

Planning and Zoning Commission

January 18, 2022 – 7:30 PM

Meeting Minutes

Note: This meeting was held online

A. Call to Order

W. Parsell called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm.

B. Members Present

Walter Parsell

Doug Roberts

John Tehan

Rebecca Sinosky

Also Present

Mike D'Amato - Land Use Agent

Rachael Burstein - Planning Consultant

Chris Roberts - Assistant Land Use Agent

C. Applications to be Received

None

D. Public Hearing

a. PZ-21-24 Special Permit for signage at Loves Travel Stop. 3 Polster Road Applicant: Betty Torstenson Owner: Love's Travel Stop & Country Stores Inc.

M. D'Amato explained that the applicant couldn't make the meeting and asked the Commission to move to hear the application at the next meeting.

J. Tehan motioned to postpone the hearing to the next meeting. R. Sinosky seconded. **All in Favor. Motion Passes.**

E. New Business

a. Affordable Housing Plan: Survey Results and Demographic Review

M. D'Amato explained that the survey results have been analyzed and that his colleague R. Burstein would be presenting findings to the commission. He further explained where in the process the plan is and what next steps will be.

W. Parsell asked how many surveys were submitted.

R. Burstein stated that they had received 89 responses. A discussion was held about the number of responses and how the town could go about reaching more citizens.

R. Burstein stated that they are about half way through the planning process, and went on to present the results of the Affordable Housing Plan Survey so far. She stated that about a third of respondents gave their emails for future communication purposes.

M. D'Amato added that those can be used to follow up with those who left their emails and keep them informed. M. D'Amato stated that he would create a web link with the survey results for the commission and others to review.

R. Burstein wrapped up her presentation and asked if there were any questions.

M. D'Amato gave his take on the results, stating that they weren't very polarized, suggesting that perhaps an educational portion should be included with the plan to explain to the public what affordable housing really means.

J. Tehan asked what effect the issue of crumbling foundations had on affordable housing.

M. D'Amato said that it's not necessarily tied into affordable housing because they are focused on income data, but it is an interesting point to look into. A discussion surrounding this issue and its relation to the plan was had.

W. Parsell asked how many crumbling foundations are typically open at one time.

M. D'Amato said that between 2018 and 2021 there were about 45 permits issued for foundation repairs. He suggested that while crumbling foundations don't necessarily relate to affordable housing directly, it possibly creates a demand on the rental market in the area.

R. Burstein explained that as a part of the plan they also took a look at the town's Plan of Conservation and Development and analyzed goals and language related to housing. Rachel suggested the Accessory Dwelling units are a good way to support affordable housing in a low impact way.

W. Parsell asked how the state views ADUs in terms of housing stock.

M. D'Amato explained that they don't count against a town's affordable housing stock but if you deed restrict an ADU it can count towards affordable housing.

R. Burstein wrapped up her presentation and asked the commission for any questions.

J. Tehan agreed that the word "consider" in some of the PoCD's goals was weak and asked if there was a way to use wording which gives more commitment to goals.

M. D'Amato discussed some key takeaways he had.

W. Parsell asked if there was any consideration of reducing lot sizes,

R. Burstein said that's something they are looking at.

M. D'Amato elaborated on this idea, and discussed it with the commission.

M. D'Amato explained and led a discussion regarding the aspect of regulatory review in the affordable housing plan. M. D'Amato brought up the idea of making the language around ADUs less restrictive.

W. Parsell asked about restrictions regarding renting ADU's. M. D'Amato explained that the owner must occupy one of the buildings to rent an ADU. He went on to explain other avenues of creating affordable housing. M. D'Amato wrapped up by saying he would create a link to post all of the results and info from the presentation for everyone to view.

W. Parsell asked if the survey could be left open.

R. Burstein said that it still was.

D. Roberts suggested using the Board of Education's newsletter as an avenue of promoting the survey.

M. D'Amato said he would reach out to the superintendent and try to do that.

D. Roberts discussed the idea of the costs of creating smaller lots and the challenges it presents. W. Parsell asked what is considered affordable rent in Willington.
M. D'Amato said he thought it was around \$1500. W. Parsell said they could discuss the next meeting to give time to figure out the math.

F. Unfinished Business

a. Special Development District Regulations

M. D'Amato noted that he added a section regarding fire suppression.
W. Parsell noted some mistakes in the regulations, M. D'Amato said he would tweak and fix those.
W. Parsell asked if the vision for the village district was mixed use.
M. D'Amato said yes but at a small scale.
W. Parsell asked if development of that type could be considered affordable.
M. D'Amato said that it could be through a deed restriction.

M. D'Amato stated that the point of looking at this is just to review the regulations and get the commission's thoughts before he sends it to CRCOG for review.
W. Parsell motioned to send the special development district regulations to CRCOG for a review.

J. Tehan seconded.

All in Favor. Motion Passed.

G. Approval of Minutes

a. January 4, 2022

The minutes were tabled until the next meeting as all of the commissioners had not had the chance to see them.

H. Correspondence

M. D'Amato said there was nothing new. He discussed commissioner training that he spoke of last meeting and said he would keep the commission posted.

I. Public Comment:

The Commission will hear brief comments at this time from anyone wishing to speak. No business can be conducted here nor can any comments be made about any items on the agenda.

R. Tulis stated that a wastewater treatment plant should be considered in South Willington going forward in order to incentivize businesses and development in that area. R. Tulis and the commission further discussed this idea.

J. Staff Report/Discussion

a. Bond Policy

M. D'Amato followed up about the bond policy with some changes that the attorney suggested.

W. Parsell asked for an update on the complaint at 331 River Road.

M. D'Amato checked the state's online system and said there was still no court date but he would follow up to see where it was at.

K. Adjournment

W. Parsell adjourned the meeting at 8:50 pm.