

DESIGN REVIEW ADVISORY COMMITTEE (DRAC)
MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, January 13, 2005

Members present:

Joe Hickey Jr.
Tom Harley
Steven Hine
Andrea Boyle
Bruce Bockstael

Not in Attendance

John Hallinan

Also in attendance:

Peter Gillespie, Town Planner/Econ Development Manager
Christine Paul

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 p.m.

Introductions

Mr. Gillespie welcomed the members to the first meeting of the recently formed Committee and thanked them for volunteering their time and experience. Mr. Gillespie asked each member to briefly introduce themselves and their interest and background as it relates to the Design Review Committee.

Andrea Boyle summarized her experience as an intern architect at Clohessy, Harris & Keiser in Simsbury, Joe Hickey noted his experience as a Planner with the State of Connecticut and his past experience on the PZ Commission, Mr. Bockstael summarized his experience as an architect with the State DPW, Mr. Harley explained his experience as an engineer with ConnDot, Mr. Hine summarized his experience as an Architectural Project Manager with Clohessy, Harris & Kaiser in Simsbury.

Background Information

Mr. Gillespie distributed the following information:

- 1987 Silas Deane Highway Master Plan
- 2000 Plan of Conservation and Development
- Work products from Silas Deane Highway Committee
- Invitation to January 21 CCAPA Design Seminar

The Committee members were encouraged to read the material and become familiar with them.

Purpose and Authority

Mr. Gillespie summarized the Town Ordinance that created the Committee and the Zoning Regulations that govern the authority of the Commission. Some of the Highlights:

- 5 members and 1 alternate
- 3 members is a quorum
- Advisory role to PZC and the Council

In general the Committee has five areas of authority:

1. New construction of a multi-family residential structure of four (4) or more units
2. A special residential development
3. New construction of a non-residential structure
4. Any significant exterior building change or other site improvement which requires site plan or design review
5. Signs as required by Section 6.3 of the new Zoning Regulations

Officers

The Commission members agreed to table this item until all members were present.

Application and Review Process

Mr. Gillespie distributed a copy of a section of the Simsbury Design Review Manual regarding the review process. The process involves 5 steps:

- Contact staff
- Informal review with Committee
- Formal review with Committee
- Formal application with Land Use Commission
- Building Permit application

The Committee members agreed upon the following items:

- a review form for applicants needs to be created
- a submission deadline of 8-10 days should be established
- Committee members should be notified upon submission of plans to provide an opportunity for them to stop in the office to review the plans.
- The plans should be mailed to the Committee members at least 5 days before the meeting date
- Allow submissions to be 8.5" x 11"

The members reviewed an application form from Gilbert, Arizona. The Commission members agreed that a form is necessary and the form could also be used for PZC preliminary reviews. The following comments were made:

- This should be a form not an application.
- Developers and property owners should be encouraged to attend meetings
- Should a nominal fee be changed or incorporated into new PZC fee schedule?
- The form should mimic the submission requirements of the regulations
- Require photographic submissions
- Require information on adjacent structures

January 19 PZC Meeting

The following items need to be discussed with the PZC at the January 19 meeting: should PZC be reviewing conceptual plans at the same time as Design Review, should the Design Review Committee be reviewing applications in the Historic District?

Meeting Schedule 2005

The Commission members decided that the best meeting nights would be the first and third Wednesday of each month, to avoid conflicts that John Hallinan has with Tuesdays and Thursdays, Bruce Bockstael has problems with Monday nights. This will put us behind the P&Z meetings but gives us time to prepare for their next meetings.

Budget 2005/2006

Peter will look into what if any cost will be created due to this committee, it appears that we will need to record our meetings therefore secretarial service will be required, plus incidental mailings. If it can be part of P&Z costs that would certainly be acceptable.

Other Business

There are a few things the Commission members need to consider for the next meeting.

- A listing of ideas our members might feel strongly about including within a document that will eventually become our guideline for development. A similar document was developed by Simsbury which seems to be much more than what we might wish to undertake at this time.
- Although we attempted to define the process for any application, we may wish to formerly adopt a procedure once we have had the opportunity to witness a few submissions, the time we initially defined might work but we should not memorialize it yet. At this point we have asked to be notified of an application 4-5 days before our meeting this should give us all opportunity to get to Town Hall and inspect the actual application, visit the site, etc. Additionally, we will receive in the mail an 8 1/2 x 11 package of the essential information that will be presented to us.
- Lastly, we may wish to adopt a format for the meeting to keep the public and applicants within a structure of order. Other Committees have identified a methodology to run these effectively and we should allow Peter to define what he thinks will work for us. This too should be modified in the future to suit us best.
- Mr. Gillespie will contact other communities with Design Review Committees and request attendance at a future meeting potentially February 16.

THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 8:05 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Peter D. Gillespie
Economic Development Manager/Town Planner