

WINDHAM PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION
July 25, 2013 MINUTES

The Windham Planning & Zoning Commission held its meeting on July 25, 2013 in the Meeting Room, Town Hall. Chair Paula Stahl called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. Members present were Scott Lambeck, Ed Pelletier, Jean Chaine, Dan Lein and Paula Stahl. Michael Graff, Juan Montalvo and Claire Lary were excused. Also present was Zoning Enforcement Officer Matthew Vertefeuille.

1) Approval of Minutes

- a) The minutes of May 9, 2013 were approved on a motion made by Dan Lein and seconded by Scott Lambeck. The motion carried unanimously.
- b) The minutes of June 13, 2013 were approved on a motion made by Ed Pelletier and seconded by Jean Chaine. The motion carried unanimously.
- c) Action on the minutes of June 27, 2013 was deferred to the next meeting.
- d) Action on the minutes of July 11, 2013 was deferred to the next meeting.

2) New Business Public Hearing – Iglesia Pentecostal Vida Nueva, 107 South Park Street, Willimantic –Special Permit application for proposed church

Joseph Boucher, L.S. with the firm of Towne Engineering identified the proposed site on the map. He said the building is presently owned by the Turkington Brothers and has housed various businesses over the years including an office building. Mr. Boucher said the Church wishes to purchase the property and convert the existing building to a church. They will also make associated site and parking improvements and will address storm water drainage and grading.

Mr. Boucher said Notices of the public hearing were mailed to all abutters and the property was posted for the public hearing. He referred to the plan which outlines grading, handicap accesses, parking, storm water, etc.

He referred to a report from Town Engineer Joe Gardner which states that he has no issues with the design of the drainage system, the grading nor the parking layout as proposed. Mr. Boucher said in looking at the Special Exception criteria the proposed use is a good use for the property. The church will definitely be an enhancement to the neighborhood and to property values.

He said they propose to add 27 parking spaces plus two handicap spaces on the 1 lot. They will also have some gravel parking spaces at the South Street entrance.

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ZEO Matt Vertefeuille said they wish to purchase the building and property and make it into a beautiful church. They already have a presence in town as they have been renting space in North Windham, CT.

Mr. Boucher said that at the last meeting Commissioner Ed Pelletier had asked if perk tests had been performed on the property. There were no perk tests performed, said Boucher.

Chair Stahl opened the public hearing for comments from the audience.

1) Roxanne LaCasse who lives at 25 South Park Street referred to a stone wall which is located on the property. Mr. Boucher said the stone wall is actually located on the property line and will remain unchanged. Ms. LaCasse said the church would bring additional traffic, lights from auto headlights and noise. Mr. Boucher said they propose to add plantings to shield the area from glare from the headlights and to cut down noise. Mr. Boucher said they do not intend to have lighting on the building, but there are lights on the street.

Commissioner Ed Pelletier asked about the hours of operation. Pastor Marta Colon said services will be held on Sunday from 3:30 P.M. to 6:30 P.M. and on Friday from 7:00 P.M. to 9:00 P.M.

Chair Paula Stahl expressed concern with noise when late services are held as this is a residential area. Pastor Marta colon said noise will be kept at a reasonable level and they will be mindful of the neighbors.

She said presently the congregation is made up of 42 adults and 9 children in the building we are now renting. She referred to parking and said at their present location there are approximately 22 cars on the site for Sunday services. Mr. Boucher explained that the church currently rents space on Route 6 in No. Windham, CT. He said their future plan is to build a larger building in the northwest corner of the lot for the church and to use the existing building for community services. Mr. Boucher said if and when they plan to expand their church in the future they will have to come back before the Planning & Zoning Commission.

After a brief discussion, Jean Chaine made a motion to approve the Special Permit application for Iglesia Pentecostal Vida Nueva for a proposed church and Dan Lein seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

3) Regulation Revisions

a) This is a continuation of a public hearing for a complete revision of Section 72 on signs.

Chair Paula Stahl said she just received comments from the Town Planner on the proposed changes, and since she has not been able to review his comments, nor has she been able to

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meet with Town Attorney Rich Cody, the public hearing will be continued to the August meeting.

b) Continuation of public hearing for a new Section 77 on lighting.

Chair Paula Stahl said this public hearing will also be continued to the August meeting.

4) Old Business

IHZ – Schedule date to reconvene the public hearing.

Chair Paula Stahl referred to a letter from the State of Connecticut stating that they have granted a preliminary determination that the town's application is eligible for incentive payments provided funding is available.

The public hearing will be reconvened on August 22, 2013

5) Report from the Zoning Enforcement officer.

ZEO Matt Vertefeuille reported that the DeVivo family as turned over the YMCA building to be used for a magnet school.

Commissioner Scott Lambeck referred to the new McDonalds sign in Willimantic and the Hertz sign on Route 32.

6) Correspondence

Copy of a letter from the Town of Mansfield regarding a regulation amendment adding a new permitted use to the RAR-90 Zone; Preservation uses. It was determined that this would have no impact on the Town of Windham.

As there was no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:34 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Lillian Murray, Clerk