

**CITY OF TORRINGTON  
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION  
MINUTES  
September 12, 2012**

Present: Richard Calkins, Chairman  
Greg Mele, Vice Chairman  
Paul Summers, Member  
Doris Murphy, Member and Inland Wetlands Liaison  
Donna Greco, Alternate  
Chris Mele, Alternate  
Jim Bobinski, Alternate

Also Present: Martin Connor, AICP, City Planner

Not Present: Greg Perosino, Member

**1. Call to Order:**

Chairman Calkins called the meeting to order at 7:01 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 Commissioners Greg Mele, Paul Summers, Doris Murphy, Donna Greco, Chris Mele, Jim Bobinski and Richard Calkins. Also present is City Planner Martin Connor, AICP.

**3. Minutes for Approval:**

a. 8-8-12

MOTION by Mr. Mele to approve the 8-8-12 minutes, seconded by Ms. Murphy, motion carried with Ms. Mele abstaining from voting.

**4. Old Business:**

a. Enforcement Update

Commissioner Summers reported there is no update at this time.

**5. New Business:**

a. Site Plan 1052  
Applicant: Community Systems, Inc.  
Location: 295 Alvord Park Road  
Proposal: Parking lot expansion

Dennis McMorrow of Berkshire Engineering and Surveying appeared representing the applicant. Mr. McMorrow reviewed the proposal for a parking lot expansion. The parking is being increased from 71 spaces to 91 spaces, with four handicap spaces. There is a slight increase in impervious surface, and drainage concerns have been addressed and a detention basin designed, and flows lowered. Site details were explained by Mr. McMorrow

Mr. Connor read his memo dated August 29, 2012.

MOTION by Mr. Mele to APPROVE Site Plan 1052

Applicant: Community Systems, Inc.

Location: 295 Alvord Park Road

Proposal: Parking Lot Expansion

with the following recommendation:

1. It is recommended that the applicant follow the advice of Acting Fire Chief, Gary Brunoli, contained in an e-mail and letter to the City Planner dated 8/6/12.

Motion seconded by Mr. Summers, unanimously carried.

b. Site Plan 1054

Applicant: Franklin Products

Location: 147 Water Street

Proposal: Parking lot expansion

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

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At 7:14 p.m. the Commission went into recess prior to public hearing.

**6. Public hearing scheduled for Wednesday, September 12, 2012, 7:30 p.m.; City Hall Council Chambers, Room 218, 140 Main Street, Torrington, CT:**

a. Zone Change and Site Plan 1051

Applicant: Hartford Dispensary

Location: 241 Kennedy Drive

Proposal: Zone Change from IP, Industrial Park Zone to Alternate Incarceration, Substance Abuse/Mental Health, Medical Marijuana Dispensary Overlay Zone (ASM Zone) and Site Plan application for Torrington Health and Recovery Center

At 7:30 p.m. Chairman Calkins opened the public hearing and stated serving on the Commission this evening will be Greg Mele, Donna Greco, Christine Mele, Jim Bobinski, Doris Murphy, Paul Summers and Richard Calkins. Also in attendance is City Planner Martin Connor and the City's legal counsel Ken Slater.

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

Mr. Calkins outlined the procedures for the public hearing process. This public hearing will be continued to October 10, 2012 as a decision from the Inland Wetlands Commission is forthcoming.

Diane Whitney, attorney with Pullman and Comley, LLC, 90 State House Square, Hartford, CT appears representing the applicant Hartford Dispensary. The applicant is proposing an opiate treatment facility. Ms. Whitney gave an overview of the proposal.

Robert R. Hiltbrand, Civil Engineer, R.R. Hiltbrand Engineers and Surveyors, LLC in Bristol, CT appeared and reviewed the proposal, providing site details.

Scott Hesketh, Traffic Engineer with F.A. Hesketh & Associates, Granby, CT, appeared before the Commission representing the applicant. Mr. Hesketh presented a traffic overview.

Hans W. Winkel, Architect and Don Hammerberg, Associates Architects appeared and presented the architectural plans for the proposal.

Robert C. Schechinger, Jr., Landscape Architect, appeared and reviewed the landscaping, lighting and signage for the proposal.

Paul McLaughlin, Executive Director for Hartford Dispensary Operations appeared and explained their operation, and spoke of the parking, which is adequate for their operation. Letters of support have been submitted.

Mr. Mele noted he does not see any staging areas, turning areas, etc., in the parking area. Just 14 parking spaces. Mr. McLaughlin stated the parking is sufficient. The clinic will be open 365 days a year.

Dr. Suzanne Ducate, Chief of Medical Staff; Dr. Peter Strong, Senior Medical Advisor; Russell D. Bucherner, Director of Performance Improvement; and Philip F. Richmond, Associate Director; all from the Hartford Dispensary appeared in support of the application, explaining their area of expertise. Dr. Ducate explained the procedures for methadone dispersal.

