

**WETHERSFIELD PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
PUBLIC MEETING
DECEMBER 16, 2003**

The Wethersfield Planning and Zoning Commission held a public meeting on December 16, 2003, at 7:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Town Hall, 505 Silas Deane Highway, Wethersfield, Connecticut.

Members present:

Earle Munroe, Chairman
Joseph L. Hammer, Vice Chairman
Theresa Forsdick, Clerk
Richard Roberts
George Oickle
John Hallisey
Scott Murphy
Philip Knecht
Matthew Cholewa
David Edwards

Members absent:

Robert Jurasin
John Adamian

Also present:

Peter Gillespie, Economic Development Manager/Town Planner

Chairman Munroe called the public meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

MANDATORY REFERRAL in accordance with C.G.S. 8-24 referred by the Town Council to the Planning and Zoning Commission the request for the removal of the Adams Landing cul-de-sac island.

Clerk Forsdick read a letter from Dolores Sassano, Town Clerk to Earle Munroe, Chairman of the Planning and Zoning Commission which asked that the item be placed on the agenda for discussion and action so that Commission recommendations and comments could be submitted to the Town Council.

Mr. Gillespie explained that a petition by residents of Adams Landing had been received by Council for the removal of the island which is a standard requirement in the zoning regulations, because it had become a maintenance problem and an eyesore for the neighborhood. He said that this was different than the standard requirements; they do have a minimum radius requirement on cul-de-sacs and they do have an island that is required. He believed that this request had been before the Commission at least a couple of times but had not been approved. The Town Engineer estimated that the removal/demolition and re-pavement would cost about \$5,000.

Commissioner Oickle said that there was quite a history on the requirement of these cul-de-sac islands. Although he recalled that they had dropped that requirement from the proposed regulations, they had been supported as a way to add green area but it was found that they get in the way of plows and of course people have to maintain them. He recalled the last reference to this request had been hung up over the issue of who would pay for the removal. He didn't feel the Town should pick up the cost.

Commissioner Roberts said that he recalled seeing this request at least twice previously when subdivision regulations required that the islands be installed but added that now they had made the policy decision that these aren't a good idea.

Commissioner Hammer asked how many other cul-de-sacs would be in this same position in the Town. Mr. Gillespie

said that he would not be comfortable guesstimating a number, but pointed out that almost all subdivisions in recent years have had one or more cul-de-sacs some with islands and some without. He thought that this action would certainly open the door to a precedent being set but he thought that by attaching the caveat that the Town Council needed to be leery of the associated costs of doing so and who would do it was important.

Commissioner Hammer asked if Adams Landing was a Town road and how many houses were on the street. Mr. Gillespie answered that it was accepted as a town road in the late 1980's and had about 10 houses on it.

Commissioner Hammer felt that if the regulations were not requiring them any more then he did not have a problem with removing it. But he was concerned with the Town having to bear the cost. He thought that it was one thing if the Town said that they did not object to making the change. He commented that lots of things change over the years, they change their regulations. However he did not want to set a precedent where the Town essentially pays to fund things that people desire to do 15 years down the road from when a development is created.

Commissioner Hallisey mentioned that the Town has a habit of using full sized plows on cul-de-sacs which just end up taking out all the curbs of the houses. In the spring or summer the Town ends up having to come back and repair them. He suggested that pick-up trucks should be used on cul-de-sacs.

Commissioner Oickle asked how many houses were in favor of removing the island. Mr. Gillespie said that there was a petition signed by more than 6.

Commissioner Oickle commented that it sounded like a majority of the residents.

Commissioner Roberts said in response to a precedent being set by this situation that at least one of the previous requests had involved the topography and the way it had been laid out in that it was lower than the surrounding driveways and so it had been a huge problem.

Mr. Gillespie said that he would ask that the Town Engineer attach his cost estimate to the referral letter the Town Council received so that the cost issue would be reinforced as a separate document.

Commissioner Munroe said that he recalled in meetings where they had discussed this issue that some residents complained that they actually backed onto the cul-de-sacs when backing out of their driveways, although some residents had preferred them. He commented that they acted on these requests on a case per case basis.

Upon motion by Commissioner Roberts, seconded by Commissioner Oickle and a poll of the Commission it was voted to **Make a Positive Referral** for the removal of the Adams Landing cul-de-sac island with the following suggestion:

1. That the Town explore ways to have the cost (approx. \$5,000.) shifted to someone other than the Town.

Aye: Roberts, Oickle, Hallisey, Forsdick, Munroe, Knecht, Murphy, Cholewa, Hammer

Abst: Edwards

Preliminary pre-application review of the plans for the construction of a car wash facility at 1730 Berlin Turnpike.

