

THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO APPROVAL AT THE NEXT P&Z MEETING

TOWN OF CHESTER, CONNECTICUT
PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
Thursday, July 14, 2022
Community Room and Via ZOOM
Chester Town Hall

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Sanders called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. In attendance included: Chairman Sanders Pat Bisacky, Henry Krempel, Elaine Fitzgibbons, Steve Merola, Shubert Koong (by Zoom) and Peter Zanardi (alt. seated for Bettie Perreault).

Also in attendance: First Selectman Charlene Janecek, Geoff Jacobson, Katie & Josh Vannotti, Steve Carlson, Denise Learned, Terri Hahn, Josh Bell, John Schroder, and John Guskowski, Zoning Compliance Consultant.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

The following Public Hearing Notice was read into the record:

“Notice is hereby given that the Chester Planning & Zoning Commission will hold a public hearing on Thursday, July 14, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. at the Chester Town Hall, 203 Middlesex Avenue, Chester, Connecticut to hear the following:

Application for Resubdivision: 45 Goose Hill Road, Map 9, Lot 216, R-1, Zone – Geraldine M. Jacobson

Application for Special Exception: 72 Railroad Ave – Chester Point Real Estate LLC; Proposed metal-framed 12,000 sq. ft. marine commercial building.

Details available on Town website or from zoningofficial@chesterct.org. At this Hearing interested parties may appear and be heard; written correspondence will be received and made a part of the record. Copy of the above is on file in the Office of the Town Clerk for public review. Bettie Perreault, Secretary. Dated at Chester, Connecticut this 30th day of June 2022.”

Board members in attendance are seated for both hearings.

Re-subdivision Application: 45 Goose Hill Road: - R1 Zone, Map 9, Lot 216

As previously reported, a letter authorizing Geoff Jacobson to represent his parents relative to the above-referenced application was received by the Commission. Geoff Jacobson proposed a one-lot subdivision at 45 Goose Hill Road. Maps/drawings of the proposal were available at the meeting for review and discussion.

The property is located in an R1 zoning district. Mr. Jacobson provided a history of the family-owned property and explained the rationale for the request. The proposal calls for an approximate 5-acre lot to be subdivided. The applicant is requesting a waiver to allow three lots off a common driveway. A recent purchase of property from the Water Company created a new frontage lot with a separate driveway and a portion of property was donated to the Land Trust. If permitted, the creation of this new lot will maintain the “status quo”; i.e.; three lots off of a common driveway. Mr. Guskowski recommended the applicant request a waiver from P&Z.

The applicant has received lot suitability approval from the Health District and Inland Wetlands (continuation of driveway into neighboring lot) as well as approval from Fire Marshal and Fire Dept. (with the addition of a "pull off" area).

Mr. Jacobson was available to address questions/concerns posed by Commission members.

The Public was invited to comment on the application.

Josh Bell and Josh Vannotti spoke in favor of the application.

There were no comments opposing the application.

Peter Zanardi made a motion to close the Public Hearing on the Jacobson application. Steve Merola seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Special Exception Application: Chester Point Marina – WD2 Zone, Map 15, Lot 56

A copy of the application for Special Exception and Site Development Plans were included in the Commission's packet and presented at this evening's meeting. Chester Point Marina is seeking approval for construction of a metal frame and sided repair/maintenance storage building that will replace and enlarge an existing "hoop" building. The use of the proposed building will remain the same. The building and uses are Special Principal Uses as authorized/permitted by the grant of a Special Exception by the Commission.

DEEP, the Connecticut River Gateway Commission and Health District have reviewed the project plans. Correspondence from these agencies were available for review. In addition, letters have been sent to abutting property owners. Note that FEMA and the Building code call for the inclusion of flood vents to allow water to flow through building. Water resistant materials will be used in the construction of the building. The movement of boats, use of heavy equipment, marina activities, etc. will preclude any meaningful landscaping project. However, the use of landscaping pots may be considered.

A representative from Thomas Metcalf, P.E., L.S. and Steve Carlson, Chester Point Marina, were in attendance and available to address questions/comments posed by Commission members.

