



Town of Colchester, Connecticut

127 Norwich Avenue, Colchester, Connecticut 06415

Website: www.colchesterct.gov

**Planning & Zoning Commission
Meeting Minutes
October 7, 2020
ZOOM Meeting @ 7:00 pm**

- 1. CALL TO ORDER** –Chairman Joseph Mathieu called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

ROLL CALL-

Members Present: Chairman Joseph Mathieu, Vice Chairman John Novak, Jason Tinelle, Bruce Hayn & Meaghan Kehoegreen (7:06)

Members Absent: Secretary Mark Noniewicz & Beverly Seeley

Others Present: Matthew Bordeaux; Planner, Daphne Schaub, ZEO

2. ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA –

M. Bordeaux reported an addition to the agenda;

11. C. Historic Preservation Overlay Zone

J. Novak MOTIONED to ADD Historic Preservation Overlay Zone under ITEM 11. C. SECONDED by B. Hayn. MOTION CARRIED.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – September 16, 2020

M. Bordeaux read the legal notice into the record.

4. PUBLIC HEARING-

A. Colvest / Colchester LLC – Regulation Text Amendment (2020-017)

Chairman Mathieu asked if there are any objections to any of the commissioners seated for the application; hearing none

M. Bordeaux presented the following report to the members of the Commission and public for consideration. The applicant, Colvest/Colchester, LLC, is proposing an amendment to the Land Use Regulations Section 5.3 regarding uses permitted in the Town Center District (TC). Specifically, the proposal would strike the word “parts” from the list of auto-related commercial uses not permitted in the TC per Section 5.3.2. The result would be to allow the retail sales of auto parts to be considered a commercial use.

Peter Alter, Attorney for the applicant was before the commission requesting a change in the text to suit a potential tenant. Mr. Alter stated in his opinion the change would support retail opportunity and permit auto part stores to operate under retail establishments, which is consistent with other retail establishments in the Town Center.

MINUTES
Wednesday, October 7, 2020
Planning & Zoning Commission

Chairman Mathieu asked if anyone was present to speak in favor or in opposition of the application.

Taras W. Rudko, Member Board of Selectman, asked for clarification as to where the overlay zone ends, as he was currently looking at the map and it shows many auto retail establishments in the vicinity of Linwood Avenue. Mr. Bordeaux stated when the regulations were amended in 2015 to revise the zoning districts and the Town Center village district, the footprint encompassed many existing auto part/retailers. Additionally the Historic Preservation Overlay Zone was delineated by parcel boundaries, however, in the case of 71-79 Linwood Ave, the application included a lot merger when the site was developed leaving an overlay zoning boundary that runs through the parcel.

J. Novak MOTIONED to CLOSE the PUBLIC hearing portion of Colvest / Colchester LLC – Regulation Text Amendment (2020-017). SECONDED by J. Tinelle. MOTION CARRIED.

5. FIVE MINUTE SESSION FOR THE PUBLIC – NONE

6. PENDING APPLICATIONS – NONE

7. NEW APPLICATIONS –

M. Bordeaux presented the new application for the commission to be heard at the October 21, 2020 meeting.

A. NCT Friction Welding – 124 Upton Road

B. Town of Colchester Planning and Zoning Commission – Regulations Amendment (2020-019)

8. PRELIMINARY REVIEWS

9. OLD BUSINESS

10. NEW BUSINESS-

A. Colvest / Colchester LLC – Regulation Text Amendment (2020-017)

Chairman Mathieu stated he is in agreement with the arguments put forth by the applicant, in addition, made mention of the number of other retail auto parts stores in the same zone. The members of the commission are also in agreement.

J. Novak MOTIONED to APPROVE the regulation text amendment to revise Section 5.3.2 of the Colchester Land Development Regulations to remove the sale of auto parts from the list of uses prohibited as Commercial Development in the Town Center District. The proposed amendment is consistent with Section 4.3 and 4.5 of the Plan of Conservation and Development as it seeks to “Strengthen the Town Center Economically” and “Facilitate and Support Economic Growth.” With an effective date of October 26, 2020. SECONDED by J. Tinelle. MOTION CARRIED

MINUTES

Wednesday, October 7, 2020
Planning & Zoning Commission

11. PLANNING ISSUES AND DISCUSSION-

- A. Historic Preservation Overlay Zone** - Mr. Bordeaux mentioned a provision within the Historical Preservation Overlay Zone that prohibits auto part sales within the overlay zone. It is suggested to strike the word 'parts' in the section or another option could be to take the portion of the Historic Preservation Overlay Zone that applies to the half of the parcel and move it to the adjacent property. Chairman Mathieu feels as though the sale of auto parts is acceptable within the Town Center Zone then it should be corrected throughout the zone rather than amend the Historic Preservation Overlay Zone Boundary.
- B. Solar Energy Systems-** Mr. Bordeaux spoke of the research that has gone into Solar Energy Systems and how surrounding towns are addressing the uses. The areas of concern are essentially solar energy systems as a principal use for a property, also known as solar farms. The split jurisdiction between the Planning and Zoning Commission and the Sighting Council was discussed and it is noted to have this clearly defined. Staff will continue to explore surrounding towns' regulations and if the commission has any comments please email them to staff. Discussion will continue with Solar Energy Systems.
- C. Affordable Housing** - Ms. KehoeGreen asked staff to provide the commission with an assessment of the town showing where affordable housing could be allowed. Mr. Bordeaux stated the Southeast Connecticut Housing alliance provided a report that included an assessment of land use and what the provisions were in different areas of town. Mr. Bordeaux will reach out to the group again and invite them to a future meeting for further discussion.

12. CORRESPONDENCE – NONE

13. ADJOURNMENT

B. Hayn MOTIONED to adjourn the October 7, 2020 Planning & Zoning Commission meeting at 8:09PM. SECONDED by J. Tinelle. MOTION CARRIED.

Respectfully Submitted,
Kamey Cavanaugh, Clerk