

**WETHERSFIELD PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
PUBLIC HEARING AND MEETING
February 20, 2007**

The Wethersfield Planning and Zoning Commission held a public hearing and meeting on Tuesday, February 20, 2007 at 7:00 p.m. in the Wethersfield Police Department Meeting Room, 250 Silas Deane Highway, Wethersfield, Connecticut

CALL TO ORDER

Commissioner Knecht called the meeting to order at 7:10pm

ROLL CALL & SEATING OF ALTERNATES

Denise Bradley called roll as follows:

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

Also present:

Denise Bradley, Assistant Planner

Commissioner Knecht stated that since there were 5 full members not in attendance at the time of roll call he requested the services of alternate members Mr. George Oickle and Mr. Anthony Homicki to serve as full members.

2. OLD BUSINESS

2.1 Discussion of Sign Regulations

- Advertising Signs on Athletic Fields
- Wall Sign Area

- Flashing Signs
- Special Events

Ms. Kathy Bagley, Wethersfield Parks and Recreation Director, was in attendance to discuss the advertising signs on the Little League fields. Ms. Bagley referred to a memo dated 2-12-07 from Peter Gillespie that stated the information that he gathered in regards to sign regulations in other towns. Ms. Bagley noted that 23 communities were surveyed and the majority of towns do allow the signs. Ms. Bagley stated that she has been working with Peter Gillespie and they have developed some proposed language for the Commission's consideration.

Ms. Bagley showed the Commission an example of what the advertising signs would look like. Her example was a bit smaller in size than the actual signs would be. Ms. Bagley stated that the signs would be weatherproof and would have grommets to attach them to the fences securely. Commissioner Knecht asked Ms. Bagley if the signs would represent businesses outside the town of Wethersfield. Ms. Bagley stated that the businesses most likely will be from Wethersfield and that there may be some businesses from the Berlin Turnpike in Newington that may advertise as well. It is more of a sponsorship for Little League.

Commissioner Oickle stated that the staff did an excellent job researching. Commissioner Oickle asked why 35% coverage rather than 25% or 40%. Ms. Bagley stated that they went to the Mill Woods Little League field and measured fencing of the field and the outfield fencing. The total measured to about 31% and they rounded it to 35%. Commissioner Knecht asked if it was more convenient to have the signs up all year round. Ms. Bagley stated that they didn't feel it was necessary to keep the signs up all year.

Ms. Bagley stated that the way the proposed regulation is written is that the signs could be placed on any recreational field that fenced. Recreational facilities with fencing and anything on school property could be considered if the Commission accepts the regulation the way it is, but they would have to go to the Board of Education for the Commission to do anything to their fields. The reason to use the language of recreational facility, is that no one can put up a sign in any park without going to the Parks and Recreation Department first.

Commissioner Petrelli asked if the signs would be applicable to the High School. Ms. Bagley stated that the signs are only for outdoors. Commissioner Homicki stated that he was under the impression that the signs were limited to certain fields. Ms. Bagley noted that he was correct. The request is only coming from Little League and when they developed the regulations they tried to be a little broader in scope to look at it in general.

Denise Bradley stated that she is looking for guidance from the Commission if staff should go forward with preparing a zoning text amendment.

Commissioner Homicki asked why the signs were 4x8 and not 3x6. Ms. Bagley stated that the 4x8 is a standard size. Commissioner Knecht asked if the fees from the signs would go toward the support of the maintenance. Ms. Bagley stated that he was correct.

Commissioner Munroe asked if there was any reference to any experience with vandalism when they were interviewing the other towns. He also asked how the signs would be attached to the fences. Ms. Bagley stated that during the interviews no town brought up vandalism of the signs as an issue. Commissioner Munroe asked if the signs were vandalized would the association replace the sign. Ms. Bagley stated that they would replace the sign in commitment to the sponsor. Commissioner Munroe asked if they town would have to replace the signs and Ms. Bagley stated that the money would come out of the maintenance fund.

