gateway Boulevard and its frontage on Route 20 make it a fit for the Commerce Park Transitional Zone.

Paul Thulen, Chairman of East Granby's Economic Development Commission, supported the zone change. He commented that the Town's addition of the Commerce Park Transition Zone provided the possibility of increased opportunities in town beyond residential and/or big box development. He noted that, through the Plan of Conservation and Development, residents have spoken in favor of additions such as a grocery store or pharmacy and he commended the applicant on his vision to bring this type of development to the town.

A motion was made by Daniel Velcofsky and seconded by Charlie Allen to close the public hearing regarding Application #22-09. The votes in favor were unanimous. Motion carried.

The public hearing was closed at 7:22 PM.

### **DISCUSSION WITH APPLICANT AND/OR PUBLIC**

None.

### **MINUTES**

A motion was made by John Welsh and seconded by Daniel Velcofsky to approve the minutes of the September 13, 2022 meeting as submitted. The votes in favor were unanimous. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Amanda Thompson and seconded by Charlie Allen to approve the minutes of the September 22, 2022 meeting as submitted. The votes in favor were unanimous. Motion carried.

### **COMMUNICATIONS**

The Commission received:

- IWC Minutes - September 7, 2022
- FOI Request 09/28/2022 - Brignole Vineyards

### **OLD BUSINESS**

#### **A. Zoning Enforcement Report**

None.

#### **B. Planner Report – Administrative Site Plan Approvals**

None.

### **C. CRCOG Regional Meeting Report**

An overview of the September 22, 2022 CRCOG Regional Meeting was previously submitted to Commission members.

### **D. GFI Partners - Site Plan Modification - Application #22-07 7, 11, 15, & 17 Bradley Park Road (rec'd 09/13/2022)**

Matthew Bruton, PE of BL Companies, Hartford provided an overview of the site plan modification applied for by GFI Partners for 7, 11, 15, & 17 Bradley Park Road. He stated that the goal of the applicant's requested modification is to provide additional functionality to the property to make it more marketable for longer term tenants by adding loading docks and trailer parking spaces.

The property is an eight-acre parcel with no wetlands. There is no proposed expansion of the buildings except for a replacement of the connector. The driveway will remain the same. Mr. Bruton stated that all improvements comply with Town zoning regulations and no variances are being requested for any of the improvements. The stormwater management system will be upgraded for the increase in the impervious area. No new utilities are required for any of the buildings. Landscaping improvements will be completed around the perimeter and some of the existing paved area will be replaced with gravel to promote infiltration. Mr. Bruton also reviewed the lighting plan, which adds wall packs and free-standing poles for trailer safety. He noted they have received and accept the conditions proposed by the Town Engineer.

Charlie Allen asked if the trees at the southwest side of the site will be kept as a barrier. Matthew Bruton stated they will remain and additional trees will be added to fill in gaps along Rainbow Road.

Amanda Thompson asked about fencing on the property. Mr. Bruton reviewed the existing chain link fence lines, planned landscaping locations, and noted that passage through a security gate is required to enter the full property.

Jay Tran asked whether all four buildings are currently occupied. Mr. Bruton replied that one has a long-term lease while the other three have short-term leases.

John Welsh asked about the sizes of the buildings and if the four were constructed at the same time. Mr. Bruton stated that they are all approximately the same size, with three constructed at once and one added later about five to ten years ago. Mr. Welsh confirmed that the changes would bring the coverage at the site from 65% to just under 75%, which is allowable. Mr. Bruton then reviewed the areas of the site that are not paved at the request of Mr. Welsh.

Charlie Allen questioned whether the additional lighting would affect any neighboring properties. Mr. Bruton showed the location of the additional light packs and poles and confirmed that there will be no light spillage over the property line.

A motion was made by Daniel Velcofsky and seconded by John Welsh to approve Application #22-07 of GFI Partners, Applicant, Bradley Park Property Owner LLC, Owner, for a Site Plan

Modification for property located at 7, 11, 15, & 17 Bradley Park Road, East Granby, CT, Map 17, Block 25, Zone CP-A, with the following conditions:

1. A pre-construction meeting is required with Town Staff prior to the start of any construction activities.
2. Final plans to be submitted to the Town for review prior to any work being commenced.
3. A final mylar must be filed in the Town Clerk's Office and a paper set is to be filed with the Land Use Office.
4. The applicant must post an Erosion and Sedimentation Control Bond in an amount to be approved by the Town Engineer. The applicant's engineer shall submit an estimate with all the E&S quantities for review and approval. Bond shall be in place before the start of any construction activities.
5. All conditions from the Town Engineer on correspondence dated 10/06/2022, Conditions 1-11, are incorporated into this approval.

The votes in favor were unanimous. Motion carried.

**E. Town of East Granby Planning and Zoning Commission Zone Text Amendment to Include Cannabis Uses in Commerce Park B Zone - Application #22-08 (rec'd 09/13/2022) (h/d 10/11/2022) (d/d 12/15/2022)**

A motion was made by Daniel Velcofsky and seconded by John Welsh to approve Application #22-08 by the Town of East Granby Planning and Zoning Commission for a Zone Text Amendment to Include Cannabis Uses in the Commerce Park B Zone as presented.

John Welsh stated that he believes it is premature to amend the regulations to allow for cannabis uses, considering the constitutional issues involved. Mr. Welsh noted that even in states that permit cannabis uses, those businesses are not recognized by the federal government. He commented that for that reason, he would vote against the regulation change. Further, he stated that he is also opposed to the change because he does not view cannabis uses as adding anything significant to the community or to any retail base in town. He stated that if the regulation is adopted, he feels it would offer an insignificant type of business use with a negative side to it as well, since cannabis is federally recognized as a controlled substance. Lastly, Mr. Welsh stated that if the Commission decides to adopt the regulation, he does believe that the Commerce Park B Zone is the appropriate location for these uses, away from residential areas.

David Brassard asked if Robin Newton had information as to why Windsor has prohibited cannabis uses. While Ms. Newton did not have specifics regarding Windsor's decision, she stated that as Planner in other municipalities she has experienced mixed reviews regarding cannabis with decisions centered on what was felt as appropriate for each community. Ms. Newton commented that some of the towns that have decided to prohibit cannabis have based their decision on the values for which they want their town to be seen, the message sent to their youth, and the fact that such uses do not add much to a tax base.

Amanda Thompson recused herself from the vote and alternate member Todd Zessin voted in her place. Votes in favor were four (Allen, Derlinga, Velcofsky, Zessin). Opposed were two (Brassard, Welsh). Motion carried.

A motion was made by Charlie Allen and seconded by Thomas Derlinga to set the effective date of the Zone Text Amendment to Include Cannabis Uses in Commerce Park B Zone to November 2, 2022. John Welsh abstained. The remaining votes were in favor. Motion carried.

**F. Meadow Street Partners LLP – Zone Change from Commerce Park A to Commerce Park Transitional Zone – Application #22-09  
1 Gateway Boulevard  
(rec'd 09/13/2022) (h/d 10/11/2022) (d/d 12/15/2022)**

A motion was made by Daniel Velcofsky and seconded by David Brassard to approve Application #22-09 of Meadow Street Partners LLP for a Zone Change from Commerce Park A to Commerce Park Transitional Zone for 1 Gateway Boulevard. The votes in favor were unanimous. Motion carried.

**NEW BUSINESS**

None.

**ADJOURNMENT**

A motion was made by Amanda Thompson and seconded by Thomas Derlinga to adjourn the meeting at 7:51 PM. The votes in favor were unanimous. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Hall  
Land Use Administrative Assistant