

Town of Willington Planning and Zoning commission

August 15, 2023 – 7:30pm

Meeting Minutes

A. Call to Order

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

B. Roll Call/Seating of Alternates

Walter Parsell
John Tehan (virtual)
Michael Johansen (Seated for Joe Hall)
Bob Shabot
Andy Marco
Doug Roberts
Rebecca Sinosky
William Bunnell

Also Present

Michael D'Amato – Land Use Agent

C. Applications for Receipt

None

D. Public Hearing

None

E. New Business

None

F. Unfinished Business

1. Seasonal Outdoor Dining Regulations

M.D'Amato stated that this language has been previously reviewed by the Commission a few times and that these changes are in response to post-COVID legislation which requires that towns allow outdoor dining associated with restaurants by right. The language attempts to codify what the state has said we have to allow for. Previous comments have discussed how the parking allocation would work on site with the addition of outdoor patio. M. D'Amato referenced the memorandum under Section 1. That "C" is newly proposed to reflect the previous discussion and require no more than 50% of the total parking on site be obligated for the outdoor dining. Everything else has remained the same and aligns with what is required by the Public Act as well as Town departments. The next step would be to do the referral to CRCOG and schedule a public hearing. R.Sinosky asked if CRCOG would review back in time. M.D'Amato said yes, he expects we could get it by the second meeting in September. W.Parsell commented that he thinks this is good enough for the public hearing so that we can get public input and modify accordingly after the hearing. J.Tehan agreed that the wording on the parking portion is a lot better and agrees to refer it to CRCOG. A.Marco spoke to concerns regarding hours of operation being no later than 9pm. M.D'Amato clarified that this is dealing with accessory uses to restaurants and that it is not going to regulate other uses already occurring. The time could be changed to 11pm and then modified to be earlier depending on public input.

R. Sinosky motioned to move the seasonal dining regulations proposed to CRCOG. Second by W.Parsell.

All in favor, Motion passes unanimously.

2. Accessory Dwelling Unit Regulations

M.D'Amato stated that this is another revision borne from legislative changes required by Public Act 21-29. The Town opted out of the provisions which means the requirements of the Act are not applicable as a mandate. There are still some changes that have been discussed, but as proposed, they do not go as far as the Act but do move the needle somewhat on the accessory dwelling regulations. In the last meeting some examples were reviewed from Tolland and Mansfield. The new revision blends the factors the Commission liked from the Tolland regs as well as the protections provided by the deed restrictions in the Mansfield regs. J.Tehan asked if "In-Law Apartments" are being outlawed under the new Accessory Dwelling language. M.D'Amato responded that , "In-Law Apartment" is an old term for Accessory Dwelling Unit, as currently proposed, an "in-Law" would be able to be rented to a non-related person. It was also clarified that as proposed, this reg does not prohibit a detached Accessory Dwelling unit. R.Sinosky referred to 7.07.05.01 (D) which says no new entrances for an accessory dwelling may be added to the front façade of a principal building. She expressed the concerns that it says no new entrances and is worried someone may read that and not supply one. She would like to it addressed somewhere that the unit needs its own entrance citing fire safety concerns. The Commission discussed how to best revise this section. M.D'Amato expressed concern of possibly causing a conflict with the building code. The Commission agreed to clarify the language to include a requirement for a separate outside entrance. M'DAmato will confer with the Building Official. R.Sinosky and J.Tehan both made observations about Section. 7.07.05.01 (C) being unclear regarding number of bedrooms. M.D'Amato stated that (C) is meant to prevent anything more than a one bedroom since the public act limits that. The Commission agreed to modify the language to clarify only one bedroom was allowed.

W.Parsell motioned to refer proposed regulations, Section 7.07.05 Accessory Dwelling Units, as revised, to CRCOG. Second by R.Shabot

All in favor. Motion passes unanimously.

3. Affordable Housing Plan

M.D'Amato stated that revisions have been made to the draft Plan based upon Commission feedback and a public listening session. The next step is doing a final layout so that the Commission can adopt it. This will still leave opportunities for minor revisions and tweaks. M.D'Amato stated that if the Commission felt no further discussion is needed, or major revisions were necessary then it could be formally put together and brought back to the Commission for final review and adoption. The Commission agreed a final draft of the Plan could be prepared for review.

G. Approval of Minutes

06/06/2023 – W. Parsell Motion to Approve, Second by B.Shabot. All in favor.

06/20/2023 – J.Tehan Motion to Approve, Second by_R.Sinosky. All in favor. With W.Parsell, A.Marco abstaining.

H. Correspondence

1. CRCOG Comment Letters

M.D'Amato reviewed the CRCOG Referrals received from nearby Municipalities.

I. Public Participation (items not listed on the agenda)

None

J. Staff Report/Discussion

1. PZC/IWWA Combined Commission

M.D'Amato explained that recently, the Inland Wetlands Commission had lost one of it's members and that current there are not enough members on the Board to make a quorum. He explains that without enough members on the Commission an applicant could petition DEEP for review of their application and DEEP could then charge or fine the Town for any costs incurred. He discussed the option of combining the IW Commission with the PZC as an alternative which several other Towns in CT have also done, but that the process would require an Ordinance. He stated that nothing would change from a Statutory perspective and that this is intended as a discussion point only. No plans are in motion and no discussions have

been had. R.Sinosky expressed concerns about the meetings being longer and larger and how it would affect them. M.Johansen asked if it would increase the size of the commission. M.D'Amato stated that it would be hard to fully answer that since this would need to be done with an ordinance, but it would not be required. The Commission held a discussion about the idea of combining these Boards and was generally not in favor of the idea, citing a preference to keep them separate. The hope is that by having this discussion residents will be more aware of the need for volunteers and the Board will obtain the membership it needs.

K. Adjournment

W.Parsell adjourned the meeting at 8:28pm