Ms. Bagley noted that the signs would be attached by the grommets and coated wire or by screw and bolt. Commissioner Munroe asked if there was any potential for a child getting injured from the signs. Ms. Bagley stated No; they would make sure that all of that would be covered since they have certain standards for attaching things to fences. Commissioner Homicki stated that it would be a good idea to have the backing of the signs be a muted color. Ms. Bagley stated that they could certainly look into that.

Commissioner Roberts stated that there was a leap from no more than 3 months a year on 3 specific fields, to no more

than 8 months on any town facility. He also stated that he was not comfortable doing this without more language. Commissioner Roberts also stated that he was not sure that the signs are worth all of the time and effort. He felt that they need to reassure themselves and organizations that there is more money to be made on the signs than what the Commission was provided has indicated. Ms. Bagley stated that they still developing language that the Commission may or may not consider.

Commissioner George Oickle made a motion to take public comment out of order from #7 on the agenda to after 2.1 on the agenda.

Commissioner Richard Roberts seconded the motion

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

Aye: Knecht, Roberts, Munroe, Petrelli, Oickle, Homicki

Nay: None.

Abst: None.

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON GENERAL MATTERS OF PLANNING AND ZONING.

Commissioner Knecht stated that there is no public hearing and that whatever the public is saying is to give reference on matters.

Peter Gardow, 60 Griswold Road was in attendance to discuss the sign issues. Mr. Gardow is a member of the Mill Woods Park master committee. He understands that the sports leagues are looking for ways to make revenue for fields and organizations, however he feels the proposals in Section 11 are open ended. Mr. Gardow has a fence dividing his property. He also feels that 8-12 months is excessive.

Mr. Gardow does not have a problem with the advertising on the lower field because there are no neighborhood "sight lines." Mr. Gardow quoted Commissions plan on Conservation Development on page 1, Vision statement strategic plan of 1995. Mr. Gardow feels that it is important to think aesthetics in neighborhoods. Commissioner Oickle asked if Mr. Gardow was against the regulation overall or if he wants more effective means of controlling viewing from private property.

Commissioner Knecht asked if Mr. Gardow objects to the philosophy of putting the signs up. Mr. Gardow stated that he does not object to the putting up of the signs, he is concerned with the aesthetics. Mr. Gardow supports the regulation with a thought process, not a "one size fits all."

Dick Lasher, 100 Griswold Road was in attendance to voice his opinion on the signs. Mr. Lasher has lived on Griswold Road for 54 years and is the Honorary Mayor of Griswoldville. Mr. Lasher's land abuts to Mill Woods. Mr. Lasher stated that Griswoldville is AA zone and does not allow commercial signs. Mr. Lasher stated that he is against the signs.

Rick Troutman, 70 Griswold Road stated that he is the closest property to the Little League field. The edge of Mr. Troutman's property to the right field fence is approximately 110 feet. Mr. Troutman is strongly opposed to putting commercial signs at Mill Woods. He would like the Commission to reconsider not allowing the signs. Commissioner Homicki asked if Mr. Troutman objected to select fields. Mr. Troutman stated that he would not object if the signs were out of sight of all residences.

Larry Daskel, 24 Griswold Road, stated that he does not want advertising anywhere. Mr. Daskel feels that there are many other uses for the parks rather than making more and more sports complexes. Mr. Daskel noted that he was concerned with who will clean the graffiti if the problem arises. Commissioner Petrelli asked how to regulate which signs will be permitted for advertising. Commissioner Petrelli suggested that the Commission get together to make a determination as to which signs if any should be put up.

Craig McGovern, 311 Nott Street, Wethersfield Little League, stated that the Wethersfield Little League was looking for some guidance from the Commission as to what they could do as far as the advertising. Mr. McGovern stated that if the Wethersfield Little League did not think that they could make money through the advertising they would not have approached the Commission with the proposal.

