

**TOWN OF HADDAM
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
PUBLIC HEARING AND MEETING
TOWN HALL
21 FIELD PARK DRIVE, HADDAM, CT
THURSDAY, 17 JANUARY 2019
UNAPPROVED MINUTES
*Subject to Approval by the Commission***

ATTENDANCE

X	Gina Block
X	Steven Bull, Vice Chairman
X	Michael Farina
X	Frank (Chip) Frey
X	Jamin Laurenza, Chairman
X	Wayne LePard
X	Edward Wallor, Secretary
X	Robert Braren, Alternate
A	Diane Waddle Stock, Alternate
X	Sam Todzia, Alternate (7:03 p.m.)
X	Bill Warner, Town Planner
X	Bunny Hall Batzner, Recording Clerk

1. Call to Order

Mr. Laurenza, chairman, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

The pledge was recited.

3. Attendance/Seating of the Alternates

All regular members were seated.

4. Additions/Corrections to the Agenda

There were no additions or correction made to the agenda.

5. Public Comments

Liz Bazazi, Lake Avenue, Higganum, read a letter, dated 17 January 2019, (Exhibit A) to the Commission pertaining to the adverse effect the closure of Haddam Elementary School (HES) will have on Higganum Center both economically and recreationally. Ms. Bazazi spoke in regard to local businesses owners voicing their concern over the closing; that the entire HES parcel, including Swan Hill, are up for sale; housing for seniors as well as young people; the Board of Education (BOE) study that was done by Wesleyan undergraduates, millennials delaying having children, and that the town's schools are the major attraction of new homeowners to Haddam (outlined in the POCD and a study done by the Friends of HES). Ms. Bazazi asked the Commission to advise the BOE that the closure of HES will have a negative impact, from a planning perspective, on the town.

Kathryn Procktor, Friends of HES, voiced concern over the closure of HES noting the school is an asset to the town. Ms. Procktor spoke in regard to Gov. Malloy talking about the state's budget gap, bringing people to the state, and people looking for rural environments yet with services provided. Ms. Procktor

stated after talking to a number of people, it's clear that people are moving to Haddam for the schools. Ms. Proctor noted that HES is the highest ranked school in the district according to School Digger. Ms. Proctor stated this plan has not been vetted and there isn't proper research. Ms. Proctor asked the Commission to discuss and consider the repercussions that the loss of the school will have on the town and to consider drafting a letter to the BOE outlining the importance of HES from a planning perspective.

Jeff Struges spoke in regard to the BOE, the Board of Selectmen (BOS), and other committees needing to interact with one another and that not taking place. Mr. Struges stated he would like to see the Center revolve around a school that anchors it and that he would like to see a plan that the majority of the town could support.

6. Public Hearing/Public Meeting: A Modification to an Existing Half Story One Bedroom with Bathroom, of an Additional Kitchenette Located at 15 Hidden Lake Road, Haddam, CT and Shown on Tax Map 55 Lot 009 Location 4.

Kristopher Proto, owner/applicant, was present.

Hearing: Mr. Proto stated that there are four bedrooms existing and that he would like to construct a dormer above an existing garage – approximately 500 to 550 square feet – to finish a half story bedroom with existing bathroom and add a kitchenette. Mr. Proto also stated this addition would be used by his mother. Mr. Proto stated due to a tank failure, the septic system has been enlarged.

Mr. Frey asked if the footprint would remain the same with Mr. Proto stating yes. Mr. Bull asked if the Health Dept. would have to sign off on the application. Mr. Warner stated the septic system is sized by bedrooms; and since there are already four bedrooms existing, the kitchen has no bearing on the matter.

Jamin Laurenza closed the public hearing and opened the public meeting at 7:27 p.m.

Meeting: Mr. Laurenza noted that he changed the date on the motion from 3 January 2019 to 17 January 2019. Mr. Wallor initialed the correction.

