

Special Meeting

The 1690th meeting of the Town of Stonington's Planning and Zoning Commission was held at the Stonington Board of Education District Office at 40 Field Street, Pawcatuck on Tuesday, March 1, 2022. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Ben Philbrick at 7:00pm. Also present for the meeting were Commissioners Fred Deichmann, Charles Sheehan, Ryan Deasy, and Lynn Conway; Alternates Gary Belke and Andy Meek; and Town Planner Keith A. Brynes. Alternate Marjorie Selinger was absent.

Seated for the meeting were Ben Philbrick, Fred Deichmann, Ryan Deasy, Charles Sheehan, and Lynn Conway.

Minutes:

Mr. Deichmann moved to approve the minutes of the February 15, 2022 meeting, seconded by Mr. Deasy, the vote was taken 4-0-1, motion approved.

Deichmann – approve, Sheehan – approve, Conway – approve, Deasy – approve, Philbrick - abstain

Commission:

Preliminary discussion regarding forthcoming local decisions on recent State Statute changes governing Accessory Dwelling Units and Residential Parking Regulations as per Connecticut Public Act 21-29.

Mr. Brynes summarized Public Act 21-29 and explained the Commission and the Board of Selectmen must decide whether to conform to or opt out of specific requirements of the public act. The town liberalized its ADU regulations in 2018, however, the public act allows significantly less restriction. The Commission must hold a public hearing with a supermajority vote to opt out and the Board of Selectmen must also approve by January 1, 2023. Additionally, there are parking requirement maximums written in the act that require the same processes in order to opt out. The Commission would have to conform fully, opt out, or amend the Regulations.

Ben Tamsky, Mystic resident, asked for further information about the differences between the Town's current regulations versus the public act.

Mr. Brynes stated that the Regulations requires the primary structure be a minimum of 2,000 square feet and the lot size must meet the minimum square footage requirement of the zoning district. A special use permit is required for an ADU in a new detached unit. Newly constructed detached units are not allowed in front of the primary structure and the applicant must apply to the Architectural Design Review Board. The public act does not have these restrictions.

Mr. Deichmann proposed to hold a public hearing to opt out in order to get public comment, and if they do opt out, to bring some of the points from the act into the comprehensive rewrite, allowing for more ADU options, but keeping valid restrictions. The commission discussed how best to communicate this to the public. Mr. Sheehan asked what other towns currently allow

Special Meeting

ADUs. Ms. Conway asked for a comparison with what other towns are doing. The commission discussed some specifics to further investigate.

Public Hearing:

PZ2202RA Town of Stonington PZC - Zoning Regulation Text Amendment application to enact a temporary moratorium on cannabis establishments so that regulations for these uses can be developed and adopted.

Mr. Brynes summarized the regulation amendment application. The proposal would provide for a six-month moratorium on applications for cannabis establishments while the commission further explores regulations around these uses. Stonington is limited to one retailer and one micro-cultivator until 2024, after which it will be reexamined. A referendum was held and the town voted to allow cannabis establishments. If approved, the moratorium would last from March 21, 2022 to September 21, 2022. During this period the commission would then have to decide on regulations for permitting the new uses. Mr. Sheehan asked about time to coordinate with the Police Commission regarding locations for traffic, safety, and parking. Mr. Brynes stated he believes there is time and they will also be able to comment on specific applications. Ms. Conway asked if there will be enough time to research what other towns have done. Mr. Brynes stated he would.

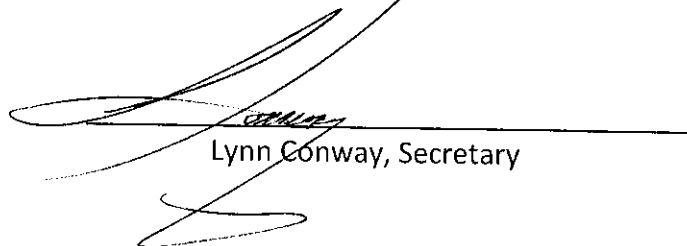
Mr. Deichmann moved to close the public hearing, seconded by Mr. Sheehan, all in favor 5-0, motion approved.

Mr. Deichmann moved to approve the application, seconded by Mr. Deasy, all in favor 5-0, motion approved.

The Effective Date of the approved amendment is March 21, 2022.

Mr. Deichmann discussed the comprehensive rewrite of the zoning regulations and that they have selected a firm to assist with the process. The process would take 18 months, meeting with the commission monthly.

Mr. Deichmann moved to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Deasy, all in favor 5-0, the meeting adjourned at 7:39pm.



Lynn Conway, Secretary