

Regular Meeting

The 1623rd meeting of the Town of Stonington's Planning and Zoning Commission was held Tuesday, October 16, 2018 at the Mystic Middle School, 204 Mistuxet Avenue, Mystic, CT. The meeting was called to order at 7:00pm by Chairman David Rathbun. Also present for the meeting were Commissioners Gardner Young, Shaun Mastroianni, Curtis Lynch, and Ben Philbrick; Alternates Fred Deichmann and Lynn Conway; Town Planner Keith Brynes, and Director of Planning Jason Vincent.

Seated for the meeting were David Rathbun, Curtis Lynch, Ben Philbrick, Gardner Young, and Shaun Mastroianni.

Minutes:

Mr. Philbrick moved to approve the minutes of the October 2, 2018 meeting, seconded by Mr. Mastroianni, all in favor 5-0, motion approved.

Administrative Review:

18-216ZON Town of Stonington (Pawcatuck Fire District) - Zoning Permit application for construction of new 60' tall antenna tower at Pawcatuck Middle School. Property located at 40 Field Street, Pawcatuck. Assessor's Map 14, Block 7, Lot 1. Zone RA-15.

The current communications tower for the Pawcatuck Fire Department is not functioning properly due to interference from trees. They would like to install a new antenna tower in a new location. The neighbors that can view it are 300-500 feet away and partially screened.

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

18-150ZON James Sullivan (Advanced Improvements) - Zoning Permit application for change of use from auto repair/gas station to retail convenience store/gas station with associated building and site modifications. Property located at 48-50 Stonington Rd, Stonington. Assessor's Map 160, Block 2, Lot 2. Zone GC-60.

The gas station hasn't been serving gas, but will be replacing the tanks and serving gas again, adding diesel, renovating to include a retail convenience store, and eliminating the traffic island near the bank. They are in FEMA flood zone AE and will stay under the substantial improvement threshold. The Architectural Review Design Board has approved the plan and recommends a water-resistant material for the columns. Mr. Lynch questioned whether there would be changes to the parking and traffic. Mr. Brynes stated that the parking meets the requirements and would make for a better traffic flow. Mr. Rathbun questioned whether the proposal included U-Haul rentals. Ms. Conway was concerned that the removal of the landscape island would make for too much asphalt, and the island should be expanded, not eliminated. Mr. Mastroianni felt the island was confusing to traffic flow. Stephan Nouslopoulos, project architect, reviewed the plans and the landscape island as originally proposed, prior to the Architectural Design Review Board's request to have it removed for safety reasons. Ms. Conway recommended adding landscaping along Route 1.

Mr. Lynch moved to approve the application with a stipulation to add the island as was originally presented to the ARDB, seconded by Mr. Mastroianni, all in favor 5-0, motion approved.

Stipulations:

1. Building improvements shall comply with all relevant Flood Hazard regulations.

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2. The landscape island shall be installed as proposed in the original application site plan. Mr. Brynes noted that Item 7A, application **PZ1825SPA & GPP BCMAN, LLC (A. Nenna)**, has been withdrawn by the owners/applicant. They will be resubmitting after they apply to the Inland Wetlands Commission.

Public Hearing:

PZ1826SUP KAC, LLC (A. Kanabis) – Special Use Permit application for modifications to previously approved applications for construction of a new, mixed use structure. Modifications include changing residential units layout to two 2nd-floor & one 3rd-floor, ingress/accessibility, and exterior building alterations. Property located at 17-19 East Main St., Mystic. Assessors Map 174 Block 2 Lot 4. Zone DB-5.

Mark Comeau, project architect, reviewed the 8 pivot points of the application changes (7 & 8 are combined):

1. Elimination of the long handicap ramp and installation of a lift. Mr. Comeau has submitted the necessary appeal paperwork to the State of Connecticut for approval of the lift.
2. On the East façade, elimination of the second inset window because it faces the neighboring property.
3. Reconfiguration of the apartments to two apartments on the second floor and one on the third to better fit the market. Four seats in the restaurant will be eliminated to accommodate parking requirements.
4. Remove the cupola and add a balustrade to hide the mechanicals on the roof. Based on a ground sightline, a balustrade at a minimum height of 34" is proposed.
5. Addition of a dormer between the gables in order to address the massing of the roof. A model was built for the Architectural Review Design Board and they agreed with the new design.
6. The French door balconies on the third floor were removed, replaced with an iron rail.
7. The layout of the windows and door on the south elevation was reconfigured with a new style of windows on both sides of the center door. The new windows will open down rather than up. The second-floor window layout has also been reconfigured.

Public Comment in Favor:

Mark Spruance, representing Whaler's Inn, spoke in favor of the application modifications.

No Public Comment Against**No General Comment**

Mr. Brynes reviewed comments from outside reviewers and one stipulation about the handicap ramp/lift.

Ms. Conway stated concern with the longer balustrade in comparison to the cupola. Mr. Rathbun stated that the balustrade will be shorter in perception, and with the removal of the cupola, the building height has been reduced. Mr. Comeau explained that it is much further back than it appears on the flat elevation, stating that they will build it to the best design. Mr. Deichmann questioned who is responsible for ensuring the eliminated restaurant seats are not added back in after a CO is issued. Mr. Vincent explained that a Zoning Compliance Restaurant Seating Certificate is issued and required to be posted on site, enabling the Zoning Enforcement Officer to confirm seating compliance.

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

Mr. Lynch moved to approve the application with two stipulations, seconded by Mr. Young, all in favor 5-0, motion approved.

Stipulations:

1. Should the proposed handicapped lift not be permitted per Building Code, the previously approved ramp may be constructed without additional Commission approvals.
2. The applicant's architect shall work with staff to find an acceptable solution to ensure both functional and aesthetic requirements of the roof balustrade. Final approval of balustrade shall not require Planning & Zoning Commission action.

Mr. Mastroianni moved to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Philbrick, all in favor 5-0, the meeting adjourned at 7:51pm.



Shaun Mastroianni, Secretary