

**New Hartford Planning and Zoning Commission
TOWN OF NEW HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, June 10, 2020 at 7:00 PM
Held Via ZOOM**

PRESENT: Chairman Ted Stoutenberg, Dan LaPlante, Jim Steadman, Alternate Mike Misiorski; Zoning Enforcement Officer Mike Lucas.

ABSENT: David Krimmel, Marty Post, Alternates Tom McLoughlin and Peter Ventre.

Chairman Ted Stoutenberg the meeting to order at 7:00PM. Mr. Misiorski was seated as a regular member for the meeting.

1. PUBLIC HEARINGS:

None.

2. NEW APPLICATIONS:

A. Barbara J. Krohner/Owner – Paul Monroe/Applicant – Map 044 - Block 013 – Lot 21A – 107 Main Street – Site Plan Approval – Temporary Outdoor Movie Events.

Paul Monroe, owner of Grey Area Tavern, accompanied by his management team, appeared before the Commission regarding this application. He explained that he was seeking to hold outdoor movie events temporarily, once or twice on weekends. Mr. Monroe noted that he had several proposals from movie vendors. He reported that it would be a sixteen-foot inflatable screen and include a transponder similar to drive-in theaters that allows viewers to tune into a radio station for sound. Mr. Monroe noted that there would be servers available on the sides to assist with orders. He noted that the plan included a police officer to look out for traffic flow.

Mr. Monroe indicated that the cars would be spaced at a distance of six feet apart and would be limited to fourteen cars. He explained that this idea came from a plan to drive revenue during the pandemic as the restaurant would operate with fewer seats than had been projected. Mr. Lucas noted that the site plan had originally included three rows of cars. However, because the outside row of cars fell within the State of Connecticut's right-of-way into the parking lot, Mr. Lucas noted that he sought to avoid tangling with the State and had instead reached out to Trail Consultant Kevin Grindall. Mr. Lucas reported that Mr. Grindall had agreed that the proposal should be scaled back to avoid the right of way. Mr. Monroe agreed, noting that the patio would remain available as an option, too.

Mr. Stoutenberg questioned whether the plan was to serve dinner and then screen a show after. Mr. Monroe noted that dinner would be served during the show. He explained that the servers would be available to go out and take orders in the lot. Mr. Stoutenberg questioned whether the patrons would be limited to the fourteen cars or whether there would be other patrons there for dinner, too. Mr. Monroe noted that the patio area would be available for sit-down guests along with the cars. Mr. Stoutenberg noted that indoor dining will be available on June 17th. Mr. Monroe indicated that he was reluctant to open in that way immediately as he has a brand-new staff.

Mr. Steadman questioned whether this proposal was planned as temporary. Mr. Monroe confirmed, noting that he would prefer his focus to be on the interior space and his patio guests. Mr. Lucas questioned whether a narrative had been emailed by Mr. Monroe earlier the afternoon of this meeting. Mr. Monroe relayed that his movie vendor was supposed to send a proposal on how it works best for them in terms of screens.

Mr. Misiorski questioned whether the proposal was intended as temporary, until the end of the COVID-19 outbreak, and whether a six-month approval should be considered. Mr. Monroe noted that once he is able to fully open his new restaurant, his plan is to provide the interior experience for his guests.

First Selectman Dan Jerram commented that this was a great way for this new establishment to get started and reported that the Police are supportive of this proposal.

As Mr. Stoutenberg questioned whether Mr. Lucas had any suggestions regarding this proposal, Mr. Lucas suggested that approval should be conditioned that movie events cannot go past midnight. He also agreed with the consensus of the commission that the approval should be allowed as a trial run to last six months.

MOTION: Mr. Steadman, Mr. Misiorski second, to approve the application as presented for a period of six months; unanimously approved.

3. PENDING APPLICATIONS:

None.

4. NEW BUSINESS:

None.

5. OTHER BUSINESS PROPER TO COME BEFORE THE COMMISSION:

None.

6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: March 11, 2020.

MOTION: Mr. Steadman, Mr. Misiorski second, to approve the March 11, 2020 Minutes; unanimously approved.

7. ZONING ENFORCEMENT OFFICER'S REPORT:

Mr. Lucas updated the Commission on the reopening of town restaurants after having been shuttered during the COVID-19 outbreak. He reported working with Mr. Jerram as the permitting of outdoor dining was undertaken. Mr. Lucas noted that patios and plans of New Hartford's restaurants came together very well with no problems. He noted that he worked with Brewery Legitimus while Mr. Jerram worked with the Parrot Delaney Tavern.

Mr. Jerram reported that New Hartford was fortunate in that Pizza Pete's, Michael Angelo's, and BLT already had outdoor dining.

Mr. Lucas reported that the sections of the Zoning Regulations addressing signs are being reviewed with outside help and consultation of Planners Marty Connors and Rista Malanca. A meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, June 17, 2020 in this regard, according to Mr. Lucas. He noted that the current sign regulations may be outdated and too restrictive. Mr. Lucas indicated that the Economic Development Commission and the Architecture Review Committee will be consulted as this is undertaken.

Finally, Mr. Lucas reported on some recent unpermitted clear cutting at 75 Cottage Street, a parcel abutting the Farmington River. He noted that after receiving a complaint, he visited the site and observed some trees that were already down and some evident brush piles. He noted that he had directed the owner to install erosion controls and undertake a mitigation plan. The Commission was reminded that this was a zoning matter as the parcel lays within the 100' protection overlay district.

8. CORRESPONDENCE:

None.

MOTION: Mr. Steadman, Mr. Misiorski second, to adjourn at 7:29PM; unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

**Pamela A. Colombie
Recording Secretary**