

WINDHAM PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION
May 22, 2014 Minutes

The Windham Planning & Zoning Commission held its meeting on May 22, 2014 in the Meeting Room, Town Hall. Chair Paula Stahl called the meeting to order at 7:01 P.M. Members present were Ed Pelletier, Jean Chaine, Scott Lambeck, Michael Graff and Claire Lary. Dan Lein was absent. Also present was Town Planner James Finger.

I) Approval of Minutes

- a) The minutes of March 27, 2014 were approved on a motion made by Jean Chaine and seconded by Ed Pelletier. The motion carried unanimously.
- b) The minutes of April 24, 2014 were amended on page 4, item c, line 8. Correct name to read **Folan property**, not Stolen property. Jean Chaine made a motion to approve the minutes as amended and Scott Lambeck seconded the motion. Voting in favor of the motion were Jean Chaine, Scott Lambeck, Michael Graff, Paula Stahl and Claire Lary. Ed Pelletier abstained. The motion carried.
- c) The minutes of May 8, 2014 were approved on a motion made by Jean Chaine and seconded by Michael Graff. Voting in favor of the motion were Jean Chaine, Michael Graff, Scott Lambeck, Paula Stahl and Claire Lary. Ed Pelletier abstained. The motion carried.
- d) Chair Paula Stahl made a motion to amend the agenda to include the minutes of April 10, 2014 and Jean Chaine seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously. Ed Pelletier made a motion to approve the minutes of April 10, 2014 and Scott Lambeck seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

II) New Business

a) David Evans – Proposed Zoning & Subdivision Regulation Revision Private Way Design Standards – Take Receipt and schedule a public hearing.

Wes Wentworth, LLC, representing David Evans, gave an overall review of what they are trying to accomplish by doing a Flexible Design Subdivision. Originally, we proposed a common driveway for access, but we are now calling it a private way with the property line shown down the center of the private way, and also allowing frontage for three lots on the private way.

Mr. Wentworth also submitted proposed Zoning & Subdivision Regulation Revisions regarding Private Way Design Standards.

He said we are proposing a revision to the Subdivision Regulations regarding frontage. At the present time, frontage is defined under Definitions, Section 4. It states that a public street must include frontage. We are proposing to add the following language **“to abut and measure along a private way of an approved Flexible Design Subdivision”**.

He then reviewed additional proposed revisions:

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Section 6 – Flexible Design Subdivision. He said we are trying to get some wording in that section that would allow a private way to serve up to six lots with a maximum length of 599 feet. In meeting with ZEO Matt Vertefeuille and the Town Planner, we tried to look at doing that under Section 6.4. He then went on to review some suggested language to Section 6, Flexible Design Subdivision.

Section 72.1.d.(v) Private Way – We have eliminated “for starter house lots” and propose to change Section 6.4.2 to Section 6.4.3

Section 7 - Standards for Streets and other vehicular ways. We are proposing language stating that a private way may be used as part of a Flexible Design Subdivision. Also remove wording for starter homes.

Under Geometric Standards - we propose to reduce the right-of-way from 50 feet to 30 feet and allow the pavement width of the private way (travel way) to be reduced to 14' - 24.5'.

Chair Stahl said a public hearing will be scheduled for June 26, 2014.

b) **Frog Bridge Gymnastics – 730 Windham Road, South Windham.** – Special Permit application to establish a retail service operation in an M-1 District.

Diane Hirsch, owner of Frog Bridge Gymnastic, LLC explained that Frog Bridge Gymnastics provides gymnastics and dance instruction to all age levels. We have hosted several gymnastics invitationals each year and we also run gymnastics day-camps in the summertime.

Ms. Hirsch said they would like to come back to Willimantic and relocate to the former Rogers Corporation building on Route 32 in South Windham. Frog Bridge Gymnastics was located here in 2005 but has been out of town for about 4 years. She said that they believe they have found, what they think to be the ideal location for the business. She said Jerry Morin purchased the property and has provided them with a wonderful opportunity to relocate there. She said he wants to make things affordable in order to get things happening. She said they will do anything to move this along so we can do what they love to do here. She added their goal is to move their operation to the new address by September 1, 2014.

Chair Stahl advised the applicant that they will have to submit a site plan showing parking, traffic circulation on the site, including any separation between this activity and any future manufacturing activity. One of our primary concerns is safety as this is a manufacturing zone, said Stahl. She said she is concerned that having a gymnastics business there may limit what the owner can do in the future on that property, and suggested that he consider the rezoning of this property to a Commercial zone. Mr. Morin talked a little about parking and traffic circulation. Parking would be available in the back and around the side, he added

Chair Stahl suggested that the applicant meet with ZEO Matt Vertefeuille to review the proposed Zoning Regulations for manufacturing M-2 and also the current commercial C-2 zone to consider the appropriate zone for the future regulations of his property, and also to understand

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the requirements of the Special Permit process. A public hearing will be scheduled on June 26, 2014.

