

**CHESHIRE TOWN BEAUTIFICATION COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING HELD ON
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2012 AT 7:30 A.M.
CHESHIRE TOWN HALL – 84 SOUTH MAIN STREET
ROOM 207 / 209**

Committee Members Present:

Chairman William Bonaminio, Jeremy Linder, William Meyerjack, Sylvia Nichols - Town Council Representative, Jane Presnick-Lyon, Lynn Voelker, S. Woody Dawson - Planning Zoning Commission Representative and Mike O'Donnell - Park & Recreation Commission Representative

Committee Members Absent:

Pat Archibald, Pauline Cacace, Carol Truluck and David Pelletier - Economic Development Commission Representative

Staff Present:

Jerry Sitko, Economic Development Coordinator

Others Present:

Mike Doherty of Milone and MacBroom, representing JAD Partners, LLC (departed at 8:30 a.m.)

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Bonaminio called the meeting to order at 7:31 a.m.

II. ROLL CALL

The roll was called.

III. DETERMINATION OF QUORUM

A quorum was present for this meeting.

IV. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

All present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – January 4, 2012 Regular Meeting
January 18, 2012 Sign Subcommittee Meeting

MOTION by William Meyerjack that the Town Beautification Committee approve the minutes of the January 4, 2012 regular meeting as submitted. **SECONDED** by Jeremy Linder.

VOTE: In Favor – Bonaminio, Linder, Meyerjack, Nichols, O'Donnell, Presnick-Lyon and
Voelker
Opposed – None

The motion passed 7 – 0.

MOTION by Lynn Voelker that the Town Beautification Committee approve the minutes of the January 18, 2012 Sign Subcommittee meeting as submitted. **SECONDED** by Michael O'Donnell.

VOTE: In Favor – Bonaminio, Linder, Meyerjack, Nichols, O'Donnell, Presnick-Lyon and
Voelker
Opposed – None

The motion passed 7 – 0.

VI. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Mr. Sitko stated that Ms. Cacace has said that she would like to continue as the Vice Chairman of the Town Beautification Committee, if the members agreed. Chairman Bonaminio stated that he would be willing to serve as Chairman again for the Committee, too.

MOTION by Bill Meyerjack to elect the officers of the Town Beautification Committee as presented with William Bonaminio as Chairman and Pauline Cacace as the Vice Chairman. **SECONDED** by Jane Presnick-Lyon.

VOTE: In Favor – Bonaminio, Linder, Meyerjack, Nichols, O'Donnell, Presnick-Lyon and
Voelker
Opposed – None

The motion passed 7 – 0.

VII. COMMUNICATIONS

1. Request of January 19, 2012 from Ann Stein re: Adopt a Spot Program

Members reviewed Ms. Stein's letter regarding the Adopt a Spot program and talked about the possible addition of a Spot at the Public Works garage on Waterbury Road. It was agreed that any new or existing Adopt a Spot locations should be offered to

Cheshire businesses / organizations, first. Mr. Sitko noted that Ms. Stein's business is located in Prospect and is a member of the Cheshire Chamber of Commerce. Members agreed that the Public Works garage would be a nice addition to the Adopt a Spot program and referred the decision to the Subcommittee.

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

1. Barrels

Chairman Bonaminio informed the Committee that Ms. Cacace will not be continuing as the coordinator for the barrels with the Boy Scouts. If no one from the Committee is available to fill this position, Mr. Sitko has said that he will.

2. West Main Street Commercial Streetscape Project

Mr. Sitko stated that the ornamental streetlights have been installed in the Phase 2 section of this project but they have not yet been activated. There is still some work to be done on the culvert but hopefully by late Spring or early Summer the utilities will be able to be brought up past the culvert on West Main Street.

3. TBC Awards

If anyone has nominations for the Town Beautification Committee Awards, please notify Mr. Sitko. Residential neighborhoods and commercial property can be nominated for an award. The next round of Town Beautification Committee awards will be given out next year.

4. Street Trees

Chairman Bonaminio is hopeful that there will be funds available in next year's Operating Budget to do some more tree plantings in the Fall.

5. Ordinance

Ms. Nichols reported that there was an Ordinance Committee meeting last night where the Town Beautification Committee's request regarding its membership size was reviewed. The request was well received by the Committee but will need to have the Town Attorney review the proposal. Once it has legal approval and the Ordinance can be re-written, the Town Council will have a Public Hearing on the Committee size adjustment and then the Town Council can vote on the proposed Ordinance change. Ms. Nichols noted that many Boards / Commissions are having similar issues as the Town Beautification Committee with regards to filling vacant seats and regular meeting attendance of its members.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

1. Plan Reviews

Mr. Dawson mentioned the landscape plan for the proposed Stop & Shop gasoline station on West Main Street and said that he feels this Committee should have asked for more of a berm with plantings as a buffer to the where the Linear Trail will be extended, along the property line, when they reviewed those plans. Chairman Bonaminio replied that it would be a good recommendation. He added that the plans presented to the Town Beautification Committee had good plantings in the front and back of the property.

Chairman Bonaminio expressed his frustration with not being able to hold property owners to replacing and/or maintaining their plantings as part of their business permit. Members agreed it would be nice if all property owners thought of the beauty and importance of nicely landscaped property but also agreed that they don't want to police people once they own a property.

A. JAD Partners, LLC – 435 Highland Avenue Two New Buildings for Medical / Professional Office use

Mr. Sitko explained that this plan review is for the property where Stoneworks was located, across from the Police Department. Doctors Feldman and Dasai are looking to put up (2) 14,000 square foot medical / professional office buildings. The proposed building to the north will be constructed first and the second one will be constructed once tenants are secured for it.

