

UNAPPROVED

WESTBROOK PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
Monday, May 10, 2010
Multi-Media Room, Mulvey Municipal Center, 866 Boston Post Road

Call to Order

Chairman Ozols called the meeting to order at 7:07 p.m.

A quorum was established with the following Commission members present: Marilyn Ozols, Chairman, Carole Ketelsen, Bill Neale and Phil Bassett. Meg Parulis, Town Planner was also present.

Chairman Ozols asked at the outset of the meeting that Commission members do their best to stay on topic to facilitate the taking of minutes and have more orderly discussion.

SUBDIVISIONS:

There were no subdivision applications discussed.

TOWN AND GOVERNMENT AGENCY REFERRALS:

- 1. Deep River – Proposed Amendment to the Zoning Regulations to allow Commercial Go-Kart Raceway in the R-80 District Applicant: Kevin Strain, dba Lone Wolf Raceway** *Public Hearing scheduled 6/17/10.*

Chairman Ozols called to the Commission's attention a memo from the Regional Planning Agency expressing concerns regarding impacts of the proposal to adjacent towns including Westbrook.

Mr. Bassett registered his concern about the noise levels that could potentially be heard several miles from an actual site.

Ms. Ozols felt that lighting could be a concern as well.

Ms. Ketelsen asked where the raceway was being proposed. Ms. Ozols responded that there was not a specific application. If the regulations are amended as proposed, the raceway could be allowed anywhere in the R-80 District in Deep River, some of which is adjacent to residential districts in Westbrook.

Ms. Ketelsen did not feel that this use was appropriate in or near a residential district.

Mr. Neal raised the issue of potential traffic through Westbrook from I 95 and felt that the local roads leading into Deep River (i.e. Horse Hill Rd.) could not handle the added traffic.

Ms. Ketelsen made a motion seconded by Mr. Bassett to send a letter expressing concern about allowing a commercial go-kart raceway in or adjacent to a residential district due to potential excessive noise, traffic and light. The motion was unanimously approved.

ZONING REFERRALS:

- 1. Application No. Z2010-07 General Store 631 Boston Post Road Special Permit Application to add a restaurant to the existing retail use.** *Public Hearing scheduled 5/25/10.*

Atty. Ed. Cassella appeared on behalf of the applicant. He explained that the applicant is seeking to expand the existing deli within the General Store to a restaurant with 26 seats. The existing septic system will need to be expanded and is currently under review by the Sanitarian.

Atty. Cassella felt that the proposed use was consistent with the Plan of Conservation and Development for the following reasons: 1) Restaurants are allowed in the Commercial Boating District and the building, landscaping & signage meet aesthetic goals. 2) The restaurant is compatible with the marina use, providing an amenity to boaters and neighbors. By locating the restaurant at the marina, there is less traffic generated on Rte. 1.

Mr. Cassella went on to explain the elements of the site plan which includes Bassett Boat Sales & Marine Electronics and the General Store. There are no proposed changes to the exterior of the building and the parking shown on the site plan exceeds the required amount for all uses including the proposed 26-seat restaurant by 16 spaces. A new sidewalk will be constructed along Rte. 1 as shown on revised plans dated 4/26/10.

Mr. Bassett noted that there are currently approx. 50 boats stored in areas designated as parking spaces and they would need to be removed if the plan is approved as shown.

Mr. Reeves Potts indicated that the marina needed to continue to use that area for boat storage, but he felt that there was plenty of parking over the entire site to support the various uses. While the Commission agreed that perhaps the parking requirements were excessive for the current tenants, the site plan should reflect the actual use and the parking plan needs to be in conformance with the regulations. It was suggested that the applicant work with the Zoning Official and the Town Planner to come up with a solution that is acceptable. She recommended that the Commission not make a specific recommendation as to the submitted site plan, but rather make a finding on the appropriateness of the proposed restaurant use and simply note items of concern.

Ms. Ozols reminded the Commission members that they are approving the use, not the current tenants.

Mr. Bassett commented that he felt the store was a great asset to the marina and would like to see it continue. He offered that he has not witnessed any parking problems with the current uses.

Ms. Ozols said that it is common for a successful deli to want to expand to a restaurant and agreed that the use complements the marina use. It is up to other entities to determine the adequacy of parking and septic for the proposed use.

