

**CITY OF TORRINGTON  
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION  
MINUTES  
October 13, 2021**

Present: Greg Mele, Chair  
Greg Perosino, Vice Chair  
Donovan Riley, Member  
James Bobinski, Member  
Donna Greco, Member  
Diane Carroll, Alternate  
Thomas Telman, Alternate

Also Present: Martin Connor, AICP; City Planner

Not Present: Starley Arias, Alternate

**1. Call to Order:**

Chair Greg Mele called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. in the City Hall Auditorium, Room 218, 140 Main Street, Torrington, CT. The meeting was held both in person and via Zoom on-line.

**2. Attendance/Announcement:**

Chair Greg Mele announced present and serving in person this evening are Commissioners Donna Greco and Greg Mele. Present and serving via Zoom this evening are Commissioners Greg Perosino, Diane Carroll, James Bobinski, Donovan Riley and Thomas Telman. Also present in person this evening is City Planner Martin Connor.

**3. Minutes for Approval:**

a. 9/8/21

MOTION by Mr. Perosino to approve the 9/8/21 minutes, seconded by Mr. Riley, motion carried with abstentions from Commissioners Greco and Carroll.

**4. Public Hearings scheduled for 7:00 p.m., Wednesday, October 13, 2021; City Hall Auditorium, Room 218, 140 Main Street, Torrington, CT:**

a. Special Exception 21-09 and Site Plan 1378  
Applicant: Alam Realty, Inc.  
Location: 861 New Harwinton Road  
Proposal: Gasoline sales, install gasoline dispensers, canopy, parking and Landscaping, building façade modifications

Chair Mele opened the public hearing at 7:04 p.m. and stated serving on the Commission this evening are Commissioners Donna Greco and Greg Mele. Present and serving via Zoom this evening are Commissioners Greg Perosino, Diane Carroll, James Bobinski, Donovan

Riley and Thomas Telman. Also present in person this evening is City Planner Martin Connor.

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

Jason Dismukes, PE, appeared representing the applicant. Mr. Dismukes presented certificates of mailing and verified the public hearing sign was properly posted. He gave a brief history of uses on the property.

Mr. Dismukes presented his plan for this proposal to the Commission.

Traffic Engineer Scott Hesketh appeared via Zoom representing the applicant. Mr. Hesketh gave a detailed traffic report. The most recent available traffic counts from the CT DOT are dated May 2012. Manual timing counts were done by his staff for weekday and weekend observations. Mr. Hesketh provided calculations for proposed traffic with the new construction and use on this site.

Lengthy discussion and questions ensued between Commission members, Mr. Hesketh and Mr. Dismukes regarding stacking, increased traffic, issues regarding snowplowing, parking concerns, etc.

Jim Renschler, 364 Circle Drive, appeared with concerns regarding traffic.

Mike Boe, Architect, 19 Tioga Drive, Torrington, CT appeared representing the applicant. Mr. Boe reviewed the submitted architectural plans.

Mr. Connor read his memo to the Commission dated 10-1-21.

Mr. Mele noted that Mr. Dismukes has submitted a response to Mr. Connor's memo dated 10-12-21. Highlights of that memo were reviewed by Mr. Dismukes, and the applicant is still awaiting lighting plans that will be submitted.

Mr. Mele opened the public hearing first for comments in favor of the application, there were none.

Mr. Mele opened the public hearing for comments in opposition to the application.

Sharon Waagner, 178 Circle Drive appeared with a map of the area. Ms. Waagner read her comments in opposition, noting many concerns about traffic, congestion, school bus stops, truck traffic on Circle Drive, etc., and referred to the comments made by Sergeant Dustin Baldis.

Polly Redmond, 100 Circle Drive appeared in opposition and submitted a revised petition against the proposal with 68 resident signatures. She also submitted photos of traffic and parking concerns.

Deborah Brown, 157 Santa Maria Drive, appeared in opposition with traffic concerns, snow plowing and site line concerns, etc.

