

WETHERSFIELD PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

PUBLIC HEARING AND MEETING

July 6, 2016

The Wethersfield Planning and Zoning Commission held a public hearing and meeting on Wednesday, July 6, 2016 at 7:00 p.m. in the Wethersfield Town Council Chambers located at the Town Hall, 505 Silas Deane Highway, Wethersfield, Connecticut 06109.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Thomas Harley called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. welcoming all to the Planning and Zoning meeting. He explained the process and procedures of the public hearing and Commissioner Richard Roberts commenced the roll call.

1.1. ROLL CALL AND SEATING OF ALTERNATES (5 members required for a quorum).

Member Name	Present	Absent	Excused
Thomas Harley, Chairman	√		
Antonio Margiotta, Vice Chairman			√
Richard Roberts, Clerk	√		
James Hughes			√
George Oickle	√		
Joseph Hammer			√
Anthony Homicki			√
Thomas Dean	√		
Ryan Allard			√
David Edwards, (alternate)	√		
Daniel Silver (alternate)			√
Yolanda Antoniak (alternate)	√		

Also present, Mr. Peter Gillespie, Economic Development/Town Planner, Ms. Denise Bradley, Assistant Town Planner and Mary Lou Wall, Recording Secretary.

Members of the public were present.

Chairman Harley stated there are six (6) members present. Chairman Harley explained in detail that 5 positive votes are necessary and it is the decision of the applicants to continue or continue at the next meeting.

2. OLD BUSINESS

None

3. NEW BUSINESS

3.1 PUBLIC HEARING APPLICATION NO. 1917-16-Z Saleem Siddique seeking a Special Permit in accordance with Section 3.5 (Accessory Uses) to park a recreational vehicle larger than permitted (30 ft.) in a residential zone at 7 Wedgewood Drive.

Mr. Saleem Siddique 7 Wedgewood Drive, Wethersfield stated that he moved from Newington to Wethersfield and has six (6) cars including the RV but he did not know that he would be unable to park his RV due to the size and in the location in the side yard. He stated that his house in Newington is rented and he would have to ask the tenant if he could park it there, should it come to that. The RV is 30' long and he indicated he will move it back as far as possible, which he showed to Mr. Peter Gillespie, Town Planner and Zoning Officer, Justin LaFountain. Mr. Siddique has a pool in his yard and one side is fenced. The RV is used by his family and the vehicle has given them many memories and is in good shape.

Chairman Harley made a clarification to the members who may be new to this issue and to the public that a property owner is allowed to park one Recreational Vehicle up to eighteen (18') feet in the back (rear yard) by right with any variation requiring a special permit. Commissioner Oickle asked the applicant if he was aware that the neighbors have a petition against it and thirty one people signed it; he indicated that he was aware of the petition.

Mr. Siddique asked if he could move the back four (4) or five (5) feet where it might be better buffered from the existing pine trees.

Chairman Harley pointed out for the record the petition signed by thirty one people from the neighborhood which was forwarded to the Commission by Santos Pirrotta. Commissioner Oickle asked if there were any other RV's in his neighborhood within three quarters of a mile. The applicant responded that he did not know. Chairman Harley mentioned that the applicant may have some options to consider, such as returning the RV to Newington or paying for storage elsewhere.

Mr. Siddique commented about the amount of taxes he is paying to the town. Commissioner Antoniak asked the applicant how often he uses the RV and indicated that the RV is visible from the street. The applicant stated that he uses the RV two (2) or three (3) times in summer time and one (1) or (2) times in the fall.

Mr. Santos Pirrotta 6 Palomino Way, Wethersfield stated that his property abuts the location of the applicant's RV, which is six to nine inches from the actual fence/property line and does not know if there are setback rules. He noted that his concern is mostly that the approval of a special permit would set some kind of precedent for someone else with a larger RV. He noted his desire to preserve the aesthetics of the neighborhood. He mentioned he pays taxes and those people that

signed the petition also pay taxes and do not like the RV in the neighborhood. Mr. Pirrotta noted that the location of the parked RV currently obstructs his arborvitae from getting sun.

Mr. Bill Anastasiades 15 Westmont Road, Wethersfield. He lives two streets down and signed the petition and shares Mr. Pirrotta's concerns. Mr. Anastasiades stated that he cannot understand why it is even being considered and is opposed to it.

Mr. Frank Saccomandi 43 Wedgewood Drive, Wethersfield discussed potential impacts to property values. He noted that the RV is screened only from one side and planting trees will take years to grow. He indicated that the vehicle can be seen from down the street. Mr. Saccomandi stated that for these reasons, he opposes the requested change.

Chairman Harley asked the public for any other questions and called for a motion to close the hearing and start this application up at the next meeting. In the ensuing period, he suggested that the applicant try to find some place to park the vehicle and check the zoning in the town of Newington. The Chairman indicated that the applicant has options that are available to consider.

Commissioner Roberts made a **Motion to Close** the Hearing.

Commissioner George Oickle **Second**.

Aye - Commissioners Antoniak, Dean, Edwards, Harley, Oickle and Roberts.

Nay - None

Abs. - None

Motion to close passed 6-0

Chairman Harley stated that the hearing on this application shall be continued to Tuesday, July 19, 2016.

Mr. Bill Anastasiades, 15 Westmont Road, Wethersfield asked how many members are required for a quorum to vote. The Chairman stated five (5). The Commission has six (6) and he wanted to know why there is a delay in voting.

