

PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION  
TOLLAND, CONNECTICUT  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF MARCH 28, 2011

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Michael Cardin, Chair  
Marilee Beebe, Vice Chair (arrived 8:25p.m.)  
Sue Errickson, Secretary  
Dave Barrow, Regular  
Jack Scavone, Regular  
John Hughes, Alternate

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Benjamin Stanford, Alternate

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Linda Farmer, AICP, Director of Planning & Community Development

1. **Call to Order:** Michael Cardin, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:35p.m. in Council Chambers. He seated John Hughes for Marilee Beebe.
2. **Public Comment:** None.
3. **Public Hearing(s):** None.
4. **Action on Public Hearing(s):** None.

**5. Other Agenda Items**

- 5.1 **P&Z App. #808 – Tolland Planning & Zoning Commission** – Tolland Village Area- proposed Zoning Regulations, Zoning Map revisions, Design Guidelines and associated Zoning Regulations. Commission to set Public Hearing date.

The Commission reviewed the proposed Zoning Regulations from the latest draft dated March 17, 2011. They will be considering a May 23, 2011 date for setting a Public Hearing. Ms. Farmer clarified that setting a May 23 date will allow them to make any substantive changes to the proposed Regulations if needed by the April 11, 2011 meeting and still meet the requirement to give CROG 30 days notice to review them.

Ms. Farmer reviewed a few of the changes made to the proposed Zoning Regulations which include adding a definition of a story and a story-and-a-half. Additionally, the Conceptual Use Diagram will be made a part of the proposed Zoning Regulations. She noted that reference documents are listed on Page 6. The Zoning Regulations will be listed under Article VII and will reference an Appendix at the end which will include the reference documents.

Mr. Hughes asked about the requirement on Page 7 referring to modifications to existing structures, which if more than 10 percent of the existing building will require the owner to apply for an Area Development Plan. He asked if this might be too restrictive on existing businesses, suggesting it might discourage an existing business owner to update their façade. Mr. Scavone said updating a façade would not likely increase the size of a building by 10 percent so the business owner would not

need to apply for an Area Development Plan. He said this requirement would be more for adding another story to a building or expanding the building in size by ten percent or more.

Mr. Cardin asked if the workforce housing requirement will help the town meet its State goals. Ms. Farmer said it will. She said currently only 3.3 percent of the town's dwelling units meet affordable housing requirements out of a needed 10 percent.

Mr. Hughes opened a discussion about restaurant drive-thrus in the TVA. He said a lot of work has been done to date to make the TVA a walkable, sustainable, mixed-use vision, and he feels drive-thru restaurants would not fit with the overall Village concept. He asked if anything has changed where residents would now want to see one. Mr. Cardin said there have been two sides to the argument and he remains conflicted on whether to open up the TVA to drive-thrus as well. He said his thought is that he does not want to impede walkability, and so if a drive-thru were allowed he does not feel it should be on the Main Street. It would also need to be properly screened and attention would need to be paid to the stacking of cars and other concerns. He said his greatest concern is that he would not want the issue of drive-thrus to become a lightning rod that deters from all the other aspects of the TVA, but he felt it also would be helpful to hear what the public says on the issue.

Ms. Errickson said drive-thru restaurants have not been proposed to the public before in the TVA. She said it was not part of the Visual Preference Survey, and it might be possible that a drive-thru could not even fit into the layout. Ms. Farmer said looking at other towns, some allow them but only at signalized intersections. She said the impetus for the drive-thru language was to be proactive about a drive-thru pharmacy.

Mr. Hughes reiterated that he felt allowing a drive-thru restaurant would be a detriment to a walkable, sustainable, community. Mr. Barrow asked if there might be another part of town that would be more appropriate for a drive-thru restaurant, which might be a discussion for a later place and time. He said he agreed that the TVA is not an appropriate place for drive-thrus.

