

**MINUTES
TOWN PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
JANUARY 9, 2024
7:00 P.M. HYBRID MEETING
275 BROAD STREET, WINDSOR, CT**

Present: Commissioners Mips, Levine, Jaggon, Jepsen and Alternate Commissioners Hallowell and Harvey (seated for Commissioner Kuintzle)

Absent: Commissioner Kuintzle

Also Present: Town Planner Barz, Assistant Town Planner Sealy and Secretary Andrea D. Marcavitch

I. NEW BUSINESS

Commissioner Mips opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Commissioner Mips asked for a motion to add an extension for the re-subdivision filing at 11 Goodwin Drive to the agenda.

Motion: Commissioner Levine moved to add a 90-day extension to submit the re-subdivision filing for 11 Goodwin Drive to the agenda.

Commissioner Jepsen seconded the motion and it passed 5-0-0.

- A. Public Communications and Petitions (five-minute time limit per person) – None**
- B. Communications and Petitions from the Town Planning and Zoning Commission – None**
- C. Zoning Enforcement Officer’s Report – None**
- D. C.G.S. §8-24 Referral Requests – None**
- E. Pre-Application Scrutiny – None**
- F. Re-Approvals/Revisions/Extensions**
 - 1. 3.9 Site Plan – 99 International Drive**, Addition of exterior chiller unit, I Zone, Clancy and Theys Construction Co.
Assistant Town Planner Todd Sealy reviewed the approved application.
 - 2. 90-Day Extension Request for Re-Subdivision Filing – 11 Goodwin Drive**, 2 lots, 62.47 acres, I Zone, Blueprint Partners Corp

Motion: Commissioner Levine moved approval of the applicant’s request for a 90-day extension to file the re-subdivision filing for 11 Goodwin Drive.

Commissioner Jepsen seconded the motion and it passed 5-0-0.

G. Site Plans

- 1. Site Plan – 903 & 1001 Day Hill Road and 141 Old Poquonock Road, Warehouse, I Zone, 37 acres, Alford Associates, Inc.**

This agenda item was heard during the public hearing portion of the meeting with the corresponding special use application.

H. Minutes

- 1. December 12, 2023**

Motion: Commissioner Levine moved to approve the minutes of December 12, 2023 as presented. Commissioner Jepsen seconded the motion and it passed 5-0-0.

II. MISCELLANEOUS – None

III. PLANNER’S REPORT

A. Update on recent development

Mr. Barz reported that the Target frozen food distribution center is very close to getting their certificate of occupancy and the warehouse/manufacturing flex building at 415/425 Day Hill Road is moving along very quickly. He also noted the ground breaking ceremony for Founders Square last month and stated that we have given comments to their architect on the building plans and expected them to come in for permits shortly.

Commissioner Levine asked if there was any movement on the apartments on Poquonock Avenue. Mr. Barz had heard that because of the high water table and heavy clay soils that they had to go back and do a redesign of the basement. He said he expected they would come to the Planning Department’s staff for a revision to their site plan.

Commissioner Jaggon asked if there were any updates to the plaza building and movie theater. Mr. Barz said there are no updates and that there is still work to be done upstairs. He said the restaurant was complete as far as he knows.

Commissioner Mips asked if the Taste of India restaurant was due to reopen. Mr. Barz said they had a long struggle with hidden damage that was discovered, which ended up in a total reconstruction inside and hoped they would be opening soon.

IV. BUSINESS MEETING

A. Application Acceptance – None

B. Old Business – None

V. PUBLIC HEARINGS

Commissioner Levine read the legal notice into the record.

A. Zone Change – 1531 Poquonock Avenue, AA to AG Zone, 16.17 acres, Khan
Continued from December 12, 2023.

Mr. Sealy explained that staff had not heard from the applicant and that they had exceeded the 90-day time limit to open the public hearing.

Motion: Commissioner Levine moved that the application requesting a zone change at 1531 Poquonock Avenue be denied without prejudice.

Commissioner Jepsen seconded the motion and it passed 5-0-0.

