

1. Call to Order

The Chester Planning & Zoning Commission opened its regular meeting at 7:50 PM immediately following a public hearing.

2. Roll Call & Seating of Alternates

Members present and seated were Jon Lavy, Mel Seifert, Sally Murray, Steven Merola, Peter Zanardi, Jacqueline Stack, Keith Scherber, Elaine Fitzgibbons (seated for D. Joslow).

3. Audience of Citizens

Others present included First Selectwoman Lauren Gister, Attorney Ed Cassella, Lillian Bella, Pat Woomer, Bill Sangster and John Schiavone. No one offered comments at this time.

4. Old Business

(b) Proposed Amendment to Zoning Regulations to amend Section 80 Research & Light Manufacturing

Motion by Murray, second by Zanardi, to approve Section 80

Amendments with conditions noted during hearing with an effective date of July 1, 2017. Approved with Seifert opposed.

(a) Proposed Medical Marijuana Regulation

Chairman Lavy noted the public hearing for this item had been closed several months ago.

Brief discussion ensued. Mel Seifert noted one big issue is that banking won't allow these facilities to set up accounts. This is a heavy cash business. Chester is a very small residential town. This creates a significant danger of criminal activity and drugs. Mr. Seifert referenced a recent "60 Minutes" article he saw.

It was also noted Chester has a very small Police Department. The danger to this community is too great. Members felt Chester was not a place to risk that. They didn't feel the banking issue would be changing any time soon.

In addition, the Preamble of the Zoning Regulations states "...protect the health, safety and welfare of the community...". It was noted both production and

dispensary facilities are available within a 25 mile radius. There is no significant regional need for these services that is not already addressed by existing facilities within a reasonable distance of 25 miles.

Sally Murray noted Federal Regulations categorize marijuana as a Schedule 1 drug. Mel Seifert noted the law prohibits the expenditure of Federal Funds to stop the production of medical marijuana. Given this inherent conflict between Federal and State Laws, it is on shaky ground.

Motion by Seifert, second by Murray, to adopt Section 117, Medical Marijuana as presented with an effective date of July 1, 2017. Brief discussion followed. Sally Murray read into the record the proposed new Section 117, Medical Marijuana. It again was noted there is no significant regional need and there is that conflict between Federal and State law. Unanimously Approved.

(c) New Stormwater Management Regulations – nothing further at this time.

5. New Business

(a) Section 8-24 Referral – Solar Installation at Chester Elementary School

First Selectwoman Gister noted there currently is a very small solar array that was put on the Chester Elementary School in 2013. The Energy Team has been researching ways to save money in Town on energy. They explored the idea of a Purchase Power Agreement (PPA). The company would own it, manage it and maintain it.

Greenskies and C-Tech submitted quotations. Greenskies savings was more. Both companies would need to do tree trimming at the school. That actually is a good thing because some of those trees are a problem anyway.

What is being proposed is 385 panels which will provide for 42% of the energy needs. The Town currently pays 16 cents per KW. With this proposal, it would be 5 cents per KW. That is a substantial savings to the Town of Chester. It is also a fixed rate. At the end of the 20 year term, the Town has the choice to tell them to

take it away or to purchase it at a cost of \$15,000. The only cost to the Town is if we decide to terminate early.

First Selectwoman Gister noted the only reason this has come before the Planning & Zoning Commission is that Section 8-24 of the CT General Statutes talks about locating and extending public utilities. She also noted there is an educational component to this as well.

Chairman Lavy asked if anyone had done a survey on the condition of the existing roof. He also asked when the roof was done. First Selectwoman Gister noted a survey was done in 2013. The current panels will stay as a separate thing. Lavy also asked if anyone checked to see whether the warranty on the roof would be void if solar panels were installed. Sally Murray asked about maintenance and upgrading during that period of time. Pat Woome noted Greenskies is responsible to repair and keep it optimally performing.

Elaine Fitzgibbons asked about payback. It was noted there is a 6 year payback on the original system because it was purchased. There is none on this one because Greenskies owns the system. Pat Woome noted they will continue to pursue these issues. They also have a system designed for the Fire House.

Motion by Murray, second by Zanardi, to send letter to Board of Selectmen recommending they move forward with Solar Installation at Chester Elementary School as this is in keeping with the Plan of Conservation & Development, it is a good use to existing flat roof space and it is an educational component. Unanimously Approved.

6. Report of Officers and Subcommittees

(a) Report from Zoning Compliance Officer

ZCO Brown reported on the following items -

(1) 10 Prospect Street – things had started to progress with clean up, but then got worse and another bus appeared. Advised the property owner if something is not done to bring property into zoning compliance, a Cease & Desist Order will be issued.

(2) Got complaint from neighbor regarding school bus company on Prospect Street.

Their original approval several years ago called for screening on the property line which is no longer there. Been playing phone tag with the property owner. Hopefully will be able to get in touch with him next week.

(3) Still working on resolution for Chester Airport. I was advised they have complied with DEEP requirements to remove the stumps.

(4) Jon Lavy noted he would like the Commission to consider adding Microbrewery and Brew Pub as a Special Exception to the Village District. It should also be added to the definitions. He has been working with EDC and WPCA to try and get them to change their regulations.

(5) Inquiry received regarding having a chocolatier/candy store at either 16-18 Main Street or 43-47 Main Street. Commission members agreed this would be a retail business.

(b) Plan of Conservation & Development

Chairman Lavy noted he met with First Selectwoman Gister and Susan Wright last week. It was agreed to write an RFP to do visioning that fits into the POCD. The Board of Finance has set aside \$60,000 for a consultant. A committee has been established consisting of Jon Lavy, Susan Wright, Doreen Joslow, Lauren Gister and Virginia Carmany. The goal is to have the POCD completed by Spring 2018. It has to be sent to State Agencies for review and hopefully can be adopted prior to December 31, 2018. Meetings need to be efficient. The \$60,000 also includes Town Meeting Charrettes. We will also need to get the Town's Zoning Map updated.

7. Bills for Payment – none.

8. Communications, Receipt of New Petitions, New Applications – none.

9. Approval of Minutes – May 11, 2017 Public Hearing and Regular Meeting Minutes

Motion by Merola, second by Stack, approve May 11, 2017 Public Hearing Minutes as written. Approved with Fitzgibbons, Seifert, Lavy abstaining.

Motion by Zanardi, second by Murray, to approve May 11, 2017 Regular Meeting Minutes as written. Approved with Fitzgibbons, Seifert, Lavy abstaining.

10. Pending Litigation – nothing new to report.

11. Adjournment

**Motion by Murray, second by Zanardi, to adjourn at 8:35 PM.
Unanimously Approved.**

Respectfully submitted,

Sally Murray

Sally Murray, Secretary /jrb