Mr. Gillespie said that he had received a phone call this afternoon from the applicant for the project, who explained that there was a prospective buyer for the property on which he wished to locate the facility, so for the time being he had decided to step back from the review process.

Chairman Munroe asked if the sale was just for the area where the car wash was located or if it would be the entire property including the hotel. Mr. Gillespie said that it had been indicated that the sale would be for the area including the hotel area, but he has not had any confirmation of that information.

Commissioner Oickle felt that it should be strongly suggested to the applicant that the hotel site be cleaned up more

than it had been done so in the recent past in order for the Commission to really consider the proposal, although he realized that they would have to consider it on its face, However, he knew they would all be discussing this aspect because it was an eyesore and had been for decades, in the preliminary discussion.

Mr. Gillespie said that the applicant had been so advised by the Fire Marshal, the Town Engineer, the Building Inspector and the Town Planner that this was an issue that needed to be resolved before any formal application to the Commission.

Commissioner Oickle said that he had visited the site and the usual public hearing signs were not posted but he wondered if abutters should be notified about these preliminary reviews.

Commissioner Forsdick questioned whether the discussions that might occur during these preliminary hearings might potentially influence negatively or positively the sale or leasing of these properties before the application process is finalized. She was concerned that if the Commission were to say it was a bad idea then the applicant could come back and accuse them of spoiling their sale.

Commissioner Oickle said that all properties have a sign on them at some point or other.

Chairman Munroe said that this property had come before them before and they would have to confine their review to the current proposal and how it conforms to the existing regulations. He added that if anything proposed was not in keeping with the new regulations then it could be pointed out.

Mr. Gillespie said that he had drafted up a preliminary review, pre-application series of procedures. He had not listed notification of abutters as one of the procedures but they could certainly talk about it later during public comments. He added that any potential commentary might affect possible sales but that this was the nature of what the Commission does and he was not concerned about that.

Preliminary pre-application review of conceptual site plan for the construction of forty-five (45) attached, age restricted condominium units at 295 Ridge Road.

Clerk Forsdick read a letter (dated December 4, 2003-on file) to Earle Munroe, Chairman of the Planning and Zoning Commission from Donna Hughes which described the proposed application. The letter said that the approximately 6.8 acre site bordered on the south by the Berlin Turnpike, the north by single family homes, and the west by a multi-family housing development was zoned A-1. A HELCO power line easement and a MDC trunk sewer line run through the site which is served by all utilities. A 15,000 sq. ft. brick building and 6 duplexes currently occupy the site all of which are approximately 60 years old. The application proposes to demolish all existing structures and construct 45 attached age restricted single story condominium units with garages. Some would have full basements. They are proposing 50' front and 30' side setbacks that are consistent with the current regulations. However these setbacks differ from the proposed regulations which call for 40' front and 15' side setbacks. They felt that given the configuration of the site the smaller side yard setback would allow them to balance the number of requested units with a flexible and free flowing interior road system.

Chairman Munroe reminded the Commissioners that this was preliminary pre-application review and there would be no motion or vote taken tonight.

Clerk Forsdick read an additional memorandum (dated December 15, 2003 - on file) to Peter Gillespie from Michael Turner, Town Engineer which gave several comments on the plans:

1. Twenty four foot wide roads are okay provided there is NO on street parking which would inhibit emergency vehicles.
2. Provide sufficient turning radii for the SU-30 vehicle.
3. Suggest sidewalks throughout.
4. Consider layout of driveways with Kelleher Court - possible traffic signal?
5. Addition of pavement and roofs will substantially increase runoff post development.

How is applicant dealing with detention and storm water quality?

6. All utilities underground.
7. Can the existing stone walls be preserved?
8. Can the numerous large trees on site be saved?
9. Commission will probably request a traffic study based on volume of new homes.
10. Applicant must consider impact of blasting for site development.
11. Landscape buffer along north property line pretty meager for size of site.
12. Any open space to be preserved?
13. Provision of adequate parking off street.
14. C&D Plan called for this to be single family residential; any ramifications?