Mr. Bull asked Mr. Warner if there was any reason the Commission should be concerned with the proposal. Mr. Warner stated no, noting that the application satisfies all the criteria in Section 23.

MOTION: Ed Wallor moved to approve a special permit to allow an attached accessory apartment to be constructed onto an existing dwelling located at 15 Hidden Lake Road, Haddam. **Conditions:** None. **Exhibits:** Map by ML Murdy Co. Cheshire CT ½" = 1'. Jamin Laurenza second. Motion carried unanimously.

7. New Business: Continue Discussion of Expanding the Higganum Village District

Mr. Warner distributed a packet titled "Site and Zoning Analysis Haddam Elementary School (HES) Property, Initial Discussion, Planning and Zoning Commission, January 17, 2019" (Exhibit 1; copy on file in the Town Clerk's Office). Mr. Warner reported that at the 3 January 2019 meeting a group of citizens, as well as a commissioner, asked the Commission to consider what the zoning should be for HES – should it be a part of the village zone or should it remain residential. Mr. Warner stated if the structure remains a school it's a moot point as it's allowed in both zones; however, if the structure doesn't remain a school, P&Z needs to be prepared.

Mr. Warner reported the HES parcel is 155 acres with two very distinctly different pieces of land – the 10 acre parcel has a little pond with a stream coming from it and the school and the 145 acre parcel is rather rugged, difficult to develop, has poor access to roads, and has a major stream coming through the parcel (floodplain and wetlands soils are associated with the parcel). Entire acreage is currently zoned R-1 (1 acre lot residential zone). Mr. Warner stated if the Commission were to contemplate changes they may consider R-2 for the 145 acres and then the question would remain should the school piece remain R-1 or become village district.

Mr. Warner reviewed the characteristics of the land the school sits – dry parcel that slopes steeply down towards the brook and the wetlands - noting that everything from the brook and the pond back is wetlands and from the major brook the property slopes up (not very usable in the back). Mr. Warner pointed out two other dry areas – 1.5 acres to the front of HES and 1 acre to the north of HES - on the school parcel and stated the Commission should consider how a developer might use the land. Mr. Warner also pointed out a 6,000 gallon septic system and the reserve area to the south of HES (both areas are not developable) and the well to the north of the school (indicated by the blue star). Due to the amount of flow from the well, it has a 150 foot separation distance as opposed to a residential well which would be 75 feet from a septic system and this would limit development.

Mr. Warner reviewed Existing Zoning – R-1 Residential and listed what is permitted. Mr. Warner noted that the Commission needs to be aware of what is allowable through a special permit. Items crossed off are allowed, but Mr. Warner didn't feel they were relevant. Mr. Warner then reviewed Potential Re-zoning R-1 to Higganum Village District (HVD)/R-2 – map with existing zoning (red indicates HVD) and a map with potential rezoning. Mr. Warner noted that the Scovil Hoe property (former DOT garage site) would be rezoned HVD. Mr. Wallor stated Higganum Green would be included in the HVD. Reviewing another map, Mr. Warner stated the major brook would be a good demarcation point. Mr. Warner spoke in regard to what is allowed within the HVD via Site Plan Review and Special Permit.

Mr. Warner stated there have been comments regarding market rate and senior housing and through the current village district zone these types of housing are allowed; however, 25 percent of the building needs to be commercial. Mr. Warner stated the Commission should consider changing the regulation as there is already commercial across the street (competing with one another). Mr. Laurenza asked Mr. Warner if a developer could ask for a waiver with Mr. Warner responding no, they could only ask for a variance.

In conclusion, Mr. Warner stated he tried very hard not to draw any conclusion, but to look at the parcel as to what may/could be.

Mr. Farina asked if the 145 acres could be placed under conservation. Mr. Warner stated there currently isn't a Conservation Zone; however, he read the proposed language. Mr. Warner noted that although the land is publicly owned, it is owned by the school district and by putting the property under conservation it would take away the value of the 145 acres.

