

**TOWN OF HADDAM
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
PUBLIC MEETING
TOWN HALL
21 FIELD PARK DRIVE, HADDAM, CT
THURSDAY, 29 MARCH 2018
UNAPPROVED MINUTES
*Subject to Approval by the Commission***

ATTENDANCE

X	Gina Block
X	Steven Bull, Vice Chairman
A	Michael Farina
A	Arthur Kohs
X	Jamin Laurenza, Chairman
A	Wayne LePard
X	Edward Wallor, Secretary
X	Robert Braren, Alternate (6:23 p.m.; left at 7:08 p.m.)
X	Frank (Chip) Frey, Alternate
X	Diane Waddle Stock, Alternate (7:05 p.m.)
X	Liz West Glidden, Town Planner
X	Bunny Hall Batzner, Recording Clerk

1. Call to Order

Mr. Laurenza, chairman, called the meeting to order at 6:15 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

The pledge was recited.

3. Attendance/Seating of the Alternates

Attendance was taken and all regular and alternate members were seated.

4. Additions/Corrections to the Agenda

There were no additions/corrections to the agenda.

5. Public Comments

Jen Mikulski, Mikes' Auto, asked if the Commission would accept input in writing or using technology to communicate ideas. Mrs. Glidden stated written testimony can be submitted; and if there is a visual, to send it to her and she'll make copies for the Commission. Mrs. Mikulski stated she and her husband, Mike, want to be involved, but cannot attend the meetings on a weekly basis.

Mrs. Glidden asked Mr. Laurenza to layout out the meeting would be handled – would public comment be accepted throughout the Commission's discussion. Mr. Laurenza stated the Commission will review/discuss everything and then take public comments.

6. Discussion Regarding Zoning Regulations for the Tylerville Area

Mrs. Glidden stated if the Commission is planning a 06/07/2018 hearing date, the regulations need to be wrapped up by 04/19/2018. Mr. Bull stated the June date is not six months. Mrs. Glidden agreed noting the six month mark for the moratorium is in mid-July. Mr. Wallor stated the regulations and guidelines would need to go to Gateway, etc. Mr. Bull stated he did not believe the process should be cut short because of a self-imposed three month deadline and felt the Commission should aim for June allowing for a little wiggle room.

Mrs. Glidden stated at the 03/22/2018 meeting there was discussion about creating two districts and what those boundaries would be – one perhaps more intense and the other a transitional zone. Mrs. Glidden also stated Patrick Pinnell has provided copies of the following: an aerial of Bridge Road from Route 154 to Dunkin Donuts and the Botelle property (Exhibit A), an aerial of Bridge Road from Route 154 to the Connecticut River (Exhibit B), and a vehicular circulation calculation (Exhibit C).

Mr. Pinnell stated the submissions are a follow up to a comment he had made in regard to concern about traffic on Bridge Road. Mr. Pinnell reported the aerials (Exhibit A and B) are from the Town's GIS showing lot lines and current public right-of-way (narrowest point near 85 Bridge Road). Mr. Pinnell stated at the current 13-14 foot highway standard it's possible to get in 10 or 11 foot travel lanes; and if wanted, 7 or 8 foot wide parallel parking as well as sidewalks. Using PowerPoint, Mrs. Glidden discussed the right-of-way distances depicted on the aerial maps (varies from 52 feet from Bridge Road and Route 154 to 36 feet near 85 Bridge Road to 102 feet near Goodspeed Station Country Store) as well as the vehicular circulation calculation sheet (Exhibit C). Mr. Pinnell stated since Bridge Road is a state highway, there will need to be a discussion with DOT; however, if the road can be narrowed through the standards outlined, it will help to calm the traffic behavior. Mrs. Glidden agreed there would need to be a conversation with DOT, but they are not always amenable to parallel parking on the road. Mr. Pinnell stated DOT has something called Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) for state numbered highways through business districts. A brief discussion followed in regard to the speed limits through Deep River and East Haddam.

