

Town of Stonington Conservation Commission

Minutes of a Regular Meeting held on April 27, 2009  
Stonington Police Station Meeting Room, 173 South Broad Street, Pawcatuck, CT

**1. Call to order:** Called to order by Vice Chairman Cole at 7:12 p.m. Commission members also in attendance were Bell, Baldwin and Herbst. Dewire was absent. Chairman Simm arrived at 7:20 p.m. and Lyons arrived at 7:25 p.m. Town Planner Brynes, Carlene Donnarummo and Ted Ladwig were present.

**2. Review of Town Developments and Proposals:**

MOTION: Move to item 2f (Bell, Baldwin). Passed unanimously.

**2f. PZ0917ZC Jamie D. Aluzzo** – *Zoning Map Amendment Application from Residential RA-20 to Commercial LS-5 for properties located at 140 & 146 Liberty Street, Pawcatuck. Assessor's Map 15, Block 2, Lots 8 & 9.* Mr. Ladwig presented the application. Brown's Garage to the south and properties on the opposite side of Liberty Street are presently LS-5. A narrow strip of the abutting pond property to the south of Mr. Liepold will remain RA-20. Simm & Lyons arrived. MOTION: To approve the zone change as requested (Cole, Bell). Passed with an abstention by Lyons; Chairman Simm did not vote. Mr. Ladwig departed.

MOTION: Revert to original order (Cole, Bell). Chairman Simm took over the meeting.

**2a. PZ0907ZC Town of Stonington (PZC)** - *Request Zone Change for properties currently zoned as LI-130 to GBR-130 (Map/Block/Lot: 70/1/4, 70/1/4A, 70/1/5, 71/1/1, 71/1/1A & part of 84/1/2), realignment of LI-130 zoning district boundary with rear property lines (MBL: 70/1/1, 70/1/2 & 70/1/3), & realignment of LI-130 zoning district boundary to be offset 50 feet of property line of Map 70 Block 1 Lot 3 onto Map 70 Block 1 Lot 4A. Properties are located off Taugwonk Road, Stonington.* Chairman Simm said that the PZC hearing had gone well with Stuart Cole speaking on behalf of the Conservation Commission and Tim Bell also speaking. Chairman Simm said the Economic Development Commission has asked the Conservation Commission to identify alternative place for LI-130 in town, but that many are realizing that LI uses are permitted in other zones throughout town. The PZC hearing was continued until May 5th at 7:30 p.m. at Mystic Middle School. Lyons asked about the Taugwonk Business Park; 100 people are said to work there although Simm said that there are vacancies as a large employer had recently left. Cole noted that the CT OPM map shows this area as residential because the state wants industry on municipal sewer systems as there is no way to monitor on-site dumping of wastes.

**2b. PZ0911RA Town of Stonington (PZC)** – *Zoning Regulations Text Amendments to Article II Section 2.6 – Non-Conforming Use & Bulk; Article V Sections 5.1.2 & 5.1.3 – Use & Bulk Tables; Article VI Section 6.1 – Special Use Permits, Section 6.23 – Traffic Impact Study, & Section 6.24 – Archaeology Study; & Article VIII Section 8.3 – Site Plan Submissions, Section 8.4 – Plan Requirements, Section 8.6 – Bonding Requirements, Section 8.7 – Fee Schedule, Section 8.8 – Impact Statement, Section 8.9 – Public Hearings, and Section 8.10 – Zoning Board of Appeals.* The changes were distributed by email in March. The town planner described these amendments as a technical clean up by Director of Planning Haase before release of the latest edition of the zoning regulations. They specify what an archaeological study is. There was comment on how property owners had moved items such as an antique grinding wheel the front of their property on Route 1 adjacent to the 1655 Wequetequock dam which was a cooperative venture between the first 4 families and which formed Cheseborough Pond. Even though archaeological studies are mentioned in the town regulations, the town seemed to ignore recommendations of state archaeologist that this site was probably the town's most historic. Lyons said that she thought that too many changes were being made in one application. The Town Planner will check with Haase on some

descriptions.