Mr. LePard asked for clarification in regard to the septic system. Using the map, Mr. Warner pointed out the septic system and reserve area noting that the system was redone in 2012 and that the 6,000 gallon tank is oversized for the flow from the school (currently 3,400 gallons per day).

Mr. Frey asked if the parcel weren't developed as part of the village district zone would the Commission have control over what would be built on the parcel other than single family housing. Mr. Warner stated only if the Commission didn't rezone the parcel. Mr. Warner discussed level of control – HVD allows design and demolition control. Mr. Frey also asked if anyone on the Commission had read the RFP as he believes there was something in the RFP requiring the façade to remain the same. Ms. Procktor stated the language is open. Mr. Warner stated it indicates they want a use that will contribute to the village.

Mr. Braren asked what would be the downside of rezoning. Mr. Frey stated Haddam is in competition with Middletown, Chester, and Deep River for business and he doesn't want to adopt too many regulations that may discourage a developer. Discussion followed in regard to the village regulations allowing for give and take; wanting regulations in place before an application comes before the Commission; and whether a sub-village district with no commercial required could be allowed (Mr. Warner stated this is allowable. Item to be discussed further at the 7 February 2019.).

Mr. Warner talked about the property being a mix of market rate and elderly housing to bring vitality to the Center. Mr. Warner used the example of the school being used for elderly housing and town houses constructed to the front along Route 154 for market rate housing. Mr. Warner also spoke in regard to the Rossi parcel being restricted by the market as well. Discussion followed in regard to 8-30g and a developer having the ability to go around the town's overlay zone. Mr. Wallor talked in regard to deed restrict-

ed housing with accessory apartments. Mr. Warner will place discussion of deed restrictions on accessory apartments on the agenda for 7 February 2019.

Mr. Bull stated he wants to see the Commission do all they can in regard to HES. Discussion followed in regard to the joint meeting between the Infrastructure Committee, Buildings Committee, and EDC and the presentation by Camoin Associates. Mr. Laurenza cautioned the Commission to be careful in regard to comments should they decide to attend the joint meeting so there are no repercussions in the future.

Ms. Block voiced concern over the closure of the school resulting in economic collapse in the Center. Mr. Bull read from the POCD related to HES (this is part of the village and it's what makes the Center what it is). Mr. Frey stated the town doesn't own the property, the BOE does. Discussion followed in regard to the POCD being P&Z's document. Mr. Laurenza asked Mr. Warner to speak to Richard Roberts, Esq., regarding a letter to the BOE concerning the closing of HES.

A brief discussion followed in regard to the Rossi property and their proposal. Mr. Warner stated the Rossis have a plan and are looking at one and two bedroom units.

Ms. Block asked if the Commission could revisit the language for the Conservation Zone. Item to be discussed at the 7 February 2019 meeting.

This agenda item continued until Thursday, 7 February 2019.

8. Approval/Correction of the Minutes

MOTION: Ed Wallor moved to approve the 3 January 2019 minutes as submitted. Jamin Laurenza second. Motion carried with Mr. Frey abstaining.

9. Chairman's Report

Mr. Laurenza had nothing new to report.

10. Scheduling of Hearings

There are no hearings scheduled at this time.

11. Town Planner's Report

Mr. Warner reported that he has been becoming familiar with the Tylerville Water and Sidewalk Projects, the proposed sewer for Higganum Center (met with Fuss and O'Neill), and that he had met with the Rossis in regard to their proposal. Mr. Laurenza asked if there was funding still available for the water project as he had heard (rumor) that the funding had been pulled by the state. Mr. Warner stated the funding for the water project is secure, there is no funding for walkway on the Swing Bridge, and there is still funding for the Tylerville sidewalk project.

12. Adjournment

MOTION: Steve Bull moved to adjourn. Ed Wallor second. Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:44 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Bunny Hall Batzner
Bunny Hall Batzner, Recording Clerk

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, 7 February 2019.