

**CITY OF TORRINGTON
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
MINUTES
October 14, 2020**

Present: Greg Mele, Chair
Greg Perosino, Vice Chair
Donna Greco, Member
Donovan Riley, Member
Starley Arias, Alternate
Tom Telman, Alternate

Also Present: Martin J. Connor, AICP; City Planner

Not Present: Jim Bobinski, Member
Diane Carroll, Alternate

1. Call to Order:

Chair Greg Mele called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m., Remote meeting via ZOOM online. (meeting not held at City Hall building)

2. Attendance/Announcement:

Mr. Mele announced present and serving this evening will be Commissioners Greg Perosino, Donna Greco, Donovan Riley, Donna Greco, Starley Arias, and Greg Mele. Also present is City Planner Martin Connor.

3. Minutes for Approval:

a. 9/9/20

MOTION by Mr. Perosino to approve the 9/9/20 minutes, seconded by Ms. Greco, unanimously carried.

4. Public hearings scheduled for 7:00 p.m., Wednesday, October 14, 2020, remote meeting (not to be held at City Hall):

a. Zoning Map Change and Site Plan 1346
Applicant: GG Torrington LLC & SL Torrington LLC
Location: 1858 East Main Street (Assessor Map 144 Block 003 Lot 033)
Proposal: CIR Zone, reconfiguration of approved building pad with 3,500 s.f. building, new 3,200 s.f. building at north end of plaza, 6,000 s.f., 9,536 s.f. and 14,825 s.f. building additions and enclosure of 5,620 s.f. existing garden center

Mr. Mele read the legal notice of public hearing which was published on the City's website.

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Mr. Mele announced serving this evening will be Commissioners Greg Perosino, Donovan Riley, Donna Greco, Tom Telman, Starley Arias and Greg Mele. Also present is City Planner Martin Connor.

Attorney Peter C. Herbst, 365 Prospect Street, Torrington, CT appeared representing the applicant. Also present are Jason Lerner, Brian Groveman, David Lerner. Mr. Herbst noted the public hearing notification letters sent to abutters, which are a part of this application.

Attorney Herbst gave a presentation on the proposal, noting a Zone Change is necessary in this unique CIR, Commercial Industrial Restricted Zone. Presentations will follow by Kenneth Hrica, PE, Lisa Turoczi, and Scott Thornton.

Mr. Kenneth Hrica, PE, provided a detailed presentation referring to site maps of the proposals, a 3,200 sq. ft. of space next to Michaels, to be retail space or a restaurant; the previously approved 3,500 sq. ft. bank pad which has been modified to be used as either retail space or restaurant, with no drive through. The impervious ratio has been reduced by 816 sq. ft.. There was a water quality basin on site, and an Inland Wetlands Commission permit has been obtained for the proposed work.

Mr. Hrica provided details on how the entrance/exit onto East Main Street (Rt. 202) will be modified. Details of how the interior drives have been modified were also reviewed. This is in response to concerns expressed by this Commission in past applications regarding the traffic flow within the site.

Mr. Hrica explained the additions and modifications that will be made to the Walmart store site. Modifications are made to the residential buffer area, making it 150 feet wide, instead of 200 feet wide, and accompanying driveway changes in this area. No additional parking is being proposed in this area. The canvas Walmart garden center is being changed into a brick and mortar addition.

Referring to site maps and plans, Mr. Hrica explained the interconnect location area of this site, to the adjoining parcel to the East. The water quality basin and drainage flow were explained in detail. The reduction of the residential buffer area will not introduce any additional building possibilities due to the steep slope and wetlands in this area.

Mr. Hrica noted a complaint had been received about garbage on site. A wood board fence has been installed and there is a chain link fence in the area as well. Clean up has begun, there was a significant amount of garbage, and evidence of a homeless encampment area with mattresses and other items discarded. A quarterly clean up has been arranged. The wooded area will be cleared, which makes the area more visible.

Questions regarding traffic flow were posed by Mr. Mele, and answers provided by Mr. Hrica, referring to site maps.

Mr. Riley noted the deep potholes on site, and Mr. Hrica provided information regarding snow storage, under drainage systems, etc. that have contributed to the decay of the parking lots. There have been major renovations to the parking lots, which have improved the situation. The original parking areas have failed much sooner than they

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should have according to Mr. Hrica. Mr. Hrica explained the new owners of the plaza have a five year master plan for improvements and maintenance to the site.

Mr. Perosino wished to focus on the Rt. 202 entrance where stacking of vehicles occurs. The Rt. 202 exit has been changed drastically so that an illegal left turn will now become virtually impossible. Mr. Perosino saw this as an improvement.

Mr. Connor read his 10/8/20 memo to the Commission

Attorney Herbst spoke, Lisa Turoczi stated her report is part of the record, Architect Mike Boe's report is part of the record, and Scott Thornton, Traffic Engineer stated his report is part of the record. Mr. Thornton echoed what Traffic Officer Steve Pisarki said, and these proposed modifications will improve safety at the intersection. Connecticut Department of Transportation approval is a separate approval process, City of Torrington approval is needed first to go to the State of Connecticut Traffic Commission for approval.

