

**CITY OF TORRINGTON  
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION  
MINUTES  
February 15, 2023**

Present: Greg Mele, Chair  
Donna Greco, Member  
Jim Bobinski, Member  
Diane Carroll, Alternate  
Tom Telman (approx. 7:40 pm)

Also Present: Jeremy Leifert, AICP; City Planner

Not Present: Greg Perosino, Vice Chair  
Donovan Riley, Member  
Starley Arias, Alternate

**1. Call to Order:**

Chair Greg Mele called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. Attendance by Zoom or in-person at City Hall Auditorium, Room 218, 140 Main Street, Torrington, CT.

Instructions for Zoom are available online at:

[www.torringtonct.org/zoom](http://www.torringtonct.org/zoom)

**Join Zoom Meeting**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7959507035?pwd=MXAwcVIEenhIUhtSXFzSGhYUnl0QT09>

**1-646-558-8656**

**Meeting ID: 795-950-7035**

**Passcode: 907148**

**2. Attendance/Announcement:**

Chair Mele announced present and serving on the Commission this evening are Donna Greco, Diane Carroll, Jim Bobinski and Greg Mele. Also present is Jeremy Leifert, City Planner. (Tom Telman joined via zoom approximately 7:40 p.m.)

**3. Minutes for Approval:**

a. 1/13/23

MOTION by Ms. Greco to approve the 1/13/23 minutes, seconded by Ms. Carroll, unanimously carried.

**4. Public Hearings beginning at 7:00 p.m., February 15, 2023 City Hall Auditorium, Room 218, 140 Main Street, Torrington, CT**

- a. Special Exception 22-08 and Site Plan 1425  
Applicant: Alam Realty, Inc.  
Location: 861 New Harwinton Road  
Proposal: Sales of gasoline, new canopy, parking, landscaping, site work, signage

At 7:04 p.m. Chair Mele opened the public hearing and announced serving on the Commission this evening will be Diane Carroll, Jim Bobinski, Donna Greco, and Greg Mele. Also present is Jeremy Leifert, City Planner.

Ms. Greco read the legal notice of public hearing from the Republican American.

Mr. Mele outlined the procedures for the public hearing.

Attorney Mike Zizka of Halloran and Sage appeared representing the applicant, he noted that comments from City Engineer Paul Kundzins were just received yesterday, noting the City Planner had recommended continuing the public hearing to the next meeting.

Michael Boe, AIA, of Boe Studios, 19 Tioga Street, Torrington appeared representing the applicant. Mr. Boe presented the neighborhood notification receipts and verified the public hearing signs were properly posted.

Jason Dismukes, PE (via zoom) of Dismukes Engineering, 241 Torrington Road, Goshen and Scott Hesketh, Traffic Engineer were also present.

Mike Boe gave a presentation of the proposal, noting comments made by their traffic engineer Scott Hesketh. Mike Boe and Jason Dismukes reviewed the elevation plans.

Commission members posed questions regarding internal vehicle travel, parking considerations, fuel delivery details, traffic counts, stacking spaces, speed of traffic on Route 4, New Harwinton Road. Responses received from Mr. Dismukes, referred to site maps.

Mr. Dismukes provided a detailed presentation of the proposal via zoom, referring to the site maps. The stormwater pattern was explained and stormwater management details were provided. Pervious pavers to be used were noted on the plans, a well will be abandoned, and the building will be connected to City water.

Mr. Mele noted a tractor trailer delivery truck exiting onto Circle Drive would hang over the yellow line. Mr. Dismukes referred to a proposal to widen Circle Drive so such a situation would not occur, and fuel deliveries will occur after 10:00 p.m. Mr. Mele noted the traffic concerns from traffic exiting the Circle Drive neighborhood. Discussion followed regarding cars stacking on site, waiting for the light at Circle Drive to change.

Scott Hesketh of FA Hesketh Traffic Engineers reviewed his traffic study findings of the site area. Traffic movement questions were posed by Commission members, responses given by Mr. Hesketh referring to site plans.

(Commissioner Tom Telman signed on at this time, approximately 7:40 p.m.)