The Public was invited to comment on the application.

Geoff Jacobson spoke in support of the application.

There were no comments opposing the application.

Pat Bisacky made a motion to close the Public Hearing on the Chester Point Marina. Henry Krempel seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS – None.

OLD BUSINESS

- a. Update on Status of Gateway Conservation Zone – June 13, 2022 letter – The Gateway Commission is requesting P&Z to adopt their new regulations into their section of Chester’s Regulations. They are encouraging Towns to adopt the new light pollution standards and the new Gateway Conservation Zone. Tom Brelsford, Chester’s representative on the Gateway Commission and other Gateway Commission members will be invited to the September P&Z meeting. A Public Hearing on the proposed changes will be scheduled.
- b. Plan of Conservation and Development: implementation of future actions – The POCD contains six pages of recommendations. The difficulty in implementing these recommendations was briefly discussed. The EDC is currently working with the Selectman’s office to prioritize and fund Capital. Work relative to bike/pedestrian paths is underway and the First Selectwoman is working with a group on public bathrooms/potable water downtown.
- c. Next Steps in review of marijuana statutes and local regulations – First Selectman Janecek reported that she has reached out to Tri Town, the Police Dept. and the schools relative to the potential development of a “roundtable” to review marijuana statutes and local regulations. Deep River has had public hearings to garner input from residents, has extended their moratorium, set up specific use districts and has a zoning amendment proposal “on the table” for Public Hearing. Deep River may allow by Special Exception in a limited area. Both Essex and Deep River have proposals for text amendments.

John Schroeder expressed concern that this discussion has been postponed. He encouraged the Commission to gather information for Chester and not rely on what Essex and Deep River have done and are doing relative to marijuana

- d. Proceedings of Public Hearing: Resubdivision Application: 45 Goose Hill Road: R-1 Zone, Map 9, Lot 216 –

John Guskowski recommended approval of the application with modifications:

- As requested by the Fire Marshal, the driveway design is to include a turn off area to allow emergency vehicle access. (Note that this requirement has already been completed).
- Easement language relative to area where driveway crosses private property.

Henry Krempel made a motion to approve the application with the above modifications. Steve Merola seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

- e. Proceedings of Public Hearing: Special Exception Application: Chester Point Marina – WD2 Zone, Map 15, Lot 56

Peter Zanardi made a motion to approve the application. Steve Merola seconded the motion. Discussion followed.

John Guskowski reported that the ZBA variance has been granted but not yet filed. As such, P&Z is unable to file a Special Permit until the variance is filed.

Due to the location of the septic system and a right of way, plantings in the area of the railroad crossing are inappropriate.

The motion passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

- a. Application for Special Exception: Camp Hazen YMCA – Site Improvements at dining hall and beach area. Receive and schedule Public Hearing for August 11

Terri Hahn and Denise Learned, Camp Hazen outlined the proposed waterfront improvement project. The proposed project includes:

- Remove existing boathouse/bathroom area and shed.
- Construct portion of a new open pavilion for outdoor kitchen, new boat storage shed(s)
- Improvements to dining patio, new deck

The project narrative and detailed description were included in the Commission’s packet.

The application was received and a Public Hearing was scheduled for August 11, 2022.

OTHER – Guests or Members – No comments raised.

REPORT OF OFFICERS AND SUBCOMMITTEES – Nothing reported.

REPORT OF ZONING COMPLIANCE OFFICER

- a. Status of Zoning Violation (Gateway Conservation District): Dock Road, Map 10, Lot 187 – Rooke Realty LLC – Gateway and our Chester representatives have met with the landowner and they are working on a mitigation plan.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE - None

BILLS FOR PAYMENT- None

COMMUNICATIONS, RECEIPT OF NEW PETITIONS, NEW APPLICATIONS RECEIVED AFTER POSTING OF AGENDA - None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On a motion made and duly seconded, the minutes of the June 9, 2022 were unanimously approved as presented.

PENDING LITIGATION - None

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion made and duly seconded, the meeting was adjourned at 8:37 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Suzanne Helchowski
Clerk