



**TOWN OF WINCHESTER
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
Town of Winchester**

**Held Remotely (Via Zoom) and livestreamed on YouTube.
March 22, 2021 – 7:00PM
Regular Meeting Minutes**

1. CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman George Closson called the meeting to order at 7:03PM.

Mr. Closson noted that the following individuals were present: Peter Marchand, Art Melycher, Craig Sanden, and Alternate John Cooney(7:10PM).

Jerry Martinez and Will Platt were absent excused. Mr. Cooney was seated for Mr. Martinez.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT:

No comment was received.

3. AGENDA REVIEW.

There were no changes to the agenda.

4. PUBLIC HEARINGS:

A. PZC#20-30 – Special Permit Location: 149 Newfield Road Applicant/Owner: East Coast Assistance Dogs (ECAD) Proposal: Special Permit for Phase III of Training Kennel and Modify Approved Site Plan.

It was noted that a request had been received from the applicant's engineer to continue the application.

MOTION: Mr. Melycher, Mr. Sanden second, to continue the public hearing in the matter of PZC#20-30 – Special Permit Location: 149 Newfield Road Applicant/Owner: East Coast Assistance Dogs (ECAD) Proposal: Special Permit for Phase III of Training Kennel and Modify Approved Site Plan; unanimously approved.

5. OLD BUSINESS:

A. PZC#20-30 – Special Permit Location: 149 Newfield Road Applicant/Owner: East Coast Assistance Dogs (ECAD) Proposal: Special Permit for Phase III of Training Kennel and Modify Approved Site Plan.

No business was discussed.

B. PZC#21-01 – Special Permit Location: 100 New Hartford Road Applicant/Owner: James Kloczko Proposal: Special Permit for Landscape and Construction Yard/Mini Mix Concrete.

It was noted that the site plan was still being created and that the application was still pending before the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission.

6. NEW BUSINESS.

None.

7. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: March 8, 2021 Regular Meeting.

MOTION: Mr. Marchand, Mr. Sanden second, to approve the March 8, 2021 Regular Meeting Minutes;

Motion approved with Mr. Closson, Mr. Cooney, Mr. Marchand, and Mr. Sanden voting in favor while Mr. Melycher abstained.

8. COMMUNICATIONS.

No communications were received.

9. STAFF REPORT:

Staff reported that a contract had been signed by a restaurant owner for the former Wendy's building. A zoning permit for a new retail shop, "Live", had been signed for a space within the old Winchester Hotel, according to staff. The proprietor had formally occupied the same store in New Hartford. Additionally, it was noted that the Railway Café would be opening soon next to Richards Jewelers. Progress on the gas station at 787 Main Street was also observed, as noted by Mr. Closson.

10. OTHER BUSINESS:

A. POCD Discussion.

The Commission reviewed the current draft of the 2021 Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) update. Mr. Closson noted that the properties that were preserved needed to be updated. He noted that the recommendations from Chief Fitzgerald should be incorporated into the draft somehow. Mr. Closson reminded the Commission of all the different community members and groups who had made suggestions for modifications to the 2021 POCD.

It was noted during the conversation of the POCD that the Subdivision Regulations ought to be reviewed at a later date to consider whether changes are necessary relative to cisterns, and more importantly, the maintenance of the cisterns.

Mr. Closson noted that Chief Fitzgerald had suggested utilizing Batchellor School for a public safety complex. Mr. Closson reminded the Commission that Mr. Marchand had suggested the use of Hinsdale School as a warming facility during emergency situations after it is renovated. He noted that it ought to be a discussion rather than a specific location.

Mr. Closson suggested that the *Implementation* Chapter ought to be dropped in the 2021 update.

Mr. Closson noted that the CERC data for 2019 showed the estimated population to be 11,356 and suggested that it should be corrected in the *Introduction*.

Mr. Marchand noted that "DEP" ought to be changed to "DEEP". He indicated the dates of the studies should be updated.

The *State-Recognized Affordable Housing in Winchester* table and *Types of Jobs in Winchester* table need to be updated. It was noted that the language on *Grand List Growth* needed to be updated.

Mr. Closson opined that at the end of *Reduce Water Pollution* under the section titled *Strategies to Protect Natural Resources* under *Conservation*, language ought to be added to encourage sewer and water connections to expand the user base to protect the town's water quality. Mr. Marchand agreed suggest that it should be expanded down the Route 800 corridor.

Mr. Closson questioned whether there was a more recent watershed protection study than the 1990 one currently referenced in the draft.

The *Dedicated Open Space in Winchester* needed to be verified as being up to date.

On Page 6-19, under *Architecture and Design*, it was agreed that the recommendation to establish architectural review procedures should be replaced with language noting that a committee had been established. Staff suggested adding language about encouraging the improvement of sidewalks downtown.

Mr. Melycher recalled a former mayor securing grants to update sidewalks near the Senior Center. Mr. Closson agreed, noting that a common theme, that remains today, is the walkability of the downtown.

It was noted that Winsted Water Works should be added as a property that has been added to the National Register of Historic Places.

Under *Adopt Design Review*, the Commission agreed that language ought to be added to set the adoption of design review standards as a future goal.

Under *Strategies to Enhance Community Structure*, the Commission agreed to delete the entire section under *Update Zoning to Promote a Traditional Mixed-Use Downtown*.

The consensus of the Commission was to delete “and addressing parking (see Chapter 8)”. The language on the following page reading, “*The Zoning Regulations should be revised to promote and support these goals*” would be taken out, too. Under the heading *Enhance the High-Density Downtown Neighborhoods*, the consensus of the commission was that the language that reads, “...*Update zoning to allow limited higher density and multi-family on a case-by-case basis...*” should be omitted.

Mr. Closson suggested incorporating Chief Fitzgerald’s suggestions without specifying a location. Mr. Marchand suggested discussion of a warming center and strongly suggested upgrading existing facilities for fire and police to modern standards.

Mr. Closson reported that he had not yet received comments from Public Schools Superintendent Melony Shanley Brady and that the input from her office ought to be sought so that the language under Public Schools could be updated.

Hartford HealthCare should be added to the section under *Non-Municipal Community Facilities* and the language about Winsted Memorial Hospital ought to be removed, the commission agreed.

The language under *Support Non-Municipal Community Facilities in Winsted* related to the *Winsted Health Center Site* will also be removed.

It was agreed that language on “...*extension of services within the proposed growth areas as indicated on the sewer and water service maps should be encouraged...*” in the section on *Strategies for Utilities*.

A request was made of staff to make the corrections as discussed prior to the next regular meeting of this commission.

B. Short Term Rentals Regulation Workshop – POSTPONED.

No business discussed.

11. ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION: Mr. Marchand, Mr. Sanden second, to adjourn; unanimously approved. The Commission adjourned at 8:31PM.

**Respectfully submitted,
Pamela A. Colombie
Recording Clerk**