Mr. Zizka stated this retail store has been here for decades, and these type convenience stores are now moving towards including gasoline pumps. Existing gas stations that add mini marts do not need a Special Exception, only Site Plan approval. This proposal is consistent with other local businesses. This proposal is an improvement providing an opportunity for a small business. Mr. Tony Mahomood (owner) spoke, inaudible.

Mr. Mele called a brief recess. The public hearing resumed at 8:30 p.m.

Mr. Mele called to order at 8:30 p.m. Mr. Mele opened the hearing for public comments in favor of the proposal, there were none.

Mr. Mele opened the hearing for comments from the public opposed to the proposal.

(inaudible name) of Circle Drive spoke in opposition, there are many trucks going around Circle Drive, as well as school buses, and there are no sidewalks on this street.

Polly Redmond of Circle Drive submitted a petition against the proposal. She noted all the traffic problems currently on site. Delivery trucks create problems, Photos of tractor trailers were submitted, and Ms. Redmond submitted one additional page of signatures that were not attached to the original submission (numbers of signatures submitted were discussed).

Debra Brown of 157 Santa Maria Drive appeared, citing concerns with traffic (portions inaudible).

John Renschler of 364 Circle Drive appeared in opposition. He questioned the statistics on the traffic reporting, page 8. This is a dangerous intersection at Circle Drive / Route 4.

(inaudible name/address) expressed concerns about traffic and trucks will not be able to make this turn, as they come up to Circle Drive to turn around.

(inaudible name) on Circle Drive noted the employees of this business park on the side of the building, and then delivery trucks park on Circle Drive and block traffic.

(inaudible name) on Santa Maria Drive expressed concerns about traffic and timing of the traffic lights.

Marc Raymont of 454 Circle Drive appeared via zoom to express concerns regarding the small sized property and squeezing a new gas station onto too small of a site, and the traffic issues present.

John (inaudible last name) of 178 (inaudible) noted the extensive amount of signage will be ignored. The site is just too small for tractor trailer traffic.

Attorney Zizka spoke, and he is familiar with the speeding on Route 4. The same issue exists for any other unsignalized intersection on Route 4. These are not unique to this property.

Mr. Dismukes noted a loading zone space was provided, as required by the regulations.

Mr. Zizka thanked the Commission for their consideration.

At 9:04 p.m., Mr. Mele declared the public hearing continued to the March 15, 2023 meeting.

- b. Special Exception 22-09 and Site Plan 1430
  - Applicant: Lelah Campo
  - Location: 232 Klug Hill Road
  - Proposal: Recreational Vehicle (RV) Park for 92 sites and associated amenities - Section 1.90 Mobile Home Park and Recreational Vehicle Park (public hearing continued from 1/18/23)

At 9:05 p.m. Mr. Mele opened the continued public hearing. Present and serving on the Commission are Donna Greco, Jim Bobinski, Diane Carroll, Tom Telman and Greg Mele. Also present is Jeremy Leifert, City Planner. Mr. Mele noted that he has reviewed and listened to the audio recording of the last meeting, as he was not present that evening, 1/18/23.

Ryan McEvoy, SLR Engineering appeared representing the applicant. Mr. McEvoy explained the driveway grade has been reduced to 10% in the area of the enter and exit portions of the driveway onto Klug Hill Road. The driveway has been widened to allow larger vehicles and delivery trucks. Fire protection methods were discussed. There will be a water tank on site, with a dry hydrant on site as well.

Mr. Leifert noted phases have been added to the plan.

Mr. Mele opened the public hearing for comments in favor of the proposal. There were none.

Mr. Mele opened the public hearing for comments opposed to the proposal. There were none. There were also no comments remotely.

Mr. Leifert read his memo dated February 15, 2023 (9:25 p.m.)

Mr. McEvoy stated the property remains two separate parcels. Mr. Leifert agreed this would be acceptable as long as the campground site and all facilities are all on one parcel. A lot line revision would be acceptable. Site details were noted and discussed.

At 9:32 p.m. Mr. Mele declared the public hearing closed.