B. Site Plan & Special Use – 903 & 1001 Day Hill Road and 141 Old Poquonock Road, Section 8.6Y, Warehousing, wholesaling and/or distribution facilities, I Zone, 37 acres, Alford Associates, Inc. Professional Engineer and Land Surveyor Christian Alford of Alford Associates, Inc., applicant Jeff O’Neil of Condyne, property owner Mark Greenberg, Traffic Engineer Scott Hesketh and Professional Engineer and Land Surveyor Wilson (Skip) Alford, Jr. of Alford Associates, Inc. were present. Mr. Christian Alford reviewed the project and discussed the adjacent properties, acreage, wetlands to the south and west, land deeded to the town to enhance the intersection, current use, special use request, setback from the road, berm, addition of a sidewalk on the north-side, landscaping, common driveway, how trucks will enter and exit the site, and both aerial and exterior views of the two proposed buildings.

Commissioner Mips said that she noticed a number of engineering comments and asked if they had been addressed. Mr. Christian Alford said that he met with the Town Engineer today and they are working on the road intersection plan and that she agreed that the plans could be approved subject to her review and approval.

Commissioner Harvey asked about hours of operation and if it would be a 24/7 operation. Mr. Christian Alford said that there is no tenant for the buildings yet. Mr. O’Neil said they cannot have restrictions but that it is designed for 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and added that tenants typically run two shifts. He also noted that the buildings could have multiple tenants creating a business park similar to what is already there. He stated that a traffic study had been done and took into account all four buildings in that area so that they could see the whole traffic impact.

Commissioner Harvey asked if the school bus parking area is located in the same area. Mr. O’Neil said that the bus parking is located behind 105 Baker Hollow.

Commissioner Harvey asked how the school buses enter and exit the site. Mr. O’Neil said that they are primarily using Baker Hollow Road and thought that when the Baker Hollow Road extension is improved to Marshall Phelps Road that they would use that road. He said the redesign of the intersection would improve access for all four of the buildings at the location, including the DATTCO’s facility.

Commissioner Harvey asked if the traffic study considered the times when the school buses would be leaving and entering during the day. Mr. O’Neil said the study included peak hours at all intersections and surrounding areas, which included the DATTCO building.

Commissioner Harvey asked if they could give a general estimate to the number of truck trips per day. Mr. O’Neil said at this point it would just be a guess but if they looked at what is going on at 105 Baker Hollow Road, which is fully occupied with about 40 employees, they are seeing about 15-20 truck trips a day.

Commissioner Harvey asked which way the trucks travel to get to Interstate 91-north. Mr. Christian Alford said they would go out Baker Hollow Road to Day Hill Road and to Poquonock Avenue, which would bring them to the interstate.

Mr. Barz said that truckers can and do use Bloomfield Avenue. Mr. Christian Alford said if they were going north on Interstate 91, they would not use Bloomfield Avenue.

Commissioner Levine asked if the façade is something the town has accepted. Mr. Barz said that he would touch on that under staff comments.

Public Comment:

Commissioner Levine read a letter of support dated January 9, 2024 from Vincent DeCarlo of the Day Hill Dome located at 875 Day Hill Road.

Mr. Barz reported that staff had met with the applicant and engineers a number of times and thought that it is a good project. He said there were a couple of concerns about the larger building, which is over 300,000 square feet, with its monolithic presence. He said he would like to see more articulation in the architecture to break up long views of the building. He thought it was something that could be addressed in final staff review. He also noted that the applicant told him that the truck drivers insist on driving into a site from the right and back in using the driver’s side mirror as opposed to coming in from the left and using the passenger’s side mirror to back in, so the larger building is going to use that northern-site driveway for access and will probably leave via the common drive between the buildings. He said the smaller building will be doing the same thing but will be using the common driveway for both ingress and egress. He said given that there is an active sports facility with soccer, softball, baseball, lacrosse, etc. and there will be a pair of hotels adjacent to that drive, staff requested a sidewalk be installed at this time on the northern-side of the northern drive where it would be more appropriate to serve the hotels.

Commissioner Mips asked if Mr. Barz was talking about adding a sidewalk on Day Hill Road. Mr. Barz said no, he was talking about the drive on the right-side of the drawing where people will be going into the sports complex.

Commissioner Mips asked if it was a private drive or a street. Mr. Barz said that it is not a public street.

