



Town of Hamden
Planning and Zoning Department

**Hamden Government
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July 20, 2020

MINUTES: THE PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION, Town of Hamden, held a Public Hearing and Regular Meeting via Zoom teleconferencing technology on Tuesday, July 14, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. with the following results:

Commissioners in attendance:

Brack Poitier
Joe McDonagh, Vice-Chair
Robert Roscow
Paul Begemann
Robert Cocchiaro
Joseph Banks
Michele Mastropetre
Ted Stevens, Sitting for Mr. Mastroianni

Staff in attendance:

Dan Kops, Town Planner
Tim Lee, Assistant Town Attorney
Genevieve Bertolini, Stenographer
Natalie Barletta, Clerk

Mr. Poitier opened the meeting at 6:58 p.m. The clerk read the Regular Meeting items into the record. The Commission and staff introduced themselves. Mr. Poitier reviewed the meeting procedures. The clerk reviewed the four methods to access the meeting using the Zoom software.

A. Public Hearing

1.Special Permit #19-1322
20 Davis Street, T-3.5 Zone

Minor amendment to convert office space into temporary secondary school classrooms due to the COVID-19 pandemic

The Hamden Hall School, Applicant

The public hearing was not held, because the application was a minor amendment.

2.Special Permit and Site Plan #20-1330
2702 Whitney Avenue, T-3 Zone

Change of use from student housing to office and chiropractic space
David Axman and Shari Switko-Axman, Applicant

Mr. McDonagh offered to recuse himself because they are clients of his, but indicated he did feel that he could review the application objectively.

Ms. Switko-Axman addressed the Commission. Ms. Switko-Axman said that in 2013 both she and Dr. Axman were given the opportunity to purchase the property with the intention to move both her law office and his chiropractic office into the building. Ms. Switko-Axman added that they purchased the property, but

remained at their locations elsewhere due to their leases. Ms. Switko-Axman said that it was since converted to student housing, and was rented to students for six years. Ms. Switko-Axman added that since their lease in the building that that they have been renting in is now ending, they would like to move into their own building.

Ms. Switko-Axman said that there would be no changes to the site, as the parking area is already there, and there is lighting in the parking lot already. Ms. Switko-Axman added that there would be no change to the landscaping as well. Ms. Switko-Axman said that this application is simply changing the use of the building.

Mr. Kops read his report recommending approval of the application subject to the following conditions:

1. The applicant shall obtain a Zoning Permit, approved by the Town Engineer and GNHWPCA.
2. All work shall be completed July 14, 2025.

Chairman Poitier asked if there were any comments in favor of application. There were none.

Chairman Poitier asked if there were any comments against the application. There were none.

The public hearing was then closed.

B. Regular meeting

1. Site Plan #19-1322

20 Davis Street, T-3.5 Zone

Minor amendment to convert office space into temporary secondary school classrooms due to the COVID-19 pandemic

The Hamden Hall School, Applicant

Chairman Poitier lost Internet connection at this point, so Mr. McDonagh took over running the meeting.

Joseph Porto, Attorney of Parrett, Porto, Parese & Colwell and representative of Hamden Hall School, addressed the Commission. Attorney Porto reminded the Commission that the applicant went to the Commission prior to the COVID-19 pandemic to allow classrooms in the building. Attorney Porto then stated that he wants to bring students back in a safe way. Attorney Porto added that five classrooms will be used for high school students only. Attorney Porto explained that there will be five classrooms – three classrooms on the first floor and two on the second – which will allow the proper social distancing protocol so students can attend classes at a safer distance from each other. Attorney Porto said that this is a temporary response to the pandemic, and there will be no parking or drop-off areas. Attorney Porto then concluded that Hamden Hall will also be employing a crossing guard from the hours of 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Ms. Mastropetre asked if the students will be going back and forth from the main campus to the Davis Street one. Mr. Roscow added that he shared the same concern. Ms. Mastropetre said she is concerned about safety, and the understanding would be that there are crossing guards available, because students would be taking classes at both campuses and would need to cross the street. Attorney Porto said that the plan is to have crossing guards there throughout the entire school day from 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

At this time, Chairman Poitier regained Internet connection, and then ran the meeting.

Mr. Stevens then asked if students might seek a direct route on their own. Attorney Porto answered while there isn't a way to prevent students from going that way, there will be two crossing guards: one will be positioned between Davis Street and Whitney Avenue, and across Davis Street. Attorney Porto then added that the plan is to keep students as safe as possible, which is why it's going to be high school students only.

Robert Izzo, Head of School at Hamden Hall Country Day School, addressed the Commission and said the school is confident that they can manage students so that they can cross safely.

