Present: Secretary: Commissioner Byron Lester, Commissioner Kevin Hussain, Commissioner Michelle Adams, Commissioner Stephen Millette

Alternates: Commissioner Michael Oliver (voted)

Absent: Chair Barry Berson, Commissioner Dwight Bolton, Sr., Commissioner Daniel Mara, Commissioner Katie Blint

Also Present: Mr. Stanley Hawthorne, Town Manager, Ms. Jennifer Rodriquez, Director of Planning & Economic Development, Mr. Jonathan Thiesse, Town Engineer

1) Call to Order: Secretary Byron Lester called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

A quorum was established with 4 members, and 1 alternates.

2) Approval of the Minutes – April 28, 2022 and May 19, 2022

Commissioner Millette made a motion to approve the minutes for April 28, 2022, and Commissioner Oliver seconded the motion. The Commission voted unanimously to approve the motion.

The May 19, 2022, special meeting minutes will be voted on at the June 23, 2022, TPZ Commission meeting.

2) Public Hearings (Continued):

a) Petition by Aaron J. Romano for a proposed Zoning Regulation text amendment to allow for the expansion of farm activities to include agritourism.

Ms. Rodriquez informed the Commission that she had a meeting with Mr. Romano to address various comments from those that attended the May 19, 2022, TPZ Commission special meeting. She gave Mr. Romano an opportunity to present those revisions to the Commission.

Mr. Aaron Romano, located at 55 Woodland Avenue, Bloomfield, stated he submitted his revised proposed zoning regulation text amendment. And he incorporated almost all of the issues or matters of concern that were presented at the last meeting.

Mr. Romano removed regulations regarding the dispensing of alcohol or the manufacturing of alcohol. Any reference to vineyard, winery or brewery was located in the definition section of the regulations, which indicated, if in the future it became relevant for Bloomfield farms, at that point regulations could be drafted and submitted supporting that issue.

The overnight camping issue was also resolved by removing it from the regulations. Mr. Romano adjusted the timing for the events, and the amplified music. The amplified music was changed from 10:00 a.m., until 10:00 p.m., to 12:00 noon, until 9:30 p.m.

The other issue addressed in the revised regulation was who would qualify under the regulations. Mr. Romano stated in the revised regulation under 7.4.a, it outlined what properties would be covered. He included a six acre (6) minimum. The other issue was the gross sales for farming. Mr. Romano proposed debt was anyone with twenty-five hundred ($2,500) dollars of invoices or debt would qualify. He removed that language, and replaced it with; a) in order to qualify the farming operation must have a minimum of six acres, b) the farming operation must have derived at twenty five hundred ($2,500) dollars in gross sales or be a holder of an active farmer tax exemption permit issued by the Connecticut Department of Revenue Services.

In reference to the permitting process and the site plan, Mr. Romano stated Ms. Rodriguez parsed out the site plans and the different considerations that the Commission might take in terms of issuing those permits. He indicated on page 4 of the proposed document where the terms were located, clearer, and easier to understand.

Mr. Romano continued addressing issues such as abutting neighbors concern about noise, number of events, decimal levels, music and entertainment.

Ms. Rodriguez stated the neighbors in that area had comments, issues, and concerns, which were addressed, and incorporated into the revised regulations. The neighbors asked to make it a requirement to have a contact person on site as a steward at the events, provide that person’s name, contact information (phone number, email) in case of an emergency or complaint. Mr. Romano stated a requirement of the application permit should request an on site point person with their information, and it shouldn’t be issued without that information. He also stated, in the event there is a violation the applicant and the point person should be cited. Ms. Rodriguez stated there was a meeting with staff and public members. They reviewed inventories of properties, some farm properties were in Industrial areas, however only farm properties with appropriate acreage can qualify.
Public Questions:

Mr. Mark Kendall located at 27 High Hil Road, Bloomfield asked was the request reflected on the revised regulations to have the reduction from 200 to 50 people lowered for special events? Mr. Romano stated the change has been made and it is 50. Ms. Rodriquez will post the revised regulations on the website for the public’s review.

Ms. Rodriguez read the Q & A from the screen. The first question was from Mr. Seth Klein, he was concerned that members of the public didn’t have an opportunity to review the revised regulations. Ms. Rodriguez stated the revised regulations will be posted to the website for their review. The revised regulations are also available to be emailed out to the public. Mr. Klein also stated there are numerous problems including sound level limits.

Ms. Erica Fern asked to clarify the 50 people for special permit events regulation. Mr. Romano explained in-depth to the satisfactoriness of the public.

