

**LITCHFIELD PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES**

February 16, 2021, 7:00 p.m.

Remote Meeting by Live Internet Video Stream and Telephone

Call to Order – Chairman Carol Bramley called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

Members Present: Max McIntyre, Robert Lupo, Stephen Simonin, Jordan Richards, Peter Losee, Abby Conroy

Members Absent: William Conti, John Cox

Appointment of Alternates – A. Conroy for J. Cox

Commissioners' requests – None

PUBLIC HEARING

Town of Litchfield - Whites Woods Rd. (Map 085/050/014) – Special Exception – Outdoor Recreation (Glossary of Terms and Phrases) 2/16/21

Parking Area #1, Gravel parking area with 19 spaces and signage

The Chairman opened the hearing and read the legal notice into the record. The green cards were reviewed.

Dennis McMorrow, P.E. from Berkshire Engineering and Surveying and Raz Alexe, P.E. and Public Works Director were present for the application. Mr. McMorrow explained that the town has obtained a grant to cover the cost of this project. Three parking areas in total will be constructed under this grant. Only this area requires a Special Exception application for Outdoor Recreational use because it is partially located on the church property. The other two parking areas (Parking area 2 and Parking Area 3) will be constructed on White Memorial Foundation property and do not require special exception approval. This particular area is split between White Memorial Foundation property and church property. It will be gravel with 19 spaces and a walkway that accesses the "Ghost Trail".

Signage for all three parcels will be located behind the town ROW. The existing stone wall will be relocated at the east edge of the 10' grass strip as requested by Dr. Tobin at the last meeting.

A discussion ensued regarding No Parking signs on South Lake Street that allow access to the trail as well.

No one spoke for or against the application.

Authorizations by the two property owners were read into the record.

S. Simonin moved to close the hearing at 7:23 p.m., P. Losee seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

S. Simonin moved to approve the application with the condition that a zoning permit be obtained before construction can begin, P. Losee seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

APPLICATION RECEPTIONS

Wakefield

Naser Rd. (Map 091/014/006)

2/16/21

Re-subdivision of a parcel with Conservation Restrictions into 2 parcels.

Mr. Wakefield was present to explain this application. He stated that the division of this parcel is for family planning purposes. He and his sister own the land together. His sister has sold her house across the street from this property and the new owners are interested in purchasing this open space. The entire lot is protected by a conservation easement held by the Litchfield Land Trust.

The Chairman requested Mr. Wakefield submit a copy of the conservation easements. Dr. Tobin requested the applicant submit a Proposed Finding and Resolution as defined in Section 8-18 of the Connecticut General Statutes drafted by an attorney for the commission to review and approve for the March 1 meeting.

Sambuco (Murphy) 59 West St. 2/16/21
Receive and set public hearing (3/15/21) for Special Exception – Restaurant (Glossary of Terms & Phrases) in HTC district.

The applicant was not present. Dr. Tobin explained that the application is complete except for review by Torrington Area Health, Water Pollution Control Authority, Fire Marshal and building official. The commission discussed setting the hearing without the applicant being present this evening.

Mr. Sambuco phoned in at 7:50. He reviewed his plan as submitted. There will be 4-6 tables with a Gelato and two pastry counters. The hours will be from 12:00 noon to 9:00 p.m. They will be serving coffee, pastry and espresso. Dr. Tobin requested Mr. Sambuco receive WPCA approval for the public hearing. Mr. Sambuco agreed that no outside seating is requested. Parking was discussed. It was noted that the parking will be the same as what was provided for the previous use. Deliveries will be made in the rear. The Chairman requested Mr. Sambuco submit a site plan showing employee parking and outside garbage container storage.

M. McIntyre moved to set the hearing for March 15, R. Lupo seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Minutes February 1, 2021 – S. Simonin moved to approve the minutes, P. Losee seconded and the motion passed unanimously with A. Conroy abstaining.

Old Business – COVID Updates

Dr. Tobin asked for commission input on what the future will look like for the restaurants when COVID 19 Executive Orders for the outdoor seating expire in April. These outside seating areas are not addressed in the current regulations. The consensus of the commission is to take a look at the regulations regarding site plan modifications to allow these business to continue the use.

New Business – A discussion ensued regarding new state orders for hybrid/online meetings.

Correspondence

Robinson & Cole, dated February 2, 2021 regarding SR Litchfield LLC, Notice of intent to file a petition for declaratory ruling for the construction, operation and maintenance of 19.8MW(ac) solar photovoltaic electric generating facility off Town Farm Road in Litchfield and Rossi Road and Highland Ave. in Torrington.

Selectman J. Zullo was invited to address questions and concerns of the Commission regarding this solar photovoltaic facility. He stated that this is a 30M to 32M construction investment by Ever source and Silicon Ranch Corporation. All power generated will be for northern New England states, Litchfield will not benefit from the electric generation. The tax revenue generated will equal approximately a quarter mill tax rate or about \$250K per year for the town. It was noted that this was endorsed in writing by the Board of Selectmen in 2017. The First Selectman stated that the current BOS have just received the same letter today and it will be discussed at the next meeting.

The commission expressed concerns regarding the extreme size of the project and the fact that the town of Litchfield will not be benefiting by getting any of the power generated. It was noted that the Plan of Conservation and Development does not endorse using farm and pasture land for this use.

The commission will place this on the next agenda to discuss.

Adjournment

M. McIntyre Moved to adjourn at 8:53 p.m., P. Losee seconded and the meeting adjourned.

Carol Bramley, Chairman

Date

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