

**CITY OF TORRINGTON
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
MINUTES
September 8, 2021**

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

Also Present: Martin Connor, AICP; City Planner

Not Present: Donna Greco, Member
Diane Carroll, Alternate

1. Call to Order:

Chair Greg Mele called the meeting to order at 7:26 p.m. Attendance is 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

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7959507035?pwd=MXAwcVIEenhIUhtSXFsSGhYUnI0QT09>

1-646-558-8656

Meeting ID: 795-950-7035

Passcode: 907148

2. Attendance/Announcement:

Chair Greg Mele announced present and serving via Zoom are Commissioners Jim Bobinski, Tom Telman, Starley Arias, Donovan Riley, and Greg Perosino. In person at the City Hall Auditorium are Greg Mele, PZC Chair, and Martin Connor, City Planner.

3. Minutes for Approval:

a. 8/18/21

MOTION by Mr. Perosino to approve the 8/18/21 minutes, seconded by Mr. Bobinski; motion carried with Mr. Telman abstaining from voting.

4. Public Hearings scheduled for 7:00 p.m., Wednesday, September 8, 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 Greg Mele announced this public hearing will not be held this evening. At the request of the applicant, an extension was granted, and the public hearing will be held at 7:00 p.m. on October 13, 2021.

- b. Proposed Amendments to Torrington Zoning Regulations
Applicant: Torrington Planning and Zoning Commission
Proposal: Section 5.19; Temporary and Limited Moratorium on Cannabis establishments

Mr. Mele opened the public hearing at 7:29 p.m. and stated serving on the Commission this evening are Commissioners Jim Bobinski, Tom Telman, Starley Arias, Donovan Riley, Greg Perosino and Greg Mele. Also present is City Planner Martin Connor.

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

Mr. Connor explained the temporary and limited moratorium being proposed, the effective dates would be September 25, 2021 through September 25, 2022, unless this Commission adopts regulations on Cannabis establishments prior to September 25, 2022.

Mr. Mele opened the public hearing for comments in favor of the proposal. (the first speaker was against the proposal, not in favor.)

Michael Niprahl, 408 Clearview Avenue, appeared against the proposal, and commented about the lottery that would be available from State of Connecticut for potential retailers, and hoping the town does not miss out on this opportunity to receive 3% tax revenue. Mr. Niprahl will be pleased to donate funds from his sales for community programs.

No speakers in favor of the proposal. Mr. Mele opened the public hearing for comments against the proposal.

Tom Macre, 3568 Winsted Road, Torrington, owner of Still River Dispensary appeared before the Commission. He stated he is the owner of the Still River Dispensary. He asked for a six month moratorium instead of one year.

Emily Szabo, 6 Hyde Road, Farmington, CT appeared, she represented United Food and Commercial Workers Union, who represents workers in the cannabis industries. She is here in support of Still River Dispensary.

There were no other public comments.

Mr. Perosino inquired about the lottery mentioned by the first speaker. Mr. Connor explained the number of retail facilities that will be allowed by the State of Connecticut will be determined by the population numbers of each individual town. Mr. Connor stated the purpose of this moratorium is to prepare plans and regulations for such operations.

Mr. Perosino does not see a problem with the one year moratorium, and this Commission should make it a priority to come up with plans and regulations.

Mr. Connor noted the Mayor is working with the Police Chief to come up with an ordinance regarding the use of marijuana in public spaces. Mr. Perosino stated the City is not opting out of retail sales, just working to come up with the best plan possible for all involved.

Mr. Connor noted the City of Torrington will not be able to stop delivery of the product, but if we don't have a retail facility, we will not receive the 3 percent tax. He noted the Commission did a careful job with the medical marijuana regulations, and an overlay district was proposed, and there have been no problems with the one facility the town does have.

Mr. Riley noted the key words are temporary and limited, and this gives us a chance to do this in an orderly fashion and involve the Police Chief, etc.

Mr. Mele closed the public hearing at 7:48 p.m.

Mr. Mele read a motion to APPROVE

Proposed Amendments to Torrington Zoning Regulations

Applicant: Torrington Planning and Zoning Commission

Proposal: Section 5.19; Temporary and Limited Moratorium on Cannabis establishments

The effective date of the regulation change/amendment shall be the day after publication of the legal notice of decision in the local newspaper.

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

5. Public Hearing 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

Public hearing passed until November 17, 2021.

6. Old Business:

None

7. New Business:

- a. 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)
Set Public Hearing Date

MOTION by Mr. Perosino to set a public hearing date of October 13, 2021, seconded by Mr. Riley, unanimously carried.

- b. Zoning and Blight Violation update

Mr. Connor noted there are no new updates to report.

8. Correspondence:

- a. Press Release from Economic Development Director Rista Malanca; Creation of a Cultural District

Mr. Connor noted Economic Development Director Rista Malanca will be hosting a Zoom meeting tomorrow evening at 6:00 p.m. on the Creation of a Cultural District.

9. Adjournment:

MOTION by Mr. Perosino to adjourn at 7:53 p.m., seconded by Mr. Riley, unanimously carried.

Land Use Office