Commission Questions:

Commissioner Millette asked would the noise level work with the Town Noise Ordinance or would it override it? Mr. Romano used page 4 as an example, basically the Town Regulations take precedence. In conclusion, the decimal levels for times of day issues and other issue will be reviewed by the Town’s attorney. Commissioner Millette was also interested in the definition of a farm referred to debt in the regulations, he asked didn’t it refer to expenses. And Mr. Romano explained the revised regulations on that section.

Commissioner Hussain asked about the time frame to get the revised regulations approved. Mr. Romano stated all of the members of the public should have an opportunity to review them first. Commissioner Hussain also stated the farm size in the regulations should be reduced to 10 acres, and anything under that would come before the TPZ Commission for review. The TPZ Commission agreed the public and all of the Commissioners should have an opportunity to review the new revised regulations before moving forward.

Public Comments:

Mr. Seth Klein was concerned with the public not having an opportunity to review the revised regulations. He recommended the final approval be delayed until the June TPZ Commission meeting which gives everyone an opportunity to review the revised regulations.

Mr. Kendall located at 27 High Hill Road and Mr. John Lohre located at 41 High Hill Road were both still concern with the measuring of the farm decimal noise levels.

Commission Comments:

The TPZ Commission was also concerned that the noise level wasn’t regulated. Commissioner Hussain stated there was a need for further clarification on the noise ordinance, lodging, camping, he recommended the regulations be reviewed by everyone and the Applicant return to the June TPZ Commission meeting for further discussions. He also recommended the application be tabled and continued at the next TPZ Commission meeting. The Commission agreed with Commissioner Hussain.

Commissioner Adams made a motion to table and continue the Petition by Aaron J. Romano for a proposed Zoning Regulation text amendment to allow for the expansion of farm activities to include agritourism, until the June 23, 2022, TPZ Commission meeting. Commissioner Millette second the motion, and the Commission voted unanimously to approve the motion.

In reference to Mr. Andy Morrison’s application, Ms. Rodriquez informed the Commission that she sent her report to the engineer and to the property owner via email, she did not receive any communication from the applicant. She recommended the Commission deny the application and asked for a new application. Commissioner Adams recommended they close the public hearing and deny the application without prejudice.

Commissioner Adams made a motion to close the public hearing for the Application by Andy Morrison for 2 lot resubdivision of 4.7 acres and 15.389 acres; property located at 1236 Blue Hills Ave., in an R-15 & 1-2 zone, Marie Dunn, owner. Commissioner Millette second the motion and the Commission voted unanimously to approve the motion.

b. Application by Andy Morrison for 2 lot resubdivision of 4.7 acres and 15.389 acres; property located at 1236 Blue Hills Ave., in an R-15 & 1-2 zone, Marie Dunn, owner.

The Applicant wasn’t present at this meeting.

Commissioner Adams made a motion to deny without prejudice, the application be heard at a later date only, if applicant apply and resubmit the Application by Andy Morrison for 2 lot resubdivision of 4.7 acres and 15.389 acres; property located at 1236 Blue Hills Ave., in an R-15 & 1-2 zone, Marie Dunn, owner. Commissioner Millette second the motion and the Commission voted unanimously to approve the motion.
Commissioner Adams made a motion to close the public hearing for the Special Permit application of Andy Morrison to allow a proposed building with outside storage of material and equipment associated with a contractor’s yard at 1242 Blue Hills Ave., in an R-15 & I-2 zone, Marie Dunn, owner. Commissioner Millette second the motion and the Commission voted unanimously to approve the motion.

c. Special Permit application of Andy Morrison to allow a proposed building with outside storage of material and equipment associated with a contractor’s yard at 1242 Blue Hills Ave., in an R-15 & I-2 zone, Marie Dunn, owner.

The Applicant wasn’t present at this meeting.

Commissioner Millette made a motion to deny without prejudice the Special Permit application of Andy Morrison to allow a proposed building with outside storage of material and equipment associated with a contractor’s yard at 1242 Blue Hills Ave., in an R-15 & I-2 zone, Marie Dunn, owner. The denial was based on no clarification of roadway, the applicant wasn’t at this meeting to address this matter. Commissioner Oliver second the motion and the Commission voted unanimously to approve the motion.

3) Sign Permit:

a. Application by Pamela Beasley, agent of Tim’s Sign & Lighting Services, Inc., for approval to install 1 wall sign, 2 drive through directional signs and 1 60” sign. Property located at 848 Cottage Grove Road in a DDZ zone, owner Buffalo-Bloomfield Associates, LLC.

