

**CITY OF TORRINGTON
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
MINUTES
September 14, 2016**

Present: Richard Calkins, Chairman
Greg Mele, Vice Chair
Paul Summers, Member
Jim Bobinski, Member
Greg Perosino, Member
Donna Greco, Alternate
Jon Sheaffer, Alternate

Also Present: Martin Connor, AICP, City Planner

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 on the Commission this evening are Greg Mele, Paul Summers, Jim Bobinski, Greg Perosino, Donna Greco, Jon Sheaffer and Richard Calkins. Also present is City Planner Martin Connor.

- a. New Plan of Conservation and Development (PoCD) for 21 town region –
Update presentation by Jocelyn Ayer, NWCOG Community & Economic Development Director

Ms. Jocelyn Ayer appeared before the Commission with a power point presentation and survey for the Commission with their regional updated plan. Details of the data they have collected were presented by Ms. Ayer. (7:06 p.m.)

3. Minutes for Approval:

- a. 8/10/16

MOTION by Mr. Summers to approve the 8/10/16 minutes, seconded by Mr. Sheaffer, motion carried.

6. Public Hearings Scheduled for 7:30 p.m., Wednesday, September 14, 2016, City Hall Council Chambers, Room 218, 140 Main Street, Torrington, CT

- a. Proposed Amendments to Torrington Zoning Regulations
Applicant: Torrington Planning and Zoning Commission
Proposal: Section 2.2 Add new Definition “Farm Brewery”
Section 3.1 Table of Uses, New Subsection 12.15 Farm Brewery
New Section 5.2.4.1 Farm Brewery

Mr. Calkins opened the public hearing at 7:30 p.m. and stated serving on the Commission this evening will be Commissioners Donna Greco, Greg Mele, Paul Summers, Jim Bobinski, Greg Perosino, Jon Sheaffer and Richard Calkins. Also present is City Planner Martin Connor.

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

Mr. Connor reviewed the referral response from Jocelyn Ayer of Northwest Council of Governments, who found it in compliance with their plan, and no concerns for neighboring towns.

Mr. Connor also sent this proposed regulation to Ms. Joan Nichols, Director of the Connecticut Farm Bureau who is very active in helping towns and farms. Mr. Connor read Ms. Nichols’ response, which included a few suggested amendments which Mr. Connor has incorporated into the proposal. Mr. Connor read the proposed regs into the record.

Discussion amongst Commission members and Mr. Connor followed, with a few suggested amendments to the proposal.

Mr. Calkins opened the hearing for public comments.

Doug Henry of 776 Guerdat Road, Torrington, appeared before the Commission and thanked them for this opportunity. This will be a good facility in Torrington and good for the community.

No further public comment.

At 7:44 p.m. Chairman Calkins declared the public hearing closed.

MOTION by Mr. Mele to APPROVE Proposed Amendments to Torrington Zoning Regulations

Applicant: Torrington Planning and Zoning Commission
Proposal: Section 2.2 Add new Definition “Farm Brewery”
Section 3.1 Table of Uses, New Subsection 12.15 Farm

The motion includes adding the word “growing” in the farm brewery, and eliminating the “e” under 12.15 Farm Brewery in the R15, R15s, R10, R10s, R6 and it includes sales or shipments of beer to retailers if permitted by law.

The Commission finds the proposal to be consistent with the City of Torrington’s Plan of Conservation and Development. The effective date of the regulation change shall be th day after publication of the legal notice of decision in the local newspaper.

MOTION seconded by Mr. Perosino, unanimously carried.

- b. Proposed Zone Change
Applicant: Bicron Holdings LLC
Location: 427 Goshen Road
Proposal: Change Zone to Industrial, I (currently Local Business Zone)

At 7:46 p.m. Chairman Calkins opened the public hearing and stated serving on the Commission this evening will be Commissioners Donna Greco, Greg Mele, Paul Summers, Jim Bobinski, Greg Perosino, Jon Sheaffer and Richard Calkins. Also present is City Planner Martin Connor.

