



Town of Lebanon
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
October 19, 2020
7:00 p.m.
Special Meeting

Lyman Memorial High School Auditorium, 917 Exeter Road and by ZOOM

Minutes

Members Present: James Jahoda (Chairman), Robin Chesmer (Secretary), Francis Malozzi, Thomas Meyer, Keith LaPorte, Wayne Budney, Thomas Benoit, Allyn Miller (Alternate), Ethan Stearns (Alternate), Julie Chalifoux (Alternate)
Also Present: Philip Chester (Town Planner), Catherine McCall (minutes)

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chairman James Jahoda at 7:06 pm.

II. CORRESPONDENCE

A letter was read by Anne Dawson, 10 Card Street, from several Lebanon residents to the Planning and Zoning Commission regarding the Mitlitsky Eggs LLC operating regarding perceived zoning violations and lack of town enforcement.

III. PUBLIC HEARING

- a. PZ-20-8890: Planning and Zoning Commission proposed changes to Zoning Regulation Sections 2.2, 4.2, 4.7b, 5.1, 5.2 and 8.8. Business Zone.

Town Planner Philip Chester outlined the proposed changes to zoning regulations that would allow apartments and condominiums on 20-acre parcels in the Business Zone. He reviewed an image of the Business Zone, 2 parcels which would be eligible for multi-family housing, and a concept plan for one of the parcels. He noted that multi-family housing was already permitted in the Business Zone and that the proposal was to allow a greater density with a 10% affordability component which in Lebanon equates to \$62,000 for a 2-family household and \$75,000 for a 4-family household.

Thomas Meyer, Chair of the Planning and Zoning Commission's Regulation Review Subcommittee presented factors to be considered regarding the proposed zone text amendment, current uses permitted in the Business Zone, and the economic impacts of a concept plan for the Scott Hill Road property.

Chairman Jahoda then opened up the hearing to public comment:

- George Mattern, owner of 20+ acres on Scott Hill Road discussed his concept plan to allow 25-units of 2-bedroom multi-family housing. He stated that he has owned the property since 2001 when he worked with the town to have it rezoned to business. He has worked with several realtors and attempted to sell the property for business development without luck and believes this project would benefit the town.

- Pat McCarthy, 6 Stewart Lane, member Economic Development Commission (EDC), noted that the Commission had met with Mr. Mattern to discuss his proposal and concluded it was desirable for seniors and young people in town looking for housing alternatives.
- John Haynes, 60 McGrath Lane, believes the project would adversely affect his property and questioned why it is suggested for this location versus the center of town. He is also concerned with its proximity and impact to the Yantic River.
- Doug Morton, 156 Church Road, requested clarification on the housing project – whether it was being planned, or if this hearing is for a zoning change that would allow it? Mr. Chester answered that it is for the zone change only.
- Nick Poppiti, Route 16, questioned the financial impact to the town with this type of housing.
- Tim Slate, 577 Trumbull Highway, stated that he is not in favor of high-density housing unless it is for seniors and that one special needs child would cost the town much more than the economic analysis indicates.
- Jeff Roundeau, 56 McGrath Lane, stated if a businesses were allowed on the property it would be a 9-to-5 impact rather than the 24-hour effect of new housing.
- Pedro Batista, Lebanon Avenue, voiced concern with the impact to the Yantic River and questioned required fire protection impact for the concept development plan.
- Lindsey Green, 124 Norwich Avenue, stated that changing the Zoning Regulations might lead to a move away from the town's practice of protecting open space and that there would be a negative impact to those living nearby.
- Brandon Handfield, 191 Norwich Avenue, stated that he is in favor of the zone change and believes this type of housing is necessary for young professionals and seniors.
- Mike Eskey, 119 Norwich Avenue, voiced concerned with the impact to the Yantic River and that it would be seen from his home. He would rather see a 9 to 5 weekday business there and believes the economic impact to the town is underestimated.
- Mark Reynolds, 68 Bogg Lane, believes the cost estimates to the town are incorrect.
- Mike Donofrio, 417 Waterman Road, experienced concern with living near renters and believes that only owners of units benefit the town.
- Bill Malone, Lynch Road, does not believe the zone change will benefit the town.
- Kim Klikowicz, Hebron Turnpike, asked if the impact to the police force had been considered, and believes there will be an increased cost to taxpayers.
- Linda Kintsler, Horiska Road, asked if impact of increased traffic on Waterman Road had been considered and noted that the cost of a special education child is much higher than was estimated in the economic analysis.
- Amanda Shank, 104 Hebron Avenue, inquired about someone applying for a variance if these zone changes were turned down by the Commission. Mr. Chester stated that he did not think a variance would be appropriate, but that there is a movement to promote and/or mandate affordable housing throughout the state; that Lebanon does not meet the State goal to have 10% of its housing stock “affordable” and that in towns without 10% affordable housing a developer can overrule zoning; and that the State requires each town to have an Affordable Housing Plan in place by 2022 or risk losing discretionary state funding.
- John Haynes, 16 McGrath Lane, asked that if the town is concerned with providing affordable housing why not use the town green rather than the outskirts of town.

