



Town of
North Stonington, CT

PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION

REGULAR MEETING

THURSDAY, JULY 6, 2023 - 7:00pm

**Old Middle High School – Media Center
298 Norwich-Westerly Road
North Stonington, CT 06359**

MINUTES

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER: Chairman Ed Learned called the Regular Meeting of the North Stonington Planning & Zoning Commission to order on Thursday, July 6, 2023 at 7:01 p.m.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Ed Learned, Chairman, Pat Lewis, Vice Chair, Mark Leonard, Secretary, & Wayne Wilkinson

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Robert Mazzella & Robert Kappes (Alternate)

STAFF PRESENT: Administrative Assistant Cheryl Konsavitch and SCOOG Interim Planner Nicole Haggerty

2. ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA: Reappoint Jennifer Lindo as Zoning Enforcement Officer under ZEO Activity Report

3. PUBLIC COMMENT: None

4. COMMISSION REVIEW:

SPL #23-038 Application of Greystone Land Holdings, LLC, 223 Jerry Browne Road, Stonington, CT 06378 for the construction of a Farm Winery pursuant to Section 1008 of the zoning regulations on property located at 77 & 79 Wintechog Hill Road in an R-80 Zone. Tax Map # 100, Lots #3127/7767 (*Commission received on 06/08/23 & must act on or by 08/12/23*)

M. Leonard read the application into the record.

Seated: E. Learned, P. Lewis, M. Leonard, W. Wilkinson

Atty. William Sweeney, David McKay, P.E and Brian, Sarah and Ellie Zuro were present for this application.

Atty. Sweeney stated his law firm represents Greystone Land Holdings LLC and the application before the Commission is for a farm winery to be constructed on the site of the former Everbreeze Farm. Atty. Sweeney stated the proposed farm winery meets or exceeds all requirements of Section 1008 of the zoning regulations. Atty. Sweeney stated access to Greystone would be provided directly from Wintechog Hill Road, which is classified as a primary road. Approval from the North Stonington Inland Wetlands Commission was granted on December 14, 2022. Atty. Sweeney stated Greystone is to be constructed on the 210-plus acre property of which approximately 30 acres have already been planted as a grape vineyard, and well in excess of 25% of the grapes used in the production of wine will originate from North Stonington or other areas of Connecticut.

Atty. Sweeney stated that Greystone is envisioned and proposed as a premier North Stonington farm winery that will focus on producing premium wines from grapes grown in North Stonington, as well as other wine regions. Greystone will consist of two fundamental operations, the vineyard and the winery. The vineyard portion of Greystone is the agricultural backbone of the operation and consists of approximately 30 acres of grapes, which were planted several years ago. The winery portion of Greystone involves the process of transforming the grapes into wine. Greystone also anticipates being involved in the cultivation of grapes off-site and bringing that wine to its processing facilities for further winemaking, processing and bottling.

Atty. Sweeney stated the agricultural and winemaking activities are supported by two buildings on the property. The first building is a 5,252 square foot tractor shed that houses equipment and tractors that are used in the vineyard with a small office to support the field work and employees. The second building is a 22,800 square foot manufacturing building which will house and support the winery and winemaking activities.

Atty. Sweeney stated there will be a significant focus on providing a guest experience that will highlight the wines that are produced. In addition to the manufacturing building, there is also a second-floor observation loft that overlooks the tank room, the barrel room, and the bottling room where guests will be permitted to taste wine and observe the manufacturing process in the observation loft.

Atty. Sweeney stated the third building proposed will be the main tasting building which is 13,580 square feet and will consist of two main tasting rooms, plus a covered porch and outdoor terrace. Greystone anticipates holding appropriately scaled special events, that might include wine festivals, musical events, wine dinners, special member events, weddings, and private gatherings which most of the events would be held during daytime hours coinciding with the operating hours of the tasting room. Weddings would typically be from 5 to 11 p.m. and all music associated with the weddings would be indoors and end by 10:00 p.m.

Atty. Sweeney also stated that Greystone expects to make some food available to guests, which typically would include pairings of bread, cheese, and fruit for sale on site with wine, but will not be operating as a restaurant. If additional food is made available for special events or weddings, they will be catered for. Atty. Sweeney stated the entire project will be phased to allow Greystone to expand appropriately as the business expands.

The Commission had questions pertaining to traffic and sight lines.

David McKay, P.E. of Boundaries LLC went over the site plan with the Commission along with the stormwater management and traffic report and stated that because there are 10.8 acres of disturbance, they will also need DEEP approval.

Atty. Sweeney went over the architecture renderings for the proposed buildings.

SCOOG Interim Planner Nicole Haggerty gave a brief review of the application, stating she will have a full review done within the next 2 weeks as she just started working with the Commission on Monday. Tom Cummings of CLA Engineers will be doing a third-party review of the application and should also have his review done shortly.

The application will be continued to the Commission August 10th meeting.

7. PLANNING ISSUES & DISCUSSION: None

8. SENIOR PLANNER & ZONING OFFICIAL'S REPORTS/ISSUES:

ZEO Activity Report – Motion to appoint Jennifer Lindo as Official ZEO

MOTION by M. Leonard, SECOND by W. Wilkinson to appoint Jennifer Lindo as the Official Zoning Enforcement Officer. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

9. NEW APPLICATIONS: None

10. **OLD BUSINESS:** None

11. **NEW BUSINESS:** None

12. **REVIEW MINUTES:**

Review minutes of Regular Meeting of 06/14/23 – The minutes of 06/14/23 were accepted as written.

13. **ADJOURNMENT:**

MOTION by W. Wilkinson, SECOND by M. Leonard to adjourn the meeting at 8:39 p.m. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Respectfully Submitted,

Cheryl Konsavitch

Cheryl Konsavitch,
Administrative Assistant, Land Use Office