Mr. Bill Bellock, representing the applicant stepped forward and described the proposal. He said that the existing large brick building was built by church homes for retired clergymen and had essentially been a boarding house. In addition there are 6 cottages for a total of 12 duplex homes. The limitations for the large building are simple he said, given the age and the condition of the structure and that it had been vacant for 6 years. The previous applications had proposed converting it to an assisted living and even a health care facility at another time but there would be a tremendous amount of code compliance work that would need to be done. The lot is very narrow and not deep enough for individual residential unit usage. He said that there are 4 units which are currently occupied under a lease that has been existing for at least 15 years. In light of the draft regulations the Commission is considering they are proposing complete demolition of the existing structures, and the construction of duplex, triplex and four-plex units. Each would be on a single level, have 2 bedrooms, 2 baths, 1 car garages and full basements. He apologized for the condition of the A-2 survey but he said that it accurately portrayed the lot as it exists today. Mr. Bob Arsenal, engineer appeared and said that they were proposing 45 units, with dual access and he would now go through Mr. Turner's memorandum.

1. He said that a single car could park in the garage and 1 in the driveway for a total of 2. They were not proposing any street parking at this time.

Commissioner Cholewa asked where visitors, such as grandchildren and family members would park during holidays. Mr. Arsenal said that they did not feel it would be necessary in this situation but that on other sites they had created an area for holiday or special event parking. In this site there was sufficient room for additional parking if the Commission felt it necessary.

Commissioner Cholewa said it sounded like they would need it if they already owned 2 cars and there was room for only 2 cars at each unit.

Mr. Arsenal commented that this was only a preliminary hearing and they had not yet worked out the final details.

2. There was room for a garbage truck.

Commissioner Cholewa said that it appeared to him that it was rather tight. Mr. Arsenal said that they had laid out the turning radii and the plan they had before would fit just fine.

Commissioner Cholewa said that he was still referring to the parking situation. He said that the plan as it is shown has a lot in it already and there doesn't seem to be any room left for anything else like any more extra parking or open space.

Commissioner Munroe said that he didn't see anything on the plan other than the units themselves. He asked if there would be any maintenance facilities. Mr. Arsenal said that all maintenance would be contracted out, there would be no on site maintenance. The units would be individually owned and taken care of by the owners. There would be a home owners association but no office.

Commissioner Munroe asked for clarification of the age restriction. Mr. Arsenal answered that no one less than 18 years of age would be allowed to live permanently in the complex.

3. There would be sidewalks. He said that the way they had laid out the loop system they had anticipated that people would be walking and had planned for sidewalks.
4. Mr. Arsenal said that he had done a few of these types of developments already and that traffic would be 1/3 less than what you would expect from a normal subdivision. He said that traffic signals are based on volume and those sorts of things but the site lines were excellent and although they would look at it he did not think a traffic signal would be necessary.

Commissioner Munroe said that when they did present a formal application that they present some sort of traffic study by a traffic engineer. Mr. Arsenal said that normally you would expect about 10 trips a day, but in this sort of subdivision you can generally expect about 150 trips per day total. Those sorts of numbers don't normally warrant a signal but they would come in with a traffic study with the application.

Commissioner Munroe mentioned that the last application that came before them on the property had brought out some of the residents in the area who were concerned about the in and out flow of traffic, and that was something they would need to consider.

Commissioner Cholewa asked what section of the current regulations would cover a multi family condominium type use in a single family zone. Mr. Gillespie said that there was an elderly housing zone which had been applied in several locations throughout Town.

Commissioner Cholewa asked if this was a floating zone. Mr. Gillespie answered that it could be and that they would have to go through a rezoning process. This applicant had looked at both the current and the proposed regulations and it was a matter of timing as to whether or not they would need a variance.

Commissioner Cholewa asked if it were the A-1 or the elderly housing zone that they were looking at. Mr. Gillespie said that in the elderly housing there was a whole set of regulations regarding attached and detached and building on undivided lots which this site was.

Commissioner Oickle asked if there would be all the usual setbacks requirements even in an elderly housing zone. Mr. Gillespie said that it would be just like a normal building lot. The present elderly housing setbacks call for 25' front, rear and side, whereas the proposed regulations call for different setbacks. Although the side setbacks are not spelled out, he was assuming they would be the same.

Commissioner Cholewa said that this would obviously have to be defined. Mr. Gillespie agreed and mentioned a project on the Berlin Turnpike was an existing situation they could look to for a precedent. However he believed the applicant was hoping to use the new regulations requirements for this project.