At 8:00 p.m. Chairman Mele opened the public hearing for comments in favor of the proposal, and then comments opposed to the proposal. There were none.

At 8:01 p.m. Mr. Mele declared the public hearing closed. Mr. Mele read a draft motion to APPROVE Zoning Map Change and Site Plan 1346

Applicant: GG Torrington LLC & SL Torrington LLC
Location: 1858 East Main Street (Assessor Map 144 Block 003 Lot 033)
Proposal: CIR Zone, reconfiguration of approved building pad with 3,500 s.f. building, new 3,200 s.f. building at north end of plaza, 6,000 s.f., 9,536 s.f. and 14,825 s.f. building additions and enclosure of 5,620 s.f. existing garden center

With the following conditions and recommendation:

1. The interconnect driveway between the Torrington Fair Shopping Plaza and Target Shopping Center shall be constructed before or at the same time as construction of the additions and pad sites. No Certificate of Zoning Compliance shall be issued until the interconnect and sidewalk is constructed in accordance with the plans.
2. The applicant shall file on the land records an easement for the proposed interconnect driveway in favor of the abutting property owner in a form acceptable to the Planning & Zoning Commission and Corporation Counsel.
3. A grading permit shall be required per Section 7.3.3 of the Zoning Regulations prior to issuance of a Zoning Permit for construction of the building additions and/or two new pad site buildings.
4. A bond estimate, prepared by the Project Engineer, shall be submitted for the cost of the installation and maintenance of the soil erosion and sediment controls as shown on the approved plans. A cash bond in an amount approved by the City Planner's office shall be submitted prior to issuance of a Grading Permit to cover the estimated installation and maintenance costs of the E&S measures.
5. The Stormwater Management/Best Management Practice (BMP) Maintenance Agreement with the City of Torrington shall be filed on the Torrington Land Records per Section 7.4.2.D of the Regulations.

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6. The architectural plans sheets shall be signed and sealed by an Architect per 8.4.3.M of the Regulations.

The Commission finds the proposed Zone Change is consistent with The Plan of Conservation and Development, provides for protection of the public welfare, does not impair the integrity of the Regulations and fully safeguards the appropriate use of the land in the immediate neighborhood. The effective date of the Zone Change shall be the day after the legal notice of decision is published on the City's website. The MOTION was made by Mr. Perosino, seconded by Mr. Riley, unanimously carried with all in favor. Motion carried.

- b. Special Exception 20-09
Applicant: Rudolfo F. Pullano
Location: 177 Eastwood Road
Proposal: Expand existing garage, pre-existing non-conforming setbacks, Section 4.1.9

At 8:05 p.m. Chairman Mele opened the public hearing and stated serving this evening will be Commissioners Greg Perosino, Donovan Riley, Donna Greco, Tom Telman, Starley Arias and Greg Mele. Also present is City Planner Martin Connor.

Mr. Mele read the legal notice of public hearing which was published on the City's website.

The applicant was not present.

Mr. Connor read his memo dated 9/28/20 to the Commission. Mr. Connor noted the neighborhood notification letter had been mailed, and the applicant has spoken with his neighbors about the proposal.

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

At 8:13 p.m. Chairman Mele declared the hearing closed. Mr. Mele read a draft motion to APPROVE Special Exception 20-09

- Applicant: Rudolfo F. Pullano
Location: 177 Eastwood Road
Proposal: Expand existing garage, pre-existing non-conforming setbacks, Section 4.1.9

With the following conditions:

1. An approval block shall be added to the Site Plan in accordance with Section 8.4.3P of the Regulations.
2. The Zoning Permit shall show the proposed relocation of the existing shed.

The MOTION to approve was made by Mr. Perosino, seconded by Ms. Greco, motion unanimously carried.

5. Old Business:

- a. Site Plan 1345
Applicant: To Design LLC
Location: Slaiby Village, 49 Tucker Drive, 71 Tucker Drive
Proposal: Construct two new buildings, 92 additional units total

Mary Dehais, Planner with To Design LLC, 114 West Main Street, New Britain, CT appeared, along with Claudia Sweeney, Executive Director of Torrington Housing Authority. Also present were Allie Michaud, Besta Corp., Architect Paul Bailey, and Ryan Scrittorale, Civil Engineer.

Ms. Dehais explained this proposal was previously reviewed and approved in the Fall of 2013, and has recently received Inland Wetlands Commission approval. That Site Plan approved in 2013 expired.

Claudia Sweeney gave a presentation, and Mary Dehais continued, referring to site maps. She reviewed the proposal, landscaping and parking on the 17 acre parcel. The new development will be on the western portion of the site, with two new buildings. There will be two new buildings, the smaller building will have 40 units, and the larger building will have 52 units.

Mr. Scrittorale, PE gave a presentation referring to site plan maps, and Mr. Bailey, Architect from New Haven, gave a presentation as well.

Mr. Connor read his memo dated 9/23/20 to the Commission.

