

Town of Willington
Planning and Zoning Commission
Meeting Minutes - March 21st – 7:30 PM

This hybrid meeting was held at Willington Town Hall (40 Old Farms Rd) and via Zoom

A. Call to Order

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

B. Roll Call/ Seating of Alternates

Walter Parsell
Andy Marco
Mike Johansen (Alternate – Seated for Doug Roberts)
Bill Bunnell (Alternate - Seated for Joe Hall)
Bob Shabot
Joe Hall (Joined Virtually at 7:34 PM)
John Tehan (Virtual)

Also Present

Mike D’Amato – Land Use Agent
Chris Roberts – Assistant Land Use Agent (Virtual)

C. Applications for Receipt

1. PZ-23-7 - Application Home Occupation for Small engine repair at 92 Ruby Road Owner/Applicant: Sean Gannon

D. Public Hearing

None

E. New Business

1. Informal Discussion: 329 Ruby Rd Site Buildout

Mike D’Amato explained that the owner of the property Phil Thompson wanted to speak to the commission about some ideas surrounding the proposed solar/pad site on 329 Ruby Road.

Phil Thompson gave a summary of the application and explained they were close to beginning to acquire permits for site construction but were waiting on a well location approval. He explained that they have signed a lease agreement with Tesla to locate EV Chargers on site. He said main concerns so far have been related to traffic generation and lack of signage. Phil explained that they had gotten DOT approval for some clearing along the exit and wanted to pick the commissions brain regarding potential clearing along the highway for the purpose of adding signage along the highway.

John Tehan asked if Phil could produce a rendering of what this would look like from the highway.

W. Parsell agreed.

M. D'Amato explained that this commission would determine if it was appropriate to locate a sign on the property. He added that the height of the sign would be another issue the commission would need to deal with.

The commission discussed signage.

Walter Parsell asked if any potential tenants brought up the fact that there is already restaurants at the truck stop. P. Thompson said this was discussed but he believed there was still room for a quick service restaurant. He added that he was flexible as to what type of business were to go there his main goals were to have something that generates traffic in the area for local taxes and something that benefits the community.

B. Shabot said that he thinks the EV chargers will draw traffic.

J. Tehan asked if they would be just Tesla chargers or if they would work with the other major chargers.

P. Thompson said Tesla will have 12-16 chargers and reserved the right for two additional spaces for 2 extra universal chargers.

P. Thompson said he would put together a rendering to show what potential signage would look like.

M. D'Amato said it would be helpful if P. Thompson could put together a plan and then they could use that to compare to the regulations.

F. Unfinished Business

None

G. Approval of Minutes

1. March 7th, 2023.

J. Tehan motioned to approve the minutes as written. W. Parsell seconded. **All in Favor Motion Passed.**

H. Correspondence

None

I. Public Participation (For items not on agenda)

Nick Tella said he like the discussion with the developer. He spoke to concerns with potential development from the fire department.

Ralph Tulis inquired about 335 River Road. He stated he had submitted a complaint and hadn't seen any action.

James Marshall stated he was speaking on behalf of himself. He spoke to concerns with the discussion regarding the SDZ regulations between the EDC and PZC. He asked the commission to be cognizant of the regulations they put forth.

J. Staff Report/Discussion

1. Home Occupation Regulations Review and Discussion.

C. Roberts explained to the commission that following the discussion regarding the home occupation regulation, that he typed up a draft for the regulation. He explained that the content was for the most part the same and that he made changes mostly to formatting and wording. He explained the major changes that he made. He invited the commission to read the draft and give feedback.

M. D'Amato spoke to home occupation regulations across other towns. He spoke to required changes made in the draft.

The commission read through and discussed the draft.

M. D'Amato spoke to the idea of exploring caps for the different categories of home occupations. The commission discussed this.

M. Johannsen spoke to his experience with his business and posed the question of where business owners like himself fall into these categories. M. D'Amato noted that the commercial vehicle definitions should be looked at. The commission held a discussion surrounding these issues.

2. Codification/Regulation Revisions Process

M. D'Amato reminded the commission that the request to for codification and the AARPA request had gone through. He explained the codification process and suggested that the commission should work on the things they know will need to be changed before sending it to the codifier to make the process smoother.

The commission discussed.

M. D'Amato suggested putting together a revision list. The commission agreed. M. D'Amato said he would put this together.

3. Phelps Plaza Signage

M. D'Amato explained that in 2021 Lots & More came before the commission regarding signage. He added that the Cannabis Shop was inquiring about signage, and he wanted to get clarification from the commission on how to handle permitting. M. D'Amato read the signage regulations to the commission and provided them with a rendering of the proposed sign.

W. Parsell asked what the name of the cannabis business would be. M. D'Amato said it was called "Higher Collective".

The Commission discussed signage.

The commission agreed they didn't have an issue with how the cannabis business was going about signage.

K. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 8:40 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Christopher Roberts,
Assistant Land Use Agent