Commissioner Hammer asked what the maximum unit density under the existing and proposed regulations for this zone were, and were there a maximum number of units per acre. Mr. Gillespie said that the existing regulations call for 1500 sq. ft. per unit as well as a 40% open space requirement with a minimum floor area of 400 sq. ft. per unit. He did not think there was a maximum unit number for this zone but that the minimum undivided land area per dwelling unit was 1500 sq. ft.

5. Mr. Arsenal said that they would have a full storm water and drainage plan with the formal application.
6. All utilities would be underground.
7. Mr. Arsenal said that part of the stone walls on the northern border of the site would be preserved although a center section would be disturbed during the construction process and would be relocated.
8. They planned to save as many large trees as possible because they also felt it contributed to the aesthetic values of the site.

Commissioner Oickle said that although he was in favor of saving trees he urged them not to save every tree, but to watch out for trees that were not healthy or were nearing the end of their life expectancies. Mr. Arsenal commented that the more trees they could save the less they would have to plant.

Commissioner Munroe said that when they did present their application a full landscape plan should be on it, denoting which trees would be saved and where new ones planted etc. He said that the Design Review subcommittee should be in place by then and they should be prepared to show full color renderings and the composition and samples of materials used.

Mr. Arsenal said that they would have an architect to make a full presentation.

9. They would submit a traffic study.
10. Mr. Arsenal said that they intend to do sample bores to determine exactly where the ledge is they would be in communication with the Fire Marshall when they do. In some instances they might have to go to crawl spaces instead of full basements because of the ledge but they would be sensitive to the neighbors about the blasting.

Commissioner Oickle asked if they had any plans to level the site. Mr. Arsenal said that they would blast as little as possible and would not be leveling anything they didn't need to. Overall he said they would be sensitive to the shape of the site.

11. Mr. Arsenal said that the northern border is the one that has the existing residential area and they would be concentrating their landscaping and buffering on this border. Mr. Gillespie thought it would be wise to include the footprint of those homes as well as the proximity of them to the site to give the flavor of the setback when making their presentation.
12. Mr. Arsenal said that they did not have any plans at this time to include any open space. He noted that there were easement areas and they would of course not want to plant trees over these areas but that they would be doing their best to enhance the areas with foundation plantings and landscaping.

Commissioner Oickle said that over the years the Town had increased densities from the very best homes to condominium complexes but there were large areas of wetlands and open areas because of the nature of the sight. To not provide some sort of open space would bother him although he didn't know how they could provide that with the density they were proposing in this plan. Mr. Arsenal said they would keep it in mind.

13. Mr. Arsenal said that they would take a look at locating some special event parking and make sure they have adequately addressed it.
14. Mr. Arsenal said that Mr. Gillespie was probably more qualified to answer that question but that they would be looking to come in with the new regulations for this project.

Commissioner Hammer asked what the sale price for these units would be. Mr. Bellock said that they would be somewhere in the low \$200's.

Mr. Bellock wanted to comment that one of the largest factors in common charge/ association fees was maintenance. Any recreational areas like a club house, pool or park areas would require more upkeep.

Commissioner Cholewa asked about the existing lease arrangement. Mr. Bellock said that it had been taken into account from the onset and would be taken into consideration.

Commissioner Oickle asked if these would be Town roads or association owned. He was told that they would be association roads and held to the standards of a private development.

Mr. Bellock said that like a condominium the units would be privately owned within the walls but all exterior areas were association owned.

Commissioner Oickle asked if any of the units would be subsidized. Mr. Bellock said that they had looked at the site a couple of years ago for a subsidized development but it did not work for this location.

Commissioner Oickle asked if this was similar to the development in Rocky Hill, and was told that it was.

Commissioner Oickle then mentioned that the buildings were structurally beautiful and asked if it would be possible to

save any of them. Mr. Bellock said that although the cottages are in good shape they are out dated, with very low ceilings and the large building is not up to current code.

Commissioner Oickle asked if they saw a need for some sort of a community building. Mr. Arsenal said that he had not seen one in a development this small, but 2 things that are very popular in these types of communities are internal walking areas and some place to have a community garden. He said that walking on site and an area to do some gardening are very important to most people who move into these developments.

