

**CITY OF TORRINGTON
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
MINUTES
April 13, 2011**

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

Also Present: Martin Connor, AICP, City Planner

Not Present: Christine Mele, Alternate

1. **Call to Order:** Chairman Calkins called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m., Torrington City Hall Council Chambers, Room 218, 140 Main Street, Torrington, CT

2. **Attendance/Announcement by Chairman:**

Chairman Calkins announced serving on the Commission this evening will be Commissioners Jim Bobinski, Paul Summers, Greg Perosino, Greg Mele, Donna Greco and Richard Calkins. Also in attendance is City Planner Martin Connor, AICP.

Mr. Calkins noted City Planner Martin Connor attended an American Planning Association conference earlier this week. A checklist for downtown zoning was distributed to Commission members. This was from an interesting seminar put on by Elizabeth Kane, who is a Senior Planner for the State of North Carolina, specializing in working with downtowns as a State level.

The Commission can be proud of the fact many of these items on the checklist have already been accomplished with some of the recent changes the Commission has approved, such as the incentive housing zone on four properties in the Downtown District. Mr. Connor provided details from the seminar for the Commission's information.

3. **Minutes for Approval:**

a. 3-23-11

MOTION by Mr. Perosino to approve the 3-23-11 minutes, seconded by Mr. Summers, motion carried with Mr. Mele and Mr. Bobinski abstained from voting.

At 7:04 p.m. Commissioner Doris Murphy arrived.

4. **Old Business:**

a. Site Plan 995
Applicant: Angelo Alduini, Jr.
Location: 51 Brewer Street
Proposal: 50' x 45' metal storage building

Mr. Calkins noted an e-mail from the applicant's engineer, Bill Colby, withdrawing the application, as they are currently addressing engineering comments and will reapply.

5. **New Business:** none

6. **Public Hearings scheduled for 7:30 p.m., April 13, 2011, Council Chambers, Room 218, City Hall, 140 Main Street, Torrington, CT**

- a. Special Exception 11-255 and Site Plan 998
Applicant: Rick's Auto Parts Inc.
Location: 32 Ricciardone Avenue
Proposal: Creation of parking lot in R-6 Zone

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

Commissioner Greg Mele recused himself from this meeting. Commissioner Jim Bobinski was seated to replace Mr. Mele.

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

George Johannessen of Allied Engineering Associates of North Canaan, CT appeared representing the applicant. The return receipts have been submitted, and the public hearing sign was properly posted. Referring to a site map, Mr. Johannessen gave a presentation of the proposal. Details regarding the detention basin were provided. Mr. Johannessen provided one copy of a revised site plan addressing the City Engineering comments. Mr. Calkins and Mr. Connor pointed out note #11 needs to be on the plans. Mr. Johannessen said the Engineering comments have been addressed.

Mr. Connor provided photographs taken by Ms. Barbieri. It is important for the Commission to see what is there now, which is currently a violation. We are trying to obtain compliance. Mr. Connor wants on the record how this lot is going to be used. Mr. Calkins stated we do not want to expand the junkyard area. The trailer will be removed. In response to a question from Mr. Calkins, Mr. Connor said this proposal is consistent with what we have previously approved for parking lots. There is a fair amount of landscaping that has been added to the plan. Parking for customers and registered vehicles is not a problem. The problem comes into play when you have trailers and junk cars at the site. Mr. Calkins verified the cars will not be in the parking lot over night. There is no site lighting.

Mr. Connor read his memo to the Commission dated April 8, 2011. The engineering comments that remain are minor in nature.

Mr. Calkins noted a letter has been received dated April 7, 2011 addressed to the Commission from Janet M. Mele. Ms. Mele owns a condominium at 333 Hillside Avenue, Unit 12. Her condo is adjacent to the proposed site. Mr. Connor read the letter. Ms. Mele expressed concern that in the future, the property must be maintained according to any special exception approval and conditions imposed.

Ann Marie Davis, 333 Hillside Avenue, #10, appeared before the Commission in favor. There is much traffic on this road, a parking lot would be much better. The junk needs to be cleaned up. Landscaping was referenced on the map. It will look much better. Mr. Connor answered questions regarding paving, etc.

Greg Day of 333 Hillside Avenue, Unit #5, appeared and concurred with Ms. Davis from Unit #10, as long as everything stays in compliance. A fence would be nice.

