

TOWN PLAN AND ZONING COMMISSION  
PUBLIC AND REGULAR MINUTES

March 9, 2015

Present were Chairman Dunn, Commissioners Brenneman, Doeg, Fraprie, Jarvis and Matava and Alternate Commissioners Bagdigian, Gurski and Houf and the Town Planner and Clerk. Secretary Doeg opened the meeting at 7:02 p.m.

Chairman Dunn explained the process of the meeting.

**PUBLIC HEARINGS**

**Martin & Karen Wand – 85 Prattling Pond Road**

Special permit application for 4-lot cluster subdivision and related intensive construction activities for property located at 85 Prattling Pond Road, R80 zone. The applicant is also seeking permission to make alterations within the scenic road right-of-way on Mountain Spring Road. Attorney Robert Reeve represented the owners of this property. He noted for the record that notices were sent out and receipts of those mailings were submitted into the record and the zoning sign was posted as required. This parcel has frontage on Prattling Pond Road and Mountain Spring Road. They are seeking approval for a cluster subdivision, rock crushing activity and scenic road right-of-way work. The reason for the cluster subdivision is to protect natural resources on the site. For comparison they prepared a conventional subdivision feasibility plan, which Attorney Reeve reviewed. The cluster subdivision as proposed will have considerably less disturbance to the site and is requested only for the reduction in frontage for each lot. Approximately 14 acres will be designated as open space and is currently being considered by the Farmington Land Trust. Some limited work is proposed in the right-of-way for the proposed driveway and associated grading. No trees or stonewalls within the right-of-way will be removed. Regarding letters of concern submitted by neighbors about septic systems and drainage; the Farmington Valley Health District has reviewed the plan and their letter that states the lots are capable of supporting septic systems is in the application file. Storm water runoff will be handled on site by rain gardens and detention basin which are designed to infiltrate and not hold water. These systems will be built under the supervision of a wetland scientist and located on individual lots. Maintenance of these will be the responsibility of the property owners.

William Aston, Buck & Buck LLC, civil engineer for this project used a PowerPoint presentation to review the plan set for the proposed subdivision. One of the natural resources on the site that will be preserved with the cluster subdivision is the undefined easement over the trail that runs through the site that the Farmington Land Trust holds. Mr. Aston presented drainage maps for the area explaining the existing and proposed drainage patterns. Some stone will be crushed on site to be used for a drainage swale behind Lot 3. There will be no increase in flooding in the outlet area shown on the site plan. Approximately 3.6 acres of clearing is proposed and the schematic location of the new houses and septic systems and that plans will have to be fully designed prior to obtaining building permits. This note has been added to the plans. An existing stone wall will be removed so that a berm can be constructed along the detention basin and then the stone wall will be rebuilt on the berm. Mr. Aston noted he has received additional comments from the Engineering Department and has no issue addressing/complying with them.

Michael Klein, Biologist, Soil Scientist, explained the soil types in the area and existing storm water drainage flow. Also reviewed were the planting plan for the rain gardens and detention basin. Mr. Klein commented the proposed cluster subdivision has all the environmental features they like to see. There is significant open space, the single mature tree in the right-of-way and the project as proposed will not have any significant environmental impacts.

Commissioners asked what size houses the septic systems were designed for, confirmation that there would be no grading in the right-of-way, clarification on the future maintenance of the rain gardens and detention basin, clearing, stone crushing operation, etc. The applicant responded the septic systems have been designed for four-bedroom houses, the only grading proposed in the right-of-way will be related to installation of the new driveway, maintenance of the drainage features will be on the subdivision plans which will be referenced on the deeds and the stone crushing operation is expected to take a maximum of three days.

Mark Pazzani, 99 Mountain Spring Road, expressed concern with development across the street and any changes to the scenic road.

Attorney Tim Fury, represented the property owner at 130 Mountain Spring Road, expressed concern with the proposed development; lack of clear topographic map, limits of clearing, maintenance plan of the detention basin and rock crushing operation.

Ruth Cutler, represented her mother at 7 Prattling Pond Road, asked for clarification regarding the frontage of the existing house and commented on amphibian access/migration.

Deborah Andrews, 136 Mountain Spring Road, commented the area is very wet and that her rear yard is very wet.

CJ Thomas, 149 Mountain Spring Road, expressed concern with the development regarding impact to the scenic road.

Upon a motion made and seconded (Brenneman/Matava) it was unanimously

VOTED: To continue this hearing to March 30, 2015.