Commissioner Murphy said that this was a positive solution for the site which had been problematic for some period of time, and that there was a need for this type of housing in Town. He thought that these types of developments can be done well if done right but that a lot of the themes that were being heard were driven by the density issue. Concerns as to the adequacy of the buffers against the neighbors, and possibly the setback from Ridge Road which he felt would create a very real issue with on-street parking. His experience with these types of developments was that it was crucial to have a certain number of community parking spaces per unit or it would create a very real problem given the narrowness of the roads and the turning radiuses. He said that he was enthusiastic about the concept but that it was greatly tempered by the problems associated with the density as proposed.

Commissioner Edwards asked if ADA compliance had been considered in the plans. Mr. Bellock said that all units were at ground level and redesigned with the correct door width etc.

Commissioner Forsdick asked if there were any other developments nearby that had the same level of density the Commissioners could go and look at. Mr. Bellock said that Dobson Hollow in Vernon was similar but not as large.

Mr. Bellock thanked the Commissioners for their time and noted that this was just a concept and an opportunity to indicate where they are going with this plan.

Chairman Munroe asked for the timeline in this proposal. Mr. Bellock said that it would depend on when the draft regulations were approved.

Commissioner Cholewa asked if this proposal would not work under the current elderly housing regulations. Mr. Bellock said that he had looked at the current regulations over a year ago and he could have answered the question better then. He added that it was not that they could not build under the existing but that the new regulations would not be as restrictive.

A brief intermission was called.

Preliminary pre-application review of plans for the total reconstruction of the Cumberland Farms facility at 1855 Berlin Turnpike.

Clerk Forsdick read a letter to Peter Gillespie from Peter Jay Alter, Attorney at Law (dated December 5, 2003 - on file) requesting a preliminary review at the earliest convenience. A memorandum to Peter Gillespie from Michael Turner was also read (dated December 15, 2003 - on file) which offered the following thoughts:

1. Variance required for canopy over front building line?
2. Variance required for building over rear building line?
3. Variance required for vacuums and air over front building line?
4. Site does not meet requirement to have no more than 25% area between street line and front building line paved. Need variance.
5. Can parking be relocated to save mature trees along southwest property line.
6. Building to have sprinkler system.
7. Consider making drive from Berlin Turnpike one way in.
8. Remove parking spaces from over front building line.
9. Consider noise impact of roof mounted HVAC units to adjacent property.
10. Canopy lighting and site lighting to be full cutoff.
11. I like the cow weathervane.

Mr. Peter Alter, attorney stepped forward and commented that it was very helpful for an applicant to get early feedback in the design process, and he appreciated this opportunity. He said that Cumberland Farms had occupied this site which was in a B-2 zone for over 20 years. The site currently has 6 gas pumps, and a 2400 sq. ft. convenience store. He added that the Commission might recall he came before them in 1995 for the reconstruction of the existing canopy and some other renovations. He said that now they were proposing a completely updated facility. There would be a 5 pump facility with a different alignment than the current configuration. The building would be shifted to the north westerly corner of the property and increased in size to about 4100 sq. ft. He said that about 9 years ago when the Berlin Turnpike was widened a portion of the property was taken along the highway. These plans are preliminary, but it is clear that they will have to go before the Zoning Board of Appeals in January for a number of issues and if they are successful then they will be returning here. One example is the requirement for 5000 sq. ft. and they will be building a 4100 sq. ft. building.

Commissioner Cholewa said he recalled that the Commission had made allowances before which did not require a variance, by combining the square footages of all structures proposed.

Mr. Gillespie said that he would research that and confer with the Zoning Officer and perhaps minimize the number of variances required.

Atty. Alter said that they were aware of the violation of the 25' yard along Arrow Road. These would be removed.

Commissioner Roberts asked if they would have enough parking spaces if those were removed. Atty. Alter said that the plan shown tonight had 25 spaces on it plus another 10 opportunities at the pumps. At the 1995 application Fred Valente determined that the requirement would be 16 based upon retail space available to the public at the ratio of 1/150 sq. ft. but that the back of the building should be calculated at 1/350 sq.ft. because it was for storage and not for public use. If the Commission were to agree with that logic then on this proposal we would require only 23 spaces. He said that Cumberland Farms feels that between 18-20 spaces are more than adequate. He said that parking requirements for gas stations are frequently difficult to reconcile, because the positions at the pump frequently are used by people also using the convenience store, so there is often a surplus of parking spaces. They feel there is adequate parking on the site if they are allowed to count the spaces at the pumps, which he pointed out are not fixed spaces or striped as parking spaces but are used as such anyway. This would allow them to landscape more as well as more opportunity to save the trees along the rear boundary area if they don't have to construct additional parking.

