



Town of Hamden Planning and Zoning Department

**Hamden Government
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January 27, 2009

Minutes: THE PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION, Town of Hamden, was held a Special Meeting on Wednesday, January 14, 2009 at 7:00 p.m. at the Hamden Middle School Auditorium, 2761 Dixwell Avenue, Hamden, CT and the following was reviewed:

Commissioners in attendance:

Joe McDonagh, Chairperson
Ann Altman, Zoning Section Chairperson
Ed Grant, Planning Section Chairperson
Robert Roscow
Peter Reynolds
Ralph Riccio
Lesley DeNardis
Don Moses
Gerald Dimenstein
Ralph Marottoli, Alternate

Staff in attendance:

Leslie Creane, Town Planner
Daniel W. Kops, Jr., Assistant Town Planner
Tim Lee, Assistant Town Attorney
Stacy Shellard, Clerk

Mr. McDonagh called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. He introduced the panel and advised that the meeting was not a public hearing. He advised the public that Mr. Dan Kops, Assistant Town Planner would be giving a presentation on the comments for the proposed zoning regulations received at the September 24, 2008 and October 15, 2009 Special Meetings. The public would then be invited to comment on the proposed zoning regulations

A. Special Meeting:

1. An informational meeting regarding the proposed Zoning Regulations

Mr. Dan Kops, Assistant Town Planner reviewed the process and the re-writing of the proposed zoning regulations. When completed the final draft will be submitted with a formal application to amend the zoning regulations. He discussed the modifications that have occurred since the prior meetings. He reviewed the handout "Summary of Key Proposed Changes to the Zoning Regulations", and the copy of the proposed zoning map. Mr. Kops discussed the SmartCode, form based approach to zoning and gave examples of how they would be applied. He explained the modifications that had been made since the documents were put on the Town web site last week.

Mr. McDonagh asked for public comment:

Mr. Ed Blair, 43 Dessa Drive, asked if eliminating the distance required from the property lines for accessory structures would include dumpsters. The school next door to him has a dumpster close to the property line. Ms. Creane, Town Planner advised that dumpsters do not qualify as an accessory structure. The dumpster should be on an impervious surface and enclosed.

Steve Mongillo, asked if an accessory structure would include houses or any type of building. Ms. Creane advised that an accessory structure would be garages and sheds. There would have to be a site plan submitted for a business to add an accessory structure. She will review the proposed zoning regulation for clarification of an accessory structure for residential and business areas. Mr. Kops stated the regulations could impose a cap for the size of a structure.

Mr. David Hennigan, stated that in the proposed regulations the maximum coverage for impervious surfaces is 60 percent of a lot. The other 40 percent he assumes is for lawn and gardens. He had spoken with someone from the RWA and was told about new technology such as asphalt and concrete that is totally impervious. He questioned if this new technology should be defined in the proposed regulations.

Mr. John Morrison, 1692 Whitney Avenue, he reviewed the proposed map for the Spring Glen area near the center and Walgreens. He stated that when Robert Orr was originally proposing SmartCode there was going to be a park. Mr. Morrison questioned if this area would be a park or could a building be constructed. Ms. Creane advised him that there have been extensive conversations with the consultants and attorneys on how to legally implement the intent of the diagrams done during the Charrette. The diagrams will be incorporated into the plan of conservation and development. The zoning regulation will continue to say that any development must be consistent with the Plan of Conservation and Development. To designate an area as park land, can constitute a taking. Mr. Morrison discussed with Ms. Creane what plans and maps were presented at the Charrette.

Mr. Steve Nugent submitted and discussed a handout and letter to the Commission. He would like to see the Mt. Carmel Connector to Mt. Carmel Avenue be changed to a T4 zone.

Mr. Tom Brundage, 165 Santa Fe Avenue, asked for clarification of the map where the bank, drugstore and parking lot is. Ms. Creane advised that the map does not include where the residential area is.

Mr. McDonagh asked for comments from the Commission:

Mr. Roscow stated his concern for T3 as suburban. The T3 that is being envisioned for the main corridors of town is not smart growth. Would like to see development of nodes at intersections. The conservation and development plan that the 9 neighborhoods Hamden have are developments from the 1920's. Would like to see the T- zones classified. There are lite transit possibilities that should be looked at. Manufacturing should be looked at from hours of use, outdoor storage, emissions and noise. Lite industry versus heavy industrial needs to be reassessed. Ms. Creane stated the manufacturing and allowed uses will be reviewed.

Mr. Marottoli questioned what the impact will be for what is proposed for the State Street and Dixwell Avenue and what the finished document would be for these area's. Mr. Roscow is a representative for the Council on Regional Planning and an update was completed. The Transit Authority is looking at a life style center at the Pratt and Whitney site. There is a proposed mall with housing above and a train stop. He has not seen one proposed in Hamden. The Charrette had proposed one on State Street. Ms. Creane advised that the Department of Transportation is considering a commuter line from New Haven to Springfield, Massachusetts. The town is trying to get a train station. This would be beneficial for commuters who are post college and the 55 and over population. Ms. Creane discussed Dixwell Avenue and the Magic Mile. The area has the same square footage in acreage as the nine squares of New Haven. This area would be mixed use that would increase the tax base.

Mr. Josh Milrad submitted copies of a proposal for village district regulations that he would like considered to protect the unique historic characteristic of Spring Glen.

Ms. Elaine Dove, 137 Santa Fe Avenue, discussed North Haven's Tax Base. She stated that there is a limited amount of apartment buildings which reduces the amount of school children. She is concerned the accessory structures that can be built by right in certain areas can cause additional hardship financially to the school system. Mr. Kops advised that single family accessory dwellings are allowed by right, but subject to a zoning permit and there are stringent requirements.

Ms. Marsha Walsh, 680 Hartford Turnpike, would like the Village District be included in the new zoning regulations as an overlay. She also asked if parking on front lawns of residential homes could be regulated. Ms. Creane advised only student housing parking can be regulated.

Mr. Wayne Chorney, 42 Morris Street, ZBA Commissioner asked when other land use commissions would be part of the process for the the proposed zoning regulations. Mr. Tim Lee, Assistant Town Attorney, advised that the public process allows input from the land use commissioners. Ms. Creane stated that the consultants had reviewed the past 5 years of ZBA decisions.

Mr. Paul Larocque, 114 Woodlawn Street, stated he is a strong supporter of the changes. It would increase the tax base. The changes would be diverse and protect the existing neighborhoods. He discussed with the Commission the Best Video site and asked if it would be a T3 or T4 zone. Mr. McDonagh advised that once the proposed regulations are adopted the can still be redefined and amended in the future.

Mr. Roscow stated the definitions of farms and commercial farms should be added. Truck gardens, truck farms, hot houses and green housed could be successful if allowed in residential areas.

Mr. Steve Nugent asked if the town will encourage LEED buildings. Ms. Creane reviewed the State of Connecticut requirements for LEED buildings.

Mr. Paul Jacques, 219 Helen Street reviewed previous problems with student housing. He feels that homeowners being required to hire home inspectors would not work. Mr. Kops stated that a home inspector would provide better information regarding the construction of the home. The Building Department and Fire Marshal are continuing to inspect homes for safety violations.

Mr. McDonagh advised the Commission and the public that a final draft incorporating comments from this meeting should be available by the end of January.

Mr. Grant made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Roscow seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting closed at 9:05

Submitted by: _____
Stacy Shellard, Clerk of Commissions