

**PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING – MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 28, 2015 – 7:00PM
NEW HARTFORD TOWN HALL – 530 MAIN STREET**

PRESENT: Chairman James Steadman, Ted Stoutenberg, Dan LaPlante, Bob Moore, Dave Krimmel; Alternate Peter Ventre; First Selectman Dan Jerram; Zoning Enforcement Officer Steven Sadlowski.

ABSENT: Martin Post.

Chairman Jim Steadman called the meeting to order at 7:00PM. All regular members present were seated for the meeting. The proceedings were recorded digitally and copies are available in the Land Use Office.

1. PUBLIC HEARINGS: NONE

2. PENDING APPLICATIONS: NONE

3. NEW APPLICATIONS: NONE

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: January 14, 2015

MOTION: Mr. Ted Stoutenberg, Mr. Steadman second, **to approve the January 14, 2015 minutes; Mr. Stoutenberg, Mr. David Krimmel, Mr. Dan LaPlante, and Mr. Steadman voted aye, Mr. Bob Moore abstained; motion passed.**

5. ZONING ENFORCEMENT OFFICER'S REPORT: NONE

6. CORRESPONDENCE: NONE

7. OTHER BUSINESS PROPER TO COME BEFORE THE COMMISSION:

A. Discuss final text of Zoning changes including:

- **Zoning Text Amendments to Section 4.5H allow new multi-family housing under the Adaptive Reuse Provision in the New Hartford Center District.**
- **To Section 3.4A to adjust the density factor.**
- **To Section 6.3D to expand the places where permitted signs can be displayed and to allow farm signs.**
- **To Section 7.1B4 to better define nonconforming structure reconstruction.**
(Actual text can be obtained from the New Hartford Town Clerk or the Land Use Office in Town Hall.)

Mr. Steve Sadlowski provided copies of the modified zoning regulations (4.5H and 3.4A) with amended texts as discussed at the January 14, 2015 meeting. He noted that he is also proposing to correct the sign issue, where generic signs formerly had not been allowed at commercial properties: no trespassing, real estate signs and to allow farm signs, (6.3D). Mr. Sadlowski explained how the proposed modifications in 7.1B4 will aid in clarifying nonconforming structure reconstruction. He noted that these modifications will go to public hearing at the commission's first meeting next month, February 11, 2015.

Mr. Steadman introduced Mr. Tom McLaughlin, a candidate for the alternate position on the Planning and Zoning Commission, and came with the recommendation of the New Hartford Democratic Town Committee. Mr. McLaughlin, a middle school teacher for the town of Wethersfield, has been a resident of New Hartford for quite a while and noted that his interest for the alternate spot grows from

a love for the Town of New Hartford and a longing to make sure the community grows in a direction that makes sense.

MOTION: Mr. Stoutenberg, Mr. Krimmel second, **to appoint Mr. McLaughlin to the alternate position created by Mr. Moore's shift to regular member status; unanimously approved.**

MOTION: Mr. Stoutenberg, Mr. Bob Moore second, **to modify the agenda to add Item, Election of Officers and Item, New Hartford Center Update Presentation; unanimously approved.**

B. Election of Officers:

MOTION: Mr. Steadman, Mr. Krimmel second, **to nominate Ted Stoutenberg as chairman of the Planning and Zoning Commission; unanimously approved.**

MOTION: Mr. Stoutenberg, Mr. Moore second, **to nominate Jim Steadman as vice chairman of the Planning and Zoning Commission; unanimously approved.**

Discussion as to whether a secretary of the commission should be elected followed. Mr. Sadlowski reported that he would check the bylaws regarding this as to whether it was necessary.

Discussion followed regarding possible suggestions for people to serve on the Architectural Review Board. Members provided Mr. Sadlowski with various names as potentially qualified residents to be considered for this board.