The Commission stopped taking testimony at 8:38 p.m.

#### Country Club of CT LLC – 373 Meadow Road

Application for 9-lot subdivision located at 373 Meadow Road, R40 zone. The applicant asked that this matter be tabled until the second meeting in March.

Upon a motion made and seconded (Brenneman/Fraprie) it was unanimously

VOTED: To table this application to March 30, 2015.

ATF Farmington LLC – 188 Main Street

Special permit for fitness center use at 188 Main Street, B1 zone. Scott Regina, ATF LLC, described the Any Time Fitness (ATF) fitness center as the largest 24 hour health club. They have successfully operated in West Hartford for seven years and have had no issues. Commissioners asked peak hours for the business, security, staffing, noise, parking and safety. The applicant responded their busiest time is Mondays between 5 and 7pm, the busiest morning hour is 6:30 am. Mr. Regina explained members have key card access to the fitness center, there are security protection cameras, panic buttons and call for aid buttons, etc. Employees typically staff the center Monday through Friday from 10 am to 8 pm, weekends from 10 am to 5 pm. They have had no issues with noise, everything is contained within the facility. Mr. Regina noted there is sufficient parking available in the plaza and briefly discussed the space and fire exit location.

There was no public comment in favor or in opposition to the application.

The hearing closed at 8:50 pm.

Commissioner Doeg moves and Commission Brenneman seconds the following resolution:

**Whereas** the Farmington Town Plan and Zoning Commission (Commission) received an application for a special permit for the operation of a 24/7 health club at 188 Main Street; and

**Whereas** the Commission found the application to be complete and conducted a properly noticed public hearing on the request in accordance with CGS Section 8-3(c); and

**Whereas** the Commission evaluated the proposal in accordance with Article IV Section 12 of the regulations, considered the public testimony and gave due consideration to the Farmington Plan of Conservation and Development.

**Now therefore be it resolved that the Commission** approves the special permit application with the following conditions:

- The proposal shall adhere to all relevant sections of the regulations and representations made by the applicant and any music within the facility shall be played at a level which is undetectable from the outside; and
- There shall be no outside exercise activities as part of the operation of this facility.

Motion passed unanimously.

**NEW BUSINESS**

Town of Farmington – 20 Wolf Pit Road

Site plan modification for parking lot improvements located at 20 Wolf Pit Road. Joe Urso, Town of Farmington Engineering Division, presented the site plan modifications. Working with the Board of Education to develop the plans, there are four main areas of traffic circulation improvement needed at the school; the main entrance, reconfiguration of the bus lane exit, access drive to the preschool and the east parking lot. All paved areas will be replaced by reclaiming

and reusing the existing pavement. Additionally, he reviewed the new dumpster pad area. Mr. Urso reviewed the site lighting improvement plan. When the project is complete there will be five additional parking spaces and an increase of impervious surface of .2%. Parking lot landscaping will increase .9%. They are working with Recreation to coordinate access to the school for summer programs. Commissioners asked for confirmation that this was primarily a maintenance project, clarification on turning access for emergency vehicles, summer programs and lighting. Mr. Urso responded the pavement is in poor condition and the parking lot islands are coming apart in addition to also taking the opportunity to improve site traffic circulation. Regarding emergency vehicle turning at the end, he will talk to the Fire Marshal. He reviewed how access would be provided for summer programs. Regarding lighting he stated they are replacing five lights and adding more than five, he reviewed the locations on the site plan. Commissioner Brenneman asked if lighting could be added to the back parking area for use during elections because of the need for lighting to offer safe passage. Currently they have to call the police for temporary lighting.

Upon a motion made and seconded (Doeg/Brenneman) it was unanimously

VOTED: To approve the Town of Farmington application for site plan modification for parking lot improvements located at 20 Wolf Pit Road as presented with the final review and approvals by the Engineering Division, Fire Marshal and Board of Education as stated in testimony provided.

#### United Technology Realty – 10 Farm Springs Road

Site plan modification for parking lot improvements located at 10 Farm Spring Road. Henry Withers, CR3, presented the proposed parking lot improvements. They are looking to repair the parking lot and make some changes to the parking lot islands. In addition, they are looking to add a cross connection between 8 and 10 Farm Springs Road. UTC occupies both sites and they will have necessary easements to cross in place on the land records. Lighting will be replaced with LED lighting and two blue lights will be added to the parking area for employee safety. Mr. Withers stated improvements will also be made to provide formal access between sites where there is currently a path.