**MOTION by Ms. Greco to APPROVE Special Exception 22-09 and Site Plan 1430**

- Applicant: Lelah Campo
- Location: 232 Klug Hill Road
- Proposal: Recreational Vehicle (RV) Park for 92 sites and associated amenities - Section 1.90 Mobile Home Park and Recreational Vehicle Park

with the following approval conditions and recommendations:

1. The applicant shall address comments of Paul Kundzins, City Engineer in his February 8, 2023 memo to the City Planner. Corrections based on these comments shall be addressed to the satisfaction of the City Engineer on the final filed plans required in #13 below and prior to the issuance of zoning or grading permits to begin construction.
2. The applicant shall follow comments of Nate Nardi-Cyrus, Assistant Planner outlined in his December 9, 2022 email to the City Planner, including:
  - a. Submission of an acceptable landscaping plan for native tree and shrub species around the campground
  - b. Add a notation to the final plans on native wildflower planting mix or an acceptable substitute on all steep slopes, septic fields and detention basins
  - c. Any future proposed development, including recreational trail use near the wetlands to the west of the current campground location shall require biological surveys for sensitive habitats or species, and any such plans shall be reviewed by the conservation commission for comment.
  - d. The applicant shall submit a separate sign plan as a modification to this approval when such plan is prepared and prior to opening for operation
3. The commission shall not adopt conservation commission recommendations to eliminate proposed campsites or remove the existing riding ring fencing near the lodge.
4. Per comments and discussion with Fire Marshal Edward Bascetta on February 8, 2023, the applicant shall indicate on the final filed plans the location of cisterns and dry hydrant connections on the property.
5. The requirement for a full photometric lighting plan as required in section 5.17.4 shall be waived. The applicant shall install full cutoff lighting as indicated in submitted documentation in compliance with section 5.17 of the regulations.
6. The requirement for six (6) marked handicap accessible parking spaces shall be waived to allow for two (2) handicap spaces near the proposed recreational center.
7. Properties known as 232 Klug Hill Road - Tax Assessor's Map 215 Block 003 Lot 016 and Tax Assessor's Map 215 Block 003 Lot 004 shall be combined in the final plans to be filed or a lot line revision to contain the project area to one parcel. A copy of the filed updated deed description shall be submitted showing the lot merger prior to the issuance of zoning permits for the project.
8. The applicant shall complete Phase I including all utilities, improvements to the common use buildings, sites I through 24 and the Phase I interior roads and infrastructure prior to opening for operation. Phases two and three shall also be completed in their entirety prior to opening for operation.
9. In accordance with section 6.7.3.R of the Zoning Regulations, no Recreational Vehicle, with exceptions as indicated in the regulations shall remain on a site for more than 187 consecutive days. No seasonal occupant of the property shall establish a permanent residence on the site.
10. Zoning and grading permits are required prior to alteration or use of the site for the proposed use, with the exception of those activities previously authorized under a grading permit for tree clearing only.

11. The Planning and Zoning Commission finds that the proposed use, location and site design is compatible with the neighborhood and surrounding uses and is protective of the health, safety and welfare of the citizens of the City of Torrington for the granting of a special exception approval.
12. In accordance with section 8.4.3 and 8.4.6 of the zoning regulations, the following shall be submitted to the City Planner:
  - a. Two paper copies of the full approved final plan set including the engineer's stamp and chairman's signature box on the title page.
  - b. One mylar copy of each site plan sheet IN, GR-I and GR-2 for filing with the City Clerk in accordance with section 8.4.3.P of the zoning regulations. The mylar sheets shall bear a chairman's signature box, a copy of the approval letter from the commission, an engineers' seal and live ink stamp.
  - c. Mylar sheets shall be filed by the applicant with the City Clerk after the signature of the Chairman and prior to the approval of zoning or grading permits to begin construction or site work.

MOTION seconded by Ms. Carroll, unanimously carried.

- c. Special Exception 22-12 and Site Plan 1434  
Applicant: Premier Building Associates, LLC  
Location: 95 Grove Street and 104 Grove Street  
Proposal: Change of use to educational facility and office use  
(former church use) (public hearing continued from 1/18/23)

Mr. Mele announced this application has been withdrawn. A new application has been submitted and will be set for a public hearing date.

