

**TOWN OF EAST WINDSOR
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION**

REGULAR Meeting #1699 – July 12, 2016

MEETING MINUTES

*******Draft Document Subject to Commission Review/Approval*******

The Meeting was called to order in the Town Hall Meeting Room, 11 Rye Street, Broad Brook, CT. at 6:30 P. M. by Chairman Ouellette.

PRESENT: **Regular Members:** Joe Ouellette (Chairman), Lorry Devaney, Michael Kowalski, Jim Thurz, and Dick Sullivan.
 Alternate Members: Tim Moore (arrived 6:35 p.m.), and Marti Zhigailo.

ABSENT: **Regular Members:** All Regular Members were present
 Alternate Members: Both Alternate Members were present

Town Planner Whitten joined the Meeting via teleconference.

GUESTS: First Selectman Bob Maynard, Deputy Selectman Richard P. Pippin, Jr., Board of Selectmen Liaison to the Planning and Zoning Commission; Selectman Jason Bowsza, Kathy Pippin, Board of Finance; Tom Talamini, Zoning Board of Appeals, Jim Richards, Executive Director, East Windsor Chamber of Commerce.

ESTABLISHMENT OF QUORUM:

A quorum was established as five Regular Members and one Alternate Member were present at the Call to Order. Alternate Member Moore arrived shortly. Chairman Ouellette noted all Regular Members would sit in, and vote, on all Items of Business this evening. In response to Chairman Ouellette's query Regular Member Kowalski reported he had read the Minutes of June 28, 2016 and the associated handouts and was prepared to participate in the Continued Public Hearing for the Application of Calamar Enterprises for a Text Amendment.

LEGAL NOTICE: None.

ADDED AGENDA ITEMS: None

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

Chairman Ouellette queried the audience for comments regarding items/issues not posted on the Agenda.

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Kathy Pippin: reported attendance at this Meeting is the anniversary of 9+ years of her presence at Planning and Zoning Commission Meetings.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES/June 28, 2016:

MOTION: To ACCEPT the Minutes of Regular Meeting #1698 dated June 28, 2016, with the following amendment:
Page 4, Line 169, **NEW PUBLIC HEARING: Calamar Enterprises – Text Amendment....., Landscape Buffer: in Section 802.15e SECTION 802.15(e).....**

Devanney moved/Thurz seconded/DISCUSSION: None.

VOTE: In Favor: Devanney/Ouellette/Sullivan/Thurz)
Opposed: No one
Abstained: Kowalski

RECEIPT OF APPLICATIONS: None.

PERFORMANCE BONDS – ACTIONS; PERMIT EXTENSIONS; ROAD ACCEPTANCE

No requests presented under this Item of Business this evening.

CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARINGS: Calamar Enterprises - Text Amendment to Section 802 Multi Family Development District (MFDD); and Section 600 Landscape Regulations. (*Deadline to close hearing 8/2/2016*):

Chairman Ouellette read the description of this Item of Business. Appearing to discuss this Application for a Text Amendment was Brent Narkawicz, Director of Development for Calamar, and Jay Ussery, of J. R. Russo and Associates, LLC.

Also present via teleconference was Town Planner Whitten.

Mr. Narkawicz accompanied his discussion with a PowerPoint presentation of several slides which illustrated/addressed comments and questions raised by members of the Commission at the previous meeting. Mr. Narkawicz indicated the Commissioners requested additional information on four topics: Density, Open Space, Storage, and Landscaping. He began his presentation by reiterating that any development for Elderly Housing should **not be located in a rural area** (Section 802.1 – Purpose), as any parcel under consideration for development must be served by utilities and commercial services such as access to transportation. Mr. Narkawicz then referenced Site Plans for proposals

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under consideration in Bloomfield, Manchester, and a potential proposal in East Windsor. Calamar generally utilizes parcels between 6 and 8 acres. The Bloomfield parcel, which contains 17 acres, is heavily impacted by wetlands. The building footprint for the Bloomfield proposal is composed of three wings, while the Manchester and East Windsor proposal would be multiple story structures. Mr. Narkawicz suggested that essentially the total parcels in Manchester and East Windsor can be developed.