Mr. Bassett made a motion seconded by Mr. Neale to find the application CONSISTENT with the Plan of Conservation and Development goal to enhance existing commercial business and that the use is compatible with the existing recreational boating services in the Commercial Boating District. The motion was unanimously approved.

SELECTMEN REFERRALS: None.

OLD BUSINESS:

- 1. Plan of Conservation and Development** – Ms. Parulis reported that the Affordable Housing study is almost complete and that the Committee is currently working on Development Issues based on feedback from the last public workshop.
- 2. Storm water Regulations** – Ms. Parulis gave a brief overview of a meeting held last week with the working group. A memo summarizing the recommendations will be presented at the next Planning Commission meeting.
- 3. GIS** – Ms. Parulis indicated that the web site development is nearing completion. It is taking a little longer than expected due to the many layers that will be included on the site. She also reported that the RFP went out to convert to a new Assessor (CAMA) database software that will be more compatible with the GIS. She gave credit to the Asst. Assessor for her cooperation with linking the GIS mapping to the Assessor database.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Appointment of Regular Member to fill vacancy due to resignation of D. Sicuranza

Ms. Ozols reported that a letter of interest had been received from Ashley Jones along with a letter from the Republican Town Committee endorsing her for the position. Ms. Ozols asked Ms. Jones, who was in attendance, to tell the Commission why she was interested.

Ms. Jones responded that she has an interest in Land Use and would like to provide a youthful perspective to the Commission. She offered that she is currently employed with Infiltrator Systems, Inc. in Old Saybrook and is working toward a degree in organization communication and has lived in Westbrook for 26 years. She has also recently obtained her real estate license.

Ms. Ozols cautioned that if Ms. Jones were to practice real estate that there could be perceived conflicts with her role as Planning Commissioner. Ms. Jones indicated that she would keep that under advisement and was not planning to practice real estate for the time being.

Mr. Neale inquired as to why an alternate member was not being considered to fill the vacancy. Ms. Ozols responded that although they generally move an alternate up because of his/her experience, they also try to fill vacancies with the same party that was elected to the vacant seat.

Ms. Ketelsen made a motion seconded by Mr. Neale to appoint Ashley Jones as a regular member to the Planning Commission to fill the vacancy left by Donna Sicuranza. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Ozols congratulated Ms. Jones on her appointment and told her that she would receive a letter confirming such. She instructed that once she receives the letter she must be sworn in by the Town Clerk.

BILLS:

Ms. Ketelsen made a motion to pay the following bills from the General Account. Mr. Bassett seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

<u>General Accounts</u>	
PC Rec. Sec. – S. Helchowski	\$100.00
Legal – Branse, Willis, Knapp	\$1,290.50
Printing - Ciel	\$132.30

Ms. Ketelsen made a motion to pay the following bills from the Special Funds. Mr. Neale seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

<u>Special Funds</u>	
Planimetrics-POCD	\$5,000.00
-AH Study	\$1,000.00
Applied Geographics, Inc.	\$1,050.00

MINUTES

1. Regular Meeting – April 12, 2010

Ms. Ozols tabled this item because the minutes were not included in the packets.

REPORTS:

Inland Wetlands Commission – Ms. Ketelsen reported that they were still reviewing an application on Rte. 1

CRERPA – Mr. Neal reported that CRERPA received some funding in the approved state budget and continues to pursue a possible merger with the Mid State Regional Planning Agency.

Harbor Commission – Mr. Bassett reported that the dredging of the Harbor began today.

Town Center Revitalization – Ms. Ozols reported that at the recommendation of the Joint Town Center and Economic Development Commission, the Board of Selectmen had approved funds to conduct an appraisal on the Morgillo property. The Town is exploring acquisition of the parcel to construct additional parking and possibly a public restroom.

CORRESPONDENCE:

Ms. Parulis distributed copies of draft amendments to Sections 2, 4, 8 and 9 of the Zoning Regulations to be discussed at the joint meeting with the Zoning Commission scheduled for June 7.

Ms. Parulis informed the Commission that a public hearing on the Widlitz dock application would be conducted on June 3. She also informed that Commission that she had submitted a grant application to conduct an Architectural and Historic Survey and that the Conservation Commission had submitted a grant application to construct a low impact development (LID) parking lot at the Salt Island Overlook.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Neale made a motion seconded by Ms. Ketelsen to adjourn the meeting at 8:20. The motion was unanimously approved.

Respectfully Submitted,

Meg Parulis, Town Planner