

**WETHERSFIELD PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION  
PUBLIC HEARING AND MEETING**

**January 2, 2008**

The Wethersfield Planning and Zoning Commission held a public hearing and meeting on Tuesday January 2, 2008 at 7:00 p.m. in the Wethersfield Police Department Meeting Room, 250 Silas Deane Highway, Wethersfield, Connecticut.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Joseph Hammer called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

**ROLL CALL & SEATING OF ALTERNATES**

Chairman Joseph Hammer called roll as follows:

Member Name	Present	Absent	Excused
Joseph Hammer, Chairman	X		
Margaret Wagner, ViceChair			X
Philip Knecht, Clerk			X
Thomas Harley	X		
Robert Jurasin	X		
Earle Munroe	X		
Dorcas McHugh			X
Richard Roberts	X (7:10)		
Frederick Petrelli	X		
James Hughes	X		
Anthony Homicki			X
George Oickle	X		

Also present: Peter Gillespie, Town Planner  
Denise Bradley, Assistant Town Planner

Chairman Hammer stated that all the members will be participating and voting.

**OLD BUSINESS**

There was no old business.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**3.1 PUBLIC HEARING APPLICATION NO. 1594-07-Z. Town of Wethersfield Seeking a Zoning Text Amendments for proposed sign regulation changes.**

Peter Gillespie, Town Planner discussed his memo to the commission dated November 9, 2007, which summarized 10 proposed changes to the sign regulations. Commissioner Hammer called upon the public.

Richard Lasher, Griswold Road noted that the Griswoldville Association is in opposition the athletic field signage.

Ray Grasso, who resides at 21 Stockade Circle and is a member of the Citations Appeal Board, stated that the tag sale signs are too stringent and that he wants the same regulations for tag sales signs as the real estate signs.

Rich Troutman, 70 Griswold Road, stated he was against any commercial signs on town property.

Peter Gardow, 60 Griswold Road also stated he was strongly opposed to signs on public property. He stated that his property is zoned 1AA and that he cannot put these types of signs up on his property which has the same zoning. Mr. Gardow also stated that if this proposed zoning rule was to be accepted, it should state that the advertising not be in within sight of adjacent residentially zoned property.

Kathy Bagley, Director of Wethersfield Parks and Rec. stated that Wethersfield Little League has been working on this proposal for about a year and they are just asking for permission to put advertising signs

on outfield fences on baseball and softball field in town. She stated that the Little League was looking on ways to improve the parks and raise money for upkeep. Ms. Bagley stated that many of our neighboring towns put signs on their outfield fences.

Commissioner Jurasin asked if the Little League would be paying for the signs. Ms. Bagley stated that the Little League is to begin soliciting advertisers and the revenue would go to Little League.. Commissioner Jurasin asked who is to install the signs. Ms. Bagley stated that town staff would install them and Parks and Rec. will maintain.

Chairman Hammer and Commissioner Jurasin asked what Little League's anticipated revenue would be from having these signs.

Ms. Bagley stated that from her notes from the Little League's May 30, 2007 meeting, they identified the fields being considered as Mill Woods, Greenfield and Highcrest. When they looked at those fields and if someone did a 2 year commitment at \$300 a sign with up to 67 total sign placements for over 2 years the revenue would be \$20,000 if they sold every sign. Ms. Bagley stated they have estimated a conservative 1<sup>st</sup> year sales of approximately 30 signs with a total profit of \$9,000 every 2 years or \$4500 every year. Commissioner Jurasin then noted that he wanted a detailed cost analysis to review. Commissioner Hammer questioned whether it was legal to allow signage in the town's right-of-way.

Dana Spicer, Mainly Tea, Main Street stated she would like to encourage the commission to favorably consider the amendments that pertain to temporary and A-Frame promotional signage in the main street area.

Debbie Gould, 65 Griswold Road, stated she is opposed to having signs on the fields. She did research on the Little League website and what their limitations and opportunities are for making money. She stated that banners are very costly and signs are distracting and someone can get hurt. Ms. Gould talked about how the Little League can obtain other sponsors and money to help their organization.

Lee Standish, 278 Hartford Ave stated commercial signs do not belong on town parks. He also wanted his letter read for the record.