Mr. Narkawicz suggested the unit designs incorporate **storage** within each resident's dwelling space. They are providing a large space within each unit which would enable residents to store larger items such as sports or exercise equipment. This storage space would be in addition to bedroom closets. Mr. Narkawicz then reviewed the 4 unit designs, which range from 1 bedroom 1 bath units (638 square feet of unit space), to 2 bedroom 2 bath units (1052 square feet of unit space). In response to Chairman Ouellette's question Mr. Narkawicz noted he is proposing a revised text amendment to Section 802.11 – Storage, which now provides "At least 85 cubic feet with a minimum horizontal area of 12 square feet with a minimum height of 7 feet.....".

Referencing the PowerPoint slides Mr. Narkawicz addressed the proposed **building height** (Section 802.12) . Calamar is proposing a 3 story building with a building height of 35' at the roof peak. Chairman Ouellette questioned how far off the street would the building be located? Mr. Narkawicz reported the building would be 50' from the front property line. Commissioner Thurz noted the potential site goes back some distance and is steep in the rear. Mr. Narkawicz suggested the minimum elevation would be 120' closest to the road and would go back to 155'. They would be constructing a detention area in the front. Chairman Ouellette questioned that the roof lines don't change with the elevation line but are consistent throughout the project? Mr. Narkawicz replied affirmatively.

Mr. Narkawicz then addressed **lot coverage and open space** (Section 802.16). Mr. Narkawicz noted he has had many discussions with Town Planner Whitten and Mr. Ussery and staff at J. R. Russo; the way the regulations are written they are designed for single family structures located within large parcels with roads and other infrastructure which might consume 50% to 60% of the land. The larger parcels might contain steep slopes which could become open space. Calamar is proposing that their designs inherently provide "open space" (such as the community patio, walking path, etc.) which isn't a dedicated space but is used for passive recreation. Mr. Narkawicz referenced the latest language revision to Section 802.16(a) – Density; he is now adding a new subsection (e) – " 'No more than 80 percent of the Buildable Area of a parcel may be covered by buildings, driveways, parking areas and other impervious surfaces.' But in no case shall the coverage by buildings, driveways, parking areas and other impervious surfaces exceed 60 percent of the total Lot Area." Mr. Narkawicz indicated they are limiting the density to 20 units/acre, and generate space in the back of these buildings as a community patio; they also have large grassy areas which they can develop as the tenants prefer. Mr. Narkawicz suggested he feels the current regulations are written for

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developments which might include a pool or jungle gym, while the elderly clients are interested in interacting in social recreation. He recalled that the average age of the elderly tenants is 73, and they are vocal with regard to their interests; Calamar develops the project around their requests.

Chairman Ouellette agreed that the needs for **open space** for the elderly may be substantially less but he noted there may be other locations besides those being considered by Calamar - maybe something adjacent to the river or contiguous to an existing open space parcel– and if the open space requirement is written out of the regulations then the Commission loses the ability to provide open space. Chairman Ouellette cited these are vanilla regulations being considered by the Commission. Mr. Narkawicz suggested that perhaps if the other tracts of land were 25 acres or larger then an open space requirement could be required. Chairman Ouellette recalled that in areas where open space isn't proposed, or needed, the Commission accepts a fee-in-lieu-of (open space); Commissioner Thurz concurred. Mr. Narkawicz indicated that the purchase of the parcel is related to the financials. Town Planner Whitten noted that the fee-in-lieu-of open space is based on 20% of the open space and on the value of that land. She indicated she had heard Mr. Narkawicz say that if a parcel is larger than 25 acres that Calamar would then propose open space? Mr. Narkawicz replied affirmatively, noting that during previous discussion someone had commented on small parcels within the community that are not useable. Town Planner Whitten questioned where the 20 acres is coming from; she thought maybe 15 acres. Mr. Narkawicz suggested if the parcel is smaller than 10 acres then it defeats having too many small parcels within the community. Mr. Narkawicz indicated he understood the discussion of linking open space parcels adjacent to existing open space parcels. Mr. Narkawicz suggested he will leave the number to Town Planner Whitten.

