

Proposed Text Amendment – Special Events, Revised to October 2022

6.13 Special Events (New 12/21/22)

The purpose and intent of this Section is to provide a mechanism to preserve rural land of the City of Torrington and allow for the temporary and accessory use of land for special events in a manner outside of the regular and customary uses of the zone in which a property is located. Furthermore, it is the intent of this Section and a condition of each approval granted under this section to require reasonable protection for nearby property owners, residents and businesses from special events which may be disruptive, obnoxious, unsafe or inappropriate given site conditions, traffic patterns, land use characteristics, and the nature of the proposed use. Finally, it is the intent of this section to preserve public health, safety and welfare.

6.13.1 The term "special event" shall mean a temporary, short-term accessory use of land or structures, not otherwise included as a permitted accessory or customary use by these Regulations. Events include, but are not limited to the following types of activities:

- a. Temporary commercial activities intended to sell, lease, rent or promote specific merchandise, services or product lines, such as a tent sale, trade show, food event, food trucks, or product demonstration.
- b. Public or private events intended primarily for gatherings, entertainment or amusement, such as concerts, weddings, festivals, carnivals, or other temporary "one-time" activities of a generally short duration.
- c. Temporary agri-tourism events including farmer's markets, fairs, seasonal farm tour events and similar activities
- d. Fundraising or non-commercial events for nonprofit religious, educational, or community service organizations outside of the regular or customary use of a specific property

6.13.2 The term "special event" shall not include:

- a. Garage sales at an individual residence,
- b. Single transient merchants such as food trucks (see City ordinance regulating food trucks)
- c. Off-site promotional signs, except as allowed in these regulations
- d. Any events held on City of Torrington property or those sponsored or organized by the City
- e. Events held on property approved for permanent special event use (i.e. banquet or event facilities, private rental parks).

6.13.3 Restrictions and Conditions

As a component of the Special Exception use, the Commission may allow special

indoor and outdoor events, subject to the following:

- a. A minimum of five (5) acres of land is required to conduct a special event under these regulations. The Commission may establish additional limits for the size and location of such special events which may be conducted.
- b. The Commission may limit the hours of operation for any special events.
- c. The Commission may limit the frequency per day, week, month, or year of such events, or may restrict them to certain seasons of the year.
- d. No more than six (6) events shall be conducted for single day or multi-day events each calendar year per property.
- e. Single events shall not exceed three (3) days in length. Traditional seasonal events may be approved for additional time by the commission. Such events may include, but are not limited to holiday events or seasonal agritourism events.
- f. As a component of the Special Exception use, food service is conditioned upon the issuance of required approvals from the Torrington Area Health District
- g. As a component of the Special Exception use, the Commission may allow for the purchase, consumption, serving and sale of alcoholic beverages as an accessory use above in accordance with applicable Local, State and Federal laws and liquor licenses. Violation of such laws and licenses may be grounds for revocation or non-renewal of special exception approval.
- h. As an accessory use of the Special Exception, the Commission may allow indoor and/or outdoor amplified sound, including music or public address systems. The Commission may limit the location, size, frequency, and hours of operation for amplified sound.
- i. As an accessory use of the Special Exception, the Commission may allow the retail sale of items provided such retail sale is limited to patrons of the approved event(s).

6.13.4 Application Requirements

In addition to the information required for all Special Exception applications and site plans in accordance with Section 6.0 and 8.4.3 of these Regulations, the applicant shall submit a Statement of Use and Site Plan containing specific information as follows:

- a. the specific types of activities to be conducted on the premises, including whether they are indoor or outdoor
- b. the location of such activities on the premises with the dimensions of each such area, and the building or portion of a building that they will occupy
- c. the location of all temporary structures for the event. Such structures shall meet all required property setbacks and buffers as required in the regulations.
- d. the typical and maximum attendance for each such activity, either individually or by categories;
- e. the food, if any, to be served at such activities and the method by which such

food will be prepared, such as in-house food preparation, third party caterers, or food trucks, and the areas of the site or buildings where those food services will be provided;

- f. the products sold or offered for sale;
- g. the frequency and duration of the proposed activity or event
- h. a traffic management and circulation plan;
- i. the extent of inland wetlands or other sensitive resources on the property, including Natural Diversity Database (NDDB) records
- j. any easements on the property, including conservation, preservation, access or utility easements
- k. a basic Onsite Parking Study and plan. In keeping with the rural, residential purpose of this regulation, the Commission may allow portions of the parking area to not be paved, but shall be a load-bearing all-weather surface so as to maintain rural and aesthetic nature of this use where the soils are such as to allow such parking without erosion or deterioration of the property. All handicap parking regulations shall be complied with per Section 5.13 of the Regulations. To the maximum extent possible, parking lots shall be located in areas on the site where they will be the least visible from access roads and adjoining properties. No on street parking shall be permitted at any time for special events.
- l. post-event property restoration plan. The commission may require bonding as part of a special exception approval for the cost of restoring the property when the event is complete.
- m. such other information as will enable the Commission to determine the type and character of activities to be conducted on the property and the potential impact of such activities on the neighborhood and the local road system, and to establish that such activities meet the standards of these Regulations

6.13.5 Validity and Expiration

Special Exceptions granted under this section do not expire and are valid under the specific terms and conditions of the approvals. Substantial changes in event types or details may require a new special exception approval. Approved site plans shall be valid for no fewer than two years and no more than five years as determined by the Commission and shall be re-approved by the Commission upon expiration.