Susan Madison of 349 Allen Road appeared in favor of the proposal. She has various certifications and this is an illness that needs to be treated.

John Kuzmuch of Sandisfield, MA appeared in favor of the proposal. He is a case manager and social workers. There is a need for this service.

Rich Doefluer, 838 Main Street, Torrington appeared in favor, as a client of the Bristol program. He has been on methadone since 1972 and he goes back to prison every time he gets off the program.

Gary Eucalitto, Torrington, CT, appeared against the proposal. Social Services and halfway houses, alternative incarceration, and everything else the correction facilities put into Torrington also come along with the addiction problems. He is concerned about the impact to Torrington as he is familiar with Willimantic facilities. Mr. Eucalitto works in Bridgeport, CT, in a building where there is a pain clinic/opiate addiction clinic. There are people laying on the sidewalk in the morning, and there are lines waiting to get in the door. Paintings are taken off the walls in their lobby. There is a high recidivism and people do not come in clean. There are needles in their parking lot. This proposed neighborhood is zoned as a business and commercial district, and there is a soccer field and a day care center located nearby. Clients will loiter in front of the day care center waiting for their bus. It doesn't make sense to put such a use in a high tech and industrial/commercial zone. There will be plenty of police activity. The traffic issues will be tremendous.

Doreen Brenner of 31 Deercrest Drive appeared against the proposal. It is a residential area, park, soccer field, day care center. Crossing Kennedy Drive is dangerous. Traffic is an issue. She asked who would want to place their child in a day care center across the street from a methadone clinic.

Kathy Bottolato of 317 County Road appeared in opposition. Contradicting information is received regarding different treatments, and hepatitis treatments, etc., more than what was proposed. This will attract people who do not follow the rules. She works in the area and is fearful for her safety.

Anthony Basso of 34 Chamberlain Street appeared in opposition. This is not an appropriate location. There are better areas in town that can adequately accommodate the facility, such as the hospital and empty factory buildings. There will be criminal activity in the area, there is a tranquil residential area. He is surprised that the Boy Scouts of America would sell this property with these impacts on the residential neighborhood.

Laura Wallace Rhoades of 66 Coolidge Avenue appeared in opposition. She moved to Torrington after an illness, and admired the Boy Scout facility. She agreed with the previous speakers in opposition. She grew up in New York and stepped over drug addicts and needles on the sidewalk and does not want to see that here.

Carl Gangloff of University Drive appeared in opposition. This is a huge business raking in a lot of money, social services and especially addiction treatment. The expansion of these facilities is in direct relation to Medicaid accepting alcoholism and drug abuse as a disability. They are following the money stream. As an employer, he has gotten notes from doctors saying people can't work on machinery because of their methadone use. The National Transportation Safety Unit has severe concerns about this, and it is not safe to drive when using methadone when just getting off opiates.

He does not believe crime will not go down.

Bill Battle, 69 Red Mountain Avenue appeared against the proposal. Mr. Battle referenced a similar operation in New Haven where the clinic operators were arrested. At times there were 50 or 60 people lined up around the clinic several times a week. There was a senior center there. Methadone does have street value, and yes, you can get high on methadone. Torrington has done it's job in providing plenty of social services as it stands.

John Silano of Crestwood Road appeared in opposition. Many people have been affected by illegal drugs and activity. He is against the idea of this clinic. Methadone is another addiction and he has seen what it does to people. This is a message to young people that it's OK to become drug addicted, as there is a methadone clinic in town to help them.

At 10:28 p.m. Chairman Calkins declared the public hearing continued to October 10, 2012 at 7:30 p.m.

7. **Public hearing scheduled for Wednesday, October 10, 2012, 7:30 p.m.; City Hall Council Chambers, Room 218, 140 Main Street, Torrington, CT:**

- a. Special Exception 12-274  
Applicant: Haynes Aggregates-Torrington, LLC  
Location: 3217 Winsted Road  
Proposal: Bi-Annual renewal of earth excavation and accessory retail sales

Passed until October 10, 2012.

8. **Public hearing scheduled for Wednesday, October 24, 2012, 7:30 p.m.; City Hall Council Chambers, Room 218, 140 Main Street, Torrington, CT:**

- a. Zoning Regulation Amendment Proposal  
Applicant: Torrington Planning and Zoning Commission  
Proposal: Proposed Amendment to the Zoning Regulations, new Section 3.1, Subsection 3.16, service and sales of boats, boat accessories and engines

Passed until October 24, 2012.

9. **Adjournment:**

MOTION by Mr. Mele to adjourn at 10:29 p.m., seconded by Mr. Summers, unanimously carried.

Land Use Office  
City of Torrington