Kevin Clark, Clark Engineering, stated the plan provides additional storm water collection on the site; storm drains, under drains, catch basins. The plans have been presented to Town Engineering staff for their review.

Thomas Messina reviewed the lighting plan. He noted there is some spillage of light for lighting of the stairs that will be installed between the two sites. Mr. Messina showed the Commissioners two light fixtures to be used on the site.

Mr. Withers commented they have received staff comments and after talking to staff there are two exceptions to the Engineering comments that he discussed with Engineering and they agreed that Comment Nos. 12 and 15 in memo dated March 9, 2015 could be excluded. All other they would accept as conditions of approval.

Commissioner Fraprie asked for clarification on the planting plan. Mr. Withers reviewed the plan, noting there isn't much at the site currently.

Upon a motion made and seconded (Doeg/Brenneman) it was unanimously

VOTED: To approve United Technologies Realty application for site plan modification regarding parking lot improvements located at 10 Farm Springs Road as presented with the following conditions:

1. That the applicant shall address to the satisfaction of the Chief of Engineering Services the comments contained in an interoffice memorandum dated March 9, 2015, excluding Comment Nos. 12 and 15; and
2. Required easements shall be filled on the land records.

Miss Porter's School – Lot 10 Mountain Road

Site plan approval to change athletic field material to synthetic turf, construct new out building and other related site improvements at Lot 10 Mountain Road. This matter was tabled from the February 23, 2015 meeting. Katie Bradley, Director of Campus Planning and Design, reviewed the plans to replace the field hockey playing field with synthetic turf, create a more formal parking area and construct an accessory structure for maintenance equipment and two handicap restrooms. They have received approval for this project from the Zoning Board of Appeals, Farmington Historic District Commission and Inland Wetlands Commission. She commented on the public information meetings they held. In addition they are proposing an 87 foot fieldstone wall along Mountain Road, stone pillars and fencing around the playing field.

Ken Costello, SMRT, provided a sample of the short pile (1 ¼") turf product explaining this will be installed on a shock attenuation surface. The turf is top-dressed with sand. The drainage system under the field is constructed similar to the field at the high school. Mr. Costello stated peak run off to the south will be reduced by half. Runoff from the parking area will go to Mountain Road and he is still working with Town Engineering staff on the runoff rates.

Commissioners asked about bio retention maintenance procedures, site drainage, shock attenuation mat material and tree removal. Mr. Costello responded the field will not be plowed so there will be very little maintenance but he will make sure the school knows how to maintain the field. He stated this project will not increase peak runoff south of the site, only to Mountain Road. Mr. Costello explained the shock attenuation mat material is paved onto crushed stone so there is no movement and breakdown of the material. Regarding tree removal there will be some clearing on the south side but they will be replace the slope as noted on the planting plan. This field will not use the loose crumb rubber that other fields use. When asked for the life of the field, Mr. Costello said the turf lasts 10 to 12 years depending on the amount of play and that the shock attenuation layer usually lasts two life spans of the turf layer.

Upon a motion made and seconded (Fraprie/Brenneman) it was unanimously

VOTED: To approve Miss Porter's School site plan application to change athletic field material to synthetic turf, construct new out building and other related site improvements at Lot 10 Mountain Road as presented with the condition that they work with the Engineering Division to work out the drainage calculations for the parking area.

Farmington Senior Living – 99, 101, 111 Scott Swamp Road

Site plan modification to reduce landscaping for development. Tabled from February 23, 2015. James Brenia, Project Manager with KBE Building, with Kyle Doolittle, EA Quinn Landscaping, presented the adjusted planting plan presented at the last meeting. They are adding 18 White Pine and 14 Norway Spruce and are keeping some lower shrubs. They commented the approved and proposed planting plans include a list of specific plantings. When asked the net loss of planted material they stated there was a 20% reduction of trees. Commissioners asked that buffers to abutting residences be retained and that they work with the Town Planner to make sure they are adequate. Mr. Doolittle confirmed they are willing to work with Town staff. No additional trees will be removed.

Upon a motion made and seconded (Doeg/Fraprie) it was unanimously

VOTED: To approve Farmington Senior Living application for site plan modification to reduce landscaping for development located at 99, 101, 111 Scott Swamp Road with the condition that once plantings are installed as per plan presented, the Town Planner will review/inspect to ensure the appropriate screening for neighbors and request installation of additional plantings if necessary.

