

Town of Stafford
Planning & Zoning Commission
Regular Meeting
March 12, 2019
7:00 p.m. – Veterans' Meeting Room
Warren Memorial Town Hall

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Nancy Ravetto
TOWN CLERK

Members Present: Nancy Ravetto, Chair
Gene Julian
Kathy Bachiochi
Ron Houle
Cindy Rummel

Also Present: David Perkins, Zoning Enforcement Officer
Leonard Clark, Alternate
Michael Delano, Alternate
Chris Joseph, Alternate

Public Hearing:

Applicant: Planning and Zoning Commission

Changes to the Town of Stafford Zoning regulations updating landscaping and buffer requirements; lighting, storm water detention; and staff ability to approve minor changes to approved site plans.

Nancy Ravetto opened the public hearing at 7:00 p.m., establishing a quorum with Nancy Ravetto, Chair; Gene Julian, Kathy Bachiochi, Ron Houle, and Cindy Rummel. Kathy Bachiochi read the legal notice.

David Perkins, ZEO, reviewed the proposed Zoning Regulation changes. The proposal calls for the elimination of landscaping items 5.10 D.2, 3, 4, 5, and 7, and 6.1 and 6.2. A new Section 6.1 and 6.2 was established that creates one landscaping and buffer section instead of two competing regulations, adds tables for buffers and dimensions between zones, adds a surface water drainage section (6.2 K.h.) that encourages low impact development, and adds an outdoor lighting Section 6.2.L.

Additionally, under 8.3, the words "or Commission" were added which will allow the Commission to waive site plan requirements in addition to the ZEO. Under 8.4, new wording will allow the ZEO with the chairman's concurrence to approve minor modifications to site plans or special permits. Under 5.13 C, the term "historical society" was revised to "Historical Advisory Commission."

Gene Julian asked if Item R on Page 108 should specify that the Commission Chair may excuse compliance with requirements for specific information. He was concerned that the new language might give total autonomy to the ZEO. There was consensus that the new language would be adequate and that adding "or the Commission" to the language in that Item will enable both the ZEO and Commission to be involved in the process.

Kathy Bachiochi noted that once the changes are approved, she will do some final proofreading and then get them to David Perkins so a new set of Zoning Regulations may be printed.

Gene Julian made a motion to close the public hearing at 7:16 p.m., seconded by Ron Houle. All were in favor.

Regular Meeting Agenda:

1. Call to order and establish a quorum.
2. Review minutes of February 26, 2019 Regular meeting.
3. Discussion – possible action – public meeting item: Zoning Regulation changes.
4. New and Other Business
5. Adjournment

1. Call to order and establish a quorum.

Nancy Ravetto, Chair, called the regular meeting to order at 7:16 p.m., establishing a quorum with Nancy Ravetto, Chair; Gene Julian, Kathy Bachiochi, Ron Houle and Cindy Rummel.

2. Review minutes of February 26, 2019 Regular Meeting

Kathy Bachiochi made a motion to approve the February 26, 2019 Regular meeting minutes, seconded by Gene Julian. All were in favor.

3. Discussion – possible action – public meeting item: Zoning Regulation changes.

Ron Houle made a motion, seconded by Kathy Bachiochi, to approve the changes to the Zoning Regulations to eliminate regulations 5.10.D2, 3, 4, 5, 7 and 6.1 and 6.2; add new Section 6. 1 and 6.2; change 8.3 to read “or commission” may excuse compliance with site plan requirements; add new 8.4 – changes to approved site plans or special permits; and change 5.3 from “historical society” to “Historic Advisory Commission.”

These changes are consistent with the POCD specifically:

2.7.3 & 5 as it relates to landscaping and buffers; 7.11.3 relating to storm water; 5.5 in regards to lighting. These changes were submitted to the CRCOG in accordance with CGS 8-3b on 2/5/19. No report has been received from then as of 3/12/19. This approval is effective March 19, 2019.

