

From: Carrie Vibert March 8, 2012 10:45:17 AM
Subject: Zoning Commission Minutes 02/06/2012 ADOPTED
To: SimsburyCT_ZoningMin
Cc:

ZONING COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING
ADOPTED MINUTES
FEBRUARY 6, 2012

I. CALL TO ORDER

Rob Pomeroy, Chairman, called the regular meeting for the Zoning Commission to order at 7:05PM on Monday, February 6, 2012 in the Main Meeting Room of the Simsbury Town Offices. The following members and alternates were present: Amy Salls, David Ryan, Ed Pabich, Ed Cosgrove, Will Fiske and Vaughn Marecki. Others in attendance included Hiram Peck, Director of Planning, Leslie Faraci, Clerk and other interested parties.

II. ALTERNATES

Commissioner Pomeroy appointed Vaughn Marecki for Gerald Post.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES - January 23, 2012 Special Meeting and the December 19, 2011 Regular Meeting

With no comments on either draft, the minutes from both the January 23, 2012 Special Meeting and the December 19, 2011 Regular Meeting were approved.

IV. PRESENTATION

Kent Schwendy, Senior Vice President, Fuss & O'Neill, addressed the Commission with regards to the application for site plan approval for the construction of student residences at Westminster School. Mr. Schwendy began by providing a brief history of past projects at the school. He then explained that the project is basically about the construction of three (3) new dormitories, and the demolition of three (3) existing dormitories. Mr. Schwendy explained that the new dormitories will be in the same architectural style as Edge House, an existing dorm, of which he showed a photo on a board to the Commission. Mr. Schwendy then explained the slight differences there will be with the new construction, due to meeting updated codes. Mr. Schwendy walked the Commission through where the new dorms will be located on the campus. He then explained that they are looking to get approval for this whole phase of the master plan, although the construction will not take place all at one time. He explained that the timing will

depend on fund raising and the impending bids. Mr. Schwendy then explained that the existing dorms will not be demolished until the new ones are in place and ready for occupancy. He then explained their plan to construct carriage houses, adjacent to the new dorms, to make up for the faculty houses they will demolish in order to construct the new dorms. The carriage houses will have garages on the first floor with apartments above them. Mr. Schwendy said there will also be the construction of additional garages for faculty parking and storage above the garage space. Mr. Schwendy provided some specifications of the proposed buildings, saying they don't require special exceptions, as they all fit within zoning regulations. Mr. Schwendy said these new buildings will use geothermal heat exchange for heating and cooling, with supplemental boilers, due to the larger quantity of hot water usage. Mr. Schwendy then expanded further on the architecture of the new structures and their placement within the campus. With a rendering of the full master-plan, Mr. Schwendy showed the overall idea of where they ultimately want to go with the make-up of the campus. Grading and storm water infiltration was discussed as well, and then Mr. Schwendy said they are not increasing impervious surfaces, they are decreasing impervious surfaces. The dorm room unit sizes were discussed, and Mr. Schwendy said he had all of the floor plans if the Commission members wanted to see more specifics. He then showed the Commission a rendering of the proposed roof lines. Mr. Peck then gave a review of the process, thus far, with this application, saying it has been in front of Design Review Board, receiving approval there. Mr. Peck said that Howard Beach, Conservation Officer, has also reviewed the application and agrees that the drainage is being treated properly. Mr. Peck said Rich Sawitzke, Town Engineer has also reviewed this application and said he had found no issues with the items in his purview. The proposed changes to the campus road were discussed briefly. Mr. Schwendy mentioned that they had met with Kevin Kowalski, Fire Marshall, several times already and he has no issues with the plans. It was discussed that if approved tonight, this site plan would be operable for nine (9) years, with possibility of extension. When discussing timing of the project, Mr. Schwendy said they hope to start demolition in March, with a goal to have two (2) dorms done by Fall 2013, with the timing of the third dorm is still up in the air. The potential for changes to the site plans following approval were discussed, with Mr. Peck saying, if the changes were not substantial, they would not need to come back in front of the Commission. The appropriate level of oversight by the Commission was discussed with regards to potential changes to the site plan. Mr. Schwendy mentioned the option of coming in for updated presentations as the construction progresses, which Commissioner Pomeroy recommended as a good idea.

Commissioner Fiske moved to approve the application of Thomas Earl, Owner, and Ronald Bomengen, Agent, for site plan approval for the construction of student residences on the property located at Westminster School, 995

Hopmeadow Street, pursuant to Article 7 of the Zoning Regulations, Permitted Uses. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Pabich and unanimously approved.

V. UPDATES ON:

(a) Budget - Mr. Peck said the only update he had, regarding the budget, is that the Budget Workshop with the Selectmen has been set for February 27th at 5:00PM. Mr. Peck mentioned a new Marketing Study, under the Economic Development Commission, that he will be presenting as an addition to the budget. Mr. Peck reviewed some of the general expenses within the budget. Commissioner Ryan requested a current set of Zoning Regulations, whether in PDF form or printed. It was decided it should be placed on the website. Commissioner Pomeroy then requested that Mr. Peck supply the Commissioners with the budget. Printing costs and application fees were then discussed.

(b) Design Guidelines - Mr. Peck said he does not have any update on the Design Guidelines.

(c) Projects for 2012 -Mr. Peck said he was interested in hearing from the Commission members on if they have anything they are interested in having Town Staff look into. He then said the West Street project is coming along. Mr. Peck said they are also continuing to keep on top of the FCC issue with the WPCA.

New Business - Commission Salls brought up the issue of the Informal Presentation process and equal access for the public to the Zoning Commission. Commissioner Pomeroy stated that if they can listen to the developer in a preliminary stage, there should be a forum where the public can be heard as well. Mr. Peck said, after discussing with Town Attorney, there cannot be a de facto public hearing created prior to a formal application being filed. The process was discussed further and the point was made that allowing a public hearing on an application that has not yet been filed, would be putting the cart before the horse. Again, Commissioner Pomeroy said that the developer had the chance to speak, so why should the public not have that chance at well. Mr. Peck said the Informal Process was created in order for the developer to come in and let the Commission know what their intentions were and to get some feedback from the Commission. He said that no matter what is said at that Informal Presentation, nothing is binding, on either side. He went on to say that the Public Hearing is really the forum for the public to speak on a formally submitted application. Commissioner Ryan made the point that the Commission should be encouraging the developer, at that Informal Presentation stage, to speak with the neighboring property owners/other interested parties. Commissioner Salls said she is glad they are addressing this process issue at the meeting so they are all clear on what can and cannot be said, and

ultimately so they do not compromise the process.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Ryan moved to adjourn the Regular Meeting of the Zoning Commission at 8:05PM. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Salls and passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Pomeroy, Chairman