Mr. Stoutenberg referred members to Section 8.9 of the Zoning Regulations wherein the Architectural Review Committee specifics are detailed:

The Committee shall consist of five (5) regular members and two (2) Alternate members, of which:

a. The town planner and the town engineer may, at the expense of the applicant, advise the Committee.

b. At least one (1) Alternate or regular member should be an architect or landscape architect.

c. At least one (1) Alternate or regular member should have a background in historic preservation.

d. No member or alternate member of the Commission shall serve on the Architectural Review Committee.

3. Term appointments for regular members shall be:

a. Initially two (2) members shall be appointed to a term of one (1) year, two (2) members shall be appointed to a term of two (2) years and one (1) member shall be appointed to a term of three (3) years.

b. Thereafter, all members shall be appointed to a term of three (3) years.

It was realized that the terms of members formerly serving on the Architectural Review Committee have by this time expired and that it is important to appoint a new one as development on Greenwoods Road will likely be occurring soon.

C. Discussion of POCD.

Mr. Sadlowski identified several key areas for the commissioners to consider as Chapter 5:

Encourage Economic Development and Chapter 6: Revitalize New Hartford Center of the proposed revised Plan of Conservation and Development were discussed. One consideration identified was to include more "by right" uses, requiring only a site plan review, as opposed to an application for a special exception which potential developers may find more risky in terms of being assured that approvals will be granted. Clarity in the zoning regulations make it easier for a builder to consider basically what the requirements and expectations of the commission are and an assurance that provided they follow what is outlined, development can occur, Mr. Sadlowski explained. Thus, he noted that he thinks it is important to continually review what is allowed, where it's allowed and make sure that the regulations reflect what the commission wants and to continually tweak the regulations

to reflect the desired outcome as the commission sees fit. Mr. Sadlowski explained that a site plan review process is a lot quicker. Mr. Stoutenberg suggested that Mr. Sadlowski include a bullet point to regularly review the regulations in the plan.

Mr. Krimmel noted that it is very likely that before a developer ever reviews the zoning regulations, something has piqued his interest in New Hartford. This is why a potential developer who approaches the town has to be met with a receptive voice that says we are very interested with you looking at New Hartford, Mr. Krimmel suggested. He opined that what needs to be very apparent, by every chairman of every significant board and commission, is the attitude that we want business in New Hartford. Mr. Stoutenberg suggested a Saturday session with representatives from every board and commission as a means to discuss the various problems of the town. He noted that a meeting such as this would be a great opportunity to discuss what Mr. Krimmel had mentioned. Mr. Krimmel agreed that this is an excellent idea and was in fact an idea that was put forth by the Economic Development Committee to meet quarterly.

Mr. Sadlowski reported that another idea for the plan that the commission may want to consider is hiring an Economic Development Director, even possibly part time. This might be achieved through collaboration with other towns of Northwest Hills COG (Council of Governments), according to Mr. Sadlowski. This position would help promote the businesses New Hartford has already as well as seek others, he explained. Mr. Krimmel thought it was a good idea if the pay was on a commission basis, zero salary with five percent of the first sale or something of that nature. Mr. Krimmel also suggested approaching it as a marketing position.

Mr. Sadlowski questioned whether or not commissioners cared to review the 2005's plan mention of Torrington East Street and Greenwoods Road Industrial Park.

Mr. Stoutenberg asked whether the commission needed to review Section 7, Guide Residential Development. Mr. Sadlowski asked whether the commission was interested in reviewing the one hundred foot setback requirements. He noted that while this size setback does result in the town looking more open and more rural, it results in driveways being twice as long, cuts into the property perhaps twice as much as needed, and more impervious surface. Mr. Sadlowski noted that with the hundred foot setbacks, he often sees that with many houses that are not at a hundred feet, having a more difficult time with adding on as they need to obtain a variance to do so. Mr. Krimmel commented that different roads that may serve as gateways, such as Town Hill Road, might benefit from having differing setback requirements so they're not all the same. Mr. Stoutenberg made the observation that one consistency with each time the Plan of Conservation and Development has been reviewed and revised, one common theme or guiding principle has always been preserving the rural character of the town. He explained that this has been the driving force behind the one hundred foot front yard setbacks. He explained that this was the reason for the Open Space Development, too. Mr. Stoutenberg noted that this concept should be noted for review, not necessarily revision, but that it won't hurt to review it.

