

TOWN OF FARMINGTON
PLAN & ZONING COMMISSION
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
Work Session
August 2, 2023

Present for the hybrid meeting were Chair St. James, Commissioners Carrier, Grabulis, Halstead, and Hutvagner, and Alternate Commissioners Bandle and Canto. Town Planner Rutherford and Assistant Town Planner Daigle were also present. The meeting was called to order at 6:02 p.m.

Present in the Council Chambers were all Commission members, Town Planner Rutherford and Assistant Town Planner Daigle.

Commissioners Sanford and Rackliffe were not present at the meeting.

Johnny Carrier, By Carrier Corporation, was present in person.

WORK SESSION

The Town Planner reviewed the action items from the July 24th meeting.

Eviction Rates

Staff has been in contact with Nancy Parent to obtain data on Farmington eviction rates. Nancy will assemble the data to include those that resulted in eviction and those that settled in mediation and will note if the reason for the eviction is due to non-payment or some other reason. Nancy did indicate that most evictions are not related to non-payment.

Developer Panel Discussion

Town Planner Rutherford indicated she has contacted three individuals to date. She is working on finalizing a date and is hopeful the September 11, 2023 regularly scheduled meeting date will work. A request was made to TPZ members to submit questions by September 1st for the panel discussion.

Initiate Draft Inclusionary Zoning Regulation for Farmington

This will be forthcoming within the next few weeks, pending feedback from Commission members on the scope and detail of the regulation. Regulation to include density bonuses and fee-in-lieu options.

Linkage Fees

Staff has found linkage fee ordinances and regulations for New Canaan, Fairfield and Stamford. They are each implemented in a slightly different manner. The fees supplement their Inclusionary Zoning Regulation. Staff has contacted the Town Attorney to confirm we are able to implement linkage fees under CGS 8-2i. Farmington is considering adding a \$1.00 to \$2.00 pr \$1,000.00 of work to the building permit fee to support for the Farmington Housing Trust Fund.

Research Building Permit Fee Comparison

Assistant Town Planner Daigle shared research completed regarding area Building Permit fees. Farmington's Building Permit fees are comparable to those of adjoining communities with Bristol and Plainville being notably higher at \$25/\$1000 and \$20.26/\$1000 respectively. The comparison spreadsheet was expanded to include demographic information of each community to aid in the comparison. Data such as median family income, median home value and mill rate with added. The sheet will be expanded to include Tolland and complete the data for Fairfield.

Partnership for Strong Communities-Zoning Summary

Staff reviewed the Inclusionary Zoning regulation for each town included in the summary sheet completed by the Partnership for Strong Communities to determine the applicable geographic area within each community. A summary review was provided by staff to the Commission and the sheet has been updated on the Sharepoint site.

The Commission engaged in a general conversation regarding the current affordable housing regulations for Farmington, the density allowance for each regulation, and the financial limitations associated with these density allowances. The limitations were related from conversations staff has had with various developers and staff from adjacent communities. The conversation evolved to include applications submitted under CGS 8-30g.

The Commission then engaged in a discussion with Johnny Carrier regarding building costs, building permit fees and thoughts regarding the addition of a linkage fee at the time of building permit. The discussion included how building permit fees are generated including the minimum estimated cost of the work which forms the basis for the fee and the requirement that the fee is to be commensurate with review effort. The discussion also included the varying land costs throughout CT, land availability, and the shift of residential building from single family homes to multi-family. The benefits of smaller multi-family buildings within existing neighborhoods was explored, including rental or condo units.

Action Items:

1. Add additional data to the building permit spreadsheet as discussed – Fairfield BP fees and add Tolland to the list.
2. Contact Avon to obtain copies of projects implemented under their inclusionary zone regulation and find out if these projects secured CHFA funding, tax incentives or other funding to support their projects.
3. Confirm ability to implement linkage fee with Town Attorney – continue follow up with Town Attorney.
4. Distribute a draft Inclusionary Zone Regulation for Farmington, including a density bonus and a fee-in-lieu options.
5. Distribute a draft ordinance update for the Housing Authority, Housing Trust Fund and Fees.
6. Advance developer panel discussion for September 11, 2023,
7. Finalize coordination with Nancy Parent to obtain data on eviction rates.
8. Follow up with Fairfield, New Canaan, Stamford to determine how repair and maintenance is managed through the Housing Authority.

The meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

SKR