Town Planner Whitten cited recent discussions within the Commission regarding the redevelopment of the Warehouse Point area; she suggested something like this could go down along the river and could be linked with existing open space or the river itself. Discussion continued regarding the number of acres related to an open space requirement vs. fee-in-lieu-of open space. Town Planner Whitten questioned Mr. Narkawicz what they did with the Manchester proposal; she understood Manchester has an open space requirement? Mr. Narkawicz reported Manchester was in the process of changing their regulations; they required a certain amount of “recreation space” which included the patios. Town Planner Whitten suggested that she feels that regulations should be dynamic and change with the needs of the community. In Connecticut open space is required which is what this type of development is dealing with. Mr. Narkawicz reported Calamar doesn't have these issues in Maine or some other states. Town Planner Whitten noted we must also deal with the issue of **affordable housing** as well.

Discussion continued regarding **open space options** and the preference of various Commissioners. Commissioner Moore suggested the use of impervious pavers rather

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than some of the parking areas as he felt elderly residents don't need as many cars. Mr. Narkawicz indicated he isn't a major proponent of the impervious pavers in New England; there is also the issue of women catching their (high) heels in them. Mr. Narkawicz cited other beneficial uses of the pavers for facilities which don't see daily parking needs. Commissioner Sullivan didn't feel the Commission should penalize someone who has a small area but he felt the developer owes the town the responsibility of bettering the area around the development. He questioned if the installation of sidewalks from Sofia's to Shoham Road would be a consideration? He acknowledged that this would cost money but would be a benefit to the residents and the town. Chairman Ouellette cited that was a good idea but the Commission is presently considering a general text amendment. Discussion continued; Town Planner Whitten and Mr. Narkawicz will continue to work on language revisions.

Chairman Ouellette questioned the Commissioners if they had any other questions regarding **storage**? Commissioner Kowalski questioned if there were other areas available for storage if the residents want it? Mr. Narkawicz indicated there were no other storage areas but some of the units have garages; some of those tenants hire the facility maintenance staff to install shelves for them. Commissioner Devaney felt the proposed storage space was a lot of space for an apartment.

Mr. Narkawicz questioned the Commission's feelings regarding the proposed language for **controlling the density** of the development? Chairman Ouellette suggested the language proposed also speaks to **open space**. Mr. Narkawicz clarified that the proposed language defines the "recreational open space" but it controls the density of the development. Town Planner Whitten suggested that if they don't give the 20% open space then it makes 20% less density. She suggested they still need to address the issue of open space in general; is the open space being considered for the residents living in the facility or others as well? Mr. Narkawicz reiterated Calamar's concept of interior community space and exterior open space. He noted their tenants use the interior community room as well as the exterior open space/patio which is located outside the community room. The community rooms are large – 40' to 50' wide by 60' to 70' long – and often contain a game room and bar. Slider doors connect the community room to the exterior patio. A sidewalk/pedestrian walkway located off the patio circles the building and becomes a walking path for the residents. These facilities also provide multiple (interior) lounge areas for socialization. Mr. Narkawicz also noted each unit is provided a private patio or deck. He suggested that these amenities provide recreation space appropriate for the tenants of these facilities.

With regard to **landscaping** Mr. Narkawicz suggested they are trying not to have a requirement for irrigation; they use native plant species, grasses, and larger trees for site landscaping. Mr. Narkawicz noted many of the residents are veterans so they get many requests for flag poles.

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Mr. Narkawicz recalled the text amendment calls for many revisions; he questioned if the Commissioners have questions on any of the other topics?

Commissioner Kowalski noted there is no requirement to turn the **irrigation** on, so he questioned its purpose. Commissioner Zhigailo noted people are trying to be more conservative with water consumption; many people are using cactus for vegetation. Mr. Narkawicz suggested many nurseries now promote vegetation that uses smaller amounts of water; many landscape architects use grasses.

Commissioner Zhigailo suggested older residents often have hobbies, such as gardening or bird watching; she questioned what **type of activities** would be promoted? Mr. Narkawicz noted that many of their facilities have garden clubs. He indicated that the residents ask for activities, and Calamar tries to accommodate them. A Calamar maintenance staff member generally oversees a program.

