

**CITY OF TORRINGTON
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
MINUTES
November 18, 2015**

Present: Richard Calkins, Chairman
Greg Mele, Vice Chair
Doris Murphy, Member and IWC Liaison
Paul Summers, Member
Donna Greco, Alternate
Jim Bobinski, Alternate
Jon Sheaffer, Jr., Alternate

Also Present: Martin J. Connor, AICP; City Planner

Not Present: Greg Perosino, Member

1. Call to Order:

Chairman Richard Calkins called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m., Torrington City Hall Council Chambers, Room 218, 140 Main Street, Torrington, CT

2. Attendance/Announcement by Chairman:

Chairman Calkins announced present and serving this evening will be Commissioners Greg Mele, Doris Murphy, Paul Summers, Donna Greco, Jim Bobinski, Jon Sheaffer and Richard Calkins. Also present is City Planner Martin Connor.

Mr. Connor noted last night he attended the Trinity Episcopal Church Meeting for considered plans for their church building. Congregation numbers have dwindled and expenses have gone up, roof replacement alone is \$200,000. They have approximately one acre of building space, and the thought is what type of uses could occur in that building to share some of that space, and share some of the expenses with the church. It was an interesting brain storming session. Mr. Connor was there to answer questions about what type of uses could occur there and the meeting went well. Some other churches are interested in sharing some of the space, but uses during the week are still needed besides the soup kitchen. The building is beautiful and the acoustics are tremendous. This is the Downtown District zone, which has the maximum allowable uses. The church does have a parking lot.

3. Minutes for Approval:

a. 10/28/15

Mr. Summers noted on page one, No. 1., the first sentence should read: "Chairman Richard Calkins *called the meeting to order* at 7:01 p.m." Motion to approve the minutes as corrected, seconded by Mr. Mele, unanimously carried. Ms. Murphy abstained from voting.

4. Old Business:

- a. Enforcement Update

No new information to report per Mr. Summers and Mr. Connor.

5. New Business:

Chairman Calkins moved agenda item 5c ahead of item 5a.:

- c. Commissioner Doris Murphy, Recognition of over 25 years of service

Mayor Elinor Carbone and Danielle Palladino were present to recognize Mrs. Murphy. Upon learning that Mrs. Murphy would not be seeking reappointment to this Commission, Mayor Carbone and her staff researched the City's historical records and determined that Mrs. Murphy has twenty six years of devoted service. In a time where an average job or career is seven years, or when a term is four years in duration, we might get one or two terms of service at best from any good Boards person, the Mayor and staff were impressed and astounded, and it's hard to express the gratitude she has for Mrs. Murphy. Mayor Carbone has a Declaration as Mayor of the City of Torrington, presented to Mrs. Doris Murphy, Planning and Zoning Commission member. Mayor Carbone read the Declaration to Mrs. Murphy. Torrington is a better place because of Mrs. Murphy's service, and many difficult decisions over the years have been made by this Commission.

Danielle Palladino, Legislative Aide, House Democrats, State Representative Michelle Cook's Office, appeared with an Official Citation from the General Assembly introduced by Representative Roberta Willis, Representative Michelle Cook, Representative Jay Case, Senator Clark Chapin, and Senator Kevin Witkos. Ms. Palladino read the Citation for her recognition for her many years of service and unwavering commitment to the City of Torrington. Ms. Palladino thanked Mrs. Murphy for her years of service.

Mr. Summers noted and recognized Mrs. Murphy's years of service of double duty, also serving on the City's Inland Wetlands Commission.

Mr. Connor recognized Mrs. Murphy, and her dedication, coming into the office to review site plan maps, and taking site visits with City staff. She has been a dedicated member of the Commission.

Chairman Richard Calkins echoed the comments, and recognized her service, and also noted Mrs. Murphy worked with multiple City staff including several City Planners prior to Mr. Connor.

- a. Site Plan 1169
Applicant: Daniel M. Gervais
Location: 17 Torrington Street
Proposal: Construct 12' x 50' carport

Mr. Daniel Gervais of Circle Drive, Torrington, appeared before the Commission and presented site maps and explained his proposal to construct the carport for equipment storage. Maps have been updated.

Mr. Connor read his memo to the Commission dated November 12, 2015.

MOTION by Mr. Mele to APPROVE Site Plan 1169

Applicant: Daniel M. Gervais
Location: 17 Torrington Street
Proposal: Construct 12' x 50' carport
with the following recommendation:

It is recommended that the applicant follow the advice of Fire Chief Brunoli contained in his letter to the City Planner dated 11/4/15. Motion seconded by Mr. Summers, unanimously carried.

- b. Special Exception 15-304
Applicant: AJK, LLC
Location: 637 and 659 Winsted Road
Proposal: Earth excavation quarry permit, Section 6.4
Set public hearing date

MOTION by Mr. Mele to set a public hearing date of December 9, 2015, seconded by Mr. Summers, unanimously carried.

- c. Special Exception 15-303
Applicant: Segundo Velasquez
Location: 3568 Winsted Road
Proposal: Change of use to banquet hall (former retail), Section 3.1,
Subsection 2.20, Set public hearing date

MOTION by Mr. Summers to set a public hearing date of December 9, 2015, seconded by Mr. Mele, unanimously carried.

- d. Special Exception 15-302
Applicant: James B. Rokos
Location: 1049 East Main Street
Proposal: Change of use to Single Family Use in the LB Zone,
(former office use) Section 3.1, Subsection 1.10
Set public hearing date

MOTION by Mr. Summers to set a public hearing date of December 9, 2015, seconded by Mr. Mele, unanimously carried.