Mr. Sadlowski noted that age restricted housing is currently not allowed in commercial districts and inquired whether the commission would like to review that. He noted that the seniors want to be near stores, restaurants and doctor's offices and it would make sense to allow age restricted housing near these areas. Mr. Steadman agreed and noted that this was in line with a recommendation made by Mr. Krimmel at a recent meeting.

With regards to Section 8, Provide Facilities and Services, Mr. Sadlowski noted that a lot of this will be brought forward into the 2015 Plan. Mr. Sadlowski noted the need to discuss, Future School Facilities Needs. Mr. Stoutenberg noted that a discussion with the Board of Education definitely needs to occur. Current enrollment figures of the three elementary schools was discussed.

Mr. Sadlowski inquired of the commission their position on the inclusion of LID (low impact development). He noted that some towns mandate it for a lot of things, even larger residential project and some don't. Mr. Sadlowski noted that in the 2005 POCD, it was recommended and in the Zoning Regulations, it is included as an option within the Stormwater Manual reference. Mr. Sadlowski noted that the language he provided is for the commission's consideration and opined that it is reasonable for larger, new commercial development as a start. Mr. Steadman reported that at a recent meeting with the various groups relating to the Farmington River (Conservation Commission, Farmington River Coordinating Committee, etc.) regarding the proposed development on Greenwoods Road, LID was a very large concern of these folks.

Mr. Stoutenberg requested that a draft of the POCD be ready at the next planning meeting, the February 25, 2015 regular meeting.

D. New Hartford Center Update Presentation

First Selectman Dan Jerram, along with Selectman Jack Casey, and Mr. Phil Doyle of Landscape Architectural Design Planners, P.C. Land Planners (LADA), arrived at the meeting at 8:20PM and presented to the commission a PowerPoint presentation regarding a draft of the New Hartford Center Update. Mr. Jerram reported that the group had just provided the same presentation at the Licia and Mason Beekley Library and reminded the Planning and Zoning Commission, as he had advised that group, this was still a draft and is meant to be marked up. He noted that the same presentation was supposed to be presented to the Board of Selectman the night before but due to the threatened blizzard was postponed to Thursday night. In response to the Planning and Zoning Commission's request for input into the POCD's Section 6: Revitalize New Hartford, Mr. Jerram, noted that along with Mr. Casey and fellow Board of Selectman Ms. Alesia Kennerson, the draft was requested and thus prepared by Mr. Doyle and contains some concepts for consideration.

Mr. Doyle noted that the plan LADA had prepared is, in many ways, fashioned after the 1995 Plan, which was a very comprehensive look of the village center of New Hartford. He further noted that it was one of the few plans his office has seen through his thirty years of being in the community design industry where it was almost entirely implemented. Most plans are not implemented, according to Mr. Doyle. He noted that the plan he has drafted, to a great degree, is putting the finishing touches on the 1995 Plan.

The concepts of the New Hartford Center Update were reviewed and described with a history detailed behind each one, drawings depicting possible changes, additions and modifications to the village center along with photographs of the different sites as well as mock ups of what the proposed sites could look like.

Mr. Doyle pointed out the different areas of the center that could function as visible gateways to New Hartford Center Zone. Adopting the Economic Commission's slogan, A TOWN FOR ALL SEASONS, it will be used to continue to market New Hartford and would be included possibly on signs at these stone pillars that would be part of these gateways, according to the presentation. Among the concepts presented were an addition to the Licia and Mason Beekley Library of a Community Hall,

the extension of the library parking down through the old Griffin gas station (vacant land across from Dunkin Donuts from Town Hill Road and from Village Hair Care from Main Street), and a pavilion along the banks of the Farmington River.

The presentation was very well received by the commission.

MOTION: Mr. Stoutenberg, Mr. LaPlante second, **to adjourn at 9:40PM, unanimously approved.**

Respectfully submitted,

**Pamela Colombie
Recording Secretary**