



Town of Colchester, CT

127 Norwich Avenue, Colchester, Connecticut 06415

PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION

Wednesday, June 21, 2023

7:00 pm – Town Hall Meeting Room 1

Regular Meeting

MINUTES

Members Present: Chairman J. Mathieu, Vice Chair J. Novak, S. Nadeau, M. Noniewicz, B. Hayn, S. Smith

Absent: M. Kehoegreen

Also Present: Planning Director, D. Sorrentino, Land Use Assistant, S. Churchill, Assistant Planner/ZEO, I. Kisluk, Applicants, Public

RECEIVED
COLCHESTER, CT
2023 JUN 22 PM 2:00
Gayle Furman
TOWN CLERK

1. **Call to Order** – Chairman Mathieu called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm

2. **Additions or Deletions to the Agenda** – None

3. **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

- a. Regular Meeting 6/7/23 – Motion by M. Noniewicz to approve the minutes as written. 2nd by B. Hayn. Vote was unanimous, motion carried.

4. **Public Hearings**

- a. PZC2023-011 of the Town of Colchester Planning & Zoning Department (Applicant) – Proposed Map Amendment from Future Development (FD) to Rural Use (RU) for 7 parcels located on Chestnut Hill Road and Parum Road, as follows: 148 Chestnut Hill Road (4E-05/004-000) 5.75 Acres of Squire; 140 Chestnut Hill Road (4E-05/004-009) 0.69 Acres of Rapuano; 128 Chestnut Hill Road (4E-05/006-001) 2.08 Acres of Hastings; 122 Chestnut Hill Road (4E-05/006-002) 6.64 Acres of Clark; 363 Parum Road (03-07/038-000) 63.3 Acres of Doocey; 367 Parum Road (03-07/037-000) 0.27 Acres of Hardy; and 353 Parum Road (03-07/039-000) 2.26 Acres of Georgens. – D. Sorrentino read the call to open the public hearing. Chairman Mathieu asked if any members of the public had concerns with commissioners seated. Hearing none, he asked staff, also the applicant, to speak about the application. D. Sorrentino read his staff report (attached to these minutes). Members discussed how this application fits into the town's Plan of Conservation and Development. D. Sorrentino stated it could diversify housing stock and potentially add to dedicated open space. With expansion of municipal sewer and water utilities to these parcels unlikely, the potential for large scale commercial or mixed-use development is low. The Chairman stated that the POCD outlines general themes, but does not dictate specific boundaries on the map. It is an advisory document. The town has not taken action to expand sewer and water utilities. A commercial or mixed-use development of such a scale that it could absorb the cost of utility expansion is likely the only way it will happen. The next revision of the POCD will be in June 2025. The Chairman asked if anyone would like to speak in favor of the application. Kevin Hastings, 128 Chestnut Hill Rd, spoke in favor. No one in attendance spoke in opposition.

Motion by M. Noniewicz to close the public hearing. 2nd by B. Hayn. Vote was unanimous, public hearing was closed.

5. Five Minute Session for the Public – None

6. Pending Applications

- a. PZC2023-011 of the Town of Colchester Planning & Zoning Department (Applicant) – Proposed Map Amendment from Future Development (FD) to the Rural Use (RU) for 7 parcels located on Chestnut Hill Road and Parum Road, as follows: 148 Chestnut Hill Road (4E-05/004-000) 5.75 Acres of Squire; 140 Chestnut Hill Road (4E-05/004-009) 0.69 Acres of Rapuano; 128 Chestnut Hill Road (4E-05/006-001) 2.08 Acres of Hastings; 122 Chestnut Hill Road (4E-05/006-002) 6.64 Acres of Clark; 363 Parum Road (03-07/038-000) 63.3 Acres of Doocey; 367 Parum Road (03-07/037-000) 0.27 Acres of Hardy; and 353 Parum Road (03-07/039-000) 2.26 Acres of Georgens. – Members briefly discussed the permitted uses for the Rural Use district. These parcels are next to other RU parcels and the change aligns with the recent zone change in the immediate area.