Mr. McGovern stated that the Little League is made up of volunteers and they are trying to keep fees at a reasonable price for the families in town. He also noted that the fields are in need of work; therefore they were looking for avenues to get income for the fields to get fixed up. Mr. McGovern stated that the Little League has very strict guidelines as to what can be associated with the Little League, i.e.; liquor stores, bars, etc. Mr. McGovern stated that the Little League is not looking to put signs on the whole fence, only the outfield fence. He also stated that they do not want the signs to be an eye sore.

Commissioner Knecht stated that the Commission will take all of the comments that were said this evening and take them into consideration before a decision is made. Commissioner Roberts feels that the Commission was presented with something much broader at this meeting as opposed to what was presented last meeting.

Commissioner Richard Roberts made a motion to move out of order and move directly to New Business.

Commissioner George Oickle seconded the motion

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

Aye: Knecht, Roberts, Munroe, Petrelli, Oickle, Homicki

Nay: None.

Abst: None.

2.2 Discussion of Rules and Procedures

3. NEW BUSINESS

3.1 REFERRAL FROM THE ZONING ENFORCEMENT OFFICER to allow an accessory apartment in accordance with Section 3.5.3. of the Wethersfield Zoning Regulations at 237 Wolcott Hill Road.

John Harvey, representing Tom and Michelle Romagnoli and Diana San Giacomo, 237 Wolcott Hill Road, showed the Commission layouts of the house. He also stated that there is public water and sewer available and that there are no plans for changes proposed to the exterior. Mr. Harvey noted that there are 2 parking spaces in garage, 2 spaces of off-street parking that could possibly be stretched to 3.

Mr. Harvey was in attendance to make sure that the dimensions were correct. He measured in the presence of the owner interior dimensions of 34ft X 25ft (850 sqft). The exterior dimension is 902 sqft, the interior dimension is 830 sqft. Commissioner Oickle asked if they can meet the 850 sqft. Mr. Harvey stated that the interior dimensions can meet the 850 sqft. Commissioner Roberts asked Denise Bradley if this is an application.

Denise Bradley stated that Brian O'Connor sent this application to the Commission just to be safe.

Commissioner Richard Roberts made a motion that the Commission advise the Building Inspector and the Zoning Enforcement Officer that it is the opinion of the Commission that this application complies with the requirements of Section 3.5.3 of the Wethersfield Zoning Regulations with the stipulation that the interior floor area be less than 850 square feet.

Commissioner Anthony Homicki seconded the motion.

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

Aye: Knecht, Roberts, Munroe, Petrelli, Oickle, Homicki

Nay: None.

Abst: None.

P.H. 3.2 APPLICATION NO. 1549-07-Z. Greg Lichatz Seeking a Special Permit in accordance with Section 3.5.B.4. of the Wethersfield Zoning Regulations to allow a recreational vehicle larger than permitted in a residential zone at 221 Wolcott Hill Road.

Greg Lichatz, 221 Wolcott Hill Road, stated that he is looking for an application for his brother to be able to come visit him and park his motor vehicle (mobile home) on his property. Mr. Lichatz stated that his property sits on 2 acres. Commissioner Oickle noted that the vehicle will sit very far back. Commissioner Knecht asked if people can see the mobile home when they drive by the house. Mr. Lichatz said that the mobile home looks like part of the house where it is currently parked. Mr. Lichatz stated that the mobile home will not be parked there all of the time.

Commissioner Homicki asked if the vehicle could be parked behind the front of the house. Mr. Lichatz stated that the vehicle could be parked behind the front of the house. Commissioner Roberts asked who sees the back of the house. Mr. Lichatz stated that person who sees that back of the house is in attendance. Mr. Lichatz stated that he just wants his brother to be able to come and visit him and park his vehicle on his property.

