

**APPROVED MINUTES
BROOKFIELD ZONING COMMISSION
Special Meeting
Thursday, October 17, 2013 – 6:00 p.m.
MEETING ROOM #133 – TOWN HALL, 100 POCONO ROAD**

1. Convene Meeting

Chairman R. Blessey convened the meeting at 6:13 p.m. and established a quorum of members.

Present: Chairman R. Blessey, Vice Chairman M. Grimes, Alternate and Voting Member M. Frankel, L. Miller (arrived at 6:14 p.m.), Alternate and Voting Member J. Varda (arrived at 6:15 p.m.)

Absent: Secretary F. Lollie, C. Lynch, Alternate J. Cordisco

Also Present: Zoning Enforcement Officer A. Dew; via teleconference, Community Development Director K. Daniel; Recording Secretary D. Cioffi

2. Design Guidelines

CDD Daniel advised that Carol Gould of Fitzgerald & Halliday, Inc., will be in attendance at the next regular meeting on October 24, 2013.

Commissioner L. Miller arrived at 6:14 p.m.

At that time, the consensus of the Commission's discussion on Design Guidelines will be conveyed to Fitzgerald & Halliday.

Alternate J. Varda arrived at 6:15 p.m. and was appointed a Voting Member.

The October 17, 2013 memo of Fitzgerald & Halliday, Inc., will be treated as a Draft document. CDD Daniel advised she can sign the contract in her capacity as Community Development Director.

Commissioner Varda shared his comments on the design guidelines. He noted his satisfaction with the manner in which Hop River regulations addressed height, bulk and scale compatibility as a concept. He also discussed the importance of emphasizing the "New England" type of architecture.

Chairman Blessey inquired if it is the Commission's intention to make the incentive architectural guidelines the same as the underlying zone. There was discussion regarding the difference between design guidelines receiving Land Use approval, and those being approved by special permit by the Commission. CDD Daniel pointed out that the grant is specific toward design guidelines for the Incentive Housing Zone. It was suggested that the guidelines providing less arbitrary language than "New England" architecture. Chairman Blessey indicated that proposals that differ from this architecture, and that are similar to the "modern" structures in South Kent, would be subject to special permit review through the Commission.

Commissioner Frankel emphasized the importance of special permit review to allow for public comment. CDD Daniel advised that a public hearing could be requested for a site plan, per the current regulations.

CDD Daniel clarified that the purpose of tonight's discussion is to determine the design guidelines that the Commission wants to utilize for site plan approval for projects.

The discussion returned to Commissioner Varda's review of other municipalities' design regulations. He continued his discussion of the utilization of building massing, creating breaks, visual effects, and façade improvements, even for gas stations to make them appear similar to other buildings in the area.

He also noted the following concepts utilized in Old Saybrook: utilizing the existing infrastructure, emphasizing the conservation and groupings of buildings with historic backgrounds, and providing for green space within a quarter of a mile.

There was discussion regarding the use of open space as a means of “interconnectivity” of buildings in the rear of the structures.

Commissioner Varda also discussed the principles of sign design utilized in Torrington, which allowed for flexibility in hanging signs. He provided a copy of his comments to ZEO Dew to share with CDD Daniel.

There was discussion regarding different types of lighting, such as gooseneck and post lighting. Commissioner Miller read sections of the Simsbury regulations that address lighting. Commissioner Frankel suggested that security/safety considerations also be addressed in lighting regulations. It was noted the current regulations already prohibit moving lights.

Commissioner Varda pointed out that the Niantic regulations call for using slope roofs and avoiding flat roofs, and noted the height limitations in Brookfield’s current regulations. Chairman Blessey discussed his satisfaction with the façade and roof lines on the development at 800 Federal Road.

Commissioner Varda also recommended considering the careful use of awnings, and pointed out New London’s handling of sidewalks, and Simsbury’s patio and porch design guidelines.

Commissioner Frankel advised that she agreed with many of Commissioner Varda’s comments, and indicated that she found Tolland’s regulations to be agreeable in that they listed a mission, were easy to understand, utilized photographs, and specified materials, colors, and roofs. Additionally, she indicated that Tolland encouraged overhang signs, and handled awnings, walkways, and streetscapes in a satisfactory manner.