Motion by M. Noniewicz to approve application PZC2023-011 of the Town of Colchester Planning & Zoning Department (Applicant) and change the zoning designation from Future Development (FD) to Rural Use (RU) for 7 parcels located on Chestnut Hill Road and Parum Road, as follows: 148 Chestnut Hill Road (4E-05/004-000) 5.75 Acres of Squire; 140 Chestnut Hill Road (4E-05/004-009) 0.69 Acres of Rapuano; 128 Chestnut Hill Road (4E-05/006-001) 2.08 Acres of Hastings; 122 Chestnut Hill Road (4E-05/006-002) 6.64 Acres of Clark; 363 Parum Road (03-07/038-000) 63.3 Acres of Doocey; 367 Parum Road (03-07/037-000) 0.27 Acres of Hardy; and 353 Parum Road (03-07/039-000) 2.26 Acres of Georgens, with an effective date of July 17, 2023. The Commission finds that this change is consistent with Colchester’s 2015 Plan of Conservation & Development. 2nd by B. Hayn. Vote was unanimous, motion carried.

7. New Applications – None

8. Preliminary Reviews

- a. Kathy Glanert or Mac McCorrison requesting preliminary discussion of bar/café with live entertainment, including outdoors, for property located at 187 Lebanon Avenue (MBL#27-00/002-000). – Mac McCorrison, realtor for Kathy Glanert, appeared before the commission to gauge their opinion on Ms. Glanert leasing this location to open a bar/café with indoor and outdoor seating and offering live amplified music on Friday and Saturday nights until midnight or 1:00 am. It is a 0.4 acre parcel with a 1,200 sq ft building. Members expressed concerns about the site including available space for parking and outdoor seating, necessary alterations to the interior of the building and noise. The use is permitted by right in the Town Center district, however, the application would be referred to the commission by staff due to the possible issue with noise concerns. The property is separated from the Suburban Use district border by only one other parcel.

9. Old Business – None

10. New Business – None

11. Planning Issues and Discussions

- a. Request for official interpretation of sign regulations regarding political signs (Sec. 11.5 & 11.5.11, potential conflict in Sec. 11.10.1) – A property owner on Hayward Ave had a sign about the budget referendum placed in front of their property within the grassy area that is within the town road right-of-way. The property owner brought the sign into town hall thinking it should not have been placed there. The individual who placed the sign came into the office to retrieve the sign and stated it was town property and was allowed to put it there. The Land Use Department is requesting the Commission’s official interpretation of the regulations to ensure that enforcement is consistent with the Commission’s intent. Members discussed the sections regarding political signs in the Town’s Land Development (Zoning) Regulations and determined that the sign previously discussed was not allowed in the Town road right-of-way nor within 10 feet of the curb line. The Commission’s official interpretation included that political signs: must always be placed at least 10 feet from the travelled portion of a road for safety; cannot be placed within a Town road right-of-way; should not be placed in the State of CT road right of way without an encroachment permit; and should never be placed on private property without the owner’s permission. The Land Use Department will compile the applicable regulations for political signs and consider means of getting this information out to the public in advance of election season, including placing a legal ad in the Rivereast News Bulletin.
- b. Appointment of Isabelle Kisluk as Zoning Enforcement Officer – Motion by M. Noniewicz to appoint I. Kisluk as Zoning Enforcement Officer. 2nd by B. Hayn. Vote was unanimous, motion carried.
- c. Zoning Enforcement Status Report – ZEO I. Kisluk stated she has 13 outstanding zoning violations right now. Templates for notices of violation and requests for compliance are being created in order to streamline the process. The Board of Selectmen needs to appoint a new Blight Hearing Officer. Members discussed an update on the ongoing issue on Skyview Drive. Gano’s Power Equipment is waiting to hear from DOT on their permit application for the parking alterations along Linwood Avenue. There was a recent meeting between the Chair and Vice Chair of the Zoning Board of Appeals, Planning & Zoning Chairman, Planning Director and ZEO to discuss some recent and proposed regulation amendments.

12. Correspondence – None

13. Adjournment – Motion by M. Noniewicz to adjourn. 2nd by J. Novak. Vote was unanimous, meeting adjourned at 7:58 pm.

Respectfully submitted by: S. Churchill, Land Use Assistant