Commissioner Roberts suggested that the applicant might want to look at the proposed regulations which he thought would require less parking spaces for this use than the current regulations.

Atty. Alter acknowledged that landscaping is limited, but they would do all they could to add landscaping to whatever green areas that exist on the site.

Commissioner Cholewa noted that Cross Mobil Station on the Silas Deane is mostly if not all paved, but he seemed to recall them winning Beautification Awards simply by the use of planting areas that they maintain throughout the year with flowers and color.

Atty. Alter then addressed the items in Mr. Turner's memorandum.

1. He said that they would adjust the position of the front canopy to comply with the front building line of 25'
2. They would slide the building forward, but in his judgment he would rather they seek a variance for that, because he said that it was important to maintain the width of the travel lanes for safety.
3. He said that they would adjust the location of the vacuums.
4. Atty. Alter said that they could not under any circumstances meet the 25% maximum requirement and would need a variance.
5. They think they can and will make every effort to relocate some parking to save mature trees.
6. The building would certainly have a sprinkler system.
7. They would resist making the access drive a right in only. They are not aware of any problem with traffic exiting and going southbound onto the Berlin Turnpike, and at least on a preliminary basis they think it better to divide

- the traffic than force traffic to cross the traffic on Arrow Road in order to get back to the Berlin Turnpike.
8. They are aware of the front parking spaces infringing on the front building line.
 9. He said that they would look into reducing any impact with noise associated with the HVAC rooftop units.
 10. All site lighting would be cutoff lighting.
 11. He said that they obviously like the cow weathervane.

Mr. Jim Giarusso, engineer stepped forward and said that the building would be completely rebuilt and described the architectural elements, the shingled roof, and clapboard gable portico over the front entrance of the building, a lot of glass in the front, real brick finishes on all 4 sides, with high windows along the side wall. There are architectural detail light fixtures on the sides of the building and soffit lighting that would indirectly wash down the front of the building and a cupola with a weathervane. A rear roof deck cut out off the back of the building like a shed dormer would contain all the HVAC units and be invisible from the street and not very visible from the rear view due to the fence. The units would be accessed from inside and not the outside. The trim work is all white. The canopy has a flat deck with white fascia panels that look like dentil moldings with molded cornices. It's made from a pre-stamped metal which from the ground looks like wood. There would be a blue and orange band with the Gulf logo, not illuminated, but very low key. They would replace the current ID sign with a free standing sign with total signage of less than 50 sq. ft. about 20' high located at the northerly end of the site by the canopy side. The underground storage tanks would be replaced with all new pipes. He said that environmentally it would be a substantial upgrade from the existing with all new dispensing pumps. The 3 existing tanks have a total of 24,000 gallon storage capacity. There would be 2 new 1200 gallon tanks and one 8,000 gallon tank. This will reduce the number of deliveries to the site. There will be a fully enclosed trash area. All the areas available to them for landscaping will be landscaped, but he wanted the Commissioners to keep in mind that there was a substantial grade difference at the rear of the site of about 7-8', and although they will do their best to preserve trees, they might decide that they can't be saved once they get into the engineering part of the site. He said that parking would be primarily around the front of the building which would provide the best access for customers coming in and out of the building, without blocking traffic aisles or fueling positions. He pointed out that there were 10 fueling positions which would be used as parking spaces by people at the pumps and also while they picked up a gallon of milk or whatever in the store.

Commissioner Oickle asked what the percentage of buyers parking at the pumps was. Mr. Giarusso said that although he wasn't sure, it might be 1/2 but certainly a substantial number.

Mr. Giarusso continued and said that the whole facility would be completely ADA compliant.

He said that they proposed to use the driveways as they currently exist which worked quite well. With the new perpendicular fuel islands, depending which side the gas fill is located a vehicle would not have to circle around other vehicles. He said that they had not investigated the engineering details of the plan yet and this was the preliminary proposal.

Commissioner Hammer asked if they were anticipating doing any type of environmental cleanup as part of this project. Mr. Giarusso answered that there is always a possibility but that anything that is required will be done. He didn't know how old the tanks were but he believed they were fiberglass which would lead him to believe they were installed some time in the 1980's. He would have all that information before they submit their final application.

Commissioner Oickle said that he would urge them to provide buffering along the back bank particularly if they have to remove some of those trees. He asked if they would be going to the State Traffic Commission for review. He said that he was concerned with the driveway onto Arrow Road and he pointed out that there is no queueing ability. He would have hoped that they could move the driveway further to the west although he could see why they wouldn't, with the steep bank and the parking there. Mr. Giarusso said that they would certainly look into it.