Commissioner Miller remarked on the Town of Simsbury’s design regulations. He commented on the manner in which “relationships to sites” was addressed, and the consideration of climate changes in the positioning of buildings and the determination of landscape species. He noted it is not only an aesthetic consideration, but a safety concern (i.e., snow and black ice). Commissioner Miller indicated that Simsbury regulations also consider climate in their discussion of building materials. He further commented on how Simsbury’s regulations handle facades, roofs, and building materials. With regard to materials, Commissioner Miller advised that he prefers natural fieldstone and large pavers, and natural wood-type clapboard and cedar shake. He would also prefer that materials such as brick and stucco are not used.

There was additional discussion regarding the materials utilized in the “modern-looking” structure in Kent.

Vice Chairman Grimes pointed out that Niantic, like Brookfield, had to build its Town Center District around existing structures. He indicated that its regulations also include a mission statement and architectural design considerations similar to those being discussed by this Commission.

Commissioner Frankel noted that many of the favored communities discourage franchise architecture.

The Commission summarized that it would recommend to Fitzgerald & Halliday that the following categories be considered in the design guidelines:

- 1) Height/bulk/scale of relationship to site; human scale principle; similar to those discussed in the Hop River and Simsbury regulations;
- 2) Materials and colors (natural; brick only in federal style; masonry (no split, cultured stone); shingles/shakes, clapboard style, no stucco, Dryvit or vinyl. With regard to vinyl, it was noted that there is natural looking vinyl with no seams, however, it is costly. Vinyl should be discouraged;
- 3) Facades/roof lines – sloped roofs, the appearance of sloped roofs, encouragement of dormers, attractive screening of utilities, and strong discouragement of flat roofs. Commissioner Frankel pointed to the language utilized in the Tolland regulations. CDD Daniel noted, as an example, the current structure at 1 Tuck Road. ZEO Dew stated that she felt that type of building was more appropriate for residential structures. Chairman Blessey suggested getting an architect’s point of view on this category. Commissioner Frankel read the language utilized in the Tolland regulations related to roof lines and materials. Commissioner Miller further pointed out that Simsbury states in its regulations that roofs “should provide substantial eave-depth”. The Tolland regulations will be provided to Fitzgerald & Halliday for consideration. Commissioner Frankel then read Tolland’s “overall design goals”. There was discussion regarding the differentiation of facades among commercial and residential portions of buildings. Commissioner Varda noted the current Urgent Care structure, and its failure to break up the façade of that building. Commissioner Miller read from the regulations of the Town of Simsbury, and it was requested that the draft model those regulations. The Commission would encourage separation of commercial and residential portions.
- 4) Signs – The Commission noted its satisfaction with Tolland’s sign regulations and how they address design and size considerations. Commissioner Frankel read those regulations. Commissioner Miller inquired how Commission members felt about balconies. Vice Chairman Grimes pointed out the safety considerations associated with them. Commissioner Frankel read Tolland’s regulations regarding awnings and lettering and lighting thereof.
- 5) Pedestrian areas – The Commission noted its satisfaction with the Niantic and Simsbury regulations, and the latter were read by Commissioner Miller. Commissioner Frankel read a small portion of Tolland’s regulations related to parking area specifications. Chairman Blessey inquired if Commission members preferred any town’s handling of open spaces. Commissioner Miller discussed the possibility of forming a wetlands park on undevelopable property in the southwest quadrant of the Town Center District to provide open space, functional value, and a wetlands bank. He recommended that a wetlands park with an internal walkway be considered.
- 6) Landscape – The Commission liked the manner in which Simsbury handled landscaping specifications.

Parking and utilities were handled in the above categories.

The Commission will provide this consensus to C. Gould of Fitzgerald & Halliday at the October 24, 2013 meeting, and Vice Chairman Grimes will provide his notes to CDD Daniel.

3. Adjourn

Commissioner Miller moved to adjourn at 7:26 p.m. Vice Chairman Grimes seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.

****Next Regular Meeting Scheduled for October 24, 2013****