- Tim Slate, 577 Trumbull Highway, requested an explanation on how the State can override Lebanon's home rule decisions. Mr. Chester stated that the State gives the town the ability to make these decisions and can take them away. He noted there are proposals being made at the State level to remove the town's (Planning and Zoning Commission's) ability to dictate if and where multi-family housing is permitted.
- Kyle Boyce, 390 Scott Hill Road, noted that traffic is already bad on Scott Hill Road and that adding more housing will cause additional problems. He suggests the land be donated to the town for educational purposes or elderly housing.
- Bonnie Tolmick, opposed to project and believes adding a development would negatively impact the Yantic River.

Chairman Jim Jahoda explained that once the Public Hearing is closed the zone changes will be discussed by the Commission.

Motion by Wayne Budney to close the Public Hearing. Thomas Meyer seconded. Motion carried.

Motion by Wayne Budney to table item PZ-20-8890. Frances Malozzi seconded. Motion carried.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

- a. PZ-20-8973: Lenkiewicz Construction Co., Clubhouse and Olenick Roads, Assessors Map 243, Lot 3. Four (4) lot subdivision. David Lenkiewicz was present. Mark Reynolds, Reynolds Engineering Services spoke on behalf of Lenkiewicz Construction. They accept Brandon Handfield's Yantic River Consultants recommended conditions.

Motion made by Keith LaPorte to approve PZ-20-8973 with the inclusion of the recommendations stated in Brandon Handfield's 10/15/20 letter. Motion seconded by Wayne Budney. Motion carried.

- b. CGS Sec. 7-159b Pre-Application Discussion: Gary Ritacco, (applicant), Shawn Guiney (owner), 74 Norwich Avenue, Assessors Map 275, Lot 58. Package store.

As this is pre-application no minutes or action was taken.

- c. PZ-20-1: Neil Rich, 387 Oliver Road, Assessors Map 238, Lot 73. One (1) lot subdivision. Philip Chester noted that this cannot be acted on tonight as it has not been approved the Inland Wetlands Commission. Mark Reynolds, Reynolds Engineering Services explained what is being proposed.
- d. Reappointments for three (3) year terms:
 - 1) Paul LeDuc and Dan King to Village Green District Design Review Board.

Motion made by Keith LaPorte to reappoint Paul LeDuc and Dan King for term of three (3) years to the Village Green District Design Review Board. Frances Malozzi seconded. Motion carried.

- 2) Jason Nowosad and Jean Reichard to Village Business District Design Review Board.

Motion made by Keith LaPorte to reappoint Jason Nowosad and Jean Reichard to the Village Business District Design Review Board. Thomas Meyer seconded. Motion carried.

- e. Adoption of 2021-22 Regular Meeting Schedule. It was noted that due to COVID-19, 2021-22 regular meetings would take place in the Fire Safety Complex unless health issues warrant Zoom meetings. It was suggested that future public hearings should be conducted by Zoom only.

Motion made by Frances Malozzi to accept the 2021-22 meeting schedule with meetings held at the Fire Safety Complex at 7:00 p.m. on Jan. 11, Feb. 8, March 15, April 19, May 17, June 21, July 19, August 16, September 20, October 18, November 15, December 13, January 10, 2022. Keith Laporte seconded. Motion carried.

V. OLD BUSINESS

- a. PZ-20-8890: Planning and Zoning Commission proposed changes to Zoning Regulation Sections 2.2, 4.2, 4.7b, 5.1, 5.2 and 8.8. Business Zone. No discussion.

VI. EXECUTIVE SESSION: Pending litigation and enforcement matters.

No action taken.

VII. TOWN PLANNER'S REPORT

Mr. Chester reported on enforcement matters.

VIII. MINUTES

- a. September 21, 2020 Special Meeting.

Motion made by Keith LaPorte to accept the September 21, 2020 meeting minutes with the correction that Robin Chesmer abstained from vote to release the draft POCD. Motion seconded by Frances Malozzi. Motion carried.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Motion made by Thomas Meyer to adjourn the meeting at 9:39 pm. Motion seconded by Thomas Benoit. Motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,
Catherine McCall