



**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>

**September 28, 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, Art Melycher, and Alternates John Cooney and Will Platt.

Craig Sanden and Jerry Martinez were absent excused. Mr. Platt and Mr. Cooney were seated for them.

**2. PUBLIC COMMENT:**

No comment was received.

**3. AGENDA REVIEW.**

No changes were made to the agenda.

**4. PUBLIC HEARINGS.**

**A. PZC#20-23 – Special Permit Location: 15 Hinsdale Avenue Applicant: Winchester Public School Owner: Town of Winchester Proposal: Hinsdale School Renovation and New Construction, Including Restoration and Daylighting of the Gilbert Home Brook that Flows in a Culvert Under a Portion of the School.**

**MOTION:** Mr. Marchand, Mr. Melycher second to reopen the public hearing; unanimously approved.

The public hearing was reopened. Staff reported that the applicant had received a variance recently from the Zoning Board of Appeals for relief from the landscape buffer requirement. It was also noted that the proposal had received approval from the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission. Staff reminded the Commission that the Architecture Review Committee had already reviewed the project. It was noted that there was an exchange of communications between Fire Marshal Steve Williams and Winchester Fire Department Chief/Commissioner Pete Marchand regarding the size of the generator to be used with the renovation project and the building being possibly used as a town emergency shelter in the future.

Professional Engineer Donald Smith, Jr. appeared before the Commission. Accompanying Mr. Smith was Superintendent of Schools Melony Brady-Shanley, Architect Paul Jorgensen, and Landscape Architect Steve Wynn. Mr. Smith reported that the Department of Public Works was in the process of inspecting the storm drains on the site, noting that they had begun the work the date of this meeting. He noted that anything that may be found during these inspections by the DPW will be addressed as part of this project. Mr. Smith indicated that a memorandum will be issued to this Commission detailing the findings of the inspections being undertaken by the DPW.

Mr. Smith reminded the Commission that there had been discussion about the location of the dumpsters. He discussed the type of screening that his design included, and later shared photographs of the detail included on the plan.

Mr. Jorgensen reviewed the reports obtained from the manufacturer of the rooftop air handling units after having provided them the distances from the rooftop equipment to the property line. The reports included the greatest decibel level of these units being 62, the reading of slightly higher than a normal social conversation.

Mr. Smith noted that a maintenance plan had been provided relative to the landscaping.

Regarding the generator, Mr. Closson questioned why a natural gas generator had not been opted for rather than one fueled by diesel. Mr. Jorgensen noted that diesel units are more economical.

Mr. Marchand reported that Mr. Williams, who also functions as the town's Emergency Management Director, had contacted him regarding whether the school would be adding an emergency generator and if so, what it would power. Mr. Marchand explained the town has been lacking in shelters during power outages, noting that currently there is a small senior center that does not hold very many people and the Winchester Center Fire Department and Grange Hall, that combined could house approximately 100 people. Mr. Marchand explained that with a larger event, residents would need to be bussed to Torrington Middle School. He noted that Mr. Williams had relayed that with only a slightly larger generator that could run the kitchen, cafeteria, adult restrooms, and a couple of classrooms in that hallway, it would allow the school to be designated as an emergency shelter for the residents living in the downtown area.

Mr. Closson questioned what would be powered with the generator at its current planned size. Mr. Jorgensen explained it was sized for minimal operations, primarily heating to avoid frozen pipes, kitchen, emergency life safety items, and emergency lighting. He agreed that it was sized for these limited systems and was not sized for the entire building. Mr. Jorgensen indicated that the building had not been studied for an emergency storm shelter. He explained that the reimbursement being sought from the State of Connecticut would not cover the cost. Mr. Marchand noted that only additional lights would need to be added to run on the generator. Ms. Brady-Shanley shared her understanding that it was not possible to designate only a portion of the building as an emergency shelter. She noted that she also understood a shelter must include showers and toilets. Mr. Marchand indicated that from his conversations with Mr. Williams, showers were not required and noted that the American Red Cross can designate parts of a building as an emergency shelter. Ms. Brady-Shanley opined that conversation should occur between the Emergency Management Director and the Town Manager as the cost could not be carried in the school district's scope. She agreed to initiate that conversation to determine whether the added cost for the Town in a larger generator is something that they would like her to investigate further.

The hearing was open to the public. No comments were received.

Mr. Closson reviewed the conditions that would likely be added as part of the approval.