Commissioner Roberts stated that we extend the courtesy routinely and try to be fair by letting the people have a large enough audience because the rule requires five (5) affirmative votes to carry anything.

3.2 PUBLIC HEARING APPLICATION NO. 1918-16-Z Dennis Kosswig seeking a Special Permit in accordance with Section 3.5 (Accessory Uses) to park a recreational vehicle larger than permitted (26 ft.) in a residential zone at 76 Stillman Road.

Mr. Dennis Rosswig, 76 Stillman Road, Wethersfield indicated that he and his wife have lived at the property for eleven years and 3 1/2 years ago wanted to resurface and widen the driveway.

Mr. Rosswig apologized and noted that the camper was previously stored up at a Lake but he was laid off and could not continue the lease and brought it home. He noted that his neighbors are fine with the RV being parked in the and my main concern is take care of the camper and not to have the camper infested with rodents. Therefore, he is applying for a Special Permit to keep the camper and care for it at home.

Commissioner Roberts asked the applicant if he was keeping the RV in the driveway or in the back yard. The applicant responded that it is currently parked on the driveway but noted that if he has to he can put it in the backyard.

Commissioner Dean asked if he would be amenable to a ten to twelve month period. Mr. Rosswig responded that he would be amenable. Commissioner Antoniak noted that the applicant parked the RV on the driveway due to a hardship, and intended to move the vehicle, it is temporary; the applicant replying, yes.

Commissioner Roberts suggested a time limit of two (2) years and waiving of the renewal fee. Chairman Harley reminded the applicant that he could wait for the next meeting if he wished, since five (5) affirmative votes are necessary to pass a motion. The applicant indicated that he wished to have his application to proceed.

Commissioner Oickle made a **Motion to close** the hearing.

Commissioner Roberts **Second**.

3.1 PUBLIC HEARING APPLICATION NO. 1918-16-Z Dennis Kosswig seeking a Special Permit in accordance with Section 3.5 (Accessory Uses) to park a recreational vehicle larger than permitted (26 ft.) in a residential zone at 76 Stillman Road.

Commissioner Roberts made a **Motion to Approve** for a period of two (2) years waiving the application fee if an extension is required with the exception that the vehicle is parked in the back yard.

Commissioner Oickle **Second**

Aye - Commissioners Antoniak, Dean, Edwards, Harley, Oickle, Roberts

Nay - None

Abs. - None

Motion Passed 6-0

4. OTHER BUSINESS

4.1 A discussion regarding Sign Regulations

Town Planner Peter Gillespie stated that the regulations of signage are a hot topic nationwide since a court decision, Reed vs Town of Gilbert in Arizona. Mr. Gillespie referred to his memo dated June 30, 2016 to the Planning and Zoning Commission regarding Sign Regulations noting the highlighted areas that may be in conflict with that particular decision and require discussion. Additionally, there are regulations that have been on the books for a long time and so there are other reasons for reviewing and revising the regulations and will require working with the town attorney as well but Planner Gillespie wants to begin the conversation with the Commission. Consequently, the Town Planner is looking for guidance from the Commission, since there will be critical decision making and suggesting options as to how to proceed.

Chairman Harley asking if this will be a long term project since a panel or subcommittee was suggested by the Town Planner. Planner Gillespie replying that he does not think it will take a year but probably three or four subcommittee meetings depending on how complicated we get. Planner's objection is to simplify the regulations and produce a clearer set of regulations.

Commissioner Oickle suggesting having both a subcommittee and the Commission, since in the past some things did not get back to the Commission in a sufficient matter.

Commissioner Edwards stating he did some research on signs and sign animation and looked at few other states and noted that our regulations were far beyond others he looked at.

Chairman Harley suggested over the next two weeks, the Commissioners should think about this and return to this discussion with suggestions and prepare to volunteer.

Commissioner Roberts said bad facts make bad laws. Town Planner Gillespie stating that consolidating will be good for everybody. A discussion ensued on changes that should be made and/or looked at.

5. MINUTES

Commissioner Roberts made a **Motion to Approve** June 21, 2016 minutes.

Commissioner Oickle **SECOND**.

Aye - Commissioners Antoniak, Dean, Edwards, Harley, Oickle, Roberts

Nay - None

Abs. - None

Motion Passed 6-0

6. STAFF REPORTS

Commissioner Roberts indicated that all terms that expired were reappointed; Commissioners Hammer, Hughes, and Margiotta. The re-election for the Chairman will be on the agenda for the next meeting.

Town Planner Gillespie referred to the letter from CRCC, Capitol Region Council of Governments, dated June 28, 2016, to the Newington Planning and Zoning Commission regarding:

Report on Zoning Referral Z-2016-63: Proposed zoning regulation amendment pertaining to Section 3.0 Higher-Density Residential Development Moratorium. This proposal will reinstate a moratorium enacted last year for an additional period of up to one-year for higher density housing within ½ mile of the CTfastrak station at 160 Willard Avenue. The moratorium is proposed for the following activities: Senior Independent Living, Housing for Seniors, Conversion of Older Homes, Single-Family Entry Level Housing, Alternate Residential Building Types, and zoning text changes of any higher density residential zoning regulation.

This notice was provided to neighboring towns, Planner Gillespie stated.

Motion to Adjourn at 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mary Lou Wall,

Recording Secretary.