Ms. Errickson said allowing drive-thru restaurants would be an issue with her, and she would not want this to stall action on the TVA. Mr. Hughes said the idea is to have people come into the TVA and park and go into restaurants for something to eat and then walk around and shop. The idea is not to have people drive in and drive out. Mr. Scavone said he has mixed feelings as he does feel there is a desire in town for a Starbucks or a Dunkin Donuts drive-thru. He said there is a Starbucks in the Manchester/South Windsor area that has a drive-thru, but it also has wrought iron tables outdoors and wi-fi service that people take advantage of. He said he is completely opposed to having a drive-thru restaurant on the Main Street. He said, however, that the TVA will not get a pharmacy unless it is allowed to have a drive-thru. Mr. Barrow said he would find a drive-thru pharmacy and bank acceptable for the TVA, but not a drive-thru restaurant.

There was consensus to remove Item 2E on Page 9 and 11B on Page 14, both of which refer to drive-thru restaurants. Also, there was consensus to remove the reference to "menu boards" from Item 11-I at the top of Page 15.

Sue Errickson/Jack Scavone motion to approve the changes to the proposed Zoning Regulations and set a Public Hearing for May 23, 2011. Motion was unanimously approved.

The Commission discussed Article XX—Zone Changes, Special Permits and Site Plans. Ms. Farmer explained that a Landscaping Plan is often not followed exactly as developers often find when they go to do the plantings that area nurseries do not carry the agreed upon plantings, and substitutions

need to be made. They discussed modifications to landscaping with the understanding that assistance will be required in making reasonable substitutions. Mr. Cardin asked how the Commission can encourage in its landscape regulations to tackle bio-infiltration and other LID recommendations. Ms. Farmer said this is addressed in a separate section of the proposed regulations.

Under the General Requirements section on landscaping, Ms. Farmer said she will add a cross reference to LID requirements. In the bullets under C-1, she will pull the appropriate wording out of the LID manual.

Under the Maintenance of Landscaping section, Mr. Barrow said they may need to reword the part that refers to the requirement for watering plants “during periods of drought” as sometimes during droughts the Town enforces a no-watering rule. Ms. Farmer said the concern was to avoid situations where landscaping companies put in plants but don’t maintain and water them. She referred to another development in town where several trees have died and need to be replaced. She suggested they might want to tone down the wording to require watering during “dry conditions.” Ms. Errickson said the sentence could simply be abbreviated to: “A watering plan should be put in place.” There was also discussion about incorporating LID practices into this bullet point. After some discussion, the Commission agreed to reword the sentence to: “*A watering plan should be put in place and LID practices encouraged to meet watering needs.*”

Ms. Beebe reviewed the LID requirements that start on Page 26. She said they appear generic enough to be applicable in the TVA, and suggested they might want to cross reference the fact that they can use landscaped areas for bio-retention. Ms. Beebe also noted that there is a list of LID treatment systems in this section, but they do not include hydrodynamic separators. She said she felt that was a good idea but asked Ms. Farmer to confirm with Steve Trinkhaus if this omission was intentional. She said she would want to avoid contradicting anything they have done elsewhere in town with regard to LID regulations. Ms. Farmer said Town Engineer Jennifer Usher just redid the road specifications and design and will have her take a look at this also.

The Commission reviewed the draft Design Guidelines dated March 17, 2011. Ms. Errickson noted a closing parenthesis is missing in the second bullet on Page 1. On Page 7 under Facades, the fifth bullet was reworded to read: “Windows should *generally* be taller than wide.” Further down on the same page under the bullet for Street level facades, the last sub-bullet was reworded to read: “*Street level window glazing should be of clear vision glass or other creative treatments that would encourage a relationship with the public.*”

On Page 18, under Hotel Regulations, there was a typographical error where aluminum storefront *types* windows was changed to aluminum storefront *type* windows.

On Page 15, under the second bullet under Parking, Ms. Beebe said she was concerned about parking lots being overly screened from view to the extent that there could be a safety issue for shoppers. Mr. Barrow said too much screening could also create a situation where people might break into cars. The Commission agreed to reword this bullet to read: “The view of parking lots from streets and private accessways should be buffered with landscaping that is green year round.” Ms. Beebe said it might be beneficial to state that the goal of this bullet is to minimize the visual impact of parking areas.

