



## ESSEX PLANNING COMMISSION

### REGULAR MEETING

Thursday, June 14, 2018

7:30 p.m.

Essex Town Hall – Meeting Room A

### DRAFT MINUTES

#### 1. Call to Order and Seating of Members

Chairman Alan Kerr called the meeting to order at 7:31 p.m. In attendance were members George Sexton and Ralph Monaco. Seated for Erin Bogan was Alternate Jane Siris. Also in attendance was Town Planner John Guskowski.

#### 2. Approval of Minutes – May 10, 2018 Public Hearing and Regular Meeting

Motion to approve minutes of May 10, 2018 by Ralph Monaco, seconded by George Sexton.  
Motion carried, with Jane Siris abstaining.

#### 3. New Business

##### a. Zoning Regulation Amendment Referral – Re-formatted Zoning Regulations with Numerous Amendments

The Commission discussed the comprehensive revision/reorganization proposed by the Zoning Commission following two years of work led by Al Wolfgram and Joe Budrow, including the synopsis of text changes from Zoning Officer Joe Budrow. John Guskowski reported that the revisions were largely cleanup and consistency-oriented, without major philosophical changes. They had also include placeholder sections for future regulation concerning Development Nodes as outlined in the Plan of Conservation & Development. Chairman Kerr questioned the language of “deference” on page 1-8 concerning the referrals to the Planning Commission on amendments. Jane Siris asked what larger “next steps” issues would be of interest to the Planning Commission. John Guskowski cited several items in the PoCD, including the mixing and intensification of activity in the development nodes, revision or reconsideration of parking standards, establishment of design standards for commercial and multifamily buildings, and more active promotion of affordable housing opportunities. He re-stated that this sort of forward-moving change was not the intended purpose of the revision.

Motion to issue a favorable comment on the proposed Regulation changes, with the note that the Planning Commission intends to be active in assisting the Zoning Commission move beyond the current re-formatting of the Regulations and incorporate substantive changes to advance the goals of the PoCD by George Sexton, seconded by Jane Siris. Motion carried unanimously

**b. Zoning Regulations Amendment Referral – Section 45, Accessory Apartments**

The Commission reviewed the proposed amendment, focusing on the additional language included since the prior approved Regulation concerning Accessory Apartments. The Commission noted several areas of concern that seemed to deviate from the original intent as developed by the Planning Commission in effort to encourage and facilitate the addition of more accessory units in town.

Motion to issue an unfavorable comment on the proposed amendment, citing Sections 45F.2, 45D.4, 45B.2 and 45E.2 by George Sexton, seconded by Jane Siris. Motion carried unanimously

**c. Planning Services Contract Extension, FY 2018-19**

John Guskowski presented the proposed contract extension and noted that CME was seeking to bring on additional planning support in the next few months.

Motion to have Chairman Kerr sign the contract extension for Planning Services with CME Associates for FY 2018-19 by Ralph Monaco, seconded by George Sexton. Motion carried unanimously.

**4. Old Business**

**a. Ad-Hoc Committee on Housing Options**

Chairman Kerr stated that the Committee did not hold its June meeting but would be joined by local developer Henry Resnikoff at the July meeting. He also noted that he toured the Essex Station apartments and was impressed with the interior quality and layout. He stated that one of his next goals was to develop an approach to an Affordable Housing Plan for Essex, and was using a template developed by the Town of Salisbury.

**b. PoCD Implementation – Development Node Mapping & Regulations**

John Guskowski apologized for not having the larger-scale map available for review, but discussed the regulatory approach of a Special Development District, citing additional examples from Branford and Trumbull. Jane Siris asked about regulatory examples from similarly-sized communities. George Sexton and Ralph Monaco discussed the competitive advantage of a favorable regulatory approach, and George Sexton stated that he would talk with Susan Malan to get a better sense of where businesses are locating when they opt not to locate in Essex. John Guskowski stated that he would develop a draft set of Special Development regulations for the Commission's review.

5. **Report of Committees and Officers**

a. **Report from RiverCOG Representative**

Chairman Kerr stated that the most recent COG meeting was cancelled due to insufficient administrative notice.

b. **Report from Economic Development Commission Representative**

George Sexton noted that the "Market" on North Main Street is open, but that "Reins" tack shop had closed. There was significant interest in "Wright's" restaurant site, but issues with equipment purchase seem to be complicating the lease. "Whole Harmony Tea" is a new business located in the industrial park; the Doggy Day Care had been approved. He noted that Governor Malloy was buying a house and moving to Essex after his term has ended. He also stated that he and EDC would be meeting with the Selectmen to talk about parking reconfiguration on Main Street, Essex.

c. **Planner's Report**

John Guskowski reported that he had met, along with Chairman Kerr, with the Ivoryton Village Alliance about parking availability concerns in Ivoryton Village, particularly during peak times. There were several potential avenues for a solution, and he will work with a small ad-hoc group from the Alliance to review options. He also stated that an appraisal had been completed for the DeVinney property on Saybrook Road, which placed the market value at \$270,000. The Commission discussed the matter and there was not an outpouring of enthusiasm for pursuing the acquisition of the property. He will continue to discuss the matter with the Land Trust, Parks & Recreation, etc.

6. **Correspondence & Invoices**

Chairman Kerr noted an invoice for the Valley Courier for the recent public hearing on the Subdivision Regulations.

Motion to pay the invoice by George Sexton, seconded by Ralph Monaco. Motion carried unanimously.

7. **Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn by Jane Siris, seconded by Ralph Monaco. Motion carried unanimously.  
Meeting was adjourned at 9:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

John Guskowski  
Consulting Town Planner

RECEIVED FOR RECORD  
06/18/2018 at 8:37 A.M.  
James M. Rozick  
ESSEX, CT - ASSIST. TOWN CLERK