

**SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
TOWN PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
JULY 30, 2024
7:00 P.M. HYBRID MEETING
275 BROAD STREET, WINDSOR, CT**

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

Absent: None

Also Present: Town Planner Todd Sealy and Secretary Andrea D. Marcavitch

I. NEW BUSINESS

Commissioner Mips opened the meeting at 7 p.m.

- 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. Re-Approvals/Revisions/Extensions**
 - 1. 90-Day Extension Request for Re-Subdivision Filing – 903 and 1001 Day Hill Road and 141 Old Poquonock Road, 2 lots, I Zone, 37 acres, Alford Associates, Inc.**

Professional Engineer and Land Surveyor Wilson (Skip) Alford Jr. reviewed the request for an extension with the Commission.

Commissioner Mips asked if this was their last extension and Mr. Alford said that this was their first extension and believed that they would be eligible for one more but did not think they would need it.

**Motion: Commissioner Levine moved to grant the applicant’s request for a 90-day extension for the purpose of filing the mylars for this application.
Commissioner Jepsen seconded the motion and it passed 5-0-0.**

II. PLANNER’S REPORT

- A. Training Opportunity – Connecticut Chapter of American Planning Association – Housing Forum, September 11 from 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.**

Town Planner Todd Sealy reviewed the training opportunity with the Commission and asked that they contact Ms. Marcavitch if they would like to attend. He noted that the Commissioners had satisfied the four-hour training requirement by the State as of December 31, 2023. He said the Commissioners must complete four-hours of training every other year and that staff would notify them of other available training.

Mr. Sealy also noted that an RFQ (Request for Quote) had been sent out for the Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) update and a Day Hill Road study. He said interviews would be conducted with consultants in mid-September and onboard someone soon after. He said they would be looking to select a sub-committee comprised of Planning and Zoning Commissioners, people from other commissions and at-large members.

Commissioner Levine asked what will be done with inquiries that are submitted in the interim for people who might be interested in applying to develop a parcel along the Day Hill corridor. Mr. Sealy said that we are looking to move faster on the Day Hill corridor study and that it was being led by the Economic Development Department. He said they are looking at the same time frame for the study as the POCD update but would be looking to wrap up the Study by February. He added that they would be looking at October 2025 for adoption of the POCD.

III. PUBLIC HEARINGS

Commissioner Levine read the legal notice into the record.

A. **Special Use – 1911 Poquonock Avenue and 67 Rainbow Road**, Section 15.2.10, Temporary or portable commercial amusements on private property, AG Zones, 52 acres, Campiti

Applicant Frank Campiti of 1188 North Grand Street in Suffield was present and reviewed the application.

Commissioner Mips said there were a number of questions during the staff review and asked if Mr. Campiti had been able to answer all of them. Mr. Campiti said yes and that he had emailed responses to Mr. Sealy.

Commissioner Levine asked what the lighting to illuminate the road would look like. Mr. Campiti replied that they would probably use solar lanterns to illuminate it and that would only be in the entryway because once you get in the exhibit, it is very well lit as almost everything is done with projections. He said it is easy to see where you are supposed to go. He said the path would be clearly marked with cones or reflectors.

Commissioner Levine said that she would assume that there would be employees along the way too. Mr. Campiti stated that they try to avoid that because they do not want anyone in there with the cars. He said they do have someone who monitors it and walks the whole thing but that they lay it all out so it can be seen from one position.

Commissioner Levine asked if it would be a dirt road. Mr. Campiti said yes and that it is the current farm roads that they use.

Commissioner Levine asked what they would do if it rains really hard. Mr. Campiti said that they would close and that they err on the side of caution.

Commissioner Mips asked if they were using the same roads they used years ago with the haunted hayrides. Mr. Campiti said from what he understood that was off in the woods and to the left. He said they would be using the area that is wide open where the barns are located and the roads are wider.

Mr. Campiti explained that he had been doing this for five years in Suffield and has had no incidents. He said it's geared towards children. He explained that he runs the business with his sister and that the exhibit is done with a lot of special effects and animation. He said the projections are huge, showing in one spot on a 20' tall witch and the sing a little song.

He addressed sound concerns and said he calls it the drive-in theater affect and that even though the projection is far from the car, there is a small speaker on the side of the road. He said you would roll down your window as you come up to it and listen. He said it is in their best interest to keep it quiet because the exhibits are only about 30' apart and people do not want to be at exhibit A and have ambient sound from exhibit B, C and D. He did not think the sound would be an issue at all.

Commissioner Jepsen said that he is familiar with Bright Lights in Springfield, MA at Christmas time where they get great crowds. He asked if they have a contingency if they get great crowds like that for traffic and things like that. Mr. Campiti said that he hoped that it would be an issue for them someday but that in the past five years their longest line was only about a third of the cue area they have here. He said the barns are 1,000 feet from the road. He said people will enter and have 700' before they even pay their entry fee. He said it would be clearly marked where the entry is and then people will go up the road and that he will be there every night to collect admission where he would ask people to lower their lights so they can better see the projections and to follow the path. He said the traffic has never been an issue in the past. He said if it were to get very busy that they would hire a police officer to assist with traffic. He said they have it laid out so that traffic does not cross each other. He said you enter on the middle road of the farm, go through where the barns are and they will leave on what they call the "camp road", which is over two or three hundred yards away from the entry. He said the only time there might be cars lined up is at the very beginning before they start the show.

Commissioner Mips asked how they are handling security on the premises. Mr. Campiti said that he would be there, as well as his sister. He stated that everyone is to stay in their car and that it is about a 15-20 minute drive-through. He said they do have a local towing company that has agreed to give them priority if a car breaks down in the exhibit.

