

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

TOWN OF CHESTER, CONNECTICUT
PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING

Thursday, October 13, 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: Steven Merola, Pat Bisacky, Elaine Fitzgibbons, Seth Fidel, Henry Krempel, Keith Scherber, Pete Zanardi (seated for Bettie Perreault), John Guskowski, Zoning Compliance Officer, and First Selectwoman Janecek.

AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS – None.

OLD BUSINESS

Zoning Regulations Regarding Marijuana - Discuss and schedule Public Hearing regarding Potential Amendment to Zoning Regulations

A Public Hearing was held at the 9/8/22 P&Z meeting relative to an application for a text amendment to the Zoning Regulations: Section 160D – Extension of Moratorium on Recreational Cannabis Establishments in the Town of Chester. The applicant was the Chester Planning & Zoning Commission.

As requested by the Commission, John Guskowski, Zoning Compliance Officer, developed the following proposed Zoning Regulation Text Amendment regarding cannabis facilities for Commission consideration:

“40V – Cannabis Facilities – No recreational cannabis or medical marijuana facilities as defined by CGS Sec. 21a-408 et. Seq. as amended, Sections 21a-408-1 to 21a-408-70 inclusive, and Public Act 21-1/Senate Bill 1201 as amended, including Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies as they may be amended from time to time, including production facilities, cultivators, micro-cultivators, retail, and hybrid retail facilities, shall be permitted in the Town of Chester. Amendment effective January 1, 2023”.

The intent would be to repeal Section 117 of the Regulations and adopt the above as drafted by Mr. Guskowski. Chairman Sanders will have the Commission’s attorney review the proposed text amendment including the current prohibition on medical marijuana.

The next step relative to the proposed amendment is the scheduling of a Public Hearing on same. The Commission discussed the parameters of the Public Hearing; in-person only vs. hybrid meeting with ZOOM options. Note, per State Statute, if one Commission member requests that the Public Hearing include a ZOOM option, the Commission must comply and offer a remote option. Written comments forwarded to the Commission by the Public are acceptable.

Peter Zanardi made a motion to hold a Public Hearing on November 10, 2022 on the Proposed Zoning Regulation Text Amendment Regarding Cannabis Facilities as presented, including repealing Section 117 of the current Zoning Regulations. The meeting will be in-person only and Commission members are strongly encouraged to attend the in-person meeting. Seth Fidel seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

It was recommended that the Public Hearing remain “open” for several months.

Update on Gateway Conservation Zone: Status of Existing Violation(s)
Discussion deferred until a later meeting.

Plan of Conservation and Development: Implementation of Future Actions
The Commission briefly discussed the importance of coordination and communication between the various groups/committees working on initiatives throughout Chester; i.e. bike trails, EV stations, public bathrooms, and water station.

The need for additional public involvement on Boards/Commissions was briefly discussed along with the difficulties in “recruiting” individuals to serve on Boards/Commissions. Many are interested in a specific project but are not necessarily willing to serve on a Board/Commission with monthly meetings, time commitments, etc.

NEW BUSINESS – Guests or Members – None.

OTHER – Guests or Members – None.

REPORT OF OFFICERS AND SUBCOMMITTEES - None.

REPORT OF ZONING COMPLIANCE OFFICER – None

Status of Zoning Violation - Gateway Conservation District – Dock Road – Map 10, Lot 187 –Rooke Realty LLC – No update received from the arborist. John Guskowski will follow-up with Torrence Downes, River COG.

Butter Jones Road Violation (junk) – status of legal action taken – no update.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE – No report available as Legislature is not in session.

BILLS FOR PAYMENT – any that have been received after posting of Agenda – None.

COMMUNICATIONS, RECEIPT OF NEW PETITIONS, NEW APPLICATIONS RECEIVED AFTER POSTING AGENDA

John Guskowski reported that the pending applications without all proper “sign-offs” are being addressed. Letters have gone out to residents and several have returned all appropriate documentation.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Elaine Fitzgibbons made a motion to approve the minutes of the September 8, 2022 meeting as presented. Pat Bisacky seconded the motion. The motion passed with Steve Merola, Keith Scherber and Henry Krempel abstaining from the vote.

PENDING LITIGATION - None.

ADJOURNMENT

Henry Krempel made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:36 p.m. Seth Fidel seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Suzanne Helchowski
Clerk