Commissioner Oickle stated that the vehicle is more than double the length of what is required by the Town. Mr. Lichatz noted that the vehicle will not be parked on his property for the entire year and is on the road during the weekends. Commissioner Munroe asked if the camper will be gone by July. Mr. Lichatz stated that the camper should be gone by July. Commissioner Munroe asked if the camper will return. Mr. Lichatz stated that the vehicle might come back.

Commissioner Munroe asked how long the vehicle will actually stay in the driveway. Mr. Lichatz stated that the vehicle is not being stored, it is being driven everyday. Commissioner Munroe asked if there was an alternative to this application. Mr. Lichatz stated that the alternative would be for him to sell it or pay for a storage facility. To Mr. Lichatz's knowledge there are no storage facilities that let you come and go.

Frank Tyburski, 28 Robbins, does not object to the vehicle coming and going. Mr. Tyburski objects to the vehicle being placed in the far back of the property since he can see it from his window. Commissioner Roberts asked if Mr. Tyburski can see the vehicle if it remains parked where it is currently. Mr. Tyburski stated that he can not see the vehicle where it is parked right now. Commissioner Petrelli felt that the consensus of the Commission seems to allow "temporary" storage for a specific period of time and that the vehicle be unobservable by neighbors would be acceptable.

Commissioner Roberts asked if Mr. Lichatz could state where the vehicle is located now. Mr. Lichatz stated that the vehicle is parked to the driveway north side of house behind the front line of the house. Commissioner Roberts asked if 1 year was OK Mr. Lichatz stated that 1 year was OK.

Commissioner Richard Roberts made a motion to approve **APPLICATION NO. 1549-07-Z** with the stipulation that the motor home be parked on the North side of the residence behind the front line of the house and that this approval will be for a period of one year from 2-20-07.

Commissioner George Oickle seconded the motion to approve **APPLICATION NO. 1549-07-Z**

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

Aye: Knecht, Roberts, Munroe, Petrelli, Oickle, Homicki

Nay: None.

Abst: None.

P.H. 3.3 APPLICATION NO. 1550-07-Z. Davina Ulisse Seeking a Special Permit in accordance with Section 5.8 of the Wethersfield Zoning Regulations for the sale and dispensing of alcoholic beverages at 884 Silas Deane Highway.

William Bumpster, 786 Silas Deane Highway, representing Davina Ulisse, John Anagnos, Owners of City Fish Market. Mr. Bumpster stated that the take-out counter at City Fish has grown tremendously. The Anagnos' are enlarging the take-out facility by using the existing administrative offices. The administrative offices will now be moved in the back on the 2nd floor. Mr. Bumpster stated that the lunch room will have tables and chairs and that there will be no waitresses.

Mr. Bumpster stated that people may go to the take out, purchase what they would like and either sit in the lunch room or take the food home. Mr. Bumpster stated that Mr. Anagnos would like to serve wine and beer at the take out. He also noted that the wine and beer will be served on the premises in plastic cups. No one will be able to take the wine and beer home. There will not be a bar.

Mr. Bumpster stated that Mr. Anagnos is looking for a permit to get a license for wine and beer. Commissioner Petrelli asked if the Anagnos' have inquired with liquor control as to their requirements as to which permit they will allow. Mr. Bumpster stated that the town needs to approve the location before they can go to liquor control.

Commissioner Munroe asked what the hours of operation will be. Mr. Anagnos stated that the hours will be 8am to 7pm. Commissioner Roberts noted that he did not want people taking the beer and wine into the parking lot. Commissioner Knecht asked if Mr. Anagnos can put sign up regarding the drinking of beer and wine outside. Mr. Anagnos stated that he would do whatever the Commission would like, but he doesn't like to post too many signs. Mr. Anagnos stated that people taking food off the premises will have the food wrapped differently from people consuming the food on premises. Mr. Anagnos noted that he will consider putting a sign above where the beer and wine will be dispensed stating that the alcohol shall be consumed on premises.