Eric Hoffman, 332 Circle Drive, appeared in opposition stating this is a residential area, and there are concerns about groundwater contamination, air emissions, etc. He noted there is already unpermitted work going on inside the building.

Ms. Renschler, 364 Circle Drive, appeared in opposition noting traffic concerns and submitted figures with her traffic count observations.

Resident of Circle Drive (inaudible name/address) expressed concerns about the safety of children at the bus stop, parking and excessive delivery truck traffic.

Mr. Dismukes noted he has resubmitted plans to the Connecticut DOT, and no response has been received yet from CT DOT. School bus timing was discussed.

Sharon Waagner of 178 Circle Drive spoke again regarding problems associated with truck delivery parking and how the truck ramps are blocking traffic on Circle Drive.

Mr. Mele noted that both box and tractor trailer trucks are servicing this property and the possibility of traffic issues with fuel deliveries. Mr. Mele noted that Sergeant Dustin Baldis has expressed concerns with the traffic issues surrounding this site, and his comments must be taken into consideration; it is not common to receive such traffic concerns. Photographs of the site were reviewed.

Mr. Perosino noted it may not be possible to schedule fuel and supply deliveries at a specific time, and Mr. Perosino is going to make his decision based upon the plans that are in front of the Commission at this present time.

Mr. Bobinski and Ms. Greco noted the extreme difficulty nowadays with getting any deliveries at all in today's world, without time restrictions.

Discussion followed on traffic, safety issues, truck deliveries, movement, etc. followed.

At 9:09 p.m. Chairman Mele declared the public hearing closed, and a decision is forthcoming within 65 days.

- b. Proposed Zone Change
  - Applicant: Allan Borghesi
  - Location: Dibble Street, Assessor Map 136 Block 006 Lot 001
  - Proposal: Change Zone Map to Local Business, LB (currently zoned R10s)

Mr. Mele stated at the request of the applicant, this public hearing will be continued to November 17, 2021.

MOTION by Mr. Perosino to continue the public hearing to November 17, 2021, seconded by Ms. Greco, unanimously carried.

**5. Public Hearings scheduled for 7:00 p.m., Wednesday, November 17, 2021; City Hall Auditorium, Room 218, 140 Main Street, Torrington, CT:**

- a. Proposed Amendments to Torrington Zoning Regulations  
Applicant: Torrington Planning and Zoning Commission  
Proposal: 1. Replace addendum: Wireless Communication Facilities with  
New Section: Wireless Communication Facilities  
2. Amendments to Section 5.1, Accessory Apartments, per  
CT PA 21-29

Mr. Mele noted this public hearing is scheduled for November 17, 2021.

**6. Old Business:**

None.

**7. New Business:**

- a. Proposed Change of Zoning Regulations  
Applicant: Volta Charging, LLC; c/o Samuel Lee  
Proposal: Proposed Amendment to Sections 5.15.2; 5.15.5B and 5.15.6.B  
(set public hearing date)

MOTION by Ms. Carroll to set a public hearing date of November 17, 2021, seconded by Ms. Greco, unanimously carried.

- b. Zoning and Blight Violation update

Commission members noted they have received an updated violation report.

**8. Correspondence:**

- a. Discussion about new Cannabis establishments regulations

Mr. Connor stated the State of Connecticut requires reporting on what actions towns and cities are taking on Cannabis regulations, and he has reported to the State the current moratorium Torrington has. Mr. Connor has spoken with Mayor Carbone and it may be beneficial to have a joint public hearing with City Council and the Planning and Zoning Commission to have an informational meeting session to get the public's input regarding cannabis establishment.

Mr. Mele inquired if the Police Chief would be involved, and Mr. Connor responded yes. An ordinance is being worked on now regarding the use of cannabis in public spaces.

Mr. Connor noted there will be a site for the Commission to review, to learn what other towns are doing regarding this matter.

**9. Adjournment:**

MOTION by Mr. Perosino to adjourn at 9:15 p.m., seconded by Ms. Carroll, unanimously carried.

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Land Use Office