Robert Young, 20 Coppermill stated that he is opposed to signs around town and on the snow shelf. He can see tag sale signs for a day or so on the weekends but not much longer. He also opposes the political signs and he agreed with Mrs. Gould about fundraising. Mr. Young does not want to see signs on the ball field or on any other town property.

Chairman Hammer asked the commission if they wanted to discuss the points on the sections that were raised.

Commissioner Petrelli stated he has concerns and believes that the Silas Deane Hwy. is unattractive with its signs and he thinks that tag sale signs are a hazard. He stated he wanted to address all.

Commissioner Roberts stated he didn't need anything else from the staff or public to move forward. He stated that he thought the hearing should be closed and the application tabled to the next meeting. Commissioner Jurasin asked what would happen if the hearing were closed but the Commission wanted more information. Chairman Hammer stated that if they close the hearing the only additional information that could be entered into the record would be from staff reports and insight they can get is from town staff and their staff but not third parties involved.

Commissioner Roberts made a motion to continue the public hearing at the next meeting as there was not enough time to discuss all the changes.

Commissioner Oickle seconded the motion.

The members voted as follows (8-0-0)

Aye: Hammer, Harley, Roberts, Jurasin, Oickle, Petrelli, Munroe, Hughes

Nay: None

Abst: None

**3.2 PUBLIC HEARING APPLICATION NO. 1595-07-Z. Lynn Dillon & Christopher Ravlin**  
Seeking a Special Permit in accordance with Section 5.8 of the Wethersfield Zoning Regulations for the sale and dispensing of alcoholic beverages (renewal) and in accordance with Section 5.2.F.2 of the Wethersfield Zoning Regulations for outdoor dining at 672 Silas Deane Highway (Former Amici's Building).

Lynn Dillon, 4 Penwood Lane, stated that she was proposing to take over the old Amici's building to open a restaurant pub called Pal's Pub Sports Bar and Grill. The building has been unoccupied for 3 ½ years. Mrs. Dillon stated that she will be taking down all four (4) signs and replacing only two (2), one in front and one in back. She also stated that the Design Review Advisory Committee approved her proposal for outdoor seating pending the subsequent review and approval of the Planning & Zoning Commission. Mrs. Dillon plans on fencing in the outdoor seating area with wrought iron fencing material. She stated she also has plans to do some fundraising on the premises for the town and has gotten permission from the owners of Ocean State Job Lot. Mrs. Dillon will need a liquor permit.

Commissioner Hammer asked the hours of operation.

Mrs. Dillon stated that they will be open Monday thru Sunday at 11:30 a.m. until 1:00am. Fridays and Saturdays, she will be open until 2:00 a.m.

Commissioner Hammer asked the seating capacity.

Mrs. Dillon stated she would like seating for 140 occupants and stated that her busy times would probably be after 10:00 p.m. when Ocean State Job Lot is closed. Therefore, she anticipates there will be plenty of parking spaces.

Commissioner Roberts asked town planner Peter Gillespie to outline what the commission is being asked to review. Mr. Gillespie stated that the Commission is being asked to review the liquor permit and the outdoor seating.

Commissioner Roberts also asked about the fencing around the outdoor seating. He thought that there was a 4ft high requirement for a fence around outdoor seating when liquor is being served. Mrs. Dillon stated that she will check into it.

Gwen Haley, 138 Church Street asked if there were going to be speakers for the outdoor seating. Mrs. Dillon replied that they have not decided on the placement of speakers and noted that if they did install any, that the volume would be kept to a minimum..

Commissioner Hughes made a motion to close the public hearing.

Commissioner Roberts seconded the motion.

All Aye

Commissioner Jurasin made a motion to approve application NO. 1595-07-Z with two conditions as follows:

1. The line striping for spaces allocated to this facility should be painted fresh and handicap parking stalls be furnished with signs.

2. Any future plans to install an amplified music system on the exterior of the building shall be reviewed by the Commission.

Commissioner Roberts seconded the motion.

The members voted as follows (8-0-0)

Aye: Hammer, Harley, Roberts, Jurasin, Oickle, Petrelli, Munroe, Hughes

Nay: None

Abst: None

**APPLICATION WAS APPROVED**

**3.3 PUBLIC HEARING APPLICATION NO. 1596-07-Z. Audrey Booker** Seeking a Special Permit in accordance with Section 3.9 of the Wethersfield Zoning Regulations for the creation of a rear lot at 114 Willow Street.