A vote was take on the motion and all were in favor.

4. New and Other Business.

Nancy Ravetto discussed floating zones, asking for findings from members who distributed areas of the town amongst themselves at the previous meeting. She reported that there is a good deal of area along Route 32 that might be conducive to a floating zone. It is not all watershed area. She said it is mostly business and residential zoning from Route 190 to the Industrial Park. A cemetery falls in that area and she questioned if a floating zone could be placed over a cemetery. Her area to investigate went up to the Massachusetts line. She said the area across from State Line Pond and Crow Hill and the forestland after the Munson Garage might be a good area also.

Kathy Bachiochi investigated Route 30 from the Congregational Church out to Crystal Lake. She noted land past the antique shop and Williamson Road, and both sides of the road past the dance studio that might be conducive. There was a question if the area past the dance studio was actually in Ellington.

Gene Julian was assigned the Borough area. He said there appears to only be one piece, his family land where the cell tower is. He does not expect that this land will be developed any time soon. He noted another area along Route 140 that presently has sewers, but he said he did not believe the property owner plans to develop it.

Cindy Rummel noted a mill on New City Road. She also looked at Route 19. There is land across from the lake, but this is the Norcross property that is part of a land trust. Gene Julian noted that the Northern Connecticut Land Trust bought some shared property with Stafford Fish and Game. He also said if the race track ever closed its doors, it would be a great property to develop.

Leonard Clark investigated the Village Hill Road area. Most of this is residential. There is an 18-acre parcel and a 35-acre parcel close to the Willington line and another parcel of about 12 acres. There is also some property up on Westford Road that might be a good candidate for a floating zone.

Gene Julian added that there is a huge piece of property between Colette Road West and Goodell Road that comes out to Route 19 along Furnace Hollow Road. He said he believes this area is sewerred, although it does not have city water.

Kathy Bachiochi also suggested a large parcel along Cooper Lane behind the Fire Department off of Route 190.

Nancy Ravetto suggested they flesh things out further at their next meeting, noting that they still want to hear from Dave Palmberg who could not be here this evening.

Chris Joseph said he is not sure they should be limiting themselves to only large parcels, as small parcels could also benefit from a floating zone. He said he felt the floating zone should be open to the entire town and suggested they consider a tiered system that would allow small increases in some areas that would allow small and home-based businesses to grow. He used an example of a residential business with a commercial kitchen that could be allowed some extra parking so customers could pick up their baked goods. It would be a way to help increase the tax base.

David Perkins said there are towns that have two or three different levels of home occupations. He said right now the idea is to get an inventory of properties. Ron Houle agreed. He said they need to do some more homework and get this down on paper first.

Besides the floating zone discussion, Nancy Ravetto asked David Perkins about adding the fees to the Zoning Regulations. She also asked if the Agricultural Advisory Commission had weighed in any further on medical marijuana. David Perkins said he will talk to him, and invite him to their next meeting.

The Commission discussed the status of the new Cumberland Farms as well as some minor work being done at the old Cumberland Farms, and the site plan permit at McDonalds. David Perkins said he has learned the Pinney School is under contract for apartments, although he has not yet seen an application. Gene Julian asked if there has been any activity at the Burrough School.

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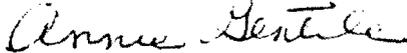
David Perkins said he understood the hoped-for funding for a potential school there was not available.

There was a discussion about occasional problems with the PZC approving applications without first obtaining other necessary approvals. Gene Julian made a motion requiring that PZC approvals cannot be granted without first obtaining the necessary written approvals from Inland Wetlands, the WPCA, and the Health Department. The motion was seconded by Kathy Bachiochi. All were in favor.

5. Adjournment.

Cindy Rummel made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Gene Julian. All were in favor. The March 12, 2019 Stafford Planning and Zoning Commission meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Annie Gentile
Recording Secretary