- d. Proposed Amendments to Plan of Conservation and Development,  
Section 9, Housing  
Applicant: Torrington Planning and Zoning Commission

At 9:38 p.m. Mr. Mele opened the public hearing and stated serving on the Commission this evening will be Donna Greco, Jim Bobinski, Diane Carroll, Tom Telman and Greg Mele. Also present is Jeremy Leifert, City Planner.

Ms. Greco read the legal notice of public hearing published in the Republican American.

Mr. Leifert read his memo to the Commission dated February 15, 2023.

Commission members and Mr. Leifert discussed the proposal, and the history leading up to this proposal.

Mr. Mele opened the public hearing for comments in favor of the proposal. There were none.

Mr. Mele opened the public hearing for comments in opposition to the proposal. There were none.

At 9:47 p.m. Mr. Mele declared the public hearing closed.

MOTION by Ms. Greco to APPROVE Proposed Amendments to Plan of Conservation and Development,  
Section 9, Housing  
Applicant: Torrington Planning and Zoning Commission

The effective date of the Plan of Conservation and Development amendments shall be the day after publication of the legal notice of decision.

MOTION seconded by Ms. Carroll, unanimously carried.

**5. Old Business:**

None

**6. New Business:**

- a. Site Plan 1438 and Location Approval  
Applicant: Baris Kara  
Location: 37 Migeon Avenue  
Proposal: Change of use to auto dealer and repair (former warehouse/office)

MOTION to table by Mr. Telman, seconded by Ms. Greco, unanimously carried.

- b. Site Plan 1440  
Applicant: Dibble Street Associates, LLC  
Location: 1565 East Main Street, 1571 East Main Street and  
220 Dibble Street  
Proposal: Display and sales of residential sheds

Mr. Mele announced this application has been withdrawn by the applicant.

- c. Sara Treaux – DesegregateCT, Work Live Ride Program Presentation

Tucker Salls appeared representing DeSegregateCT, he is the Legislative Director. The Torrington Work Live Ride Brief focuses on diverse types of housing, developed around transit, to reduce car dependency. Bus lines are to be emphasized. A slide presentation was reviewed by Mr. Salls. Work Live Ride gives a town or city P&Z an “opt in” to create a transit oriented community district. There will be different tiers and densities, affordabilities, etc.

Mr. Leifert asked Mr. Salls to provide him with a copy of the slide presentation.

- d. Proposed Change of Zone Map and Site Plan 1441  
Applicant: Patrik Jonsson  
Location: 53 McDermott Avenue  
Proposal: Change Zone to Local Business (LB) with AM overlay and Adult use cannabis retail establishment (set public hearing date)

MOTION by Ms. Carroll to set a public hearing date of March 15, 2023, seconded by Ms. Greco, unanimously carried.

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MOTION by Ms. Greco, seconded by Mr. Telman to add an item to the agenda by 2/3rds vote, motion unanimously carried:

- Special Exception 23-01 and Site Plan 1442  
Applicant: A. Secondino and Sons, Inc.  
Location: 95 Grove Street and 104 Grove Street  
Proposal: Change of use to educational facility and office use (former church)

MOTION by Mr. Telman to set a public hearing date of March 15, 2023, seconded by Mr. Bobinski, unanimously carried.

## **7. Correspondence:**

- a. Zoning and Blight Violation update

Zoning and Blight Updates were emailed to Commission members, noted by Mr. Leifert.

- b. Commissioner Training for 2023:  
. CT Land Use Law Seminar, March 11, 2023

Mr. Leifert reviewed the new training requirements for all Commission members. The seminar being offered on March 11, 2023 is an all-day seminar on zoom, with the afternoon session devoted to Affordable Housing. Tonight's presentation from Mr. Tucker Salls will fulfill a quarter hour of training for Commission members here in attendance.

## **8. Adjournment:**

MOTION by Mr. Telman to adjourn at 10:08 p.m., seconded by Ms. Carroll, unanimously carried.