



**TOWN OF WINCHESTER
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION**

**Town of Winchester Town Hall
Held Remotely (Via Zoom)**

and was streamed live on YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCT1ffiBjMTBQM5OEXSgKlqg/videos>

October 26, 2020 – 7:00PM

Regular Meeting Minutes

1. CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman George Closson called the meeting to order at 7:00PM.

Mr. Closson noted that the following individuals were present: Peter Marchand, Jerry Martinez, Art Melycher, and Alternates John Cooney and Will Platt.

Craig Sanden was absent excused. Mr. Cooney was seated for him.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT:

No comment was received.

3. AGENDA REVIEW.

No changes were made to the agenda.

4. PUBLIC HEARINGS.

None.

5. OLD BUSINESS.

None.

6. NEW BUSINESS.

A. PZC#20-27 – Special Permit Location: 149 Newfield Road Applicant/Owner: East Coast Assistance Dogs (ECAD) Proposal: Construction of 7118± SF Building for Dog Kennel with Indoor Exercise Run and Office Space.

Prior to the vote on the following motion, staff reported that the Architectural Review Committee will meet via Zoom on Thursday, November 5, 2020 at 5:30PM to review the application.

MOTION: Mr. Closson, Mr. Melycher second, to accept Application PZC#20-27 – Special Permit Location: 149 Newfield Road Applicant/Owner: East Coast Assistance Dogs (ECAD) Proposal: Construction of 7118± SF Building for Dog Kennel with Indoor Exercise Run and Office Space and to schedule a public hearing for the November 9, 2020 regular meeting; unanimously approved.

7. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: September 28, 2020 Regular Meeting.

MOTION: Mr. Marchand, Mr. Melycher second, to approve the September 28, 2020 Regular Meeting Minutes as amended;

Motion passed with Mr. Closson, Mr. Marchand, Mr. Melycher, and Mr. Cooney voting in favor while Mr. Martinez abstained.

8. COMMUNICATIONS.

None.

9. STAFF REPORT:

Staff reported another inquiry from a potential restaurateur who had operated several successful “*Chicken and Pie*” locations in Florida. Staff reminded the Commission that the proprietor was originally from this area and had recently returned to Winchester. This individual had entered into a contract for the former Wendy’s location on Main Street, according to staff. Additionally, staff reminded the Commission that the *Railway Café*, formerly located in Canaan, is readying for her new location in the building between Richards Jewelers and Ellen Marino’s law firm on Main Street.

Mr. Closson requested that staff provide an update on the earth and excavation permits in town, reminding the Commission that they are subject to a two-year renewal approval process.

10. OTHER BUSINESS:

A. 2021 Meeting Calendar.

The Commission reviewed a proposed schedule for 2021. The first meeting in October, scheduled for Columbus Day, was pushed to Tuesday, October 12, 2020.

MOTION: Mr. Closson, Mr. Melycher second, to approve the 2021 Meeting Schedule as presented subject to the October 11, 2020 meeting moving to October 12, 2020; unanimously approved.

A. POCD Discussion.

Mr. Closson reminded the Commission that he had emailed an update on the POCD, noting that he had listed the maps that should be updated along with letters that were sent to various parties during the last update. He questioned whether any additional individuals should be added to the list. Mr. Melycher suggested that Building Official/Zoning Enforcement Officer Marc Melanson, Fire Marshal Steve Williams, and Department of Public Works Director Jim Rollins be added to the list.

Mr. Closson noted that the Sewer Expansion Area be forwarded to the Water Sewer Commission Chairman John Massicotte. Mr. Closson reported that Ms. Perga is working on the mapping for the conservation areas. He noted that the comments provided by each commissioner were not extensive as he had anticipated that not much actually would need to be updated with this 2021 POCD. Mr. Closson questioned Mr. Martinez’s note that the focus may be too much on conservation rather than development. Mr. Martinez noted the influx of people as a result of COVID-19. He opined that the conversation pertaining to the POCD should maybe shift, in light of that, away from the green initiatives that were part of the 2010 POCD. Mr. Martinez reminded the Commission of his comments that Winchester is carrying more of its share of open space for the state of Connecticut’s goals in that respect. He questioned whether Ms. Perga might have more information on this. Mr. Closson noted that the last POCD had addressed road improvements and industrial development. Mr. Martinez noted that there ought to be some review of the spaces that are within the Rural Residential zone and the spaces around that. He also thought that there ought to be some focus on cellular capabilities and internet. Mr. Closson noted that he would draft a letter to Rick Lynn of the NWHCOG to find out what that group is doing relative to technological infrastructure. Mr. Marchand updated the Commission on Firstnet, a division of AT&T, who received a grant for cell phone coverage for first responders who are expected to deliver more than 90% coverage by 2024. He noted that the coverage maps provided by Firstnet are not accurate currently.

Mr. Closson advised the Commission about an initiative underway by some for housing development that would not be regulated by this group but instead be permitted in a fashion similar to the way solar farms are reviewed by the Siting Council. He urged the Commission to read up on this and possibly advise the local legislators, the COG, and the Board of Selectmen.

Mr. Closson suggested commissioners email staff any additional review comments on the POCD.

B. Short Term Rentals Regulation Workshop – POSTPONED.

Mr. Closson noted that this has been carried on the agenda but not discussed because the meetings were being held via ZOOM. Staff noted that the Commission may want to consider discussion on Short Term Rentals be scheduled to be held remotely as people appear to have adjusted to it. Mr. Closson suggested that Mr. Martinez again forward the information he had put together on the subject.

Mr. Marchand updated the Commission on Mr. Melanson's three-month medical leave and questioned how zoning will be enforced in his absence. It was agreed that Mr. Closson would reach out to the town manager to gain an understanding of how this is planned to be handled.

11. ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION: Mr. Marchand, Mr. Melycher second, to adjourn; unanimously approved. The Commission adjourned at 7:58PM

Respectfully submitted,

**Pamela A. Colombie
Recording Clerk**