

**PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING – MINUTES
JUNE 25, 2014 – 7:00 PM
NEW HARTFORD TOWN HALL – 530 MAIN STREET**

PRESENT: Chairman James Steadman, David Krimmel, Dan LaPlante, Ted Stoutenberg; Alternates Robert Moore and Martin Post; Land Use staff Steven Sadlowski.
ABSENT: Gil Pratt; Alternate Peter Ventre.

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

1. PUBLIC HEARINGS:

No business was discussed.

2. PENDING APPLICATIONS:

A. Catherine Ross – 741 Steele Road – Modification of Special Exception - Increase limit in conditions of approval of students from 10 to 25. (*Public Hearing Scheduled for July 9, 2014 regular meeting – No action needed.*)

The Commission agreed to table this matter to the July 9, 2014 regular meeting.

3. NEW APPLICATIONS:

A. Lynn and Frieda Taylor, 395 South Road – Special Exception – Dog Kennel with Four Runs and Storage Area.

B. Town of New Hartford, 53 Steele Road and 65 Steele Road - Zone Change from R-1.5 to R-15.

C. Brent St. John, 202 Main Street – Change of Use from Retail to Residential.

MOTION Mr. Stoutenberg, second Mr. Moore, to accept the applications in the matters of **Lynn and Frieda Taylor, 395 South Road – Special Exception – Dog Kennel with Four Runs and Storage Area; Town of New Hartford, 53 Steele Road and 65 Steele Road - Zone Change from R-1.5 to R-15; and Brent St. John, 202 Main Street – Change of Use from Retail to Residential** and to schedule public hearings for the July 9, 2014 regular meeting; unanimously approved.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

A. June 11, 2014 regular meeting.

Mr. Stoutenberg noted two changes to his comments in the fourth paragraph of page 2 in agenda item 2A. The first change is to the sentence in the fifth line to remove the word “not” so that the sentence then reads: “Additionally, he noted that the property was at the top of the hill...” The second change would correct the sentence in the third line from the bottom to the following: “He also noted that the nearest neighbor to the subject area was approximately 180 feet away.”

MOTION Mr. Krimmel, second Mr. Stoutenberg, to accept the minutes of the June 11, 2014 regular meeting as amended; unanimously approved.

5. ZONING ENFORCEMENT OFFICER’S REPORT:

No business was discussed.

6. CORRESPONDENCE:

No business was discussed.

7. OTHER BUSINESS PROPER TO COME BEFORE THE COMMISSION.

A. Informal Discussion with David Hurley regarding possible Development Project on Greenwoods Road.

David Hurley, Attorney David Markowitz, Ken Hrica, PE, and Karl Nilsen addressed the Commission regarding Mr. Hurley's property on Greenwoods Road. Mr. Markowitz explained that the property was 16.95 acres, of which 11.12 was within the New Hartford Center Zone. He said that they had met informally with Mr. Sadlowski regarding their proposal, which they wanted to briefly review with the Commission now. The Commission then reviewed a concept plan showing a proposal for up to 200 one- and two-bedroom apartments on the site with approximately 1-1/2 parking spaces per unit. Mr. Hrica stated that most of the apartments would be one bedroom units; however, there could be some two-bedroom units as well. Mr. Markowitz said that he had drafted sample overlay district regulations and submitted them to Mr. Sadlowski; he then distributed the sample language to Commission members.

Mr. Markowitz said that they had informally discussed their proposal with the Water Pollution Control Authority and with the Fire Chief, and they had received a positive response. He stated that their concept plan included a walkway along the top of the bank along the Farmington River for the length of the property, which could potentially connect with MDC property for a walking trail if MDC were amenable. Mr. Hrica stated that the proposal would be almost entirely outside of the upland review area and the flood plain; the only activity within the upland review area which would require Inland Wetlands Commission approval would be work to create a connection for fire access to the river. He explained that 4800 linear feet of pipe would be required to connect the site to the sewer line; therefore, a certain number of units were necessary in order to make the project financial feasible. The development detailed in the proposal was for a four-story building with the first floor at grade; the parking area would be underneath the building in order to limit the amount of area needed for a parking lot. Mr. Hrica explained that one bedroom units would average 600-700 square feet, and two-bedroom units would average 1000-1100 square feet; 75% of the units would be one-bedroom and 25% would be two-bedroom. Apartments facing the river would have balconies.

Mr. Stoutenberg noted that the plans showed the 100-year flood plain limits but not the 500-year flood plain limits; he stated that he believed residential developments within the 500-year limits might require additional engineering according to the Building Code. Mr. Hrica stated that this might not be an issue since the first floor would be a parking area; however, he said he would research this. He explained that sprinklers would likely be used for fire protection. Mr. Stoutenberg then asked if market analysis had been performed yet, noting that 139 houses were currently for sale in the Town of New Hartford; four of which were condominiums in River Run. He questioned whether there was any demand for apartments such as those proposed. Mr. Markowitz stated that the developer would perform the market analysis, but he noted that this proposal was for smaller, rental units, which were different from those Mr. Stoutenberg mentioned. Mr. Steadman questioned what the development would look like from the Town Hall side of the river. Mr. Markowitz stressed that their design was very preliminary; however, they were modeling the development after One West Street in Simsbury. Mr. Markowitz noted that seven houses near the property currently used a septic system located on Mr. Hurley's property; that system and the system for the factory building would be abandoned. All of those homes and the factory building would therefore also have to connect to the sewer system.

Mr. Markowitz then briefly reviewed the draft overlay regulation. He explained that they were trying to be flexible with potential uses for the factory building since the space was now vacant. He proposed allowing any uses from the underlying zone as well as any uses permitted in the New Hartford Center Zone.

Mr. Krimmel stated that he had envisioned development of the site with one- and two-bedroom apartments, which were good locations for older residents to live when they wished to downsize yet remain in the Town. However, he expressed a desire for retail and possibly restaurant space in that area as well. He questioned whether Mr. Hurley had considered locating retail space on the first floor with parking higher up.

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Mr. Krimmel stated he did like the idea of adding sewer customers as well as the potential for a walkway and access to MDC property. Mr. Markowitz stated that they had planned on the 118,000 square feet in the factory building for more of a mixed use development; however, he agreed that a restaurant near the river sounded like a good idea. Mr. Stoutenberg asked whether this development and draft language was for an incentive housing zone, and Mr. Markowitz responded negatively. He said that while incentive housing zones had been discussed, they ultimately decided to recommend an overlay district instead. Mr. Moore asked whether the developer would retain ownership of the walkway or donate it to the Town. Mr. Markowitz stated that they were still reviewing that issue in light of potential liability issues. He said that the walkway would follow the existing tree line, so distance to the river would vary; they did not wish to do any excavation too close to the river.

The Commission agreed to review the draft overlay regulation, and they thanked Mr. Hurley and his representatives for their presentation.

B. Discussion of Plan of Conservation and Development.

Members of the Commission discussed demographic trends and ways to improve job growth in the Town. They also reviewed the Litchfield Hills Northwest Connecticut Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy document. Lastly, the Commission discussed ways to revitalize the Town Center with more public events.

MOTION Mr. Stoutenberg, second Mr. Moore, to adjourn at 8:15PM; unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

**Stacey M. Sefcik
Recording Secretary**