



ESSEX PLANNING COMMISSION

REGULAR MEETING

Thursday, September 12, 2019
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 7:30 p.m. In attendance for the meeting were Members George Sexton, Ralph Monaco, and Erin Bogan. Seated for Member Gary Riggio was Alternate Al Wolfgram. Also in attendance was Planner John Guskowski.

Member Gary Riggio, Alternate Jane Siris, and Alternate Hope Proctor arrived shortly after the meeting commenced.

2. Approval of Minutes – August 8, 2019 Regular Meeting

Motion to approve minutes of August 8, 2019 by George Sexton, seconded by Ralph Monaco.
Motion carried unanimously.

3. New Business

a. Zoning Amendment Referral – Pet Grooming Facilities in Commercial Districts

Chairman Kerr and John Guskowski briefly introduced the proposed zoning text amendment, which would include “dog grooming facilities” with no overnight boarding to all current Zoning Districts that allow commercial uses. The Commission had a general discussion of the concept, which would add another potential use in each of the “node” areas as identified in the Plan of Conservation & Development. Al Wolfgram questioned whether dog grooming was a use that would fit in the Essex Village district, and Jane Siris discussed very popular boutique grooming salons in New York City fitting in very well.

Motion to issue a favorable comment on the proposed text amendment by Ralph Monaco, seconded by George Sexton. Motion carried unanimously.

4. Old Business

a. PoCD Implementation

i. Bokum Development Node – Next Steps

John Guskowski noted the proposed Bokum Node (BNDO) was submitted to the Zoning Commission as a formal Application for Text Amendment. The application is set to be received on September 16, with a likely hearing date of October 21.

ii. Ivoryton Development Node – Discussion of Uses

John Guskowski referenced the proposed regulation draft for Ivoryton, which closely tracked the format and approach for the BNDO regulation. He highlighted key areas of difference, focusing on minimum acreage, maximum coverage, and the list of allowable uses. The Commission discussed the geographic extent of the node, relative to the core of Ivoryton, and there was general agreement that the extent should be narrower, excluding the Pratt-Read factory property, which could be covered under the existing special development regulations. Given that agreement, several of the proposed uses would likely change. John Guskowski stated that he would provide a revised map and draft of the proposed regulations for the next meeting.

b. Sustainable CT – Next Steps

John Guskowski updated the Commission on the documentation that he helped assemble to provide the Sustainable Essex Committee with information for their efforts to achieve “Bronze” status, and would keep the Commission informed about this progress.

The Commission had a general discussion about policies that would encourage homeowners to install solar panels or other energy-efficiency techniques. Ralph Monaco stated that he believed that some sort of local property tax abatement was a way of doing this, and Jane Siris discussed her experience with seeking tax credits and certification for a LEED residence. John Guskowski stated that he would inquire with Sustainable CT about any best practices about incentivizing energy efficiency.

5. Report of Committees and Officers

a. Report from RiverCOG Representative

Chairman Kerr stated that RiverCOG alternate Sandra Childress was taking primary responsibility for participation with the Regional Planning Commission and reviewed her written report. The COG reviewed several zoning referrals as well as pursuing a change to the U.S. Census designation/treatment of COGs in Connecticut as “counties” for data purposes. He asked John Guskowski to investigate whether a non-Planning Commissioner could be the primary Town representative to the COG.

b. Report from Economic Development Commission Representative

George Sexton reported on several recent developments, including: the CT Coastal Academy beginning special-needs educational services on Westbrook Road; the progress on the Centerbrook sidewalks; the pending Carlson's Landing opening and that of Swanky's; a new antiquarian bookstore at 55 Main Street, Essex; the slow progress at the proposed brewpub at the Witch Hazel factory; a new golf simulator opening in the Clark properties next to the Fire Station; and the plans to do an economic-development promotional video of Essex.

c. Planner's Report

John Guskowski had no additional report beyond the items discussed on the agenda.

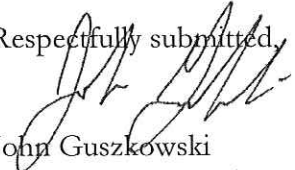
6. Correspondence & Invoices

There were no items of correspondence nor invoices.

7. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn by George Sexton, seconded by Ralph Monaco. Motion carried unanimously. Meeting was adjourned at 8:49 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


John Guskowski
Consulting Town Planner

RECEIVED FOR RECORD
09/16 2019 at 8:40
Yvonne M. Rojick
ESSEX, CT - ASSIST. TOWN CLERK A.M.