



# TOWN OF OLD SAYBROOK

## Zoning Commission

### Executive Board

*Robert C. Friedmann, Chairman*  
*Madeleine B. Fish, Vice Chairman*  
*Geraldine M. Lewis, Secretary*

302 Main Street • Old Saybrook, Connecticut 06475-1741  
Telephone (860) 395-3131 • FAX (860) 395-1219  
www.oldsaybrookct.org

### Members

*Charles E. Sohl*  
*John T. Talbott*

### Alternate Members

*Thomas C. Farnham, Jr.*  
*Vacancy*

## REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

### Tuesday, January 17, 2012 at 7:00 PM

1<sup>st</sup> floor conference room – Town Hall  
302 Main Street

#### I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Friedmann called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

#### II. ROLL CALL

##### Attendant Members

Robert C. Friedmann, Chairman  
Madeleine B. Fish, Vice Chairman  
Geraldine M. Lewis, Secretary  
John T. Talbott, Regular Member  
Thomas C. Farnham, Jr., Alternate Member, seated for Charles Sohl  
Charles E. Sohl, Regular Member, arrived 7:25 p.m.

##### Attendant Staff

Christina Costa, Zoning Enforcement Officer  
Christine Nelson, Town Planner  
Susan Graham, Administrative Clerk  
Mark Branse, Legal Counsel  
Matt Willis, Legal Counsel

#### III. REGULAR BUSINESS

##### A. MINUTES

<p><b>MOTION</b> to approve the minutes from the December 5, 2011 Regular Meeting <b>MADE:</b> by R. Friedmann; <b>SECONDED:</b> by G. Lewis; <b>VOTING IN FAVOR;</b> R. Friedmann, G. Lewis, M. Fish, and J. Talbott. T. Farnham, Jr. <b>OPPOSED:</b> None. <b>ABSTAINING:</b> None. <b>APPROVED:</b> 5-0-0.</p>
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**B. CORRESPONDENCE**

**MOTION** to pay Branse, Willis & Knapp, LLC, invoices #29329 (\$132.00) and #29330 (\$49.50), for a total of \$181.50. **MADE:** by G. Lewis; **SECONDED:** by M. Fish; **VOTING IN FAVOR:** R. Friedmann, G. Lewis, M. Fish, J. Talbott, and T. Farnham, Jr. **OPPOSED:** None; **ABSTAINING:** None; **APPROVED:** 5-0-0.

**C. ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

Mr. Talbott offered a suggestion to vote for officers as a unified slate since all of the current officers were willing to continue in their positions. The Commission agreed.

**MOTION** to nominate R. Friedmann as Chairman, M. Fish as Vice Chairperson, G. Lewis as Secretary. **MADE:** by R. Friedmann; **SECONDED:** by J. Talbott; **VOTING IN FAVOR:** R. Friedmann, G. Lewis, M. Fish, J. Talbott; and T. Farnham, Jr. **OPPOSED:** None; **ABSTAINING:** None; **APPROVED:** 5-0-0.

**MOTION** to close nominations. **MADE:** by J. Talbott; **SECONDED:** by R. Friedmann; **VOTING IN FAVOR:** R. Friedmann, G. Lewis, M. Fish, J. Talbott; and T. Farnham, Jr. **OPPOSED:** None; **ABSTAINING:** None; **APPROVED:** 5-0-0.

**D. APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVES**

**MOTION** to nominate C. Sohl as representative to Inland Wetlands & Watercourse Commission. **MADE:** by M. Fish; **SECONDED:** by J. Talbott; **VOTING IN FAVOR:** R. Friedmann, G. Lewis, M. Fish, J. Talbott; and T. Farnham Jr. **OPPOSED:** None; **ABSTAINING:** None; **APPROVED:** 5-0-0.

**MOTION** to close nominations. **MADE:** by R. Friedmann; **SECONDED:** by J. Talbott; **VOTING IN FAVOR:** R. Friedmann, G. Lewis, M. Fish, J. Talbott; and T. Farnham, Jr. **OPPOSED:** None; **ABSTAINING:** None; **APPROVED:** 5-0-0.

Mr. Sohl arrived at the meeting.

**IV. PRESENTATION**

**“The Good, The Bad & The Ugly” Legal Considerations in Design & Aesthetics**

Presenter: Mark K. Branse, Esq., Branse, Willis & Knapp, LLC

Ms. Nelson introduced the presenter, Mark Branse, Esq., and explained that the purpose of the presentation was to have a better understanding of what can be legally regulated by the Commission. Atty. Branse showed a PowerPoint presentation of examples of buildings, signs, parking areas and landscapes of commercial settings from various towns. The Commission viewed examples of architecture in line with the goals of towns that maintain New England quaintness, as well as others that were considered less appealing.

Discussion followed pertaining to the shortage of parking in certain areas of Town. Ideas for additional parking were mentioned, although there are no definite plans at this time.

Mr. Talbott presented photos of business vehicles that are being used as signs and seem to be permanently parked in front of businesses. The Commission discussed the legality of such practices.

Mr. Friedmann inquired about a policy on electronic signs that flash more frequently than every 15 minutes. Atty. Branse recommended it be put in the Zoning Regulations. Mr. Friedmann also questioned the wording of signs and if they must be used solely for the name of the business. Atty. Branse clarified that businesses can word their signs for advertisements, rather than the business name, as long as they stay within the size limits. He also commented on the aesthetic appeal of some businesses that have dressed up their rear entrances with signs and awnings.

Ms. Nelson gave credit to the Commission for creating regulations that additionally serve as design standards. She suggested that the Commission review the standards to see if they still are in line with the desired effects on the community. Atty. Branse suggested that Commission members take photos of signs they either liked or disliked and analyze the constraints of the signs to quantify the characteristics and aid in designing standards.

**V. COMMITTEE, REPRESENTATIVE & STAFF REPORTS**

ZEO Costa reported on the following:

- A letter was received from Gray Sobran requesting to operate a wholesale marine business at 71 Mill Rock Road East. The Commission determined that this is a marine commercial use and is not an allowable use in the Business B-4 district.

- Dr. David Morandt, 1358 Boston Post Road sent a letter requesting that the Commission remove Special Exception Permit requirements for sidewalks on Boston Post and Old Post Roads. The Commission determined that this is a modification of the approved Special Exception Permit.
- The Commission was updated on anticipated applications for upcoming meetings including workshops to be held the second meeting of every month depending on application workload.

VI. **ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION** to adjourn the meeting at 9:22 p.m. to the next regularly scheduled meeting to be held on February 6, 2012 at the Old Saybrook Town Hall, first floor conference room, 302 Main Street at 7:00 p.m.: **MADE:** by J. Talbott; **SECONDED:** by G. Lewis; **VOTING IN FAVOR:** R. Friedmann, G. Lewis, M. Fish, J. Talbott, and T. Farnham, Jr.; **OPPOSED:** None; **ABSTAINING:** None; **APPROVED:** 5-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Graham  
Administrative Clerk