Commissioner Devaney noted Calamar is proposing a 25' **landscape buffer** between residential uses, while Town Planner Whitten has offered comments regarding the current regulations and possible alternatives. Commissioner Devaney questioned if Mr. Narkawicz is proposing to eliminate the need for a landscape buffer? Chairman Ouellette noted there appears to be an inconsistency regarding distance requirements in various sections of the current regulations; he suggested there appears to be room for improvements. Mr. Narkawicz clarified they are proposing a minimum 25' landscape buffer. Chairman Ouellette questioned what the typical side yard setback would be; Mr. Ussery suggested the side yard setback is currently 25'. Commissioner Thurz felt the language amendment eliminates the requirement for use of a landscape architect to create/design the buffer. Chairman Ouellette suggested this proposal could design a building very close to the property line without a landscape buffer. Mr. Narkawicz felt that situation could always occur. He read the language amendments for Section 802.15(e). Discussion followed regarding what the buffer accomplishes; Chairman Ouellette felt it provided a visual break between properties. Mr. Narkawicz concurred but felt the regulations should provide criteria regarding what type of vegetation comprises that buffer. He cited the buffer regulation created in Manchester. Mr. Narkawicz suggested he doesn't favor a 40' strip of arborvitae.

Town Planner Whitten cited Section 600.2 – **Landscape Buffer Requirement** - calls for a 100' buffer between commercial and residential uses; the purpose of that requirement is to separate uses. She cited a larger buffer might be needed between a noisy commercial use and a residential use. Discussion continued regarding disparate commercial and residential uses. Mr. Narkawicz felt the onus for the buffer should be on the commercial or industrial use. Chairman Ouellette suggested it really comes down to the quality of the landscape plan; Mr. Narkawicz cited the need for the Commission to define the criteria for the landscape buffer. Commissioner Kowalski questioned if a lesser buffer could be approved based on the Site Plan review? Discussion continued regarding submission of a

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plan which must be approved by the Commission, the effect of site topography on the landscape plan, and the need to provide a welcoming entrance for the development.

Chairman Ouellette queried the audience for comments:

(Deputy First Selectman) Dick Pippin: felt you have hit the nail on the head, and have a good plan in the works.

Jim Richards: felt there has been good discussion on the open space and recreational open space. He felt there are a lot of projects the Town could attract.

Tom Talamini: liked Commissioner Sullivan's idea of installing sidewalks as it improves the area. Mr. Talamini questioned the location of the Manchester project? Mr. Narkawicz suggested the location is on Spencer Street but is not yet built. That project has preliminary approval; he is hoping for formal approval in August.

(Selectman) Jason Bowsza, 34 Rye Street: he noted Mr. Narkawicz talked about the 3 sites; is Calamar doing all those sites or choosing amongst them? Mr. Narkawicz reported all are priority projects. Selectman Bowsza questioned how many units would the facility have? Mr. Narkawicz suggested 122 units. Selectman Bowsza noted he is in favor of a fee-in-lieu-of open space. He would rather see the Town move forward in that direction rather than have many small parcels of open space.

Chairman Ouellette queried the Commissioners for any additional questions or comments:

Commissioner Sullivan indicated he had nothing further presently. He noted he hates to rewrite regulations every time a project comes through but felt there will probably be more of these facilities in the future. Whether it's a small or large project the regulations need to be applicable across the board.

Commissioner Devanny concurred with Commissioner Sullivan; she was happy with the discussion that occurred this evening.

Commissioner Kowalski would rather not rewrite the regulations every time a project comes up; he would rather set specific guidelines but understood the Commission needs to have the flexibility to address site specific developments. Chairman Ouellette suggested the Commission's flexibility was taken away in a lawsuit (eliminating a Commission's ability to grant waivers for non-applicable requirements).

Commissioner Zhigailo recalled she questioned at the previous meeting if there was a formula for the amount of open space provided for a resident? Mr. Narkawicz suggested some residents want 10' of passive recreation while others want 30'. The architects have come up with the community rooms based on the needs of the residents.

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Commissioner Zhigailo cited the maintenance issues for maintaining the outside walking path. Mr. Narkawicz suggested they get different requests from residents of facilities in the Midwest vs. those in New England.

Commissioner Moore agreed with the requirement for the fee-in-lieu of open space.

Hearing no other comments or questions Chairman Ouellette thanked Mr. Narkawicz for considering East Windsor. He asked Mr. Narkawicz if Calamar was flexible regarding **the age requirements?** Mr. Narkawicz suggested the average age of their residents is 72; Calamar was fine with age 62.

