



Town of Lebanon
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
Regular Meeting
Monday, December 18, 2023
7:00 p.m.

Lebanon Town Hall
579 Exeter Road, Downstairs Meeting Room

MINUTES

Members present: Wayne Budney (Chair), Robin Chesmer (Secretary), Karl Weinsteiger, Robin Chesmer, Todd Pannone, Thomas Benoit, Allyn Miller, Keith Sczurek, Tom Dunham (Alternate), Julie Chalifoux (Alternate)

Members absent: Ethan Stearns (Alternate)

Also present: Philip Chester (Town Planner), Catherine McCall (Secretary)

Mr. Chesmer welcomed new commissioners Keith Sczurek and Tom Dunham and recognized the good work of Francis Malozzi and Tom Meyer who served previously. He entertained nominations for a Chair Pro Tem. Mr. Miller nominated Mr. Chesmer and Mr. Budney seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Chesmer entertained a motion for Commission Chairman. Mr. Miller nominated Mr. Budney and Mr. Pannone seconded. Hearing no other nominations from the floor, Mr. Budney was elected unanimously.

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Wayne Budney at 7:03 pm.

Mr. Budney nominated Mr. Chesmer as Commission Secretary and Mr. Miller seconded. Hearing no other nominations, Mr. Chesmer was elected unanimously.

II. OLD BUSINESS – None.

III. NEW BUSINESS

- a. PZ-23-24: Linda & Barry Improte, 876 Trumbull Highway, Assessors Map 235, Lot 76. Application for Home Occupation for art gallery under Zoning Sec. 7.5a.

Linda Improte presented. She would like to open an art gallery to operate from May to December on weekends from 11:00 am to 6:00 pm to feature the work of local artists. The home's library, dining room, and living room would be used, as well as outdoor patio in good weather. She has experience doing this as she previously ran a gallery in Old Lyme. There are 8-10 parking spaces on the property.

Mr. Miller asked if there would be large gatherings and Ms. Improte said no, though more attendees could be expected during an artist's opening which she will monitor. He inquired if the property would remain available for an art gallery should the home be sold and asked about outdoor lighting. Mr. Chester said the use ran with the land under the Home Occupation designation and that any outdoor lighting would have to follow the outdoor lighting regulations under Zoning Sec. 7.9.

Mr. Pannone asked how overflow parking would be handled, and Ms. Improte said she does not expect this to be an issue based on her experience.

Mr. Weinstein asked if No Parking signs could be installed along the street and Ms. Improte said she could do that.

Motion made by Mr. Miller and seconded by Mr. Pannone to approve application PZ-23-24 with the following conditions:

- 1. An outdoor lighting plan shall be presented prior to gallery opening.**
- 2. Rooms used for gallery use shall be the living room, dining room and library.**
- 3. Temporary entrance and exit signs shall be placed at the driveway on Route 207 and 87 so that there is a one-way traffic flow when the gallery is open.**

Motion passed unanimously.

- b. PZ-23-25: Town of Lebanon, 22 Imogene Lane, Assessors Map 236, Lot 10. Application for special permit for 16-units of age-restricted affordable senior housing under Zoning Sec. 4.11b.1). Accept application and set public hearing date.

Mr. Chesmer abstained from this discussion and left the meeting table. Ms. Chalifoux was appointed a voting member by Mr. Budney.

James Russo, presented. He explained that the town has requested funding from the State for this project and the State would like confirmation that the Planning and Zoning Commission has approved the project. Mr. Chester explained that there is currently no developer, but this is a necessary step to move forward so that project funding can be secured.

Motion made by Mr. Pannone and seconded by Mr. Benoit to set a Public Hearing for PZ-23-25 for January 22, 2024 at 7:00 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

At this time Mr. Chesmer resumed his seat on the Commission.

- c. PZ-23-26. Benjamin Walker (applicant), Tammy Walker (owner), 63 Clarke Road, Assessors Map 222, Lot 19. Application for Home Occupation for tree removal/landscaping business under Zoning Sec. 7.5a.

Benjamin Walker presented. He would like to run a small business from this property. He currently has only one truck and one trailer.

Mr. Weinstein asked if there would be any processing of materials on the property and was told no. Mr. Miller asked if any wood would be brought onto the property to make firewood and was told no. Mr. Sczurek asked if there were good sightlines for pulling out of the driveway and was told there were.

Motion to approve PZ-23-26 made by Mr. Miller and seconded by Mr. Weinstein with the following condition:

- 1. No trees or other plant materials shall be brought onto the site with the exception of firewood for use in the house only.**
- 2. No more than two (2) trucks associated with the home occupation shall be permitted on the site.**
- 3. The maximum number of non-resident employees shall be limited to one (1).**
- 4. Signage associated with the home occupation shall be prohibited.**

Motion carried unanimously.

- d. FY 2024-25 Operating Budget. Mr. Chester presented a proposed Operating Budget as prepared by the Finance Department which calls for a 2.95% increase.

Motion made by Mr. Miller and seconded by Mr. Pannone to accept the proposed operating budget with the exception that the Recording Secretary fee be increased from \$75 to \$100 per meeting (for a \$300 total increase in the proposed budget). Mr. Pannone seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

- e. FY 2024-25 Capital Budget. Mr. Chester presented the proposed Capitol Budget, which per the *Plan of Conservation and Development*, calls for the town to maintain \$300,000 in its Open Space Account annually. The current balance in the account is \$281,331.92 and there are several farmland preservation projects and a large open space project in the works.

Motion made by Mr. Miller and seconded by Mr. Sczurek to recommend that \$18,668.08 be added to the Open Space Account. Motion carried unanimously.

- f. 2024 Regular Meeting Calendar

Motion made by Mr. Chesmer and seconded by Mr. Weinstein to accept the 2024 Regular Meeting Calendar as proposed. Motion carried unanimously.

IV. MEETING MINUTES

- a. October 16, 2023

Motion made by Mr. Chesmer and seconded by Mr. Pannone to accept the October 16, 2023 Meeting Minutes as presented. Motion passed 6-0-1 with Mr. Sczurek abstaining.

V. TOWN PLANNER REPORT

Mr. Chester discussed the addition of an electrical box and temporary light to illuminate the ice-skating pond on the Green. (Mr. Chemer abstained from this discussion and Ms. Chalifoux was appointed a voting member by Mr. Budney.) Mr. Miller noted that the Commission is responsible for approving installations such this and the town should not conduct this work without Commission approval. Members expressed concern with the electrical box design and location. Mr. Cwikla explained that arborvitaes will be planted in front of the electrical box. The light will be on from sunset until 10:00 p.m. when the pond is frozen December to March. He received approval from the Historical Society.

Motion made by Mr. Weinstein, seconded Mr. Pannone, to approve the lighting installation. Motion carried 6-1-0 with Mr. Miller opposing.

Mr. Chester noted that the Fire Department was looking into erecting a communication tower on the southerly section of town for emergency radio transmission, and that the town is looking into whether adding a stop sign on West Town Street at Imogene Lane would help slow traffic on West Town Street.

VI. EXECUTIVE SESSION - Pending litigation.

Motion by Mr. Weinstein, seconded by Mr. Miller, to enter Executive Session with the First Selectman and Town Planner at 8:03 p.m. Motion unanimously approved.

The Commission came out of Executive Session at 8:24 p.m. with no action taken.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Motion made by Mr. Pannone, seconded by Mr. Miller, to adjourn the meeting at 8:25 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Catherine McCall, Secretary