

TOWN OF FARMINGTON  
PLAN & ZONING COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES  
May 20, 2024

Present for the hybrid meeting were Chair Halstead, Commissioners Afshar, Bandle, Canto, Sanford, St. Germain and Alternate Commissioner Tucci. Town Planner Rutherford and Clerk Michaud were also present. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

Present in the Council Chambers were all Commission members, Town Planner Rutherford and Clerk Michaud. Alternate Commissioners Polsky and Zimmermann were absent. Town Council Representative Wlodkowski was present in the Council Chambers until 8:30pm.

Secretary Sanford read the legal notice into the record.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **CPD Properties and 342 Colt Highway LLC – 342 Colt Highway**

Accept the CPD Properties and 342 Colt Highway LLC application for special permit and site plan approval for new fuel service station, convenience store and quick service restaurant and schedule public hearing (recommend hearing date of June 24, 2024).

Upon a motion made and seconded (Bandle/Afshar) it was unanimously

VOTED: To accept the CPD Properties and 342 Colt Highway LLC application for special permit and site plan approval for new fuel service station, convenience store and quick service restaurant and schedule public hearing for June 24, 2024.

### **PUBLIC HEARING**

#### **Specialty Transportation Inc. – 150 New Britain Avenue**

Application for special permit and site plan approval for school bus transportation facility at 150 New Britain Avenue, C1 zone. Attorney Christian Hoheb represented the applicant and confirmed all notice requirements were completed. This applicant is the new bus company for Farmington Public Schools. They will use this site to operate their school bus transportation business including parking forty-four full size buses, eleven mini buses, and 20 mini vans. The property is zoned C1 and could have a number of other more intensive uses which Attorney Hoheb listed. He then reviewed the abutting properties and stated for the record they have properly sized parking spaces, they have demonstrated the turning radius works for the site and that the property owner Local Choice will also have space for their landscape business operation. At this time they have not formalized a lighting plan and plan to submit a plan if they receive a favorable decision from the Commission. Michael Turner, Vice President of Specialty Transportation Inc. stated there will be minimal noise early morning from the buses. They need to warm up in cold weather and will be warming the buses earlier during the cooler months while they run through their safety checks. Their buses are newer and do not require long idle times. He anticipates buses leaving the site between 6 and 6:30 a.m. to return to the lot between 9 and 9:30 a.m. at which time there will be noise from backup beepers. The buses leave again in the afternoon between 2 and 2:30 p.m. to return between 4:30 and 5:30 p.m. at which time they will back into their parking spaces. Attorney Hoheb stated for the record the bus company will not

conduct heavy repairs on sight and asked Mr. Turner to confirm they use one of the other locations for maintenance. There was some discussion to describe employee parking, and buses used for sporting events and/or after school programs. Attorney Hoheb noted they had a short video of a full-size school bus making a right hand turn onto New Britain Avenue leaving the site. He added they will check the sight line and trim vegetation if needed. He then submitted a site map showing the distances to neighboring buildings from bus parking areas for the record. The Commissioners asked for clarification on nighttime or weekend sporting events bus usage. Mr. Turner responded there are few of these events. Commissioners asked for an approximate backup beeping window typically can be expected when the buses will be backing into their parking spaces. Mr. Turner responded typically it is a ten-minute window of time. Commissioners asked if buses are washed on site. Mr. Turner responded no, they have another location for bus washing. The applicant was asked for clarification regarding the length of the parking spaces and full-size buses and if there will be a planted buffer behind the buses. It was confirmed arborvitae / evergreen plantings will be installed along the southern (trail) property line. There was a brief discussion about residences across the street and the headlights of buses exiting the site shining into some of those units. James Dooley, Local Choice Properties, was asked to show how the site will be shared. Mr. Dooley showed the location of a propane tank east of the building, parking spaces along the easterly portion of the building will be for the landscaping business employees and a portion of the interior for the building will house landscaping business vehicles/equipment.

#### Public Comment In-Person

Mark O'Hare, 161 New Britain Avenue, stated there is a lot of traffic and noise with the existing business use of the site and expressed concern traffic and noise will increase.

Ryan Anderson, 169 New Britain Avenue, expressed concern with noise and agreed with Mr. O'Hare's comments.

#### Public Comment On-Line

Nate Fournier, 167 New Britain Avenue, expressed concern with traffic, noise and lights from the buses.

Divyesh Rajkotia, 5 Cobble Court, asked about the bus contract savings.

Attorney Hoheb responded he believes the neighbors' concerns are sincere, but this company has an established track record and per the contract the buses need to be in Town. The property owners have been working hard to clean up the property. The applicant expects to submit a lighting plan to staff as soon as they can finalize the plan.

The public hearing closed at 8:03 p.m.

Upon a motion made and seconded (Bandle/Canto) it was unanimously

VOTED: To approve the Specialty Transportation Inc. application for special permit and site plan approval for school bus transportation facility at 150 New Britain Avenue, C1 zone as presented and on file in the Planning Office with the following conditions:

1. A lighting plan shall be submitted for review and approval by Town Staff;
2. The applicant shall investigate widening of the driveway apron and improving the sight line; and
3. The applicant shall contact the property owners across the street regarding the bus headlight concerns and possible reasonable screening.