The Commission reviewed the draft Zoning Map and they did not request any changes. Ms. Farmer said the regulations also modified separating distances from some existing businesses.

Sue Errickson/Jack Scavone motion to approve the proposed Zoning Map, Design Guidelines and associated Zoning Regulations as amended and set a Public Hearing date for May 23, 2011. Motion was unanimously approved.

- 5.2 **P&Z App. #810 – Tolland Planning & Zoning Commission** – Proposed revision to the Design Manual for Low Impact Development, Road Design and Construction Standards. Commission to set Public Hearing date. Ms. Farmer reviewed some minor modifications noting that the LID manual changes are mostly related to formatting, charts and illustrations. Sue Errickson/Jack Scavone to approve the draft Design Manual revision dated March 28, 2011 and set a Public Hearing date for May 23, 2011. Motion was unanimously approved.
- 5.3 Update on Traffic/Roadway Concept Plan for Tolland Village Area – VHB Engineering. The Commission reviewed the memo dated March 22, 2011 from Steve O’Neill of VHB. Ms. Farmer said Mr. O’Neill did some traffic counts and additional work on putting together a concept idea. Most importantly, he addressed the connector road to Cider Mill Road. Ms. Errickson confirmed with Ms. Farmer that this letter will go to the Town Council for review as they review the amendment to the Plan of Conservation and Development.
- 5.4 Update on legislative action on the commuter lot and Town parcel. Ms. Farmer said Steven Werbner testified before the Committee on Government and Elections about the requested change from Open Space to commercial use and the possible relocation of the commuter lot. She said the Committee appeared to find the request favorable and will be moving it along.
- 5.5 **P&Z App. #809 – Mariella Luginbuhl** – Subdivision request to designate a building lot as a rear lot. Location: 17 Stonehenge Drive. Commission to set Public Hearing date. Ms. Farmer said this is a 16 acre lot with frontage on Shenipsit Lake Road, but access is via another road. It is a rear lot. Jack Scavone/John Hughes motion to set a Public Hearing date for April 11, 2011. Motion was unanimously approved.
6. **Approval of Minutes** – Approve minutes of February 28, 2011 Regular Meeting and March 7, 2011 Special Meeting. Sue Errickson/Jack Scavone motion to approve the minutes of the February 28, 2011 Regular meeting. The motion was unanimously approved with the exception of John Hughes, who abstained. Motion passed.
- Sue Errickson/Dave Barrow motion to approve the minutes of the March 7 Special Meeting. The motion was unanimously approved, with the exception of John Hughes, who abstained. Motion passed.
7. **Activities and Updates**: None.
8. **Town Staff Comments**:
- Stone Pond Condominiums – landscape modifications. Ms. Farmer said this development requires some landscaping along the driveway as the existing hemlock trees have died. She said a landscape professional on the Design Advisory Board has made recommendations and she is working with the condo association on the replanting.
9. **Announcements – Upcoming Meetings**: The next meeting will be held on April 11, 2011. Steven Lowrey will be the staff liaison.

10. **Reading of Correspondence:** None.

11. **Communications and Petitions from Commission Members**

**CRCOG Report – Sue Errickson:** Ms. Errickson said at the latest CRCOG meeting, they heard an in-depth presentation on the I-84 viaduct study. She said there are three alternatives to repairing the viaduct, but currently there is no funding available. She said CRCOG will also need to create a long range transportation plan to tie into the Regional Plan of Conservation and Development. Ms. Errickson said she started a new agenda item at CRCOG, called What’s New in Town, which gives participating towns an opportunity to share what is happening in their communities.

12. **Public Participation:** None.

13. **Adjournment:** Sue Errickson/Jack Scavone motion to adjourn the meeting and pay the clerk at 9:35 p.m. Motion was unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Annie Gentile  
Clerk