Harold Booker, 114 Willow Street, stated that he and his wife Audrey have lived at this location for 36 years. They plan to demolish the existing home on the front lot and build a new home there and on the rear. Their existing home was built in 1860. Mr. Booker and his wife plan on moving to a condo or possibly using the rear lot and with a modular home.

Attorney O'Keefe spoke on behalf of Mark and Louise Priest of 17 Rhodes Circle who are abutting property owners to the east.. Attorney O'Keefe provided a letter from his clients to the commission dated December 18, 2007. He then summarized the letter. His clients concerns are about an existing drainage problem and the potential for increased problems due to the proposed new home construction. The Priest's property sits 25 feet below the Bookers. Attorney O'Keefe showed photos of flooding in his client's back yard and stated that due to the reasons documented in his client's letter, that the application be denied.

Chairman Hammer mentioned for the record another letter they received dated December 18, 2007, from Elizabeth and Wayne Prunier of 11 Rhodes Circle. Chairman Hammer also mentioned they received another memo that evening from Edward Mocarsky of 22 Half Penny Lane who stated that he is opposed to the application.

Elizabeth Prunier, 11 Rhodes Circle adjacent to Mark and Louise Priest stated that she is concerned about this special permit due to drainage issues. She says that at times there is a 20 x 30 foot pond in the back of her yard and that her son fell through the ice last year prompting her to send a letter to Mike Turner. He advised that the problem was their issue as far as grading. Mrs. Prunier stated that there is a town drain in the back of their property with a right of way on theirs and their neighbor's property. There is a town pipe that runs out to a main at the end. Mrs. Prunier stated they had a contractor do exploratory digging and they had found that the town pipe is actually crushed. Their biggest concern is drainage and with that they are opposed to the approval of this application.

Mr. Booker stated that there is no run off from their property to Mark and Louise Priest property. He believes that the surface run-off issues are not going to be aggravated by anything they are planning on doing.

Chairman Hammer asked Peter if they need to have the applicant submit some type of drainage analysis on a resubdivision and if the town engineer has looked at the drainage issue. Peter responded that for a one (1) lot split they do not ask for a drainage analysis but the commission has the discretion to require additional information. He also stated that the town engineer did not comment about the other drainage problems.

Chairman Hammer asked the commission if they would like to have the town staff and engineer look into the drainage issue that has been raised.

Mark Priest, 17 Rhodes Circle stated his concerns with drainage.

Commissioner Roberts made a motion to continue the public hearing for the applicant to work with staff and his engineer on exploring the current drainage issues.

Commissioner Hughes seconded the motion.

The members voted as follows (8-0-0)

Aye: Hammer, Harley, Roberts, Jurasin, Oickle, Petrelli, Munroe, Hughes

Nay: None

Abst: None

**3.4 PUBLIC HEARING APPLICATION NO. 1598-07-Z Tricycle Corp.** Seeking a Special Permit in accordance with Section 5.8 of the Wethersfield Zoning Regulations for the sale and dispensing of alcoholic beverages at 251 Main Street.

Mark D’Onofrio of Tricycle Corp. summarized his business proposal (also outlined in a letter from the applicant in the file) to open a non-traditional coffee house, which will be called “The Bean & Grape”, at 251 Main Street, formerly known as the Crown and Crinkle Coffee Shoppe. Mr. D’Onofrio stated that he was looking for approval from the Commission for a liquor permit which would enable him to offer wine by the glass in the evening hours. He will serve coffee seven (7) days a week from 6 a.m. to 2 p.m. and wine Thursdays – Saturdays from 5 p.m. to 10 p.m. Mr. D’Onofrio made it clear that his intent is not to establish a “bar” scenario. Mr. D’Onofrio stated that he would provide outdoor seating.

Commissioner Hammer asked if wine would be served outside. Mr. D’Onofrio noted that wine would be served in the outdoor seating area.

Howard Willard, 141 Main Street, stated that he is neither in favor nor against application. Mr. Willard had questions for the applicant in regards to the café and what food items would be served. Mr. D’Onofrio stated that in the morning he would have pastries that would be warmed up and in the evening they will serve cheeses and cured meat. Mr. Willard commented that this would be the 5<sup>th</sup> establishment in Old Wethersfield to serve liquor.