The Commission took a break from 8:10 p.m. to 8:15 p.m.

#### Farmington West Estates Ltd Ptns – Governor’s Pride

Application for 10-lot subdivision of Governor’s Pride off Snowberry Lane (Phase VI-A), AH zone. Attorney James Ziogas represented the applicant providing the background/history of the Affordable Housing Zone approval process through appeal to the Superior Court for this site. The development is required to adhere to the Affordable Housing Zone 1991 zoning regulations and comply with current storm water requirements by submitting a subdivision application for each phase of the development. Attorney Ziogas reviewed the prior phases approved by this Commission and the Inland Wetlands Commission. This current 10-lot subdivision of Governor’s Pride was approved by the Inland Wetlands Commission in December 2023. The phase will also be serviced by public water and sanitary sewer. The lots meet the zoning requirements, open space is proposed as part of this plan and will be deeded to the Homeowner’s Association with a Conservation Easement to the Town of Farmington to ensure proper maintenance of the open space. Attorney Ziogas commented they have requested a waiver regarding the grade of the roadway within 50’ of the intersection of Snowberry Lane and Governor’s Pride. The overall layout and drainage design was done by Kratzert Jones & Associates Inc. Severino Bovino, Kratzert Jones, reviewed the overall site plan for all of Phase VI describing the property, lot sizes and proposed drainage plan. This phase is designed to have six subphases. Mr. Bovino presented the landscaping plan including arborvitae buffer, evergreen buffer, typical house landscaping and flowering street trees. Conservation easement areas will have wooden posts along the edge of the boundary with conservation area markers. Mr. Bovino stated Governor’s Pride will be a private road and described the general home styles that will be available. Each homes’ roof leaders will be connected to drywells. Details about the erosion and sedimentation control are on the plan. Mr. Bovino stated, for the record, they have responded to staff comments and feel there are only minor comments left to address. Andrew Quirk, Kratzert Jones, presented the stormwater management plan commenting on the current stormwater standards apply. He explained details of proposed stormceptors and the two stormwater detention areas providing details on the pre and post development analysis he performed. Stephen Barberino, Jr. commented on how long he has been building homes in this development and that the entire Phase VI drainage has been designed/engineered. The Commissioners asked about the timing of the other portions of phase VI. Attorney Ziogas responded it is market driven. The Commission asked about lighting and Attorney Ziogas responded lighting will be consistent with the rest of the development.

#### Public Comment In-Person

Ralph Passaro, 7 Cobble Court, commented Mr. Barberino builds a quality home but commented the more recent homes have a different exterior. Mr. Passaro expressed concern with traffic.

Kathryn O’Sullivan, 660 Plainville Avenue, expressed concern with drainage.

Public Comment On-Line

Samir Prabhu, 36 Snowberry Lane, expressed concern with drainage and the HOA obligation to maintain the basin post-construction.

Sunil Swami, 16 Snowberry Lane, expressed concern with traffic and the HOA having responsibility to maintain the stormwater detention basins.

Divyesh Rajkotia, 5 Cobble Court, expressed concern with traffic.

Attorney Ziogas responded with the number of homes left to construct, there is no requirement regarding the exterior design of the homes or requirement to maintain a specific look. Regarding drainage concerns, they are adding two additional stormwater detention basins to the site. A traffic study was conducted when they applied for the AH zone. Maintenance of the basins will be the responsibility of the HOA and the maintenance schedule is part of the plan sheet.

At 9:48 p.m. a motion was made and seconded (Bandle/St. Germain) and unanimously

VOTED: To continue this public hearing for the Farmington West Estates Ltd Ptns application for 10-lot subdivision of Governor's Pride off Snowberry Lane (Phase VI-A), AH zone to the June 10, 2024 meeting.

**PLANNER'S REPORT**

Metro Realty – 1600 New Britain Avenue

Minor modification to approved site plan to the approved housing community at 8562 (1600) New Britain Avenue. The proposed development is reserving 20 of the 90 apartments for people with intellectual disabilities with funding secured by the State's Department of Developmental Services. To improve accessibility and safety for their residents, the Supportive Service Provider, FAVARH – The Arc of the Farmington Valley, is requesting a few minor architectural changes to the approved plan. Staff reviewed the changes to the plan which changes four - 8-unit buildings with courtyards to two 20-unit buildings with central corridors to facilitate supportive service access to the FAVARH residents as needed. Additionally, the 8-unit buildings at the northeast and southeast corners of the developments are reduced to 4-unit buildings to maintain the total unit count of 90. Town Staff is requesting review by the Commission and confirmation this change may proceed administratively under Planner's report. The Commission did not express concern and agreed this could proceed administratively.

**MINUTES**

May 6, 2024

Upon a motion made and seconded (Sanford/Canto) it was unanimously

VOTED: To approve the May 6, 2024 Town Plan & Zoning Commission meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 9:56 p.m.

*SJM*