**2c. PZ0912RA Town of Stonington (PZC) - Zoning Regulations Text Amendment to replace all portions of existing language in Section 6.6.22 – Open Space Development, and the addition of OSD's in the RA-20 and RA-15 zoning districts.** The version reviewed by the Conservation Commission has been updated as of 4/1/2009; Brynes distributed copies. Some of Herbst's comments made via email were incorporated by Haase in this version. MOTION: Section 6.6.22.4.1 (FAR) is still confusing and there was concern about allowing private driveways/roads which the Town may be forced to accept years later, but were seen as a carrot for developers (Herbst, Bell). Passed unanimously. There was concern that driveways were permitted within the buffer at 6.6.22.4.3.3 and that the minimum tree size for mapping was increased to 24 inches; Chairman Simm recommended a compromise of 18 inch diameter (presently 12 inches). Carlene Donnarummo asked if the amendment could be reviewed by an engineer; Brynes will send it to Alisa Morrison, an engineer who had expressed frustration with the regulation, and will check on the FAR issue (whether FAR applies to parcel as a whole or to individual lots within the parcel) and private/public road issue.

**2d. PZ0913RA Pine Point School - Zoning Regulations Text Amendment to Article VII to create regulations for Alternative Energy Systems: Section 7.22 (Renewable Energy Systems) and Subsection 7.22.1 (Small Wind Energy Systems).** The amendment application was distributed via email with the agenda. The regulation appears more restrictive, Pine Point's reaction to an earlier denial. Herbst will send Hervie Lamb of Mystic Solar the regulation for review; he will be invited to the May 18th meeting.

**2e. PZ0916SD Suzanne Medeiros - Subdivision Application for a 3-lot subdivision of approximate 4.27± acre parcel. Property located at 108 Greenhaven Rd., Pawcatuck. Assessor's Map 35 Block 1 Lot 4. Zone RA-40.** A similar application was reviewed in late 2007. This application is for four lots. One of two proposed house sites was marked with a limit of clearing and proposed tree line on the plan. Carlene Donnarummo asked if a limit of clearing could be required on the plan as the Verzillo subdivision on Burdick Lane had recently been clear cut. The applicant is asking for a fee in lieu of open space; there are no nearby open space parcels. MOTION: The Conservation Commission is in favor of a fee in lieu of open space for the application (Cole, Bell). Passed unanimously.

**2g. Any pending applications and new preliminary proposals -** None. Brynes departed.

### **3. Open Space Subcommittee**

**3a. Discussion of parcels for preservation in Pawcatuck and other locations.** Carlene Donnarummo said that there has been no change since Mr. Verzillo cleared his parcels on Burdick Lane; the tree litter has not been cleaned up. Chairman Simm has observed the site.

It was noted that trees and rocks on scenic roads cannot be removed without PZC approval except in emergency situations. Baldwin noted how a boulder had been removed from the west side of North Main Street, just south of the Avalonia parking lot, apparently without approval and after surviving the repaving and being marked with a fiberglass wand.

Baldwin expressed his concern about the clearing at 13-acre 335 Liberty Street, a riverfront parcel between the La Quinta Inn and Route 78; a couple of specimen trees along the frontage were preserved.

Baldwin noted that a number of other large parcels are currently for sale in Town, including the 60-acre 46-lot Meehan or Clairemont subdivision on Pequot Trail.

**4. Old Business**

**4a.** *Discussion of HI-60 Zoning Regulations.* Not discussed.

**4b.** *Discussion of Revisions to Neighborhood Development District (NDD) Zoning Regulations.* Not discussed.

**4c.** *Mystic River Dam Committee.* Bell had inspected earlier in the day.

**4d.** *Discussion of Stonington's 200 Greatest Roadside Trees.* Not discussed.

**4e.** *Discussion of Wequetequock Cove water quality study and water quality testing for streams.* Not discussed.

**4f.** *Discussion of possible Taugwonk Road zone change from LI-130 to GBR-130.* Covered under item 2a, again.

**4g.** *Discussion of 2/2/09 meeting with chair of the Economic Development Commission.* Not discussed.

**4h.** *Looking Forward to 2009 - Discussion of possible regulation changes to bring about short term economic benefits to the Town including floor area ratio and setback requirements in the RC-120 and GBR-130 zoning districts, accessory apartments and vegetable production greenhouses.* Simm is to discuss with Lynn Young, PZC Chairperson, after May 3rd.

**4i.** *Discussion of Alternative Energy Options for the Town: Helical Wind Turbine Study – Stuart Cole.* Covered under item 2d, again.

**5. New Business - None.**

**6.** *Review of March 23, 2009 draft minutes.* MOTION: Approve minutes as distributed (Bell, Herbst). Passed by all with the exception of Lyons, who abstained.

**7.** *Adjournment - Motion to adjourn (Cole).* Approved at 10:15 p.m.

Submitted by Ben Baldwin, Secretary

Approved at a regular meeting on 7/27/2009