Mrs. Mikulski asked if the amount of traffic ties into the CSS publication. Mr. Pinnell stated there is a more complex equation depending on the level of service, right-of-way available, etc. Donna Torza asked how the town can accommodate people trying to parallel park along Bridge Road. Mr. Pinnell stated in part it's done to slow traffic down noting that slow and steady beats intermittent or fast. Mr. Pinnell also stated parallel parking is a lost art; however, it is technically feasible. Ms. Torza asked if parallel parking is advised for this location. Mr. Pinnell stated there's nothing better for slowing down traffic than on street parking.

Alan Blaschik, Alan's Small Engine, asked if the town should go to the state first to see what they will allow before wasting any more time on this matter. Mrs. Glidden stated the state has allowed it in other village districts; however, that would be a conversation further down the road. Mr. Laurenza asked those in attendance to take a breath and allow the Commission to go through the process noting nothing is going to take effect immediately.

Mrs. Glidden stated at the end of the 03/22/2018 meeting there was discussion about boundaries (two districts) and alternate conceptual roads. Continuing to use PowerPoint, Mrs. Glidden displayed a zoning map of the Tylerville area and where some conceptual byways could go (development will drive these). Mrs. Glidden talked about possible incentives is to allow modifications within the village district if people are preserving historic structures or creating a right-way or easement to further one of the conceptual roads allowing more commercial frontage to the rear and traffic relief; however, it needs to be determined whether there will only be one district or two. Mrs. Glidden stated there was some concern expressed about what would occur if someone took down an historic structures, the Commission could provide a provision in both village districts that would require a Special Permit to tear down a structure before it can be torn down and build something new.

Using an 11 by 17 inch map of the Tylerville area (Exhibit D), Mrs. Glidden asked the Commission as well as those in attendance to mark out what they envision as the village district. Mrs. Mikulski asked how many historic structures were located in Tylerville. Mrs. Glidden stated she didn't have a number, but briefly reviewed what she was aware of. Mrs. Mikulski stated in the Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) it indicates between Shailerville and Tylerville there are 46. Mrs. Glidden asked Lisa Malloy, Executive Director, Haddam Historical Society, if the statement in the POCD referring to Shailerville and Tylerville was the area of the cemetery. Mrs. Malloy stated yes. Mrs. Mikulski stated in the POCD, Shailerville and Tylerville are combined. A brief discussion followed in regard to the removal of the 2007 POCD from the town's website.

Mrs. Glidden stated what she believes she has heard from the audience and the Commission over the course of these meetings is that they do not want the current commercial property rezoned to residential, but rather leave it either commercial, one of the village districts, or industrial. Mrs. Glidden also stated in determining what type of zoning is being sought, it will help develop the boundaries. Mrs. Glidden stated another thing the Commission needs to consider is the industrial piece (currently Essex Design) as the town doesn't have a lot of industrial land and advocated leaving it as it is. Mr. Laurenza stated he would leave the parcel zoned as is so that there's some sort of central employer in the village. Discussion followed in regard to possibly carrying the zone over to the self-storage area as it's one of the areas for a conceptual byway.

Using a conceptual map developed by Mr. Pinnell, Mrs. Glidden pointed out potential areas for byways. Mr. Pinnell stated there are a number of ways to look at this and it's a matter of adjusting it in order for any given property owner who loses property is more than compensated by the new value of the frontage gained. That's the tradeoff. Mrs. Glidden stated this isn't something that the Commission determines, but rather the developer; however, a carrot needs to be held out. Mrs. Mikulski asked if a town has already done this. Mr. Pinnell stated there's an example of this in Kent. Mrs. Glidden stated Hebron has also done something similar as well as Marlborough. Discussion followed.

Going back to the 11 by 17 inch map, Commissioners reviewed their vision of the village. Mr. Bull talked about a recreational zone (River Front District) down by the river, but it's unclear how it would be different. Mrs. Glidden talked about properties being zoned commercial and village and the need for leveling the playing field so that properties that are zoned commercial do not have to go through the same requirements as a village district property. Mr. Laurenza stated he envisions the Bridge Road/Saybrook Road area as the village district. Mrs. Glidden asked what would be allowed if there were a River or Recreational Zone (how would it be different from a village district – less intense or more intense; regulate structures and/or uses). Mr. Bull and Mr. Laurenza stated less intense and under the watchful eye of the Architectural Review Committee (ARC) and uses that foster the train and the Lady Katharine. Discussion followed in regard to food (food was sold at Eagle Landing years ago; something similar to the Blue Oar), tourism related businesses, no commercial store fronts on the bottom with offices on the top, and leaving the marina as it's currently zoned.