Mr. Doherty of Milone and MacBroom was present on behalf of the applicants to review the plans for this project. He reviewed the aerial view of the property to give the Committee a perspective as to where the property is and the layout of the proposed project. There is heavy tree growth to the back side of the property; access to the property will be where it is now, directly across from the Highland School driveway, at the traffic light. There are 150 parking spots proposed for the project.

Mr. Doherty reviewed the proposed landscape plans for the project. The landscaping along Route 10 will be a combination of shade trees and sugar maples. There will be Stewartia between the two buildings along with snow belles and River Birch. There will be shrubs and perennials such as azaleas, Boxwoods, hydrangeas, junipers and spirea around the buildings. Arborvitae and mixed larger evergreen trees will be on each side of the North and South retaining walls in the Northwest corner and along the back of the property. There will also be Blue Spruce trees in the back to help block the headlights from the residential area behind the property.

With regards to the architectural of the buildings, there will be varied roof lines on the 2 story buildings. From the back, only 1 story will be visible but from the front you will

be able to see 2 stories. There is not a proposed sign shown and there is no design for one yet, but there will be one on the property.

Ms. Nichols asked about the location of the front plantings along Route 10 and their proximity to the power lines. Mr. Doherty replied that the power lines are on the other side of the sidewalk along Route 10 and will not be a problem.

Mr. Meyerjack asked if there was ledge on the property and Mr. Doherty replied that he was not sure and he didn't think that they had done test pits yet on the property. Mr. Meyerjack asked if foliage will grow in ledge? Mr. Doherty replied that if there is ledge on the property it shouldn't be a problem for the landscaping because new top soil will be brought in to get to the planned finished grades of the property.

Ms. Lyons expressed her concern with the high pedestrian traffic in the area of the property and the potential combination with elderly drivers. She suggested an area of refuge be created to the north of the entrance for walkers / pedestrians, while waiting to cross the intersection; maybe a bench area with gravel attractively incorporated into the design as a "good neighbor". Mr. Doherty noted that part of the project will be to make improvements to the crosswalk ramp and there will be a stop sign on the property before vehicles reach the traffic light to leave the property.

Mr. Linder asked if the landscaping will be done in phases, like the buildings? Mr. Doherty replied yes, except for the trees along the front of the property, along Route 10, will be planted as part of the first phase.

Members of the Town Beautification Committee agreed that the proposed landscaping plan is acceptable. There was some discussion about having a second review of the project, once it is underway, to get a better understanding. Mr. Doherty stated that when Milone and MacBroom is retained for an entire project, they do make adjustments as a project goes along, when they are needed. Mr. O'Donnell commented that the Committee should focus on the frontage plans because he didn't feel the Committee could force a property owner to stick to the landscape plans, after a project is completed. There was some discussion on when a landscape plan would best be reviewed during the process of a project.

MOTION by Jeremy Linder that the Town Beautification Committee has reviewed the plans presented on behalf of JAD Partners, LLC for 435 Highland Avenue for two new building for medical / professional office use and find them to be acceptable as presented to the Committee with the following stipulations: The applicant should use the types of plants specified or close to them, while landscaping this property; the Town Beautification Committee suggestions the creation of a possible waiting space for the crosswalk and that the plantings added the property do not effect the power lines; if there are any major changes to the landscape plans, the applicant will come back to discuss them with the Town Beautification Committee. **SECONDED** by Jane Presnick-Lyon.

VOTE: In Favor – Bonaminio, Dawson, Linder, Meyerjack, Nichols, O'Donnell, Presnick-Lyon and Voelker

Opposed – None

The motion passed 8 – 0.

2. Expo – April 14, 2012

Chairman Bonaminio stated that he attended the first meeting regarding the Spring Expo several weeks ago. The Chamber of Commerce has scheduled the event for April 14th and expects Teresa LaBarbra from WTNH to attend. Chairman Bonaminio suggested that the Committee raffle off a cactus at the Expo. Some other things to consider for the event would be something with an Herb Garden, playing a picture disc of local tree pictures and having a planting station for kids. Ms. Nichols stated that she could get a bunch of discs that the Committee could show. Mr. O'Donnell suggested that the Expo would be a good time to give out tree information due to the number of trees that came down during the Noreaster and October snow storm. Ms. Nichols suggested making a "trees of Cheshire" posterboard with a sheet to fill in with guesses for the tree locations.

3. Projects for 2012

Mr. Sitko suggested to the Town Beautification Committee that the trees to be appreciated program and tree plantings at the schools were projects for the Committee to work on this year.

4. Committee Reports

There were no Committee reports given at this meeting.

5. Liaison Reports

Mr. O'Donnell from the Parks & Recreation Commission reported that the Community Pool will hopefully be open next Monday. He will check with the Park & Recreation Commission regarding the parklet lights, on the corner of Cook Hill Road.

Ms. Nichols from the Town Council said they will be working on the Town's Operating Budget over the next couple of months.

Mr. Dawson from the Planning & Zoning Commission reported that they are started to see things pick up with more applications coming before them. He also talked about the Stop & Shop gasoline proposal for West Main Street.

Mr. Sitko reported that he contacted the property owners of the former Sunoco station at the corner of Route 10 and Higgins Road, who has said they will be cleaning up the lot. He also mentioned the Palm Reader sign on Route 10 that never came before the Sign

Committee and is a change of use for the property so the Planning Officer is working to recitify the situation.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Lynn Voelker to adjourned the February 1st meeting of the Town Beautification Committee at 8:55 a.m.; **SECONDED** by Mike O'Donnell.

VOTE: In Favor – Bonaminio, Dawson, Linder, Meyerjack, Nichols, O'Donnell, Presnick-Lyon
and Voelker
Opposed – None

The motion passed 8 – 0.

Respectfully submitted:

Tracey M. Kozlowski
Substitute Recording Secretary