

Special Meeting

The 1719th meeting of the Town of Stonington's Planning and Zoning Commission was held virtually via WebEx on Tuesday, February 28, 2023. The meeting was called to order at 6:30pm by Chairman Ben Philbrick. Also present for the meeting were Commissioners Lynn Conway and Fred Deichmann, Alternates Andy Meek and Gary Belke, and Town Planner Keith A. Brynes. Commissioners Ryan Deasy and Charles Sheehan and Alternate Marjorie Selinger were not present.

Discussion of Comprehensive Zoning Rewrite Project with consultant, FHI Studio

Task 1.1 Review relevant plans and documents

Task 1.2 Line by line review of regulations

Task 1.3 Review Use Summary table

Task 1.4 Develop format prototypes and supplemental graphics

Task 1.5 Reformat regulations

FHI Studio Project Manager, Francisco Gomes, discussed modifications made to the draft regulations since the last meeting. These include the following:

- Section 2.4 – Clarifying the stated purposes of the floating zones.
- Section 4.4.1 – Clarifying that the Town does not allow buildings that are legally non-conforming regarding setbacks to expand vertically. The Commission requested additional language clarifying that such buildings also cannot expand horizontally. A graphic could be added.
- Section 5 – References could be added to the use chart referring readers toward relevant regulations.
- Section 5 – “Light Manufacturing” and “Advanced Manufacturing” now specifically allowed in the Town's industrial zones where all types of manufacturing are allowed.
- Clarified Home Occupation regulations for multi-family units.
- Added regulations for Temporary Health Care Structures which are permitted by state statutes.
- Modified multi-family parking standards to reflect those required under CT Public Act 21-19.
- Clarified regulations for the expansions of existing parking lots.
- Updated regulations to allow electric charging stations in building setbacks. New CT Public Act requires larger parking lots to include charging stations but many parking lots are located in building setbacks.
- Clarify Performance Standards section.
- Bonding requirements have been moved to their own section.

Mr. Gomes described several open items that need further consideration:

- Section 12.4.4 – This section requiring consistency with the residential character of a neighborhood may be inconsistent with Public Act 21-19 which prohibits land use decisions based on the “character” of a neighborhood. Other options to promote historic preservation were discussed. Consensus to change the word “shall” to “should.”
- Consensus to exempt handicap ramps to existing buildings from building setback requirements. No exemption for new construction or building additions.
- Consider adding guidance as to what constitutes an “expansion” of a Special Permit. Regulation should clarify what is “expansion” vs. allowable “intensification” and clarify what permitting is necessary for expansions.
- Add clarification regarding what triggers Architectural Design Review Board applications. Input should be received from that board.
- Clarify and slightly modify some parking lot dimensional standards. Graphics will be included for

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clarity.

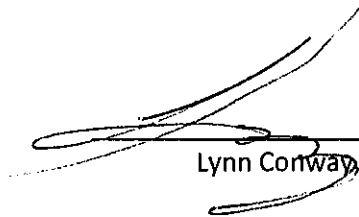
- Table summarizing various buffer requirements across zones should be developed either now or in Phase 2.

Next steps include:

- Further revise draft based upon Commission and staff comments.
- Develop additional graphics.
- Develop change log.
- Share draft regulations with ADRB and ZBA for review.
- March meeting: Review draft of complete regulations.
- April: Distribute to Regional Planning Agency and DEEP for review.
- May or June: possible public hearing for adoption of Phase 1 changes.

Mr. Philbrick discussed changing the date of workshop virtual meetings to the 4th Wednesday of each month to accommodate all members. Consensus was to change to Wednesdays beginning in April and start meetings at 7:00PM. March meeting will be the 4th *Monday* 3/27 at 7:00PM.

The meeting adjourned at 8:43PM.



Lynn Conway, Secretary