Commissioner Oickle asked about the timeline and how long the pumps would be off line. Mr. Giarusso said that they were planning on 90 days to as much as 4 months. They would break ground as quick as they could get the permits, perhaps in April.

Commissioner Oickle asked why the area in front of the trash area would be striped. Mr. Giarusso said that it would be for employees who could quickly move their vehicles if needed.

Commissioner Oickle thought that the north lane entrance looked narrow. Mr. Giarusso said that the existing lane meets State requirements; he commented that it was not huge but was 37'. Tankers would be able to negotiate the driveway without having to back up.

Commissioner Cholewa thought that the side wall even though it faced a motel could possibly be broken up with a window. Mr. Giarusso said that he would provide a picture of one that had been built already as an example of how the architectural details look.

Commissioner Cholewa thought that if they were removing the parking along Arrow Road then perhaps they might have room to move the driveway.

Atty. Alter asked if the Commission could revisit the parking space plan. He said that it would be his intent to seek relief from ZBA, and vote to comply with the new regulations.

Commissioner Cholewa asked if they complied by the Fred Valente calculations. Atty. Alter answered that they did.

Commissioner Cholewa said it certainly seemed to make sense that some people are parking at the pumps. He said that he couldn't imagine all the spaces being filled but thought that if a vehicle were to see that all 20 spaces were taken up at Cumberland Farms they would just keep going.

Commissioner Roberts thought that if they were granted a variance then that would be great, but he would be delighted if they could comply with the proposed regulations. He would be much more comfortable with that than any other convoluted calculations.

Commissioner Oickle noted that the proposed improvements to the site were substantial and that really pleased him. He thought that there were more parking spaces proposed than are there now and that it looked sensible to him.

Mr. Gillespie said that they had not really sat down and worked it out yet, but maybe they would be able to come up with a number that would please everyone.

Commissioner Murphy said that the new regulations contemplate some tradeoffs like additional landscaping areas or moving the driveway and achieving some benefits in return for the loss of parking spaces. He said that he was supportive of the proposal.

Commissioner Cholewa said that while Planning and Zoning Commissioners were not supposed to appear at ZBA meetings or take positions on hearings, the Town Planner has made recommendations in the past.

Atty. Alter said that he would like to take up the suggestion of having a meeting with the Town Planner to discuss his opinions about the new regulations in regard to their proposal.

Mr. Gillespie said that he wanted to mention that although supplying a traffic study had not been mentioned, he wanted to bring it up so that the applicant could plan accordingly.

Commissioner Munroe thought that if they were using the existing driveways and not going over the parameters of 400 spaces or 100,000 sq.ft. of living space or asking for a traffic signal, they might be able just to confirm it with the DOT agent up in District 1. He also thought that it would be handy to have color renderings along with samples of the material that is going into the construction. Mr. Alter said that they could bring in some sample colors as well.

Mr. Gillespie asked if there was a local store that had been redone in the updated style they were proposing. Mr. Giarusso said that there was one in Fairfield and he could submit photographs of it at the application.

Mr. Gillespie noted that for the record Wethersfield was now up to the same level as Fairfield.

Upon motion by Commissioner Roberts, seconded by Commissioner Oickle and a poll of the Commission it was

unanimously voted to Add Application No. 1416-03-Z to the Agenda.

APPLICATION NO. 1416-03-Z. Jamie Angeloni seeking approval to establish a retail business from a roadside stand/vehicle at 1881 Berlin Turnpike.

Ms. Jamie Angeloni, 403 Main Street, appeared before the Commission proposing to establish a floral stand where she would sell roses and fresh and silk floral arrangements on the corner of Arrow Road and the Berlin Turnpike. She had already gotten permission from the owner. She proposed to set up for business a couple of weeks before Valentine's Day. Hours of operation Monday thru Friday 10 - 7pm Saturday & Sunday and major holidays 8-4 pm. There would be 2, 12" X 18" signs with 3" letters on both entrances. Enter Only signs at the entrances, with an Exit Only sign on the exit onto the Berlin Turnpike. She said that there was comfortable parking for 7 vehicles along the Berlin Turnpike and that there had been concerns about traffic flow and she was thinking about putting up a pennant flag tied from the Enter Only sign right to the flower stand itself to discourage traffic. Price lists would be posted daily to the outside of the 10' X 8' X 8" vinyl sided building she would use as the floral stand. She noted that the State Police had not reported any accidents at this corner.