Mrs. Glidden talked about the potential for three districts – river zone, village zone, and cottage industrial zone. Mrs. Glidden asked how the Commission would like to handle the residentially zoned properties – perhaps create a cottage industry zone allowing the conversion of an existing dwelling into office space or small retail. Mr. Wallor asked about home occupation regulations in a residential zone. Mrs. Glidden stated it would be allowed but limited by percentage allowed. Mr. Wallor stated those regulations may be restrictive enough, for the time being, and the Commission can come back to this after completing the village district. Discussion followed at length with concern being raised about historic houses potentially being torn down (how to protect; historic district); leaving the area residential with the provision that if the owner wants to change the zoning the only option is to become village district; the current demolition delay process (120 day waiting period; the town, Haddam Historical Society, or anyone else can approach the owner to safe/buy the structure); and for the time being leaving the residential area alone.

Mrs. Glidden asked the Commission how they would like to handle the commercial area on Route 154 south of the Route 82 Connector. The Commission felt it best to leave this area alone at this time.

Mrs. Glidden asked the Commission if they would want to allow residential in the River Zone. The Commission did not feel residential would be appropriate. Mr. Bull asked if the state has to follow the Commission's regulations. Mrs. Glidden stated the state does not have to receive permission from the Commission; however, it does look at both the state's and town's POCD and the town zoning maps. The Commission was agreeable to some light commercial that would support river and railroad activity. Mr. Bull asked why the marina shouldn't be under this zone. Dave Papallo, Andrews Marina, asked the Commission to leave the marina alone. Mrs. Glidden talked about provisions for marinas along the river. Discussion followed in regard to the Commission not looking to have the marina remove their equipment needed to operate their business; the River Zone calling out recreational, river, and train uses; and new construction would need to go before ARC. Mrs. Glidden asked the Commission how they would like to zone the Riverhouse. The Commission felt it should go in the village district. Mrs. Glidden will draft up maps for the next meeting.

Mrs. Glidden showed the Commission a draft of Section 7A.9 – Modification Procedure for Uses Permitted in the Village District (to be reviewed by Attorney Mark Branse) and explained how it would work. Ms. Block asked if "historic structure" needs to be defined. Mrs. Glidden stated no, as it's subjective and anything older than 50 years is considered historic.

Mrs. Mikulski states she agreed with leaving the residential area alone because if it were changed, it would be easier for people to convert along Bridge Road v. keeping the focus in the areas that were outlined as village district. Mrs. Mikulski asked if everything that is currently zoned would be grandfathered in. Mrs. Glidden stated the zoning district would change from commercial to village. Mrs. Mikulski asked how grandfathering would apply to them. Mrs. Glidden stated any commercial use that is currently permitted would be grandfathered in. Discussion followed in regard to expansion of an existing use (Special Permit, matching architecture) and design guidelines preventing what isn't wanted.

Ms. Torza asked if the town has the authority to say what goes on state owned property. Mrs. Glidden stated no, but the Commission has the responsibility for a zoning district, therefore, state owned property has to be zoned something. Ms. Torza asked if the state owned property is currently zoned commercial. Mrs. Glidden stated yes. Ms. Torza asked if the town can develop state owned property. Mrs. Glidden stated it would be up to the state as to how they'd want to develop their property.

Ms. Torza stated she would dislike seeing any additional homes demolished and that she would like to see residential stay residential. Ms. Torza also stated her vision of a village has some residential in it. Mrs. Glidden stated she would not like to see any other homes torn down; however, it may not be for the Commission to manage; perhaps the Haddam Historical Society or another organization could take on the preservation and protection of historic structures. Ms. Torza stated the Historical Society tried to save the Shailer-Banning House; however, the Society does not have that kind of money. Ms. Torza stated she would like the Commission to see that Haddam is an historic town and she would like to see historic homes remain standing. Discussion followed in regard to the houses being more protected in the village zone; however, there was consensus amongst the Commission to leave the houses within the residential zone; and the creation of an historic district. Mr. Pinnell stated a village district concept was developed in 1998 in order to have an easier way of designating historic areas and controlling them. Mr. Pinnell also stated a two-thirds vote of the property owners is needed to establish an historic district while only a majority vote of the Commission is required to establish a village district. Mr. Wallor stated the Commission needs to get the village district with design guidelines done before tackling anything else. Mrs. Glidden agreed.