Mr. Stevens asked about the property on the north end. Mr. Izzo said Hamden Hall owns the property along Whitney Avenue, and has security cameras along the property. Mr. Izzo added that rules will be followed, but if any student breaks these rules, they will be disciplined.

Ms. Mastropetre suggested that Mr. Izzo give each student a map as well as a handout to be given to both students and parents.

Mr. Kops read his report recommending approval of the following conditions:

1. The applicant shall obtain a Temporary Zoning Permit, signed by the Fire Marshal, QVHD and the GNHWPCA.
2. All fuel oil, paint, or other hazardous materials shall be stored in a secondary container and removed to a locked indoor area with an impervious floor during non-work hours.
3. No site work shall be undertaken without prior approval.
4. A Conditional Certificate of Compliance shall be required prior to use of the facility.
5. During special events, parents and visitors shall be required to park on the main campus (1108 Whitney Avenue) and a shuttle service shall be provided by Hamden Hall to the temporary upper school (20 Davis Street).
6. The Temporary Minor Amendment is valid through July 14, 2021. It may be extended for a year one time by the Town Planner, provided that Hamden Hall submits a written request indicating how the COVID-19 pandemic has created the need for the extension.

Attorney Porto said the applicant agrees to those conditions.

Ms. Mastropetre made a motion to approve with the recommended conditions listed in the Town Planner's memo. Mr. McDonagh seconded the motion.

Mr. Kops made a correction so that it says conditional certificate of zoning compliance.

Ms. Mastropetre made a motion to approve with the correction. Mr. McDonagh seconded, and all were in favor.

The amendment was approved with the following conditions:

1. The applicant shall obtain a Temporary Zoning Permit, signed by the Fire Marshal, QVHD and the GNHWPCA.
2. All fuel oil, paint, or other hazardous materials shall be stored in a secondary container and removed to a locked indoor area with an impervious floor during non-work hours.
3. No site work shall be undertaken without prior approval.
4. A Conditional Certificate of Compliance shall be required prior to use of the facility.

5. During special events, parents and visitors shall be required to park on the main campus (1108 Whitney Avenue) and a shuttle service shall be provided by Hamden Hall to the temporary upper school (20 Davis Street).
6. The Temporary Minor Amendment is valid through July 14, 2021. It may be extended for a year one time by the Town Planner, provided that Hamden Hall submits a written request indicating how the COVID-19 pandemic has created the need for the extension.

2. Special Permit and Site Plan #20-1330

2702 Whitney Avenue, T-3 Zone

Change of use from student housing to office and chiropractic space

David Axman and Shari Switko-Axman, Applicant

Ms. Mastropetre made a motion to approve Special Permit and Site Plan #20-1330 with the recommended conditions noted in the Town Planner's Memo with the correction. It was seconded by Mr. Banks and was approved, with one abstention from Chairman Poitier.

The application was approved with the following conditions:

1. The applicant shall obtain a Zoning Permit, approved by the Town Engineer and GNHWPCA.
2. All work shall be completed by July 14, 2025.

C. Old Business/ New Business

1. Review minutes of the June 23, 2020 Meeting

Mr. McDonagh made a motion to approve the minutes. It was seconded by Mr. Cocchiaro, and passed, with one abstention from Ms. Mastropetre, as she was not present at the meeting.

2. Reappointment of Francis Albis, Jr. as Village District Consultant

Mr. Kops addressed the Commission and said that Mr. Albis said that he was going to leave Hamden. Mr. Kops then added that he recently learned that Mr. Albis did not end up leaving, and wanted to continue his role. Mr. Kops then gave a brief history of the role, which is for any and all of the village districts. Mr. Kops then concluded that he reviews approximately one application per year, and provides both the applicant and the Commission insight about applications that affect the village district.

Mr. McDonagh made a motion to approve the reappointment of Francis Albis, Jr. as a Village District Consultant. It was seconded by Ms. Mastropetre. The vote was unanimous in favor.

Mr. Kops then added that at the July 28, 2020 meeting, there will be a presentation of the current master plan for Quinnipiac University, and also he will also be coming back with updates on both the rewrite of the Adult Entertainment section, and the Zoning Regulations.

Mr. Roscow then stated that he has some comments that he would like to make, and offered to write them out to send them to Mr. Kops. Mr. Kops said that would be helpful.

D. Adjournment

Mr. McDonagh made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Cocchiaro seconded, and the vote was unanimous in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 7:41 p.m.

Submitted by: _____
Natalie Barletta, Clerk of the Commission