- b. Approval of 2016 Meeting Calendar

MOTION by Mr. Summers to approve the 2016 calendar, seconded by Mr. Mele, unanimously carried.

Ten minute recess prior to public hearing.

6. Public Hearing Scheduled for Wednesday, November 18, 2015; 7:30 p.m., City Hall Council Chambers, Room 218, 140 Main Street, Torrington, CT:

a. Proposed Zone Change:

Applicant: Torrington Planning and Zoning Commission

Location: 18 parcels as follows:

Portion of East Elm Street, Assessor Map 118 Block 019 Lot 001; 132 Brightwood Avenue; 137 Brightwood Avenue; 138 Brightwood Avenue; 147 Brightwood Avenue; 148 Brightwood Avenue; 20 Jones Street; 32 Jones Street; 38 Jones Street; 279 East Elm Street; 289 East Elm Street; 295 East Elm Street; 309 East Elm Street; 17 Kinney Street; 27 Kinney Street; 35 Kinney Street; 39 Kinney Street, 55 Kinney Street

Proposal: Change current zone R6 to Local Business Zone

Chairman Richard Calkins called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. and stated serving on the Commission this evening will be Commissioners Paul Summers, Jim Bobinski, Doris Murphy, Jon Sheaffer, Jr., Donna Greco, Greg Mele and Richard Calkins. Also present is City Planner Martin Connor.

Commissioner Mele read the legal notice which was published in the Republic American.

Chairman Calkins noted this Commission is the applicant, and asked Mr. Connor to read his memo to the Commission, and read Economic Development Director Erin Wilson's memo, discuss the application, and then go to the audience for public comment.

Mr. Connor read his memo to the Commission dated November 10, 2015.

Mr. Connor read Economic Development Director Erin Wilson's memo recommending approval to the Commission dated today.

Commissioner Shea asked Mr. Connor what he envisioned going into this area. Mr. Connor responded parcels could be combined for redevelopment, many of them are on the smaller residential size. When there is a property located in the LB zone that is being used for residential use, we follow the regulations for residential properties being used in the R6 zone. Any of those houses could continue forever to be used as residential, with setbacks the same as R6 zone. The thought is that if there is a larger developer who wanted to combine a few of those parcels together, that could possibly happen. At one time we were looking for a hotel site in the area. At one time such an application came in for several combined parcels on East Main Street for a hotel. There is a need for a hotel in the area.

Mr. Connor explained the process for development in a Local Business zone, and the setbacks. Mr. Connor referred to the map, and noted that this Commission has never made a zone change to a parcel where the property owner was against the proposal. That is why it was important to send out the explanatory letter to the property owners. In the past, previous planners made changes to multiple properties, and the property owner did not even know that it happened. Ms. Murphy recalls this occurring many years ago.

Mr. Connor referred to the map, and noted a letter of opposition has been received from a property owner on Jones Street, and he will read that letter into the record. Mr. Connor noted which parcels would be important to rezone, particularly properties on the corner that could be redeveloped or be used as parking.

Mr. Connor noted a previous application that was approved, changed to Downtown District zone on Field Street, with the property owner's permission (Timkin) so that we could set a tone for future redevelopment.

A letter was received from Betty Ann Killiany, 20 Jones Street, it was received November 17, 2015 and addressed to Mr. Connor. Mr. Connor read the letter which was in objection to properties located on Jones Street being changed. Ms. Killiany was supportive of the application to change the zone on 245 East Elm Street, so she has been active in following the zoning issues in this area.

Mrs. Murphy viewed the area today on Jones Street and expressed concern for the property owners on Jones Street, and the neighbors who may also be affected by this change.

Setbacks were discussed, Mr. Connor explained the setback requirements.

Joseph Barbieri, 10 McKay Street, Torrington, CT appeared in opposition. Mr. Connor read a letter from Mr. Barbieri in opposition to the proposal. Mr. Barbieri inquired what his house would be worth if a business was located across from his house. Mr. Calkins stated he is not qualified to answer that question. Discussion followed on various properties in the neighborhood, and topography in the area.

Tim Tagan, 17 Kinney Street property owner appeared with questions. He is not sure such a change would increase the value of his property. Discussion followed on traffic issues, school bus traffic, etc. The map was referred to, and discussion of which properties could be changed, and which ones could remain as R6.

Mr. Mele relayed his experience with changing a property he owned into Industrial zone, and after research concluded his property value did increase with that zone change.

Jim Serkey of 59 Jones Street, Torrington, CT appeared in opposition. He is on the corner of Jones and Kinney Street. He thinks it make more sense to go along with Mr. Barbieri's and Mr. Connor's suggestion of eliminating some of the properties for a change on Jones Street.

Mr. Calkins noted there is no rush or 65 day time limit to make a decision on this application. Mr. Calkins would like to view the neighborhood, other Commission members agreed. Mr. Connor will have a map made up for the Commission to review at the December 9, 2015 meeting, which would follow Mr. Barbieri's recommendations. The Jones Street properties would be eliminated from the proposal.

It was the consensus of the Commission to close the public hearing.

At 8:10 p.m. Chairman Calkins declared the public hearing closed, and there will be a decision at a future date.

7. **Adjournment:**

MOTION by Mr. Summers to adjourn at 8:10 p.m., seconded by Mr. Mele, unanimously carried.

Land Use Office
City of Torrington