**MOTION:** Mr. Melycher, Mr. Marchand second, to close the public hearing; unanimously approved.

## **5. OLD BUSINESS.**

**A. PZC#20-23 – Special Permit Location: 15 Hinsdale Avenue Applicant: Winchester Public Schools Owner: Town of Winchester Proposal: Hinsdale School Renovation and New Construction, Including Restoration and Daylighting of the Gilbert Home Brook that Flows in a Culvert Under a Portion of the School.**

**MOTION:** Mr. Closson, Mr. Marchand second, to approve Application PZC#20-23 Special Permit Applicant: Winchester Public Schools Owner: Town of Winchester Location: 15 Hinsdale School Proposal: Hinsdale School Renovation and New Construction, Including Restoration and Daylighting of the Gilbert Home Brook that Flows in a Culvert Under a Portion of the School, subject to the following:

1. In evaluating this application, the Planning and Zoning Commission has relied upon information provided by the applicant and if such information subsequently proves to be false, deceptive, incomplete, and/or inaccurate, this permit shall be modified, suspended, or revoked.
2. This application is consistent with the Town's Plan of Conservation and Development.
3. The application meets the criteria and standards of III.J. Common Regulations (Special Permits and Special Exceptions).
4. Engineer Donald Smith to provide certification prior to final stormwater management design, existing pipe to be inspected to confirm its ability to handle the project projected stormwater flow.
5. Project to include shielding of the RTUs (roof-top units).
6. Due to the planned staging of school busses along the shared drive coming off of Williams Avenue, the installation of a sign indicating "Do Not Block Driveway" at the residence fronting that drive access, be installed.
7. One-year landscape passbook maintenance bond be submitted to the Town.
8. Approval is based on plans entitled, "Town of Winchester Mary P. Hinsdale School 15 Hinsdale Avenue Winsted, Connecticut" as prepared by Silver, Petricelli, and Associates and Donald P. Smith, dated June 20, 2020, and revised through September 17, 2020, Sheets C100, C101, C102, C200, C200A, C201, C300, C300A, C301, C-400, C-401, C-402, C-403, C-404, C-405;

*unanimously approved.*

Following the motion but prior to the vote, Mr. Closson clarified that the landscape design team ought to come up with an estimate for the expected landscape and installation costs in order to establish the maintenance bond. The amount of the bond should be one hundred percent of the landscape materials cost, according to Mr. Closson.

## **6. NEW BUSINESS.**

### **A. PZC#20-26 – CGS 8-24 Location: Parcel Between Highview Drive and South Road (Map 043, Block 154, Lot 019x34) Applicant: Winchester Land Trust Owner: Town of Winchester Proposal: CGS 8-24 Referral – Request to Donate Vacant Property Between Highview Drive and South Road.**

Mr. Closson reminded the board that at the last meeting, discussion had included the note on the subdivision plan on this parcel that read, "6.5 Acres for Public Use". No additional information had been gleaned on that note, but Mr. Closson noted that the land was likely a set-aside for open space. He noted that he had conversed with Land Trust member Jen Perga who had walked this parcel and indicated that there had been no encroachments onto this parcel from the abutting property owners. Mr. Closson reported that Ms. Perga had indicated that the Land Trust had no intention of building trails on this parcel. He noted that the Land Trust plans include for this parcel to remain in its natural state to serve as a wildlife corridor.

**MOTION:** Mr. Closson, Mr. Marchand second, to forward a positive referral pursuant to CGS 8-24 on the request to donate vacant property between Highview Drive and South Road;

*unanimously approved.*

## **7. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: September 14, 2020 Regular Meeting.**

The September 14, 2002 Minutes should include the following correction:

The portion of text under Item 10A that reads, "...*He noted that he had confirmed with Conservation Commission Chairman Jen Perga, noting that she had finished up the natural resources inventory...*" should instead read, "...*He noted that he had communicated with Conservation Commission Chairman Jen Perga who indicated that she was working on the natural resources inventory...*".

**MOTION:** Mr. Marchand, Mr. Melycher second, to approve the September 14, 2020 Regular Meeting Minutes as amended;  
*unanimously approved.*

**8. COMMUNICATIONS.**

None.

**9. STAFF REPORT:**

Staff reported progress with zoning enforcement as it relates to an uptick with chicken coops and/or roosters in zones that do not allow them. She noted that a meeting was scheduled for a new restaurateur at the former Louis' Diner. Mr. Closson requested the Hinsdale School generator be discussed at the next staff meeting to foster dialogue with the school's Building Committee.

**10. OTHER BUSINESS:**

**A. POCD Discussion.**

Mr. Closson requested that the submittals provided by each commissioner be forwarded to the entire Commission.

**B. Short Term Rentals Regulation Workshop – POSTPONED.**

No business discussed.

**11. ADJOURNMENT:**

**MOTION:** Mr. Platt, Mr. Marchand second, to adjourn; unanimously approved. The Commission adjourned at 8:10PM

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Pamela A. Colombie  
Recording Clerk**