

MINUTES OF THE CHESHIRE PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION PUBLIC HEARING SPECIAL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, JUNE 10, 2019, AT 7:30 P.M. IN COUNCIL CHAMBERS, TOWN HALL, 84 SOUTH MAIN STREET, CHESHIRE CT 06410

Present

Earl J. Kurtz Jr., Chairman; Sean Strollo, Vice Chairman; Jeff Natale, Secretary;
Members: Robert Brucato, S. Woody Dawson, John Kardaras, Louis Todisco.
Alternates: Robert Anderson, Tom Selmont, Donald Walsh
Absent: Matthew Bowman and Gil Linder.
Staff: William Voelker, Town Planner

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Kurtz called the public hearing to order at 7:31 p.m.

Chairman Kurtz read the emergency public service notice.

II. ROLL CALL

The Clerk called the roll.

III. DETERMINATION OF QUORUM

Following roll call a quorum was determined to be present.

IV. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The group Pledged Allegiance to the Flag.

Secretary Natale read the call of public hearing for the applications.

1. **Waiver Request of Section 25.3.2** P.H. 5/29/19
Subsection 9 – for earth removal, filling P.H. 6/10/19
Or regrading within 50 feet of the street MAD 8/11/19
line
Robert Donnelly
400 East Johnson Avenue
PUBLIC HEARNG CONTINUED TO 6/24/19

2. **Earth Removal, Filling or Regrading** P.H. 5/29/19
Permit P.H. 6/10/19
Robert Donnelly MAD 8/11/19
400 East Johnson Avenue
To regrade
PUBLIC HEARNG CONTINUED TO 6/24/19

3. **Zone Text Change Petition** P.H. 6/10/19
Planning and Zoning Commission
To amend and add new Section 36,

**Highland Avenue Design District
Regulation and Amend Section 23
Definitions-Context Sensitive Design
And Design Narrative**

Town Planner Voelker stated this application would be left open pending receipt of comments from regional planning agencies.

Mr. Voelker read comments from SCRCOG dated 6/26/19, and a letter from David Pelletier, Chairman, EDC, dated 6/5/19 into the record.

Town Planner Voelker reviewed the draft amendment for new Section 36 with the Commissioners. He said the amendments to the POCD are for the overlay district, on both sides of Highland Avenue, which will not displace any of the uses already allowed in the I-1 and I-2 zones. Any proceedings within the Highland Avenue Design District are discretionary by the Commission. The process crafted in the amendment will require the developer to submit a master plan.

Mr. Voelker read Section 36.1 "Statement of Intent" into the record.

The Commission has modeled the proceedings the same as those for the Special Design District (S.D.D.). It enables an applicant to bring in a separate set of regulations to be used for each project. There would be comparison between the existing regulations and whatever is proposed. Each project would have separate regulations; it would be governed as a zone change; there would be public hearings; and use of the informal review process.

There are two (new) proposed amendments to the regulations. One is Context Sensitive Design and the other is Design Narrative. Mr. Voelker read both amendments into the record of the meeting.

If someone proposes a development under the regulations they must state the context and why certain design choices were made.

Mr. Voelker talked about the two sides of the street (Highland Avenue).

Westerly side – occupied by older structures; the three (3) acre minimum size is out; maximum lot size shall be 120, 000 square feet; this will require consolidation of smaller parcels on the westerly side; with redevelopment there could be some demolition.

Easterly side – there is more area; there is limit for projects to scale; topography includes wetlands.

Mr. Voelker explained the regulation is crafted to allow for maximum flexibility, allowing for “design as you go” process based on the individual parcels. Mr. Voelker stated his recommendation to keep the public hearing open pending regional agency comments.

Under Section 36.2, Mr. Natale noted under the master plan a public hearing is required.

In reply, Mr. Voelker said the process cannot be done without a zone change approval which requires a public hearing. For the preliminary review there is no public hearing. The Commission listens to what is being proposed and presents any concerns or questions about the proposed project.

Mr. Todisco asked about a public hearing for the site plan, after zone change is approved, and noted it is a one-step process.

A project example was cited by Mr. Voelker. A 15 acre site is put together; this is the S.D.D. site; there could be phases to that; the tenant may promise something which can't be done; if another tenant comes in, does not fit into the master plan, the applicant must return and amend the plan. This is how the S.D.D. functions now (town center). The Planning Department and Commission are trying to make the process user friendly.

For a 15 acre site there could be 100,000 total S.F.; there would be an anchor tenant; the Commission will be shown what the project will look like, how it will function, and this is the Context Sensitive Design feature.

Mr. Walsh mentioned the westerly side, combining of lots, and questioned this being a real estate transaction as the first thing happening...or does the applicant come to PZC with the site plan.

Mr. Voelker said someone could option to combine three (3) parcels, but will not purchase the parcels until there is approval.

According to Mr. Stollo, other areas have land/lease options , and asked if this could be done in the Highland Design District...i.e. properties together, sharing parking lot, etc.

Mr. Voelker said the issue is not the property lines, but how the site functions...proper circulation around the building, property access management onto the street. There could be language crafted to use a unified design.

The issue of joining bigger properties was raised by Mr. Stollo, off Route 10, and accessing them from back properties.

The Commission was told by Mr. Voelker that the parcels must show the access management plan. The town wants to minimize curb cuts, and access management is to reduce the number of conflicts onto the street. He does not expect the Planning Department will receive overwhelming proposals.

Chairman Kurtz mentioned someone owning property on Route 10 which could qualify for the process, but the person behind this property could not join in, unless the property is purchased from the front property owner.

It was noted by Mr. Voelker that the further back a property is on Route 10 there is less chance of going through the subject process.

Chairman Kurtz continued the public hearing to June 24, 2019.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Mr. Kardaras; seconded by Mr. Dawson.

MOVED to adjourn the public hearing at 7:52 p.m.

VOTE The motion passed unanimously by those present.

Attest:

Marilyn W. Milton, Clerk