

**Regular Meeting**

The 1436<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Town of Stonington's Planning and Zoning Commission was held on Tuesday, January 18, 2011 at Mystic Middle School, 204 Mistuxet Ave., Mystic, Connecticut. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 P.M. by Chairman John Swenarton. Present were Commissioners Bob Mercer, Rob Marseglia, and John Prue; Alternates Frances Hoffman, Gardner Young, and Curtis Lynch; and PZC/Zoning Permit Administrator Gayle Phoenix. Commissioner Ben Tamsky, Director of Planning Bill Haase, and Town Planner Keith Brynes were absent.

Seated were Mr. Swenarton, Mr. Marseglia, Mr. Mercer, Mr. Prue, and Mr. Lynch.

**Minutes:**

Mr. Marseglia made a motion to approve the January 4, 2011 minutes. Mr. Prue seconded. Both withdrew their motions in order to review a correction. Mr. Marseglia made a motion to approve the minutes as amended. Mr. Prue seconded. The minutes were approved 4-0-1.

**Roll Call:** Swenarton – approve, Marseglia – approve, Prue – approve, Lynch – approve, Mercer - abstain

**Reports:**

Joe Larkin's Zoning Official report was included in the Commissioners' packets.

**Old Business:**

**PZ1029CAM Norwest Marine, Inc.** - Coastal Area Management Review for proposed replacement of previously existing underground gasoline storage tank with a 4,000 gallon above ground gasoline storage tank. Property located at 7 River Rd., Pawcatuck. Assessor's Map 5 Block 6 Lot 21: Zone MC-80.

Mrs. Phoenix reviewed the application, noting Pawcatuck Fire Department Kevin Burns' response addressing spill containment. PFD requests the containment boom be large enough to cross the entire river and the boom and boat be stored on site. Ms. Phoenix stated that the DEP had not yet performed their review and recommended tabling the application to await their comments.

Mr. Marseglia made a motion to table the application. Mr. Mercer seconded. The motion to table was unanimously approved, 5-0.

**Public Hearings: 7:30 p.m.**

**PZ1025RA Joseph H. Putnam** - Zoning Regulations Text Amendment to Section 3.4 Residential RA-20, RA-15 Zones: within RA-20 only, to permit Open Space Development in accordance with Section 6.6.22, and Section 5.1.2 Residential Zones: Permitted, Accessory & Special Uses.

Mr. Prue recused himself. Gardner Young was seated.

Joseph Putnam gave an overview of the proposed regulation change, noting the benefits of OSD's, and providing a handout illustrating where RA-20 zoned properties are located throughout the town. He discussed the differences in the uses permitted in RA-20 & RM-20 zones. Alisa Morrison, representing the applicant, discussed the technical merits of OSD's and reviewed other properties that could be affected by the amendment change. Ms. Morrison responded to Staff Report comments regarding conformance of the proposed amendment with the stated purpose of the RA-20 zone and relevant goals and strategies of the POCD. She discussed the environmental benefits of an OSD subdivision.

Commission members asked questions regarding the requirements of an Open Space Development such as bulk requirements, wetlands, roadways, driveways, open space set aside, and water/septic requirements for lots. Commissioners questioned the repeated exclusion of RA-20 & RA-15 zones from cluster / OSD subdivisions.

Public Comment in Favor: David Rathbun, 211 Cove Rd., an owner of property that could benefit from the change, stated he was in favor of the proposed amendment but had no current plans for developing his property.

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Public Comment Against: Dora Hill, 26 Oakwood Ave., is opposed to text or map amendments targeted for one specific property, further noting that the purpose of the RA-20 & RA-15 zones is single-family house lots which should be maintained as such. She submitted her written comments.

Public Comment General: Carlene Donnarummo, 22 Oakwood Ave., expressed displeasure that the Staff Report did not address more of the properties potentially affected by the regulation amendment.

Mrs. Phoenix reviewed the staff report, noting the required yard minimums of 15' and the floor area ratio of 15%. She responded to questions from the Commission regarding the exclusion of RA-20 & RA-15 zones from cluster / OSD subdivisions.

Ms. Hoffman requested information on how RA-15 & RA-20 properties may have changed over time with respect to public utilities.

Rebuttal: Mr. Putnam disagreed with a previous speaker's suggestion that the proposal was spot zoning, stating that the change would apply to all RA-20 properties. He also noted the social benefits to OSD developments. Alisa Morrison also spoke in rebuttal, reading from the POCD regarding open space and impervious surfaces.

Mr. Young made a motion to close the Public Hearing. Mr. Mercer seconded. The motion was unanimously approved, 5-0.

Mr. Marseglia asked whether there were wetlands on Mr. Putnam's property. There was discussion of open space: its designated uses, proximity to other open space, and percentage of wetlands. Mr. Mercer noted that a development requiring 50% open space is preferable to those requiring only 15%.

Mr. Marseglia made a motion to table the discussion to the February 1, 2011 meeting. Mr. Lynch seconded. The motion was unanimously approved, 5-0.

### **PZ1027RA Greater Mystic Chamber of Commerce, et al - Zoning Regulations Text Amendment to Section 7.12.7.7 Special Detached Banners.**

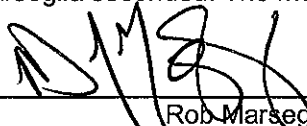
Greater Mystic Chamber of Commerce President Tricia Cunningham gave an overview of the proposed regulation amendment. The applicants include the Chamber of Commerce, Mystic Seaport, and the Mystic Aquarium. Brian Kent of Kent + Frost gave a PowerPoint presentation showing similar banners, some in other towns. Mystic Aquarium Representative Cassandra Meyer-Ogren and Nat Arata of the Mystic Seaport spoke of the value the banners provide, both for creating a sense of where tourists are and for wayfinding. The groups feel that by working collaboratively, the banners can be beneficial to the community in making a strong public statement.

Commissioners discussed issues including the legality of regulating content, how the banners would be controlled, and how these changes might affect the existing Downtown Pawcatuck/Westerly Banner program.

Public Comment Against: Dora Hill and Carlene Donnarummo spoke against the proposal, both submitting their written comments with suggested changes to the text.

Mr. Prue made a motion to continue the Public Hearing to the February 15, 2011 meeting. Mr. Marseglia seconded. The motion was unanimously approved, 5-0.

Mr. Prue made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Marseglia seconded. The motion was unanimously approved. The meeting was adjourned at 10:57 P.M.

 3/1/11  
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 Rob Marseglia, Secretary