



Town of Hamden

Planning and Zoning Department

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Memorandum

To: Hamden Planning and Zoning Commission

From: Erik C. Johnson, Acting Director Planning and Economic Development

Re: Proposed Regulation Amendment to Section 580 Outdoor Lighting

Date: April 18, 2022

The Planning Department for your review and consideration, has submitted the proposed Amendment to Section 580 Outdoor Lighting Section of the Town's Zoning Regulations. The purpose of the proposed change to the regulations is intended to accomplish the following; (1) provide clarification on what is permissible and is not permissible under the Town's ordinances; (2) develop policies that align with established best practice and the environmental standards that have been established for Town; and (3) adopted, to create a pathway for public and private interests through the Planning and Zoning Commission, through a Special Permit Process, to create sports fields and facilitates that are more attractive, more accessible and better managed.

The Town has operated under the premise that sports lighting fixtures should not exceed 35', and any deviation for this premise, would require an application to the Town's Board of Zoning appeals. In submission of the proposed changes to Section 580 for Outdoor Lighting it should be noted that as currently adopted Section 580 does not include any requirements for the height of outdoor lighting for recreational or non-recreational uses. The 35 foot pole maximum height that has been the basis for the Town's policy is based Section 380.4.4 Dimensional Standards and in Table 3.4 in the Zoning Regulations – Summary of Transect Zones where under Building Height the Principal Building heights are limited to 35 feet in T1, T2, T3, T3.5 and T4 zones. The height increases to 60 ft. in T5 zones. (The pole height policy has been based on the construct that the pole are structures and as such are governed by the requirements established for T Zones.

Section 530.4 Height Limitation of the Town Zoning Regulations is also silent on the building height of lighting fixtures, and does not address the height requirements for sport lighting fixtures. The only reference to height in the entirety of the section is in Section 530.4.3 which refers to Flagpoles, stating that they are allowable up to 75 ft.

The proposal changes to Section 580 for Outdoor Lighting will address gaps that are currently present within the Town's regulations and are:

1. Based on standards that have been established by the International Dark Sky Alliance, specific to sport facilities. The pole heights and foot candle requirements will be based on best practice for them to be considered for approval by the commission.
2. Will require the Commission to make a comprehensive review any application requesting sports lighting in its entirety, and taking into consideration that impact that these improvements may or may not have neighborhood conditions, traffic and or access.
3. Were designed to ensure that sports lighting is approved in a consistent, environmentally safe way that provides opportunity to all Hamden's residents; and
4. Will only be approved by Special Permit, which can only be obtained once a public hearing for the matter can be held, and will ensure that all actions by the Town and the Commission are transparent.

Thank you in advance for your review and consideration of this request to amend Section 580 of the Town's Zoning Regulations. The Planning Staff would like to submit the proposed amendment for a 35 day public notice period, after which the proposal would be open to a public hearing, where the matter can be discussed with the general public and any interested parties in advance of any action taken by Planning Commission in support or opposition to the proposed Amendment to the Town's Zoning Regulations.