

TOWN PLAN AND ZONING COMMISSION
PUBLIC AND REGULAR MINUTES

June 22, 2015

Present were Chairman Dunn, Commissioners Doeg, Fraprie, Jarvis and Matava and Alternate Commissioners Bagdigian, Gurski and Houf and the Town Planner and Clerk. Secretary Doeg opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m. Town Council Liaison Peter Mastrobattista was also present.

Secretary Doeg read the legal notice into the record.

Chairman Dunn explained the process of the meeting. Alternate Commissioner Gurski was appointed to vote on behalf of Commissioner Brenneman.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

Edward E. Fishman – 1432 Farmington Avenue

Change of zone from R20 to B1, special permit and site plan approval for medical office use for property located at 1432 Farmington Avenue. David Whitney, P.E., represented the applicant and stated on November 17, 2014 the Zoning Board of Appeals denied a modification of use variance to expand the building and parking at this site. They stated it was more appropriate for the applicant to seek a change of zone from the Town Plan & Zoning Commission. Mr. Whitney reviewed the existing condition site plan which has a small two story building and parking area. The parcel is adjacent to two B1 zoned parcels and the applicant feels this site would be appropriate for a small medical office building. Edward Fishman handed out a narrative of the proposed 2,970 sq. ft. two-story building. Mr. Whitney reviewed a schematic design of the proposed building and the proposed site plan. The site plan shows a building footprint of 35' x 43' with 16 parking spaces which creates approximately 38% coverage. The site plan also proposes street trees along Farmington Avenue and a vegetated buffer along the rear property line. Mr. Whitney stated he is working on the details of an on-site drainage plan and revising the plans in response to Engineering and Planning comments. Notes are on the plans to provide automatic doors and an elevator or lift to provide compliance with the accessibility regulations. He also requested this hearing be continued to the next meeting. Commissioner Doeg commented he will be looking at traffic, safety of egress/ingress to the site, landscaping for Knollwood residents and accessibility compliance of the new building.

Gerald Cassella, 1 Woewassa Lane, expressed concern with increased storm water runoff from the parking area and lighting from the site. He commented he was in favor of improving the site.

Mr. Fishman responded his objective is to improve the site by seeking a change of zone, special permit and site plan approvals to make the parcel more marketable for someone else to develop.

Chairman Dunn stressed hours of operation and lighting will be a concern.

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

VOTED: To continue the hearing to July 13, 2015.

NEW BUSINESS

Leggett Insurance Agency – 1053 Farmington Avenue

Sign application for property located at 1053 Farmington Avenue. The applicant was not present. Town Planner Warner noted that he has not yet received the owner's authorization of this application despite requests. The matter was tabled.

Creative Dimensions – 72 Spring Lane

Anthony Pena, Creative Dimensions, reviewed the five proposed signs. IMI Precision Engineering text will replace Norgren on the proposed sign panels. Proposed monument sign panels A and B are the same size as existing panels. Town Planner Warner confirmed the proposal complies with the requirements of the zoning regulations. Signs C, D and E were described as directional signs. There was discussion on sign D and its proximity to sign B. Mr. Pena confirmed there would be no changes to lighting for any of the signs.

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

VOTED: To approve the sign application submitted by Creative Dimension as presented for property located at 72 Spring Lane.

Lauretano Sign Group – 10 Farm Springs Road

UTC is proposing a new 3' 7" x 6' monument sign to replace their existing sign. Existing ground lighting will not be changed. Town Planner Warner said the replacement sign complies with the requirements of the sign regulations.

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

VOTED: To approve the sign application submitted by Lauretano Sign Group as presented for property located at 10 Farm Springs Road.

InSite Real Estate Partners LLC – 763 Farmington Avenue

Town Planner Warner received a letter from Attorney Christian Hoheb requesting a one year extension of the special permit approval granted for 763 Farmington Avenue. Since the approval, the State Historic Preservation Office has become involved in preservation of elements of the existing structure and their approval from the FDIC has been pending and remains unresolved. They are unable to obtain a demolition permit and proceed with the project until these issues are resolved.

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

VOTED: To grant a one year extension of the special permit approval granted to InSite Real Estate Partners LLC for property located at 763 Farmington Avenue.

K.M. Crowley – Scott Swamp Road

Town Planner Warner was contacted by Attorney Timothy Furey who has asked that this matter be tabled until the next meeting.

Sign Pro Inc. – 55 Mill Street

Robert Kuszpa, Sign Pro Inc., stated they are seeking approval to provide two awnings for Cure Restaurant, an 11 1/8" x 3" tenant sign and a 40" x 42" sign panel on an existing free standing sign. The proposal has been reviewed and approved by the Unionville Architectural Design Review Committee. Mr. Kuszpa added they will use existing ground lighting for the free standing sign.

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

VOTED: To approve the sign application submitted by Sign Pro Inc. for property located at 55 Mill Street, Unionville, as presented.

PLANNER'S REPORT

Commercial Real Estate Signs

Town Planner Warner talked about the sign regulations regarding existing commercial properties with For Lease/Sale signs. The regulation states such signs shall not exceed 6 square feet in area; however, if the commercial building exceeds 10,000 square feet in area and exceeds 50% vacancy the sign area may increase to a maximum of 32 square feet by the Zoning Enforcement Officer. He noted that this condition does not currently exist in Farmington although there are a number of large commercial real estate signs around Town. The sign shall also be located at least 15 feet from the edge of the roadway on the subject premises. Additionally, the regulation requires a permit be issued for a six-month period only by the Zoning Enforcement Officer. Town Planner Warner suggested eliminating the requirement of obtaining a permit from the Zoning Enforcement Officer. He said his office could inventory the signs and notify the real estate companies that they must reduce the size of their signs to six square feet in area. After a brief discussion the Commissioners were in support of moving forward with the amendment.

Landscaping

Town Planner Warner recommended requiring property owners with an approved landscaping plan to maintain the approved landscaping.

Business Signs

Town Planner Warner suggested if a business goes out of business or moves out away from it location that the sign must be removed. Commenting on signs at Canal Path for businesses that have relocated.

Sign Regulations

A resident has approached the Commission and offered to work on a proposed amendment to the Town's sign regulations regarding lighting, for their consideration.

MINUTES

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

VOTED: To approve the minutes of the June 8, 2015 meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

SJM