Ms. Pamela Beasley was here representing this application. Ms. Rodríguez provided her May 26, 2022, memorandum to the Commission. Pamela Brealey applied for wall, directional and menu board signage related to Starbucks restaurant totaling 52 square feet for this proposal.

Zoning: The subject property lies in the DDZ zone. Signs are regulated by Section 6.3.L of the Zoning Regulations. 6.3.L permits internal directional and wall signs to be issued by the Zoning Enforcement Officer. Menu Boards, one of which is proposed as part of this application are to be reviewed by the Town Plan and Zoning Commission. It is possible that by “menu board” the intention of the regulation is to review “reader boards” as part of a freestanding sign rather than an internal sign containing a menu of restaurant items as part of a drive-thru. If this is true, this application can be reviewed by staff.

Other comments:

1. Directional signs per Section 6.3.E.4 are not to be illuminated. The applicant proposes directional signs that are, however, wall signs as well.

2. Per 6.3.H

a. Signs on a given wall surface shall not exceed two (2) square feet of sign area for every linear foot of the same wall of that section of the building.

b. Only one (1) detached menu board shall be permitted per order window, on a lot. Display surface area shall not exceed 32 square feet of sign area per detached menu board.

It was recommended that the Commission provide guidance to the applicant on whether the permit should be delegated to staff review. It is also recommended that the applicant demonstrate compliance with the above comments and sections of the regulation.

Commissioner Hussain made a motion to approve the Application by Pamela Beasley, agent of Tim’s Sign & Lighting Services, Inc., for approval to install 1 wall sign, 2 drive through directional signs and 1 60” sign. Property located at 848 Cottage Grove Road in a DDZ zone, owner Buffalo-Bloomfield Associates, LLC. The approval was subject to the recommendations by staff dated May 26, 2022, and the menu board to be reviewed by the Commission. Commissioner Millette second the motion and the Commission voted unanimously to approve the motion.

4) Old Business:


Ms. Rodríguez stated they must meet with the firms, ask questions and their recommendations will be forwarded to the TPZ Commission for their review.
5) New Business:

a. Appointment of a representative and alternate to serve on the CRCOG Regional Planning Commission from the date of appointment through December 31, 2023.

Ms. Rodriguez stated there are quarterly meetings, she explained the mission of the organization in-depth. Commissioner Hussain will be the representative and Commissioner Adams will be the alternate representative. The term will end December 31, 2023.

b. Connecticut General Statutes 8-24 referral from Town Council regarding sale of town property, 15 Douglas Street, for a 41 unit residential development.

Ms. Rodriguez provided a proposal and a PowerPoint presentation, the final application will be returned to the TPZ Commission for review. The Counsel voted to refer it to the TPZ Commission, and before a decision is made all of the TPZ Commissioners must be present.

Commissioner Millette made a motion to table the Connecticut General Statutes 8-24 referral from Town Council regarding sale of town property, 15 Douglas Street, for a 41 unit residential development, until the June 23, 2022, TPZ Commission meeting. Commissioner Oliver second the motion and the Commission voted unanimously to approve the motion.

c. Informal discussion regarding proposed cannabis regulations.

Ms. Rodriguez stated she sent a draft copy of the regulation that Mr. Giner created to the Commission for their review, she suggested a special meeting for this topic. She gave a summary of the regulation and she recommended the Town Attorney review the new legislation. Commissioner Hussain also recommended a special meeting for this topic and create a working group. Commissioner Lester recommended Chair Berson and Ms. Rodriguez work together on a special meeting date.

6) Other Business (Continued):

a. Request from Tom Donahue of William Raveis on behalf of the Estate of Peter Stitch, for an extension of the Special Permit and Site Plan approval for the proposed residential development at 17 Watkins Road, and Overbrook Farms Road.

Commissioner Hussain made a motion to extend the Request from Tom Donahue of William Raveis on behalf of the Estate of Peter Stitch, for an extension of the Special Permit and Site Plan approval for the proposed residential development at 17 Watkins Road, and Overbrook Farms Road, to the June 23, 2022, TPZ Commission meeting. Commissioner Millette second the motion and the Commission voted unanimously to approve the motion.

7) Staff Updates:

Ms. Rodriguez forwarded the memorandum with the updates to the Commission via email.

8) Adjournment:

Commissioner Hussain made a motion to adjourn, and Commissioner Oliver second the motion. The Commission voted unanimously to approve the motion and adjourn at 9:24 p.m.

NEXT MEETING: June 23, 2022