

**Westbrook Planning Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes
January 14, 2013
Mulvey Municipal Center, 866 Boston Post Road
Multi-Media Room**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Marilyn Ozols, Chair; Carole Ketelsen, Eric Reeve, Marie Farrell (alt.), Bob Furno (alt.)

ALSO PRESENT: Meg Parulis, Town Planner and Lisa DeMaria, Recording Secretary

Ms. Ozols called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. Ms. Farrell and Mr. Furno were seated for Regular Members Mr. Neale and Mr. Bassett.

SUBDIVISIONS: None

TOWN AND GOVERNMENT AGENCY REFERRALS: None

SELECTMEN REFERRALS: None

ZONING REFERRALS:

1. ZC2012-033 – Proposed Amendment to the Zoning Regulations- Section 2.10.05 – Ms. Ozols began the discussion by explaining that the proposed amendment is intended to legalize some uses that are technically illegal but were allowed to be established in the early years of Zoning (1956 -1960). Ms. Ozols further explained that these uses continue, but without the ability to get permits to improve deteriorating conditions. Because there would not have been a complete site plan review for these uses, there is no record to be able to move forward with improvements. The use would still be considered non-conforming, and as such, could not be expanded.

Ms. Ketelsen asked if there was an example of this type of use. Ms. Ozols stated that one example is the Hallahan property on Willard Avenue. This problem surfaced when Mr. Hallahan tried to get a permit to enclose some equipment in a building and could not get a permit.

Ms. Parulis added that the proposed language for this amendment was recommended by Attorney Mark K. Branse.

Ms. Ketelsen made a motion to find the application CONSISTENT with the Plan of Conservation and Development goals to *protect established neighborhoods and review and update land use regulations on a regular basis.* The motion was seconded by Ms. Farrell and unanimously approved.

2. ZC2012-034 – Proposed Amendment to the Zoning Regulations - Section 4.31.04 – Ms. Ozols explained that the proposed amendment would remove the 15' height limitation for accessory structures in the HDR (High Density Residential) District.

Ms. Farrell asked what the height requirement is in all other districts. Ms. Parulis explained that in all districts, the language in the regulations clearly states that an accessory structure has to be incidental and subordinate to the primary structure. The maximum height for any residential building is 35' except in the Commercial Boating District where it is 30'. A garage could never be bigger or higher than the primary structure. This application was initiated by the Zoning Commission because 15' is not sufficient to build a two-car garage with a gable roof.

Ms. Ketelsen made a motion to find the application CONSISTENT with the Plan of Conservation and Development goals to *protect established neighborhoods and review and update land use regulations on a regular basis.* The motion was seconded by Mr. Reeve and unanimously approved.

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3. ZC2012-035 – Proposed Amendment to the Zoning Regulations - Section 12.00.00 – Ms. Ozols began the discussion by explaining that there is language in the regulations that requires applicants to submit electronic copies of all documents for Site Plan Review and Special Permit Applications. There is no requirement for digital submissions for Administrative Permit Applications. New Legislation has been proposed to require all documents to be digitally filed for court cases and the Land Use Department now has a Permit Tracking System where all documents associated with a permit are being stored digitally.

Ms. Ketelsen asked if Administrative applications were usually small projects. Ms. Parulis explained that the applications could be small. Drawings on small paper for smaller projects can be easily scanned. If the documents are submitted on paper that exceeds 11 by 17 inches, the office has no way of making copies or scanning the documents. There is a cost to the Town to send the documents out to be copied. Applicants can go to Staples or Ciel in Old Saybrook to have their documents put into a digital format. Ms. Parulis further explained that many applicants work with engineers who have the ability to submit electronically.

Mr. Reeve made motion to find the application CONSISTENT with the Plan of Conservation and Development goals to facilitate *implementation of document management and permit tracking systems.* The motion was seconded by Ms. Farrell and unanimously approved.

BILLS:

GENERAL ACCOUNTS		SPECIAL FUNDS	
1. Recording Secretary – Lisa DeMaria	\$90.20		

Ms. Farrell made a motion to pay the General Account bills as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Furno and unanimously approved.

MINUTES:

Mr. Reeve made a motion to approve the regular meeting minutes of December 10, 2012 as presented. The motion was seconded by Ms. Farrell and unanimously approved.

OLD BUSINESS:

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Election of Officers – Ms. Ozols stated that she is willing to continue to serve as Chairman. Mr. Neale could not be at the meeting but spoke to Ms. Ozols and indicated that he is willing to continue as Vice Chairman. Ms. Ozols assumed that Mr. Bassett, who could not be at the meeting, would be willing to continue as Secretary as long as the duties did not change since he had not indicated otherwise.

Ms. Ketelsen made a motion to maintain the same slate of officers with Ms. Ozols as Chairman, Mr. Neale as Vice Chairman, and Mr. Bassett as Secretary. The motion was seconded by Ms. Farrell and unanimously approved.

2. By-Laws – Ms. Ozols stated that she and Ms. Parulis had reviewed the By-Laws and did not feel that anything needed to be updated. Some provisions had been updated two years prior.

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REPORTS:

- 1. Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission** – There were no new applications.
- 2. RiverCOG** – Ms. Parulis reported that the Regional Planning Agency has submitted a draft Hazard Mitigation Plan for review by the Town. Preparation of the Plan was funded by a Hazard Mitigation Grant. It will be the responsibility of the Planning Commission to shepherd the plan through the adoption process. The plan must be updated every 5 years. Ms. Parulis will review the document and the process for adoption and report at the next meeting.
- 3. Harbor Commission** – Ms. Parulis reported that an initial draft of the Harbor Management Plan has been completed and will be circulated for review shortly. The Harbor Management Plan will have to be approved at a Town Meeting.
- 4. Town Center Revitalization Committee** – Ms. Ozols reported that the UCONN Collaborative would be presenting additional concept plans for road and sidewalk improvements surrounding the Green at the next TCRC/EDC meeting. She also noted that the Committee had decided to become a member of the CT Main Street Program.

CORRESPONDENCE:

- 1. Brochures for CT Land Use Law Seminar** – Ms. Ozols explained that the Seminar is sponsored by the CT Bar Association for Land Use Commissions and staff. It is a full day seminar and a good refresher course with training on many aspects of Planning and Zoning. She encouraged Commission members to attend if possible. Anyone interested should contact the Land Use Office to register as soon as possible as the seminar tends to fill up quickly.

Ms. Ketelsen made a motion to adjourn at 7:25 p.m. The motion was seconded by Ms. Farrell and unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa DeMaria, Recording Secretary