Commissioner Forsdick asked if she was affiliated at all with the stand that used to be there. Ms. Angeloni said that she was not in any way connected with the fruit stand that was once there. But she was looking for the opportunity to pursue her passion for flowers, and would accept a year to year approval. She understood that another flower business had operated there but there had been problems with cleanup. She considered it very unprofessional to have a dirty site and said that would not be a problem with her.

Commissioner Murphy asked if the area she was using was part of a larger parcel or a separate area. Ms. Angeloni said that it was part of a larger parcel that had been for sale for some time. She understood that if it were sold she would have to get permission from the new owner or leave.

Commissioner Murphy asked if there was any pavement there. Ms. Angeloni said that it was not paved, but was gravel.

Commissioner Forsdick asked if it was necessary to have her come here when there had been a similar business before. Mr. Gillespie answered that his initial response was to say no, but apparently the previous applicant had been granted a permit on a time frame which after some time had not been renewed and so it had been determined that Ms. Angeloni would need to come before the Commission.

Commissioner Knecht asked if she was planning to lease the property. Ms. Angeloni answered that it would be a month to month situation.

Commissioner Oickle asked if there was any possibility of paving the area. Ms. Angeloni said that it was a combination of gravel and pavement but she would not be able to pave it.

Commissioner Oickle asked if she had any photographs of the building other than the sketch. Ms. Angeloni answered that it was not built yet and would not be until she was given approval. Although she hoped to be there for a couple of years she assumed that the property would be sold before then and she added that it was largely seasonal. She would not have any refrigeration or heat, so she would not be there much after Mother's Day, or much before Valentine's Day.

Commissioner Roberts asked what ZBA had granted her a variance for exactly. The letter from ZBA was not in the file but Mr. Gillespie retrieved the letter from upstairs and read that the variance was granted for conducting a retail business from a vehicle/roadside stand without a principal building, and subject to Planning and Zoning Commission approval.

Commissioner Cholewa asked if there was any possibility of getting a scale drawing of the property showing where the stand would be located in respect to the rest of the lot.

Commissioner Hammer asked if someone selling flowers out of the back of a pick up truck would need to come before the Commission and was told that they would not. He felt that putting the applicant through any further expense or

detail didn't seem necessary to him.

Commissioner Forsdick said that while she was there today looking at Cumberland Farms she noted the corner location and wondered why there was no business there because she thought it was a great location, and then she came in tonight and saw this application added onto the agenda. She felt that the applicant was willing to put the building up and make it look nice and that it would certainly look better than it does now.

Ms. Angeloni said that she could certainly do a good business out of buckets and her car but she wanted to take it a step further and make it that much nicer.

Upon motion by Commissioner Hammer, seconded by Commissioner Forsdick and a poll of the Commission it was voted to APPROVE Application No. 1416-03-Z. Jamie Angeloni seeking approval to establish a retail business from a roadside stand/vehicle at 1881 Berlin Turnpike with the following condition:

1. The applicant must return in 12 months time for Commission review of the business.

Aye: Forsdick, Hammer, Munroe, Murphy, Hallisey, Roberts, Edwards Nay: Cholewa

Abst: Knecht

APPROVAL OF [MINUTES OF: December 2, 2003](#)

Upon motion by Commissioner Oickle, seconded by Commissioner Forsdick and a poll of the Commission it was voted to approve the minutes as submitted.

Aye: Munroe, Oickle, Forsdick, Knecht, Murphy, Hallisey, Roberts, Edwards

Abst: Cholewa, Hammer

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Gillespie suggested that the Commission meet in Mid January in order to discuss the changes that are proposed to the new regulations, based upon comments. He mentioned that he was still planning to have a meeting with Old Wethersfield residents to finalize their comments the first week of January.

Commissioner Hammer suggested that if the agenda for the second meeting in January was light enough, to have this meeting supercede the regular meeting. Mr. Gillespie said that although he was planning to have the meeting with the Old Wethersfield shopkeepers the night before the first P& Z meeting, they might be able to hold their discussion meeting for the second scheduled meeting.

Mr. Gillespie said that he wasn't sure what rule the Council has in the adoption of the regulations, unless there is something in the charter.

The Commissioners discussed whether or not the adoption of new regulations was part of a charter item.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 p.m.

Theresa Forsdick, Clerk