III) Other Business

a) Municipal Improvements – CGS 8-24 Review Town application for “Main Street Investment Fund” grant program as referenced in Section 78 & 7f of Public Section 11-1, seeking funds to construct the Airline & Hop River Trail Extension – Willimantic’s link to the CT Airline Greenway Pedestrian and Bikeway trail as an enhancement to the Town’s Commercial Center.

Chair Stahl explained that the Town is in the process of applying for a grant to help pay for the construction of the CT Airline and Hop River Trail Extension (Willimantic’s link on the East Coast Greenway Pedestrian and Biking Trail that runs from Key West Florida to Calais Maine). It is anticipated that the completed project will enhance the visibility of the Town’s Commercial attractions and will promote the Downtown’s revitalization.

After some added discussion, Michael Graff proposed the following resolution:

Be it hereby **Resolved** pursuant to the Connecticut General Statutes Section 8-24, the Windham Planning & Zoning Commission recommends that the Town of Windham proceed to submit an application for the “Main Street Investment Fund” grant program as an referenced in Section 78 & 79 of Public Act 11-1, to seek funds to construct the Airline & Hop River Extension, Willimantic’s link to the CT Airline Greenway Pedestrian & Bikeway Trail, an enhancement to the Town’s Commercial Center.

The project will complete a recreation trail for hiking and to use as a bikeway, and will help to promote businesses in the Downtown area which is consistent with the Town Plan of Conservation & Development.

Jean Chaine seconded the resolution. The present voted unanimously in favor.

b) Municipal Improvements – CGS 8-24 Review– Proposed driveway easement for 67 Sundale Drive across an undeveloped portion of Town accepted road right-of-way.

Joseph Boucher, M.S., L.S with Towne Engineering spoke to the application requesting the Town of Windham to grant a driveway and utility easement over a portion of an accepted Town Road currently known as 67 Sundale Drive. He said Rick and Carol Mobley are currently under contract with the Estate of Georgia Stygar to purchase a 28.79 parcel known as 283 Windham Back Road. They wish to construct a single family home which will become their residence.

Mr. Boucher’s report dated May 15, 2014 explained that access to the buildable area of the 283 Windham Back Road property is severely limited due to the presence of wetlands along Back Road. The 283 Windham Back Road property also has 50 feet of frontage on Sundale Drive which was deeded to the town. Sundale Drive became an accepted town road in 1970. The Tax

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Assessor is showing a portion of Sundale Drive as 67 Sundale Drive instead of the part of the deeded and accepted land of Sundale Drive

Mr. Boucher added that the Mobley's wish to access the property known as 283 Windham Back Road from the current cul-de-sac at the terminus of Sundale Drive by constructing a driveway, at their own expense, for their proposed single family home and extending utilities through the town parcel currently known as 67 Sundale Drive.

A general discussion ensued. Don Aubrey, PE, LS, Towne Engineering reviewed the history of the property.

Mr. Boucher said they have consulted with Town Engineer Joe Gardner regarding permitting requirements for constructing a driveway from the 283 Windham Back Road property through the undeveloped portion of Sundale Drive to the current cul-de-sac. Town Engineer Gardner consulted with Town Attorney Rich Cody who determined that in order to construct a driveway and extend utilities across that portion of Sundale Drive would require that the Town grant easement rights in favor of 283 Windham Back Road.

In his report, Mr. Boucher outlined that the easement will be both for driveway purposes and for customary residential utility services to be granted in favor of the homeowners of the 283 Windham Back Road property and to run with that property. In addition, the driveway will be constructed by the homeowner in accordance with Town standards, and under a permit issued by the Town Engineer. He added that the process for the Town to grant these easements will also require action by the Town Council to move the question to a Town meeting, and the filing of easement documents.

Mr. Boucher said they are in the process of preparing the easement mapping to current A-2 Standards which will be forwarded to Mr. Gardner and Attorney Cody for review.

After further discussion, Chair Stahl proposed the following Resolution.

Be it hereby resolved that pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes Section 8-24, that the Windham Planning Commission recommends that the Town of Windham grant an easement to 283 Windham Back Road for driveway access from Sundale Drive. The Commission finds this to be consistent with the Town Plan of Conservation and Development. Jean Chaine seconded the resolution. The present voted unanimously in favor.

c) Report from Zoning Officer - none

The meeting was adjourned at 7:55 P.M. Motion made by Ed Pelletier and seconded by Michael Graff. The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Lillian Murray, Clerk