

**CITY OF TORRINGTON
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
MINUTES
July 19, 2023**

Present: Greg Mele, Chair
Greg Perosino, Vice Chair
Diane Carroll, Alternate
Donovan Riley, Member

Also Present: Jeremy Leifert, AICP; City Planner

Not Present: James Bobinski, Member
Donna Greco, Member
Starley Arias, Alternate
Thomas Telman, 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.

2. Attendance/Announcement:

Chair Mele announced present and serving this evening are Commissioners Greg Perosino, Diane Carroll, Donovan Riley (via zoom) and Greg Mele. Also present is Jeremy Leifert, City Planner.

3. Minutes for Approval:

a. 6/28/23

MOTION by Mr. Perosino to approve the June 28, 2023 minutes, seconded by Ms. Carroll, unanimously carried.

4. Old Business:

a. Special Exception 23-03 and Site Plan 1457
Applicant: Randall Stelma
Location: Newfield Road, Assessor Map 231 Block 001 Lot 026
Proposal: Farm Stand (public hearing closed on 6/28/23)

Commissioner Donovan Riley stated he will abstain from voting on this proposal.

Mr. Mele announced the public hearing is closed, and there will be no more public commentary.

Mr. Perosino and Ms. Carroll spoke (inaudible)

Mr. Leifert read his memo to the Commission dated July 19, 2023.

Commission members discussed concerns regarding people pulling in and out of the site, if the farm stand was closed. Mr. Perosino suggested signage indicating whether the farm stand is open or closed. Mr. Mele suggested a chain or barrier across the driveway entrance, with signage. Hours of operation were discussed by the Commission and Mr. Leifert.

Mr. Riley abstained from voting as he was not present during the public hearing and all discussions.

MOTION by Ms. Carroll to APPROVE Special Exception 23-03 and Site Plan 1457

Applicant: Randall Stelma

Location: Newfield Road, Assessor Map 231 Block 001 Lot 026

Proposal: Farm Stand proposal

with the following conditions and recommendations:

1. The operation of a food truck on the property shall not be approved as part of this application and shall be removed and substituted by two additional parking spaces on the final plans.
2. One additional parking space for employees of the farm stand shall be located to the rear of the property on the final plans
3. The applicant shall address all remaining comments from City Engineer Paul Kundzins with respect to City Engineering standards for driveway curb cuts and plan details prior to the issuance of a zoning permit for the project. See the latest email comments from the City Engineer dated June 28, 2023.
4. The farm stand shall be attended at all times when open to the public with an open/closed sign clearly visible
5. Per zoning regulations section 2.2 (Farm Stand), at least 75 percent of the products sold at the farm stand shall be from the farm where the stand is located.
6. The applicant shall follow comments of Nate Nardi-Cyrus, Assistant Planner outlined in his June 22, 2023 email to the City Planner. The requirement for a landscaping plan shall be waived. However, the applicant shall work with the Assistant Planner to install appropriate screening and visual buffering to the property at 1929 Newfield Road to the North of this property.
7. The requirement for paving of the Van-Accessible handicap space on the site shall be waived. The parking space and route to the farm stand shall be a flat, rolled gravel surface that is suitable for accessibility.
8. Public operation of the farm stand and associated uses shall occur during daylight hours only
9. A zoning permit is required prior to alteration or use of the site for the proposed use
10. 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 in accordance with the general and specific Special Exception standards of section 8.2 of the zoning regulations and state statutes and policies governing agricultural uses.

11. 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. Due to the nature of the proposed use, the commission waives the requirement for the filing of a mylar plan with the City Clerk
 - b. Two paper copies of the full approved plan set including the engineer's stamp, the approval letter and chairman's signature box on the title page shall be submitted for the chairman's signature prior to issuance of zoning permits.

The Commission grants the following waivers from the Zoning Regulations:

- a. Paving of the required van-accessible handicap space (5.13.2.S). The space shall have a rolled level gravel surface to enable access to the proposed farm stand and greenhouse.
- b. Site plan requirements; 8.4.3.I – Landscaping Plan and 8.4.3.J – Utilities Plan

The commission makes a finding 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.

MOTION seconded by Mr. Perosino, motion carried unanimously (with Mr. Riley abstaining).

5. New Business:

- a. Proposed Change of Zoning Regulation
Applicant: McCall Behavioral Health Network
Proposal: Revise Section 3.1, Table of Uses, Subsection 1.83 to allow a Group Care Facility with 7-12 residents by Special Exception in the Local Business Zone (set public hearing date)

MOTION by Mr. Perosino to set a public hearing date of August 16, 2023, seconded by Ms. Carroll, unanimously carried.

- b. Special Exception 23-04 and Site Plan 1458
Applicant: David Walesczyk – Quality Barns and Sheds LLC
Location: Winsted Road (Assessor Map 238 Block 002 Lot 006)
Proposal: Display and sales of outdoor structures
(set public hearing date)

MOTION by Mr. Perosino to set a public hearing date of August 16, 2023, seconded by Ms. Carroll, unanimously carried.

6. Correspondence:

- a. Zoning and Blight Violation update

Nate Nardi-Cyrus, Assistant City Planner was present and provided a mid-year enforcement update for the Commission. There are 61 active enforcement cases, 4 cases with Corporation Council, 15 cases have Cease and Desist Orders, and 6 cases have been brought into compliance.

Nate stated the cases currently with Corporation Council are nearing completion. Some cases with C&D orders are on hold, and being watched to ensure they remain compliant.

The condition of 144 Woodlawn Drive was discussed. Ashley Clement, Blight Enforcement Officer has this site on the blight enforcement report, and Mr. Nardi-Cyrus will follow up with Ms. Clement on this property.

Mr. Perosino inquired about a property on Pine Street with a recreational vehicle parked on a vacant lot. Mr. Perosino stated he would follow up with a written complaint.

Mr. Leifert and Mr. Nardi-Cyrus reviewed the complaint handling process in the Land Use Office.

Mr. Leifert reviewed the site, 2177 Winsted Road, site plan approval, as well as 92 Brightwood Avenue which has a site line issue coming out of the new building and curb cut that was installed without approval from the Engineering Department.

The Site Plan approval at 1050 East Main Street, coffee truck use, was discussed. Mr. Leifert noted not a single condition of approval has been addressed. A violation Cease and Desist was sent to the owner and a copy sent to this Commission. Mr. Leifert will have an update for the Commission at the August meeting.

The blasting accident incident on Winsted Road was briefly discussed by the Commission and Mr. Leifert. That particular quarry renewal process/application will be back before this Commission in the Spring.

The 93 Main Street, Yankee Pedlar case was briefly discussed.

7. Adjournment:

MOTION by Mr. Perosino to adjourn at 7:45 p.m., seconded by Ms. Carroll, unanimously carried.