



Town of  
**North Stonington, CT**

PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION

**REGULAR MEETING**

**THURSDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2020 - 7:00pm**

**VIA ZOOM**

**MINUTES APPROVED ~ DECEMBER 10, 2020**

1. **CALL MEETING TO ORDER:** Chairman Louis Steinbrecher called the Regular Meeting of the North Stonington Planning & Zoning Commission to order on Thursday, December 3, 2020 at 7:00 p.m.

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:** Louis Steinbrecher, Chairman, Wayne Wilkinson, Jennifer Pensa (Alternate) Mark Leonard, Pat Lewis, Ed Learned and Robert Kappes (Alternate)

**COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:** None

**STAFF PRESENT:** Planning, Development & Zoning Official Juliet Hodge and Administrative Assistant Cheryl Konsavitch

2. **ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA:** None

3. **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Shawn Murphy stated he would like to comment under Sr. Planner & Zoning Official's Reports/Issues for 421L Wyassup Road.

4. **ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA:** None

5. **COMMISSION REVIEW:**

**A. CGS 8-24 #20-104 (CT General Statute 8-24 Review),** On behalf of the Board of Selectmen, Selectman Michael Uργο requesting Planning & Zoning Commission review, in accordance with CGS 8-24, on the following item: The Town is seeking approval to lease a portion of the 2-story wing of the old Middle/High School educational purposes, in accordance with the deed restriction on the property. The property is located at 298 Norwich-Westerly Rd. in an R-40 Zone. Tax Map #109, Lot #7195

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

1<sup>st</sup> Selectmen Mike Uργο was present and went over the request stating the Town is seeking approval to lease the 2-story wing of the former High School/Middle School. M. Uργο stated the Board of Education does not need the space and the lease of this portion of the building will transfer the financial responsibility for the utility costs to the tenant and be a source of revenue for the Town. M. Uργο stated the use proposed by the tenant selected would meet the deed restriction for the property for educational purposes. The tenant would make any improvements to the building that may be needed.

The Commission asked questions pertaining to use of other spaces in the school and the parking.

M. Uργο stated he would send out an RFP to see if anyone is interested in the building.

M. Uργο stated that private schools are not held to the same criteria as public schools so less updates may not be required.

Brian Rathbun and Brad Borden commented on the request and J. Hodge explained the 8-24 process.

**MOTION by M. Leonard, SECOND by P. Lewis A. to approve CGS 8-24 #20-104 (CT General Statute 8-24 Review), On behalf of the Board of Selectmen, Selectman Michael Urgo requesting Planning & Zoning Commission review, in accordance with CGS 8-24, on the following item: The Town is seeking approval to lease a portion of the 2-story wing of the old Middle/High School educational purposes, in accordance with the deed restriction on the property. The property is located at 298 Norwich-Westerly Rd. in an R-40 Zone. Tax Map #109, Lot #7195.**

**MOTION CARRIED 4:1**

In Favor: L. Steinbrecher, W. Wilkinson, M. Leonard, E. Learned

Opposed: P. Lewis

**B. MOD SPL #20-107 (Site Plan Modification)** Application of Quinlan Enterprises, LLC, 152 Wheeler Rd., Stonington, CT 06378 for a site-plan modification for the construction of a Phase 2 warehouse building on property located at 75 Frontage Rd., in an EDD/WSPO Zone. Tax Map #122, Lot #7634

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

Sergio Cherenzia, Licensed Engineer & Jason Quinlan of Quinlan Enterprises were also present via zoom.

S. Cherenzia went over the site plan for the Commission, stating the building being proposed is Phase 2 of the project that was presented several years ago. S. Cherenzia stated there are 256 parking spaces provided on the whole property and could easily accommodate the low intensity, warehouse use. There will be some minor re-grading to accommodate access to the building and some landscaping and hardscaping will be done to the site. S. Cherenzia stated there currently is no office or work space proposed in the warehouse, but that the septic system was designed several years ago to accommodate both buildings and any proposed offices. Only warehouse space is being proposed at this time. S. Cherenzia stated he will submit new building plans as the one's submitted were only draft.

J. Hodge stated the use is allowed in the zone and is waiting on a 3<sup>rd</sup> party review and LLHD review. The applicant still needs wetlands approval so the Commission will not act on this application this evening.

## **6. PLANNING ISSUES & DISCUSSION:**

**A. Farming Definitions** – J. Hodge stated she would like to resume discussions with the Commission on the farming definitions and what constitutes an “Active Agricultural Use”. P. Lewis and J. Hodge have been doing some research. J. Hodge stated that some clarification is needed on what makes a farm a farm entitled to have an accessory use – such as an event barn for example. P. Lewis mentioned that questions came up during the public hearings for the event barn about how you differentiate the farm as a principal use if the accessory use produces more income than the farming operation? How do we decide if the farm is just a crutch to establish the accessory use? P. Lewis felt that the Commission needed to define what an Agricultural Operation is and come up with criteria and guidelines to consider to make sure the intent of the regulations is being met. She mentioned Lebanon's regulations as a good example to look at. J. Hodge agreed that clarification was needed to address the possible situation where the accessory use becomes the primary use and the farm use eventually goes away or becomes clearly secondary. P. Lewis stated she will continue looking at other Towns' regulations to see where we are in comparison and will work with J. Hodge on this further.

**B. Budget Discussion** – J. Hodge went over the draft of the proposed 2021-22 Land Use Budget with the Commission and specifically the sections related to the PZC. J. Hodge stated she would like help with zoning, specifically to have someone go out and verify complaints, follow-up on active violations, write inspection reports, and take pictures. She proposed adding these responsibilities to the current WEO responsibilities with a slight

increase in pay. \$5,000 was discussed. J. Hodge suggested using the \$2,500 in the current budget for contracted consulting to give this a trial run before adding to the budget next year.

**7. SENIOR PLANNER & ZONING OFFICIAL'S REPORT/ISSUES:**

**A.** ZEO Activity Report/November – J. Hodge went over her Activity Report for the month of November, updating the Commission on ongoing enforcement cases.

**B.** 421L Wyassup Rd – J. Hodge stated she has a permit application for a Year-round SFR along Wyassup Lake that was initially denied back in 2017. The applicant then went to the Zoning Board of Appeals to increase the cubicle content and that application was also denied. She stated the plans before her looks like exactly what was denied with respect to Cubicle Content. She asked for direction from the Commission.

Shawn Murphy stated that he was seated on ZBA for this application and the house does look like what the Board had denied in 2019 and felt the Board would not be happy if this was approved as submitted. J. Hodge stated she would speak to the applicant to see what his intent was for some of the areas on the plan not marked for their use.

35 Wintechog Hill Rd.: J. Hodge stated she had received a complaint about the conditions of an apparent apartment above the garage for which no permits were ever obtained and that the owner was also potentially running an illegal business on the property. J. Hodge stated she would like to have the enforcement issue on this property cleared up and has been talking to the homeowner on a possible solution such as converting the apartment to a single-family residence.

**8. NEW APPLICATIONS:** None

**9. OLD BUSINESS:** None

**10. NEW BUSINESS:** None

**11. REVIEW MINUTES:** Review minutes of Regular Meeting of 11/12/20. The minutes of 11/12/20 were accepted as submitted.

**12. ADJOURNMENT:**

**MOTION by M. Leonard, SECOND by R. Kappes to adjourn the meeting at 9:40 p.m. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Respectfully Submitted,

*Cheryl Konsavitch*

Cheryl Konsavitch, Administrative Assistant  
Land Use Office