Five Star Properties LLC – 304 Main Street

Informal discussion of possible change of zone to residential apartment/townhouses at 304 Main Street. This matter will not be going forward at this time.

8-24 Referral – Lot 45B-1 Walnut Farms Drive

Recommend acquisition of property at Lot 45B-1 Walnut Farms Drive and a land swap between the Town of Farmington and Walnut Farms Village Association. This matter was tabled from the February 23, 2015 meeting. Assistant Planner Liz Dolphin presented the proposed acquisition of 3.57 acres and land swap of 8,618 sq. ft. to Walnut Farms Village Association and 8,516 sq. ft. from the Association to Town Open Space. Assistant Planner Dolphin reviewed the linkage with existing open space and trail system, open space access from a public road and the potential future recreation with open meadow. This property was added to the Land Acquisition List June 3, 2013, the date of appraisal is October 25, 2013 with a value of \$343,160. The negotiated acquisition price is \$275,000 with no fee for the land swap. The Town will not be applying for an Open Space Grant for this property in order to retain potential future active recreation use. This lot is not shown on the Future Open Space Planning Map in the Plan of Conservation and Development because it was listed on the Town's Land Acquisition List after 2006. The Plan of Conservation and Development Existing and Future Open Space Planning Objectives are where it is possible to interconnect existing and future open space and conservation easements of wildlife corridors or future pathways, the Town should seek to preserve a minimum of 40 percent of its area as permanently protected open space, and Public Acquisition of key parcels identified in the Town's Land Acquisition List should be considered on a priority basis as funds become available. This lot, after the land swap, will link with significant Town owned property and open space to the north. A future trail could link this land with the existing paved trail system on Town open space to the north. Assistant Planner Dolphin further explains the property was originally listed as the excess land of 70 Coppermine Road and was added to the list on June 3, 2013. Since that property was listed, the house and .88 acres of

land have been sold. The remaining land is 3.57 acres. Letters of support for acquisition of this land have been received from the Farmington Land Trust and the Farmington Historic Society. Commissioner Jarvis commented on the number of properties on the Land Acquisition List and whether they are listed by priority. Commissioner Doeg asked clarifying questions about access. Commissioner Fraprie commented he has a hard time supporting the acquisition because it is not in the Plan of Conservation and Development. Chairman Dunn asked the Town Planner how this parcel would go to the Town Council before this Commission. Town Planner Warner explained per State statute the 8-24 referral can happen at the last minute because the only thing that can't happen before this Commission reviews is the closing. Chairman Dunn then commented on accessibility to existing open space without acquisition of this parcel, it's not terribly scenic, not really an open space purchase because the Town is using its own money and not grant money from the State. Assistant Planner Dolphin responded meadows in their natural state are a rare commodity, from DEEP's position this would be of value in their Green Plan. It also has potential historic value. In response to open space designation, Assistant Town Planner Dolphin explains that open space designation is not defined by obtaining an open space grant. It is defined by not being developed and if used for active and passive recreation as defined in the Plan of Conservation and Development. An open space grant does not allow active recreation and that is why they are not applying for a grant. Open space also can have buildings on it like Westwoods Golf Course and Tunxis Mead.

Upon a motion made and seconded (Brenneman/Doeg) it was

VOTED: 1 in favor (Brenneman) to 5 opposed (Doeg, Dunn, Jarvis, Fraprie, Matava) to recommend acquisition of Lot 45B1-1 Walnut Farms Drive and land swap between the Town of Farmington and Walnut Farms Village Association as presented.

Discussion of members in opposition of the motion included Commissioners Doeg and Fraprie commenting they were having difficulty supporting because the parcel is not included in the Plan of Conservation and Development. Chairman Dunn commented there was a subdivision application and the neighbors were angry and didn't want a subdivision and went to the Council to try to get it on the Land Acquisition List so the Town could purchase it. The existing open space can already be accessed from the neighborhood, this lot does not have a link to other Town property, the lot is irregularly shaped, it's a meadow with no scenic, topographic, conservation or wilderness value, which is the charge of the Land Acquisition Commission.

### **PLANNER'S REPORT**

No Planner's Report.

### **MINUTES**

Upon a motion made and seconded (Doeg/Matava) it was unanimously

VOTED: To approve the minutes of the February 23, 2015 meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 10:44 p.m.

*SJM*