Commissioner Hammer asked the applicant if he would be serving beer as well as wine and Mr. D’Onofrio stated that he will only be serving.. Commissioner Hammer asked if Mr. D’Onofrio would have any objection to a stipulation in the commissions’ actions specifying that no beer shall be sold on premises. Mr. D’Onofrio stated he would not object.

Maureen Hayes, 29 Hartford Ave, is an abutter to the property and she is concerned of the expansion of a larger restaurant/bar in the back of the property. She thinks that the café is appropriate for the area and a great addition to the neighborhood.

Commissioner Jurasin made a motion to close the public hearing.

Commissioner Roberts seconded the motion.

All Aye

Commissioner Jurasin made a motion to approve application NO. 1598-07-Z, subject to the following conditions:

1. The fire marshal has requested a fire lane through the parking lot with a minimum width of fifteen (15) feet to ensure access of fire apparatus. Details about this access are required from the fire marshal.
2. Curb stops for the five (5) customer parking spaces are required.
3. The site plan shall be modified to designate the materials of the outdoor café as flagstone or similar.
4. The handicap parking spaces need to be identified with pavement markings and permanent signage.
5. The sale and dispensing of alcoholic beverages on the premises shall be limited to wine.

Commissioner Roberts seconded the motion.

The members voted as follows (8-0-0)

Aye: Hammer, Harley, Roberts, Jurasin, Oickle, Petrelli, Munroe, Hughes

Nay: None

Abst: None

**APPLICATION WAS APPROVED**

**3.5 APPLICATION NO. 1599-07-Z. Michael Tine** Seeking Site Plan and Design Review for a change that is not significant to operate a takeout restaurant at 740 B Silas Deane Highway.

Mike Tine, 100 Wells Road described his proposal to renovate this former nail salon into a take-out restaurant serving chicken wings at 740B Silas Deane Hwy. The applicant noted that there will be no seating and no delivery. The restaurant will have 2 fryers, no ovens or grills. It will be a one (1) employee operation. The hours of operation will be Mon-Sat from 11-9 p.m.

Commissioner Roberts asked the applicant if there will be only be chicken wings and nothing else. Mr. Tine stated that chips and soda will be sold on premises as well.

Commissioner Oickle made a motion to approve application 1599-07-Z with no conditions.

Commissioner Roberts seconded the motion.

The members voted as follows (8-0-0)

Aye: Hammer, Harley, Roberts, Jurasin, Oickle, Petrelli, Munroe, Hughes

Nay: None

Abst: None

**APPLICATION WAS APPROVED**

**OTHER BUSINESS**

Commissioner Hammer stated that Margaret Wagner (Vice Chair) officially sent in her letter of resignation. With that he wanted to make a motion to add to the agenda the election of a new vice chair.

Commissioner Jurasin made a motion to add the election to the agenda.

Commissioner Oickle seconded the motion.

All Aye

Commissioner Jurasin made a motion to elect Commissioner Richard Roberts as the new Vice Chair. Commissioner Munroe seconded.

Commissioner Roberts accepted.

The members voted as follows (8-0-0)

Aye: Hammer, Harley, Roberts, Jurasin, Oickle, Petrelli, Munroe, Hughes

Nay: None

Abst: None

**4.1 Pre-Application Review – John Kulesza – 4 Progress Drive.**

John Kulesza, President of Young Pharmaceuticals, stated that he actually submitted a similar application for this site about ten (10) years ago that was approved by the Planning and Zoning Commission. He noted that there had been many issue related to this site that have been addressed over the years and that he is back to renew the application to move forward. Mr. Kulesza brought with him architect John Wilcox and landscape architect Rosemary Aldridge.

Mr. Kulesza is proposing an approximately 17,000 g. f. a. medical/business/research-lab/wholesale distribution building for the site. The building will be a combination medical building and for pharmaceuticals. Mr. Kulesza stated that they have already given a presentation to the Design Review Advisory Committee.

Mr. Kulesza stated that he was before the PZC to provide a presentation and answer any questions.

Rosemary Aldridge showed the commission the planting plans that she is proposing for the project. She stated that the lot is on Progress Drive in the business park district. The building will consist of 2 floors. The first floor will have the medical offices which will be for cosmetic out patient surgery and the bottom floor will have the business offices, laboratory and wholesale distribution for Young Pharmaceuticals which prepares skin care product.