Commissioner Levine asked if it would interfere at all with the Brown's Harvest Halloween time. Mr. Campiti said no and that it was one of their concerns. He said they are keeping their corn maze but they do not have any hay rides going on. He said there will only be one weekend when they are open at the same time where they have a flash light night in the corn maze, otherwise they provide activity at different times of the day.

Public Comment:

James Madison of 8 Fitzmaurice Circle was present and stated that he runs the neighborhood group for Fitzmaurice Circle. He said they had a neighborhood meeting and that he talked to about 10-12 of the 20 residents on the street. He said they are in strong support of it as neighbors in the area. He said he has

spoken to the owners of Brown's Harvest and to Mr. Campiti and they had their concerns addressed. He said they would like to see Brown's Harvest succeed as much as possible for as long as possible.

Commissioner Levine asked for the dates of the show. Mr. Campiti said he did not know the dates but that it would be Thursday-Sunday for the four weeks in October and that they do not operate on Halloween.

Mr. Sealy recapped the experience Mr. Campiti described and asked if there would be strobe effects or live actors. Mr. Campiti said there are no actors and most of the lighting is from flickering lanterns. He said there are no bright lights in there at all because it would completely interfere with the video projection. He said they have about 23 locations for video.

Mr. Sealy said that staff met with the applicant during a development team meeting. He said he would like to go out to the site with staff and review it once it is set up. He wanted to ensure car headlights are not pointing into people's houses and that the projections are in appropriate locations.

Motion: Commissioner Levine moved approval of the special use at 1911 Poquonock Avenue and 67 Rainbow Road for a period of four weeks in October from Thursdays to Sundays and with the final approval of town staff who will visit the area once it is set up.

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

B. Special Use – 519, 545 and 549 Palisado Avenue, Sections 4.5.7C and 10.5.3, Private schools or colleges, AA & AG Zones, 14.8 acres, Medina Academy

Commissioner Jepsen recused himself and Alternate Commissioner Hallowell was seated.

Professional Engineer and Land Surveyor Wilson Alford Jr. and Secretary of the Board at Medina Academy Ahsan Saghir were present. Mr. Alford reviewed the application.

Commissioner Levine asked if the property was in the Historic District. Mr. Sealy replied no, it is not.

Commissioner Levine said she thought she heard that it would take them a couple of years to make a determination if they would build something more permanent. Mr. Alford said they are trying to determine if the increase in enrollment is a fluke or an ongoing trend.

Commissioner Mips is the building was being used at all now and Mr. Saghir said no.

Commissioner Jaggon asked if they anticipated any maintenance challenges. Mr. Saghir said not really because nothing is really changing but that they will hire additional custodians. He said they would have three or four.

Public Comment: None

Mr. Sealy reported that in 2019 Loomis had submitted an application for temporary dormitories and it was processed as a staff level review and that he thought moving forward that a temporary building

should require a special use to place a time limit on it. He noted that the time limit would not be for the removal of the structure but a time limit for another review by the Commission to know what the plans are for the school. He said the purpose of the time limit is to ensure we are moving toward a more permanent solution and to allow time to determine if the need will remain. He said based on the precedence of the Loomis application and if the Commission were to approve this special use then a staff level review of the site plan would be appropriate.

Commissioner Mips thought that there should be time limit on a special use and that the Commission has done that with many other applications. She stated that they are asking for four years but that she thought that was too long. She thought two years would give them time to determine what they need to do. She also thought a special use was appropriate because of the school's residential area.

Commissioner Levine and Harvey agreed.

Commissioner Harvey said that four years is a long time and that if they are still uncertain after two years that they can come back.

Commissioner Levine said that they can come back to the Commission and ask for an extension.

Commissioner Mips said that they have had others do that like the one on Market Circle and Day Hill Road.

Commissioner Jaggon thought that the Commission should continue the same trend that they did for Loomis for Medina Academy.

Commissioner Mips said that she would agree with Commissioner Jaggon except that Loomis is more of a contained island and is different than going into the residential area that this is going into. She said she thought a two year limit would make more sense.

Commissioner Levine agreed.

Commissioner Harvey said that the Loomis temporary dorms were not a special use. Mr. Sealy said they never came before the Commission.

Commissioner Harvey said that it just so happens that it has been four/five years and now Loomis is taking them down but that it was not a decision the Commission made.

Commissioner Mips said that in those years, Loomis did build a new dorm.

Mr. Sealy said that he agreed with Mr. Jaggon's sentiment and that he thought a special use would have been appropriate.

Mr. Alford commented that there is a staff comment from the Engineering Department about ADA access to the temporary classroom and he was not sure if it was necessary or not.

Commissioner Mips said that it is because it is a public building and a school.

Mr. Alford said that he is not familiar with the requirements and did not want the condition if it were not required. He said if it is required then they will do it.

Commissioner Mips said that she believed ADA access is an automatic nowadays.

Mr. Sealy said that it would be addressed during the site plan review by the staff.

Commissioner Levine added that the fire alarm system would be reviewed as well.

Motion: Commissioner Levine moved approval of the special use for 519, 545 and 549 Palisado Avenue for temporary classrooms for a period of two years subject to staff review of the site plan, fire alarm system and ADA access.

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

IV. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS AND PETITIONS (if not completed) – None

V. ADJOURNMENT

Motion: Commissioner Levine moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:35 p.m.

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

Respectfully submitted, _____, Andrea D. Marcavitch, Recording Secretary on July 30, 2024.

Jill Levine, Secretary