Chairman Ouellette cited the **alternate access** was a consideration for him. He cited Mr. Narkawicz's meeting with the Fire Marshal who would have considered emergency equipment needs in relation to site access. Chairman Ouellette indicated he can't live with one access. Maybe access could be provided through another abutter, or the use of grass pavers could be considered. He cited concern for the resident's safety if the main road is blocked with traffic or the main entrance is blocked. Mr. Ussery questioned if a boulevard access would be ok? Chairman Ouellette agreed. Mr. Ussery suggested the boulevard would address curb appeal as well.

Chairman Ouellette noted receipt of the **CRCOG referral**; he read an excerpt which indicated CRCOG "has no apparent conflict with regional plans and policies or the concerns of neighboring towns." CRCOG's referral goes on to say "The proposed regulation will expand housing choices in the community, however, we encourage the Town to also consider means to provide for some **affordable units** in such elderly housing developments." Mr. Narkawicz reported that Calamar has built third party developments in communities in other states. Mr. Ussery clarified that this suggestion comes from the Federal government; East Windsor has already met its requirement. In response to Chairman Ouellette's question Mr. Narkawicz suggested that if units are labeled affordable from a market perspective there is a connotation. He cited the need for median income by region or community; he indicated that up front their tenants are not that far off, so they can help the need without designating the units as affordable. Mr. Narkawicz noted including affordable units also creates a different process for the developer regarding financing the project.

Chairman Ouellette suggested this isn't a deal breaker for CRCOG. This is an ability for residents to age in place, and this might be a small way to keep people in town. Chairman Ouellette reiterated the Commission is considering vanilla regulations.

Commissioner Thurz questioned the potential cost of the units? Mr. Narkawicz suggested the unit price isn't set in stone. They anticipate a 14 to 16 month period for construction; he suggested the units may cost \$1150 to \$1445/month. Mr. Ussery suggested he will do some research for the next meeting. Town Planner Whitten and

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Chairman Ouellette clarified that in Connecticut the median income range is set for each Town.

Chairman Ouellette queried Town Planner Whitten for additional comments. Town Planner Whitten indicated she hopes to return to work in the office next week; she has homework to do in the meantime. Mr. Narkawicz indicated he'll work with Town Planner Whitten when she's available.

Commissioner Thurz requested Town Planner Whitten to provide a calculation for the fee-in-lieu-of open space for the next meeting.

Chairman Ouellette noted the Public Hearing would not be closed tonight; he questioned if anyone from the public or the Board had any additional questions?

Commissioner Sullivan questioned if Calamar builds medical buildings? Mr. Narkawicz indicated Calamar does build medical centers for third party investors; they also build hotels on the same basis.

Hearing no additional requests to speak Chairman Ouellette called for a motion to continue the Public Hearing.

MOTION: To CONTINUE the Public Hearing on the Application of Calamar Enterprises for a Text Amendment to Section 802 Multi Family Development District (MFDD); and Section 600 Landscape Regulations to the Commission's regularly scheduled meeting on July 26, 2016 to be held at 6:30 p.m. in the Town Hall Meeting Room, 11 Rye Street, Broad Brook, CT.

Devanney moved/Kowalski seconded/DISCUSSION: None.

**VOTE: In Favor: Devanney/Kowalski/Ouellette/Sullivan/Thurz
(No one Opposed/No abstentions)**

NEW BUSINESS: None.

NEW PUBLIC HEARINGS : None.

OTHER BUSINESS: None.

OLD BUSINESS: None.

BUSINESS MEETING/(1) Signing of Mylars/Plans; Motions:

Mylars: None.

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Motions:

- **Recycled Concrete Products of CT and owner Herb Holden Trucking, Inc.** -
Renewal of existing Special Use Permit for volume reduction facility at 33 Apothecaries
Hall Road. [M-1 zone; Map 57, Block 48, Lot 38]

ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION: To ADJOURN this Meeting at 8:16 p.m.

Devanney moved/Kowalski seconded/VOTE: In Favor: Unanimous

Respectfully submitted,

Peg Hoffman, Recording Secretary, East Windsor Planning and Zoning Commission