Barbara Zordan of 333 Hillside Avenue, Unit #11. Her deck is next to the white trailer. She inquired if everything will be removed to the junkyard before the parking lot work starts. Mr. Connor noted much grading needs to be done and a detention area constructed. Everything will need to be moved off the site to accomplish the work. There is an envelope where the parking area will be constructed, Mr. Johannessen pointed to the map and gave further explanations (inaudible). Ms. Zordan noted existing trees are in very poor condition and she hopes the area is cleaned up

before more plantings are added. Mr. Connor explained a bond would be posted for the landscaping that is proposed.

No further comments. At 8:00 p.m. Chairman Calkins declared the public hearing closed.

MOTION by Mr. Perosino to APPROVE Special Exception 11-255 and Site Plan 998

Applicant: Rick's Auto Parts Inc.

Location: 32 Ricciardone Avenue

Proposal: Creation of parking lot in R-6 zone

with the following conditions:

1. The applicant shall file an application for a grading permit prior to obtaining a zoning 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. 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.
3. The applicant shall ensure that cars are not parked in the front yard setback, per CZ&WEO Kimberly Barbieri.
4. The applicant shall address comments from Matt Walsh, Assistant City Engineer, contained in a memo to the City Planner dated 4/13/11.
5. Hours of operation shall conform to the hours of operation of the junkyard and there will be no overnight parking.
6. The lot is to be cleaned of junk and vehicles immediately.

MOTION seconded by Mr. Summers, unanimously carried.

b. Special Exception 11-256

Applicant: Poyant Signs/Centro Properties Group

Location: 1 South Main Street

Proposal: Increase sign square footage (Section 5.15.4 F)

Mr. Calkins opened the public hearing and stated serving on the Commission this evening will be Jim Bobinski, Paul Summers, Greg Perosino, Greg Mele, Donna Greco, Doris Murphy and Richard Calkins. Also present is City Planner Martin Connor.

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

Mike Patenaude of Poyant Signs, April Drive, Litchfield, NH appeared representing the applicant. Neighbor notifications were submitted, and Mr. Patenaude verified the public hearing sign was properly posted.

Mr. Patenaude gave a presentation, the sign has maintenance issues. There are tenants in the plaza that are not noted on the sign. Changes had been suggested by the Architectural Review Committee and implemented. The address will be added to the new signage. The existing height of the sign is approximately 31 feet, the new sign will be 28 feet. This plaza has 22 or 24 tenants, and their signage will be included. Details of the signage were provided by Mr. Patenaude.

Mr. Perosino requested the blank tenant spaces be opaque, without light. This will make for a better looking sign and keep the focus on the tenants, not on a blank lit area. Mr. Patenaude agreed to this suggestion.

Mr. Connor read his memo dated April 6, 2011 to the Commission.

Ms. Murphy inquired what would happen if a new tenant came in and took up two spots. Mr. Patenaude responded most likely the sign would expand across for a double space. 99 Restaurant is one that has a double space. Discussion took place on how a panel would be divided in half if one of the spaces was split to accommodate two tenants.

No comments from the public.

At 8:20 p.m. Chairman Calkins declared the public hearing closed.

MOTION by Mr. Mele to APPROVE Special Exception 11-256

Applicant: Poyant Signs/Centro Properties Group

Location: 1 South Main Street

Proposal: Increase sign square footage (Section 5.15.4F)

With the condition that an opaque insert shall be installed in spaces where signage is unused. Motion seconded by Mr. Perosino, motion unanimously carried.

7. **Public Hearings scheduled for 7:30 p.m., April 27, 2011, Council Chambers, Room 218, City Hall, 140 Main Street, Torrington, CT**

a. Special Exception 11-258

Applicant: George W. Klug

Location: 725 Klug Hill Road

Proposal: Farmer's Roadside Stand (Section 3.1, Table 1, 12.20)

b. Special Exception 11-259

Applicant: Thomas W. Richardson

Location: 231 Mountain Road

Proposal: Reduction of front yard setback, Section 4.3, for covered breezeway

Public hearings passed until April 27, 2011.

8. **Adjournment:**

MOTION by Mr. Perosino, seconded by Mr. Summers, motion unanimously carried at 8:23 p.m.