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

Attorney William Grikis of 12 Porter Street, Lakeville, CT appeared representing the applicant. Mike Toussant, General Manager of Bicron Holdings LLC was also present. Bicron Holdings has recently relocated with 45 employees to this new Torrington location. At one time this site was zoned Industrial, and it has since been changed to Local Business. This proposal would limit Bicron from expanding more than ten percent due to the Local Business zone. Mr. Grikis referred to Mr. Connor's recommendation memo dated 8/19/16.

Mr. Connor read his memo dated August 19, 2016 to the Commission.

Discussion followed amongst Commission members and Mr. Connor.

Certified return receipts from the applicant were given to the Chairman for the file.

Mr. Calkins opened the hearing for public comment.

Christine Rosmour of 243 Goshen Road appeared in opposition. Ms. Rosmour requested that the proposal be denied. Quality of life issues are paramount to citizens. She stated we just heard they may be interested in selling, and a different manufacturer will purchase the property, and what will become of the site is not predictable. This site could become a junkyard or an automobile graveyard. Homeowners should be able to have a reasonable expectation that zoning of their property or around their property should not change to their detriment. She is for the rejuvenation of Torrington, there are ample appropriate zones and vacant buildings that are existing and available to Bicron. They chose to purchase in an area that may not support future growth without zoning change. This proposal can change their quality of life.

Attorney Grikis stated Bicron Holdings has been in business for over 50 years and there are no plans to sell now and he would expect the business to stay for a while. The former location in North Canaan, CT was completely surrounded by residential properties, and he is not aware of any complaints during the last ten years he has represented the applicant. Bicron's operations should not affect the peaceful enjoyment of neighboring properties.

In response to questions from Mr. Perosino, Mr. Connor reviewed some permitted uses in the Industrial Zone, and which ones would require a Special Exception.

At 8:04 p.m. Chairman Calkins declared the public hearing closed.

Discussion amongst Commission members followed.

MOTION by Mr. Mele APPROVE Proposed Zone Change

Applicant: Bicron Holdings LLC

Location: 427 Goshen Road

Proposal: Change Zone to Industrial, I (currently Local Business zone)

The Commission hereby finds the proposal to be consistent with the City's Plan of Conservation and Development. The effective date of the Zone Change shall be the day after publication of the legal notice of decision in the local newspaper.

MOTION seconded by Mr. Perosino, unanimously carried.

4. Old Business:

a. Enforcement Update - No new updates from Commissioner Summers.

b. Site Plan 1200

Applicant: 600 Riverside Avenue Torrington LLC

Location: 600 Riverside Avenue

Proposal: 4,880 square foot tent building

Attorney Perly Grimes of 46 West Street, Litchfield, CT appeared representing the applicant. Dennis McMorrow, Professional Engineer with Berkshire Engineering and Surveying, Bantam, CT was also present. Presentation given by Mr. Grimes. Approval already received from the Inland Wetlands Commission.

Mr. McMorrow gave a presentation on the proposal with accompanying site map (8:14 p.m.) .

Mr. Connor read his memo dated August 24, 2016 to the Commission.

MOTION by Mr. Mele to APPROVE Site Plan 1200

Applicant: 600 Riverside Avenue Torrington LLC

Location: 600 Riverside Avenue

Proposal: 4,880 square foot tent building

with the following conditions:

1. The Rain Garden and Landscape plantings shall be installed in accordance with the plan within 60 days of the Site Plan approval.

2. Zoning Permit and Building Permit shall be obtained for the tent structure

MOTION by Mr. Perosino, unanimously carried.

c. Site Plan 1201

Applicant: Aldi, Inc.

Location: 320 East Elm Street

Proposal: 2,839 square feet expansion of existing supermarket

Jeff Board of BL Companies, 355 Research Parkway, Meriden, CT appeared before the Commission along with Bruno Lourenco of Aldi's. This is a for a building extension on the north side of the market. There has been a reduction of 1,000 sq. ft. of impervious surface with additional landscaping. More details of the proposal were given. The access of Zion Street will be closed off, leaving a six foot gap for pedestrians.

