

Chester Planning & Zoning Commission
Meeting Minutes
February 11, 2021
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1. Call to Order

The Chester Planning & Zoning Commission met on Thursday, February 11, 2021 via ZOOM. Chair Jon Lavy called to meeting to order at 7:01 P.M.,

2. Roll Call and Seating of Alternates:

Commission members attending via ZOOM and seated were Jon Lavy, Michael Sanders, Seth Fidel, Elaine Fitzgibbons, Henry Krempel, Steve Merola, Bettie Perreault, Keith Scherber, Peter Zanardi, Alternates Pat Bisacky and Shubert Koong. Also present were Zoning Officers John Guskowski and Mike D'Amato and Chester representatives to the Gateway Commission Tom Brelsford and Jenny Kitsen.

3. Audience of Citizens: there were none present

4. Old Business

a. Discussion of Gateway Standards: pending further review no discussion was held. Tom Brelsford, Chester representative and Jenny Kitsen, alternate to the Gateway Commission were introduced.

b. Tom Brelsford is a relatively new representative to the Gateway Commission. Historically, the Gateway area of the lower CT River valley was under consideration to be a National Park in the 1970s. The national designation did not happen and the Gateway district was formed instead. The purpose was to protect the lower CT River valley through zoning and conservation efforts. The Commission works through staff of the CT RiverCOG in a joint venture fashion. Chester zoning regulations are more restrictive than most other towns. Review of the regulations, with suggestions to be made to the Planning & Zoning Commission, will allow Chester to review and decide what, if any changes to make. Brelsford and Kitsen want to be proactive for projects that affect the Gateway District and asked that they be called on when activities are planned in the Gateway District.

5. New Business: there was nothing brought up at this time.

6. Other – Guests or Members: there were no guests present.

7. Report of Officers and Subcommittee

a. Report of Zoning Officers: John Guskowski said he and Mike D'Amato have been “digging out” the backlog and currently there are no pending voice mail messages. Approvals for some decks and sheds have been granted, and they have responded to many questions, a number of which have been from realtors.

A query about a non-residential use of a property on the north side of Route 148 near the Killingworth town line was discussed. Potential uses mentioned included light commercial, self-storage, etc. The POCD should be reviewed for recommended uses in that area; use of an over-lay zone or a special development district might be options; and spot zoning may need to be addressed. Additional information will be needed and the Commission welcomes conversation and dialogue.

The Pattaconk Yacht Club has met with zoning officials in connection with the potential for a swimming pool. Gateway considerations and proximity to the River will need to be addressed.

Outstanding issues which are being addressed include the issuance of a Notice of Violation in connection with chicken coops (Zoning officers are working with Building Official toward resolution); proposed construction of a residential structure as part of a horse property is being reviewed, and a complaint that was received verbally in connection with a company in an industrial area will need more investigation and information.

Mike D'Amato made note of a CT Bar Association training scheduled for March 6 at Wesleyan University and recommended it to members. Information will be sent to all.

Lavy reported he is very pleased with the feedback he has received in connection with the new zoning officials.

8. Bills for Payment: none have been received at this time.
9. Communications, Receipt of New Petitions, New Applications received after posting of Agenda: There was no correspondence to report; no petitions or applications received.
10. Approval of Minutes: December 10, 2020 Public Hearing and Regular Meeting and January 14, 2020 Regular Meeting

On Motion by Michael Sanders, seconded by Seth Fidel, the minutes of the December 10, 2020 Public Hearing were approved by seated members. Henry Krempel, Steve Merola and Keith Scherber abstained.

On Motion by Michael Sanders, seconded by Seth Fidel, the minutes of the December 10, 2020 Meeting were approved by seated members. Henry Krempel, Steve Merola and Keith Scherber abstained.

On Motion by Peter Zanardi, seconded by Seth Fidel, the Minutes of January 14, 2021 were approved by seated members. Jon Lavy abstained.

11. Pending Litigation: There is no pending litigation.

Michael Sanders reminded members to review and comment on the RiverCOG Plan of Conservation and Development.

12. Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Commission,

On Motion by Michael Sanders, seconded by Henry Krempel, the meeting adjourned at 7:38 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Bettie Perreault, Secretary