

Chester Planning & Zoning Commission
Regular Meeting, September 12, 2019
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1. Call to Order

The Chester Planning & Zoning Commission held its regular meeting on Thursday, September 12, 2019, at the Chester Town Hall, 203 Middlesex Avenue, Chester, Connecticut. Chairman Lavy called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM.

2. Roll Call & Seating of Alternates

In attendance and seated were Jon Lavy, Michael Sanders, Bettie Perreault, Peter Zanardi, Steven Merola, Elaine Fitzgibbons, Seth Fidel, Andrew Landsman (seated for Krempel) and Keith Scherber (arrived at 7:50 PM).

3. Audience of Citizens

Aaron Mortensen from N. L. Jacobson, First Selectwoman Lauren Gister and Joel Severance, Harbor Management Chairman were all present and commented appropriately on Agenda items below.

4. Old Business

- (1) #19-04 Petition for Amendment to Zoning Regulations, Chester Planning & Zoning Commission, Section 73.6.3 Village District "Design Standards" Boundaries – SET EFFECTIVE DATE

Motion by Perreault, second by Fidel, to set an effective date of September 20, 2019 for #19-04 Petition for Amendment to Zoning Regulations, Chester Planning & Zoning Commission, Section 73.6.3 Village District "Design Standards" Boundaries." Unanimously Approved.

5. New Business

- (1) Section 8-24 Referral – Main Street Project, Phase 3

Chairman Lavy read two letters into the record – one from First Selectwoman Lauren Gister dated September 5th requesting the 8-24 referral of Main Street Project, Phase 3, and the second one from Aaron Mortensen, from N. L. Jacobson & Associates outlining the Main Street Project, Phase 3.

Bettie Perreault noted the record should show there have been several meetings with the public as well as individual property owners in the center of Town.

Mr. Mortensen reviewed the following items –

- Roadway improvements, the roadway will drop about 6" and will taper from both ends to meet in the middle.
- New parking stalls to be delineated, adding more crosswalks, one parking space will be lost.
- Existing signage will be reduced, there will be signs to direct cars to the 2 municipal parking lots.
- Adding guide rail on Spring Street and landscaping on the top of the Chester Wall.

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- Reviewed storm drainage, there is an existing drainage next to the old Town Hall, they will be adding sumps and inlets.
- Met with the Wetlands Agency and was asked to look at the drainage on the west side.
- Hydrant in the Flag Pole area is inaccessible and will be relocated to the east by the Water Company in October when it replaces the water main.
- New sidewalks will be concrete with Belgium Block bands.
- Adding curb ramps meeting ADA requirements as much as possible, maximum 2% slope on the sidewalk, all the water should pitch away from the buildings.
- Site lighting was reviewed, it was noted electrical connections will be picked up from the cemetery.
- Work on the deteriorating Chester Wall and stairs was reviewed, a kiosk will be added with a power receptacle for adding power to the kiosk.
- Trash containers, benches, bike racks will be added, there are no charging stations for electric cars, but First Selectwoman Gister noted the E Team is looking at that.
- The handicap parking space in front of the Brewery will be moved to a spot that meets ADA requirements.
- The bollards in the plaza area will be removable and stored at the public works garage.
- Scot Mills and Brian Kent have gotten together and are looking at more native tree species.
- The granite curb in front of Priscilla Robinson's will be extended from Spring to Maple Streets. Also getting rid of one tree in front of Priscilla's property.
- Adding a sidewalk at 1 Maple for pedestrian traffic coming down the hill.
- The kiosk will be 4' high and 7' wide with a roof consistent with other signage. Cummings and Good will be designing it.
- The Flag Pole circle will be landscaped and the wall repaired. The Fire Marshal, Fire Chief and Public Works have all been involved with this process.
- Chairman Lavy asked if this project would go out to bid and noted the project must be effectively managed. Lavy noted the merchants and residents need to know what's going to happen. Mr. Mortensen noted the project will go out to bid.
- Merchant deliveries were discussed, perhaps there should be some kind of traffic control on duty.

First Selectwoman Gister reviewed the process for filling the empty spaces underneath some of the buildings, the sidewalk and the road. The empty spaces will be filled with flowable fill. Gister also noted they are trying to get as much done ahead of time as possible. It is hoped to start construction in March. They are concerned about events such as the Farmers' Market and 4 on the 4th, etc.