Mr. Papallo asked where the marina stands at this point – commercial, river front, or village. Mrs. Glidden stated river front with a marina provision in it. Mr. Papallo stated the village district is disconcerting to him and that he doesn't want to be within the village. Mrs. Glidden asked the Commission to not get into individual properties.

Mrs. Glidden stated the Commission has draft design guidelines (Higganum Design Guidelines made Tylerville appropriate and they're only a suggestion). Mrs. Glidden asked everyone to review the draft at home and either email comments directly to her or come back to the next meeting with comments. Mr. Laurenza stated the guidelines were not emailed because they did not want social media to get hold of them so rumors, etc., didn't start. Mrs. Glidden stated she would rather have the Commission vet the guidelines before the public sees them. Mrs. Glidden clarified that the photo of the old car is a "sign" that would be encouraged.

Mrs. Glidden reported the Commission will be continuing the hearing for 85 Bridge Road (new plans distributed) at the 04/05/2018 meeting, 7:00 p.m. Mrs. Glidden stated she would like comments for the design guidelines received by the 04/05/2018 meeting so she may place the guidelines on the web; that she will have the boundaries for everyone, and recommended the Commission hold another meeting on 04/12/2018 (at that time the Use Chart needs to be completed).

Mr. Bull asked the Commission if they are opposed to drive-thrus on the conceptual roads. Mr. Laurenza stated he feels drive-thrus should be allowed anywhere by Special Permit. Mr. Bull disagreed. Ms. Block stated drive-thrus would discourage walkability; and to draw people to Haddam we need unique businesses that can't be found elsewhere. Mr. Bull agreed. Mrs. Glidden stated there appears to be no objection to drive-thrus for banks and pharmacies, but there is for drive-thru restaurants. Mrs. Glidden suggested a drive-thru would be subject to the design guidelines, a Special Permit, and the drive aisle to the rear and/or screened from state highways. Mr. Frey asked for the Special Permit process to be explained in terms of what can or cannot be denied. Mrs. Glidden explained noting that each application should be judged on its own merits. Discussion followed at length in regard to property values, walkability, and allowing drive-thrus on the conceptual byways.

Mrs. Glidden asked about prohibited uses in the village district such as a cell tower (concern that one may go in on a property within the proposed village). Discussion followed in regard to the need for cell coverage, towers being unattractive, the Siting Council having not approved anything in the town that was discussed months ago, and the Goodspeed Airport being restrictive to a cell tower. The Commission agreed that they did not want a cell tower within the village district.

7. Approval/Correction of the Minutes

Correction to the 22 March 2018 minutes: page 3, fifth paragraph, twelfth line – change "didn't believe" to "believes".

MOTION: Steve Bull moved to approve the 22 March 2018 Meeting minutes as amended. Chip Frey second. Motion carried unanimously.

8. Chairman's Report

Mr. Laurenza asked the Commission to review the draft guidelines and to not go to social media with them.

9. Scheduling of Hearings

85 Bridge Road – Public Hearing continued to Thursday, 5 April 2018.

On Thursday, 19 April 2018, a public hearing is scheduled for a Special Permit for a house in excess of 4,000 square feet with a detached accessory apartment on Mill Creek and the Connecticut River. The five acre lot is located off of Saybrook Road behind the Spencer's.

In May there will be a public hearing for a Special Permit for a house in excess of 4,000 square feet on the Connecticut River. Property is located on Horton Road.

10. Town Planner's Report

There was nothing new to report.

11. Adjournment

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

The meeting was adjourned at 8:02 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Bunny Hall Batzner

Bunny Hall Batzner
Recording Clerk

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, 5 April 2018.