Ms. Aldridge handed out and discussed the zoning data for the commission and went over the building and landscaping plans.

Chairman Hammer asked Ms. Aldridge explain a notation on the zoning data that indicates the rear yard is 25 feet as proposed but the abutting residential regulations state 75 feet. Ms. Aldridge stated that the area to the east is zoned residential although it is part of the Progress Drive subdivision. It is owned by Soundbridge and in order for the school to be in the area it had to be zoned residential even though it is not a residential use. They are proposing parking in that area and not building.

Chairman Hammer asked the applicant if they have talked to the school about the proposal. Mr. Kulesza stated that when they submitted the original proposal the school was concerned about noise issues because many of the attending children with hearing impairments are sensitive to different noises. He stated that they will do whatever possible to make sure there are no unusual noise levels. Mr. Kulesza also stated that he has had no recent discussions with the school officials.

Chairman Hammer asked Ms. Aldridge how far the building is set back from the school. Ms. Aldridge stated there is quite a bit of separation.

Mr. Gillespie stated that SoundBridge is proposing an addition and exterior changes to their play area and asked that they contact them with their plans.

John Wilcox the architect handed the commission a packet outlining the proposal. He also showed some of the materials that will be used for the building.

Commissioner Oickle asked if the building will have sprinklers. Mr. Wilcox stated that the building would not have sprinklers. Mr. Gillespie noted that there is a local town ordinance that requires the installation of sprinklers in building over 2000 square feet. Mr. Wilcox stated he was not aware of the ordinance but would address the issue.

Mr. Wilcox also talked about incorporating building practices for added energy conservation.

Mr. Gillespie questioned the accuracy of the parking calculations. They have one (1) space per 1000 s.f. and the regulations state that four (4) spaces per 1000 s. f. is necessary. Ms. Aldridge stated she would check the calculations.

#### **4.2 2008 Meeting Schedule**

Commissioner Jurasin made a motion to approve the 2008 meeting schedule.  
Commissioner Roberts seconded the motion.

The members voted as follows (8-0-0)

Aye: Hammer, Harley, Roberts, Jurasin, Oickle, Petrelli, Munroe, Hughes  
Nay: None  
Abst: None

#### **MINUTES**

Commissioner Oickle made a motion to approve the minutes from December 4, 2007.

Commissioner Petrelli seconded the motion.

The members voted as follows (6-0-2)

Aye: Hammer, Harley, Roberts, Oickle, Petrelli, Hughes  
Nay: None  
Abst: Munroe, Jurasin

#### **STAFF REPORTS**

No staff reports.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENTS ON GENERAL MATTERS OF PLANNING AND ZONING.**

#### **CORRESPONDENCE**

A letter from Joanne Newland to Peter Gillespie dated December 8, 2007, regarding 120 Belcher Road.

A memo from Peter Gillespie to Brian O'Connor regarding the expiration of the Planning and Zoning Commission approval granted for Application No. 1576-07-Z – Rana Automaster/1652 Berlin Turnpike.

A letter from John Guskowski to municipal officials regarding the Environmental Review Team (ERT) program administered by the Eastern Connecticut Resource

Conservation and Development Area, Inc.

An invitation to the Wethersfield Chamber of Commerce Business After Hours event to be held at Sake Café on January 7<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 p.m.

**PENDING APPLICATIONS TO BE HEARD AT FUTURE MEETINGS**

**APPLICATION NO. 1593-07-Z. Patel Ramesh** Seeking a Special Permit in accordance with Section 6.10 (Earth Removal & Filling) of the Wethersfield Zoning Regulations for the receipt of fill at 35 Arrow Road.

**APPLICATION NO. 1597-07-Z. Paul Randazzo** Seeking a Zone Change from the Office (O) Zone to the General Business (GB) Zone for properties located on the easterly side of the Silas Deane Highway as depicted on a plan prepared for RANDEV LLC and dated November 15, 2007.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Roberts made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Commissioner Oickle seconded the motion.

The members voted as follows (8-0-0)

Aye: Hammer, Harley, Roberts, Jurasin, Oickle, Petrelli, Munroe, Hughes

Nay: None

Abst: None

**The meeting was adjourned at 11:00 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

Denise Bradley  
Assistant Planner