Mr. Mele read a draft motion to APPROVE Site Plan 1345
Applicant: To Design LLC
Location: Slaiby Village, 49 Tucker Drive, 71 Tucker Drive
Proposal: Construct two new buildings, 92 additional units total
With the following conditions and recommendation:

1. The applicant shall comply with the conditions of approval listed in the Certification of Special Exception approved 12/11/13 filed on the Torrington Land Records 12/18/13; Bk: 1174 Pg: 50.
2. The applicant shall address the comments from Ray Drew, Administrator, WPCA, contained in his memo to the City Planner dated 9/22/20
3. The applicant shall address the landscaping comments from Asst. City Planner Jeremy Leifert, contained in his memo to the City Planner dated 9/9/20
4. The applicant shall address the comments from Paul Kundzins, P.E., Deputy Public Works Director/City Engineer, contained in a memo to the City Planner dated 9/23/20.

MOTION was made by Mr. Perosino, and seconded by Ms. Greco, motion unanimously carried.

6. New Business:

- a. Site Plan 1348
 - Applicant: Plimpton & Hills Corp.; Calvin Hills III
 - Location: 790 Main Street
 - Proposal: Construct 2,940 sq. ft. storage building for plumbing supply

Todd Parsons, PE, Lenard Engineering of Winsted gave a presentation, referring to site plan maps and photographs to construct this new storage building on site.

Mr. Connor read his memo dated 10-7-20 to the Commission.

Questions were posed by Mr. Mele regarding utilities, fire alarm system, electric, etc. Responses were provided by Mr. Parsons.

Mr. Mele read a draft motion to APPROVE Site Plan 1348
Applicant: Plimpton & Hills Corp; Calvin Hills III
Location: 790 Main Street
Proposal: Construct 2,940 sq. ft. storage building for plumbing supply
MOTION to approve made by Mr. Perosino, seconded by Mr. Telman, unanimously carried.

- b. Site Plan 1350
 - Applicant: Marinos LLC
 - Location: 12 Pinewoods Road
 - Proposal: Re-construction of Marino’s Restaurant (7,385 sq. ft.) including site improvements

Cheryl Marino appeared representing the applicant. Robert Colabella of Laurel Engineering gave a presentation, referring to site maps.

John Martin, Architect, presented drawings and designs.

Mr. Connor read his memo dated 10-7-20 to the Commission and noted items 4 and 5 have been addressed.

Mr. Mele read a draft Motion to APPROVE Site Plan 1350
Applicant: Marinos LLC
Location: 12 Pinewoods Road
Proposal: Re-construction of Marino’s Restaurant (7,385 sq. ft.) including Site improvements

With the following conditions:

1. A Grading Permit shall be submitted and approved by the Zoning Officer prior to issuance of a Zoning Permit for the Project. A bond estimate, prepared by the Project Engineer,

shall be submitted for the cost of the installation and maintenance of the soil erosion and sediment controls as shown on the approved plans. A cash bond in an amount approved by **Torrington Planning and Zoning Commission**
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the City Planner's office shall be submitted prior to issuance of a Grading Permit to cover the estimated installation and maintenance costs of the E&S measures.

2. A Stormwater Management/Best Management Practice (BMP) Maintenance Agreement with the City of Torrington shall be filed on the Torrington Land Records per Section 7.4.2.D of the Regulations.
3. The architectural plans sheets A1-A2 shall be signed and sealed by an Architect per 8.4.3.M of the Regulations.
4. The applicant shall address the comments contained in a memo to the City Planner from Ray Drew, WPCA Administrator dated 10/7/20.

MOTION to APPROVE was made by Mr. Perosino, seconded by Ms. Greco, unanimously carried.

c. Special Exception 20-10 and Site Plan 1352

Applicant: A.J. Resources

Location: Winsted Road, Assessor Map 244 Block 001 Lot 007

Proposal: Earth Excavation (set public hearing date)

MOTION by Mr. Perosino to set a public hearing date of November 18, 2020, seconded by Ms. Greco, unanimously carried.

d. Site Plan 1353

Applicant: Gerald Marchell

Location: 1109 South Main Street

Proposal: 60' x 46' addition to South Valley Auto

Mr. Gerald Marchell appeared, and Mike Sherman, PE, Laurel Engineering made a presentation referring to site maps.

Mr. Connor read his memo dated 10/13/20 to the Commission.

Mr. Mele read a Motion to APPROVE Site Plan 1353

Applicant: Gerald Marchell

Location: 1109 South Main Street

Proposal: 60' x 46' addition to South Valley Auto

MOTION to APPROVE was made by Mr. Perosino, seconded by Mr. Riley, unanimously carried.

e. Enforcement Update

Mr. Connor stated there will be an update at the next meeting.

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Mr. Connor briefly discussed with the Commission the possibility of a Zoning Regulation amendment regarding not allowing tattoo parlors in the Downtown District. The arts community and society in general looks differently at tattoos nowadays. Years ago a tattoo parlor was a sign of a declining downtown. Artistic ability and creations have evolved over the years. It was the consensus of the Commission to instruct Mr. Connor to prepare a draft amendment for the Commission’s review, regarding an amendment in the Zoning Regulations.

7. Adjournment:

MOTION by Mr. Perosino to adjourn at 9:48 p.m., seconded by Ms. Greco, unanimously carried.

Land Use Office