Commissioner Mips asked where the road goes. Mr. Barz said it is going into the sports complex and the 1001 Day Hill Road complex with the brewery and the softball.

Commissioner Mips responded that it is a street then. Mr. Barz said for all intents and purposes but it is technically a driveway.

Mr. Barz continued that the Town Engineer is still working with the applicant on the final design of the intersection at Baker Hollow Road and Old Poquonock Road, so staff would request final review of the road improvement design and the traffic report. Some staff had concerns with the larger building in terms of potential for increased truck traffic. He said that we have been lucky with low-key tenants that have gone into the buildings in that area, which resulted in low truck traffic.

Commissioner Levine asked how we would control that. Mr. Barz said this special use does give the Commission some discretion and they could lower ceiling heights to prevent an extra rack of space that some of the high velocity retailers look for. He believed the 32' ceiling height the proposed building has is below the height some retailers might want. He said they also have loading docks from end to end across the back of the building, which is at a ratio that is comparable to the other three buildings but those are smaller buildings.

Commissioner Levine said she thought the extra height is what new businesses were looking for. Mr. Barz said that it depends on the business.

Mr. Barz continued that the staff thought about different scenarios and thought it could help if the Commission requested the applicant to cut down a certain percentage of the docks. He provided examples of the Ford warehouse which has one loading dock per 6,000 square feet and the building at 415/425 Day Hill Road has a little less than one per 6,082 square feet. He proposed that they could eliminate six loading docks, which would put them at one dock per 6,000 square feet. He said it would be up to the Commission if they felt that would make a difference.

Commissioner Levine said she thought it was worse to have an empty building and Commissioner Mips agreed.

Commissioner Mips reviewed conditions that would need to be included with an approval.

Mr. Barz asked that the Commission include installation of additional loading dock screening, if necessary, prior to certificate of occupancy. He said there used to be a vegetative buffer at the back but due to sand mining it had been nibbled away over the years.

Mr. Barz noted that the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission did approve their application on December 5, 2023.

Mr. O'Neil said that this project would be a vast improvement to how it has been used in the past and will create a nice business park for all of Baker Hollow Road.

Mr. Barz asked if top soil would be imported into the site prior to landscaping because grass cannot be planted in sand. Mr. Christian Alford said that there is still top soil at 141 Old Poquonock Road but that they would take a look and add it where they need to.

Commissioner Harvey asked about the traffic report and had some concerns with the questions that the Town Engineer posed.

Mr. Hesketh said that he reviewed the comments from the Town Engineer and did not think there was anything that could not be resolved. He reported that the Town Engineer had some input on about 15 parameters that they would have done differently but he did not think it would change any of the outcomes. He said they will take a little bit of time and run through it and respond. He believed it could be rectified in short order.

Mr. Christian Alford said that they wanted to renumber the buildings to 75 and 85 Baker Hollow Road and have gotten approval to use those numbers.

Mr. Barz clarified that the Town Assessor and the applicant have agreed upon addresses for the new buildings and that the special uses will be filed under 75 and 85 Baker Hollow Road.

Motion: Commissioner Levine moved approval of the special use for 903 & 1001 Day Hill Road and 141 Old Poquonock Road, as 75 and 85 Baker Hollow Road. Commissioner Jepsen seconded the motion and it passed 5-0-0.

Motion: Commissioner Levine moved approval of the site plan for 903 & 1001 Day Hill Road and 141 Old Poquonock Road, as 75 and 85 Baker Hollow Road, pending resolution of the following items: any outstanding issues with the Town Engineer, final staff review of the architectural elements of the larger building, the sidewalk be constructed on the north-side going into the complex, applicant install additional landscaping by the loading docks as necessary, any outstanding issues with the traffic study and resolution of outstanding items in staff memos, and approval of the waiver for the sidewalk on Old Poquonock Road. Commissioner Jepsen seconded the motion and it passed 5-0-0.

VI. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS AND PETITIONS – None

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Motion: Commissioner Levine moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:58 p.m. Commissioner Jaggon seconded the motion and it passed 5-0-0.

Respectfully submitted, _____, Andrea D. Marcavitch, Recording Secretary on January 9, 2024.

Jill Levine, Secretary