Mr. Connor read his memo dated August 30, 2016 to the Commission.

Mr. Perosino expressed his concerns about closing the access to Zion Street. (private driveway)

Mr. Connor read a letter from Ms. Sue Wallace of 50 Brightwood Avenue regarding concerns of extreme traffic, noise, and safety with this driveway. This is not a city street, it is a private driveway.

Bruno Lourenco of Aldi's appeared and stated their reasoning for wanting this driveway closed. Normally they want as many curb cuts as possible, but not in this situation. Since opening, this is an area they cannot control, and it has been a dumping ground for unused vehicles that they must then remove. The history of this site is an easy way to dispose of vehicles. Mr. Perosino disagreed with closing the driveway.

MOTION by Mr. Mele to APPROVE Site Plan 1201

Applicant: Aldi, Inc.

Location: 320 East Elm Street

Proposal: 2,839 square foot expansion of existing supermarket with the following condition and recommendation:

1. The applicant shall address the comments from Ray Drew, Administrator, WPCA, in his memo to the City Planner dated 8/9/16.
2. It is recommended that the applicant follow the advice of Fire Chief Gary Brunoli contained in his letter to the City Planner dated 8/11/16.

MOTION seconded by Paul Summers, unanimously carried.

b. Site Plan 1203

Applicant: Roberta Chamalian, Kitty Quarters

Location: 1188 New Litchfield Street

Proposal: Change of use to kennel (former office)

Ms. Roberta Chamalian, Saverese Lane, Burlington, CT appeared before the Commission and explained their mission of rescuing cats and getting them ready for adoption. No work will be done on the exterior of the building, and Ms. Chamalian explained how the cats will be housed inside the building, they will have approximately 20 cats at this site. Mr. Connor noted our regulations include cats under the kennel definition.

Mr. Connor highlighted his memo to the Commission dated September 8, 2016. This property has been for sale for a long time, and so far the only interested parties want to put a use in that requires more parking that what is available. This use is a good fit.

MOTION by Mr. Mele to APPROVE Site Plan 1203
Applicant: Roberta Chamalian, Kitty Quarters
Location: 1188 New Litchfield St.
Proposal: Change of use to kennel (former office)

with the following condition and recommendation:

1. The applicant shall address the comments from Ray Drew contained in his memo to the City Planner dated 8/31/16.
2. It is recommended the applicant follow the advice of Fire Chief Gary Brunoli contained in his memo to the city Planner dated 8/31/16.

MOTION seconded by Mr. Perosino, unanimously carried.

a. Site Plan 1202

Applicant: Al Zaidi
Location: 475 East Main Street
Proposal: Existing building demolished, proposed new parking layout, closure of two curb curbs, new lighting and landscaping

Mr. Connor reviewed the proposal, the Illustra Beauty Salon was demolished, and the property owner has met with City Staff. Two curb cuts will be closed, and the additional work/improvements will be accomplished, City Staff have signed off. There was no one present to represent the applicant.

MOTION by Mr. Mele to APPROVE Site Plan 1202

Applicant: Al Zaidi
Location: 475 East Main Street
Proposal: Existing building demolished, proposed new parking layout, closure of two curb cuts, new lighting and landscaping.

MOTION seconded by Mr. Perosino, unanimously carried.

c. Site Plan 1017

Applicant: Garrett Homes LLC
Location: 1019 East Main Street
Proposal: demolish existing building, construct 7,225 sq. ft. Auto Parts retail building, associated parking, landscaping, lighting.

MOTION by Mr. Summers to table this application, seconded by Mr. Mele, unanimously carried.

7. Adjournment:

MOTION by Mr. Mele to adjourn at 8:45 p.m., seconded by Mr. Summers, unanimously carried.