Commissioner George Oickle made a motion to approve **APPLICATION NO. 1550-07-Z**

Commissioner Earle Munroe seconded the motion to approve **APPLICATION NO. 1550-07-Z**

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

Aye: Knecht, Roberts, Munroe, Petrelli, Oickle, Homicki

Nay: None.

Abst: None.

4. OTHER BUSINESS

5. MINUTES

5.1 Minutes of the January 16, 2007 meeting.

Commissioner Munroe stated that the motion for adjournment from the 1-16-07 meeting did not have his name as a voting member. Commissioner Homicki's name was in his place. The minutes will be corrected and Commissioner Munroe's name will be added and Commissioner Homicki's name will be removed since only 9 votes are allowed and Commissioner Homicki is an alternate.

Commissioner George Oickle made a motion to approve [the Minutes of the January 16, 2007 meeting.](#)

Commissioner Anthony Homicki seconded the motion

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

Aye: Knecht, Roberts, Munroe, Petrelli, Oickle, Homicki

Nay: None.

Abst: None.

Commissioner Earle Munroe made a motion to table Section 2.1 Discussion of Rules and Procedures due to the absenteeism of the Chairman and the Vice Chair.

Commissioner Anthony Homicki seconded the motion

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

Aye: Knecht, Roberts, Munroe, Petrelli, Oickle, Homicki

Nay: None.

Abst: None.

Commissioner Fred Petrelli made a motion to postpone Section 2.2 Discussion of Rules and Procedures.

Commissioner Richard Roberts seconded the motion.

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

Aye: Knecht, Roberts, Munroe, Petrelli, Oickle, Homicki

Nay: None.

Abst: None.

6. STAFF REPORTS

8. CORRESPONDENCE

8.1 The Connecticut Federation of Planning and Zoning Agencies Quarterly Newsletter.

8.2 An invitation to the 59th Annual CFPZA Conference to be held on March 22, 2007 at the Southington Aqua Turf.

8.3 A letter dated February 7, 2007, from Nermin Duric to Peter Gillespie regarding the withdrawal of APPLICATION NO. 1545-06-Z. Bosnian American Islamic Cultural Center Seeking a Special Permit in accordance with Section 3.2.E.2 of the Wethersfield Zoning Regulations to construct a mosque in a residential zone at 119 Goodwin Avenue Lot "B".

8.4 A letter dated February 8, 2007, from Darren Sinofsky to Peter Gillespie regarding the withdrawal of APPLICATION NO. 1545-06-Z. Bosnian American Islamic Cultural Center Seeking a Special Permit in accordance with Section 3.2.E.2 of the Wethersfield Zoning Regulations to construct a mosque in a residential zone at 119 Goodwin Avenue Lot "B".

The beginning of Sec 8.4 is correct, A letter dated February 8, 2007. The rest is incorrect due to cut and paste.

9. UPCOMING BUSINESS

9.1 APPLICATION NO. 1552-07-Z. CP Equity Holding, LLC Seeking a Special Permit to renovate existing structures, construct an additional building, convert property into a mixed retail, office and residential development and associated site improvements at 249-263 Main Street.

9.2 APPLICATION NO. 1553-07-Z. Percon, Inc. Seeking a Special Permit to construct an additional eleven (11) units in accordance with Section 5.2.E.7. of the Wethersfield Zoning Regulations at 1695 Berlin Turnpike.

9.3 APPLICATION NO. 1554-07-Z. Alkedi Saraci Seeking a change of use from residential to office/commercial of property located at 312 Silas Deane Highway.

9.4 APPLICATION NO. 1555-07-Z. 291 Ridge Road LLC Seeking a Special Permit to modify Applications 1478-05-Z and 1519-06-Z for property located at 295 Ridge Road.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Frederick Petrelli made a motion to adjourn the meeting

Commissioner Anthony Homicki seconded the motion.

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

Aye: Knecht, Roberts, Munroe, Petrelli, Oickle, Homicki

Nay: None.

Abst: None.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:55 pm

Philip Knecht, Clerk