Chairman Lavy asked when this would go out to bid. First Selectwoman Gister replied December. She reviewed the bidding process and that it has to go before the State a couple of times. Hopefully the State will do their part as quickly as possible.

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Chairman Lavy asked about the staging area. First Selectwoman Gister noted they are working on that.

First Selectwoman Gister noted they have formed a group of merchants, property owners, tenants, and town staff. They will start meeting next Wednesday. The BOS/BOF have been talking about what the Town can do to assist merchants.

Chairman Lavy asked if any night time or weekend work hours have been considered. Gister noted a survey has been done with the merchants to see what their work hours are. The biggest concern is when the sidewalks are open, the merchants can still get into their buildings and have parking.

Elaine Fitzgibbons asked if this plan is as good as it can get. This is going to last for a long time. First Selectwoman Gister noted the biggest concern is what will the State allow to be included in the Grant.

Andrew Landsman felt this was a much more practical project, fixing the road, fixing the sidewalks. It will be painful but everyone will get through it.

Michael Sanders asked if there was any assurance the LOTCIP money will be appropriated. First Selectwoman Gister noted she was pretty sure it would.

Motion by Perreault, second by Fidel, to waive the fees for the Main Street Project, Phase 3. Unanimously Approved.

Motion by Fidel, second by Perreault, to recommend approval to the Board of Selectmen for the Section 8-24 Referral for the Main Street Improvements, Phase 3, as presented to the Commission with all necessary requirements of various local agencies to be met and that the plans reflect the 2019 Plan of Conservation & Development. Unanimously Approved.

(2) Chester Creek Dredging, deposition of material on Dock Road property
Joel Severance, Chairman of the Harbor Management Commission, noted they have tentative approval from the Connecticut Port Authority. He indicated the mouth of Chester Creek needs to be dredged every 10 years. The WPA project has used the Eckhouse property on Dock Road for deposition of spoils several times. This is a vacant piece of land at the end of Dock Road. The Connecticut Port Authority came up with a cost share for the project which has been approved tentatively by the Board of Selectmen and Board of Finance. This will also have to go to a Town Meeting. Mr. Severance had a map dated December 29, 1997 showing where the proposed dredging and spoils deposition area. He explained there were several reasons to keep the Creek open to boats. Chairman Lavy noted this project would require a Special Exception application and approval from DEEP. Mr. Severance should also check with Torrance Downes to see if he

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needs to get Gateway approval. The zoning application should include any and all other approvals already obtained. It should also include a letter from the Dock Road property owner agreeing to deposition of the spoils.

Chairman Lavy asked when the dredging would be done. Mr. Severance replied at the end of Winter and beginning of Spring when endangered species aren't moving up and down and before the boats go in the water.

Chairman Lavy noted the Special Exception would be received in October and scheduled for public hearing at the November meeting. It was also noted the Commission would waive the fees.

(3) Gateway Standards

The Gateway Standards were distributed. Members should review them and we'll ask Torrance Downes if he is available to come to the Commission's October meeting.

(4) Regional Planning Commission vacancy

Michael Sanders volunteered to be the Planning & Zoning Commission's representative to Regional Planning Commission. Meetings are held once a month on the 4th Monday of each month.

6. Report of Officers and Subcommittees

(a) Report of Zoning Compliance Officer

New Cease & Desist Order issued for 173 W. Main Street for junk cars and car parts on property.

7. Bills for Payment – none.

8. Communications, Receipt of New Petitions, New Applications

Simon's Marketplace Outdoor Dining Zoning Permit received. **Motion by Perreault, second by Sanders, to approve Outdoor Dining Zoning Permit for Simon's Marketplace with condition that a Certificate of Insurance be provided. Unanimously Approved.**

9. Approval of Minutes – July 11, 2019

Motion by Zanardi, second by Perreault, to approve July 11, 2019 Public Hearing Minutes as written. Approved with Scherber abstaining.

Motion by Perreault, second by Zanardi, to approve July 11, 2019 Regular Meeting Minutes as amended. Approved with Scherber abstaining.

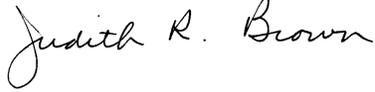
10. Pending Litigation - none.

11. Adjournment

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Motion by Fidel, second by Merola, to adjourn at 9:05 PM. Unanimously Approved.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Judith R. Brown". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the text "Respectfully submitted,".

Judith R. Brown, Recording Secretary