

**CITY OF TORRINGTON
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
MINUTES
June 22, 2011**

Present: Richard Calkins, Chairman
Greg Mele, Vice Chairman
Doris Murphy, Member and Inland Wetlands Liaison
Paul Summers, Member
Christine Mele, Alternate
Greg Perosino, Member (arrived 7:04 p.m.)

Also Present: Martin Connor, AICP, City Planner

Not Present: Donna Greco, Alternate
Jim Bobinski, Alternate

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 will be Doris Murphy, Paul Summers, Greg Mele, Christine Mele, and Richard Calkins. Also in attendance is City Planner Martin Connor.

3. Minutes for Approval:

a. 6/8/11

MOTION by Mr. Summers to approve the 6/8/11 minutes, seconded by Mr. Mele, unanimously carried.

4. Old Business:

None

5. New Business:

a. Site Plan 1011
Applicant: Angelo Alduini, Jr.
Location: 51 Brewer Street
Proposal: 50' x 45' metal storage building

Angelo Alduini of 404 University Drive appeared and explained this building will be to store his concession stand equipment. Mr. Alduini explained he has three concession trailers, he goes to fairs and carnivals, their main business is in the fall, and then everything gets cleaned up and put away.

Mr. Connor read his memo to the Commission dated June 15, 2011.

MOTION by Mr. Mele to APPROVE Site Plan 1011

Applicant: Angelo Alduini, Jr.

Location: 51 Brewer Street

Proposal: 50' x 45' metal storage building and outside storage of equipment

With the following conditions:

1. The applicant shall file an application for a grading permit. A bond estimate for the cost and installation of the erosion and sedimentation controls in accordance with the approved plan shall be prepared by the applicant's engineer. A bond for the erosion and sedimentation controls in an amount acceptable to the City Engineer and in a form acceptable to the Corporation Counsel shall be posted prior to beginning construction on the project.
2. Per the recommendations of Kim Barbieri, CZ&WEO, in her 6/15/11 memo to the City Planner, additional Blueberry Bushes shall be added to the Landscape Plan along the East property line adjacent to N/F Thomas Lukcso to create a loose "hedge".
3. The applicant shall submit a bond estimate to be reviewed and approved by the City Planner for the proposed landscaping. A bond in a form acceptable to the Corporation Counsel shall be posted prior to issuance of the Zoning Permit. 25% of the posted landscaping bond shall remain in place for one year after the landscaping plan has been fully implemented to ensure successful growth of the plantings.

MOTION seconded by Mr. Summers, motion carried with Mr. Perosino abstaining from voting.

b. Violation letter

Site Plan 11-255 and Site Plan 998

Owner: Rick's Auto Parts Inc.

Location: 32 Ricciardone Avenue

Approved Proposal: Creation of Parking Lot in the R6 Zone

Mr. Connor explained he wrote a letter on June 7, 2011 to Mr. Ricciardone as it was clear no action was being taken regarding the conditions placed on the approved Site Plan issued by the this Commission on April 15, 2011. One of the conditions was that the lot was to be cleared of junk and vehicles immediately. As of June 7, 2011, nothing had happened, the same condition as April. Mr. Connor sent a letter and requested that this specific condition be followed and asked that Rick's Auto Parts Inc. appear at the June 22, 2011 Planning and Zoning Commission meeting and explain to the Commission why they were flagrantly ignoring the conditions of the approval.

Rick's Auto Part's attorney, Joel Perlotto, reviewed the file and advised his client to follow the conditions imposed. Mr. Connor has inspected the site and it is cleared off, as well as Kim Barbieri and Greg Mele viewed the site for compliance as well. The lot is completely vacant with a chain across it and a sign that states No Parking. The Site Plan approval is good for five years, an extension can be requested at that time, but the lot cannot be used for storage of junk any longer.

Mr. Connor noted the violation has been cleared up and there is no further action needed by the Commission this evening.

c. Location Approval and Site Plan 1012

Applicant: Robert Persechino

Location: 855 East Main Street

Proposal: Used Car Dealership (Set public hearing date)

MOTION by Mr. Summers to set a public hearing date of July 27, 2011, seconded by Mr. Mele, unanimously carried.

d. Discuss potential for new Mixed Use Zone in South end of Torrington

Mr. Connor explained the Economic Development Commission, Mr. Greg Mele is a member of the EDC, has requested a look be taken at the South end where there are many mixed uses of properties, and if the Zoning Regulations can be reviewed and perhaps amended to promote some redevelopment. In the Plan of Conservation and Development, there is a section on neighborhoods and in that Plan it recommends that in the future we may review some of those neighborhoods on a case by case basis and perhaps do some studies to see whether or not amendments are in order for the regulations. The South End is a neighborhood identified on the Community Structure Map. The City's GIS specialist, David Scherf, has prepared a map showing parcels that have sanitary sewer, and parcels within the sanitary sewer service area in the south end neighborhood. If we are to make changes to the regulations, in Mr. Connor's opinion, changes would be implemented only where sanitary services are currently available, or at the very least parcels in the sewer service area.

If the Commission wants to pursue this, there are several ways to go about it. We can think about creating an overlay zone. It may encourage someone to put together some parcels to create a certain size. Perhaps mixed uses could be allowed, Mr. Connor learned from his recent planner's association meeting, there are two towns in Connecticut that are looking at form-based zoning. It is minimal zoning. If the Commission wishes to make any changes, we would start with the Plan of Conservation and Development, by making an addendum to the neighborhood section, with involvement with the Economic Development Commission and other City staff.

Mr. Calkins noted the City has established residential neighborhoods in the South End, and we run the risk of disrupting those neighborhoods, a commercial development may not be proper close to such a neighborhood. Mr. Mele noted the Oak Avenue area is still intermixed with residential areas, many pre-existing commercial uses in the residential areas.

Mr. Connor noted if a parcel is large enough to accommodate another use, often by combining with another parcel, that may be an incentive for development.

Mr. Calkins wished to see commercial development be enhanced in a commercial zone, and not sprawled over all the place, into the residential zones, as it dilutes the value of the existing commercial zones. His opinion is to keep commercial businesses in commercial areas.

Mr. Connor further explained overlay zones, and an existing business could potentially be expanded into another parcel with this overlay zone. Or the Commission could conclude after discussion this is not appropriate. A vehicle could be provided for a case by case basis for review.

Ms. Mele noted the awful view of Albreadas when coming over the hill from her condo, especially with the trees down with the riverfront work.

This is worth looking into per Mr. Calkins, and perhaps Mr. Mele can obtain more information from the Economic Development Commission on their thoughts. Mr. Connor will look into this with the Mayor's Land Use Committee.

Discussion followed.

6. Adjournment:

Motion by Mr. Perosino to adjourn at 7:38 p.m., seconded by Mr. Summers, unanimously carried.