

**SUFFIELD ZONING AND PLANNING COMMISSION  
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING  
AUGUST 17, 2009**

**Present:** Frank E. Bauchiero, Jr., Chairman  
John Conley, Jr.  
Mark Winne, Alternate  
Charles Sheehan, Alternate  
Frank Ravenola  
Glen Vincent

**Absent:** Chester Kuras, Vice Chairman  
John O'Malley, Secretary

**Also Present:** Bill Hawkins, Town Planner  
Jim Taylor, Zoning Enforcement Officer  
Karen Doyon, Administrative Secretary

**I. ROLL CALL**

Chairman Bauchiero called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m., during which time he asked the Administrative Secretary to take a silent roll call, and reported that there was no Legal Notice to be read into the record.

**II. NEW BUSINESS**

**File #: 61-2009:** Request from Zoning and Planning Commission to amend the Zoning Regulations by adding under: Section IV.L. PROHIBITED USES, letter bb. and cc.; Section II., DEFINITIONS, adding: Greenhouse / Membrane Structure / Customary Home Office or Occupation / Drive-thru and; Section IX., SIGNAGE, adding number eight (8). Chairman Bauchiero asked if Mr. Taylor or Mr. Hawkins would like to report on the recommended house-keeping changes to the Zoning Regulations. Mr. Taylor began by stating that in order for him to enforce certain issues that have recently come across his desk, he put together a draft for the Commission to discuss and consider taking to a public hearing. Mr. Taylor offered the following:

Adding letter bb to Section IV.L., Prohibited Uses; The burial of stumps, logs, branches or other construction debris such as scrap lumber, metal, concrete, asphalt or other discarded materials. Mr. Taylor reported that the Subdivision Regulations state that the burial of stumps is prohibited, but can be difficult to enforce because they are not part of the Zoning Regulations.

Adding letter cc to Section IV.L., Prohibited Uses; the placement of Membrane Structures (see section II Definitions) in residential zoning districts as an accessory use to a residence. Mark Winne arrived (7:05). Membrane Structures, better known as hoop houses are permitted [with a permit through the Building Department] on farms and residential property. He said hoop houses are getting out of control and being assembled without permits, some [very large in size on residential property] are in serious violation of front and side yard setbacks. He recommended that the regulations prohibit these structures on residential property [allowing existing hoop houses to be grandfathered in if they have permits]. The Commission asked Mr. Taylor if the structures are inspected for structural integrity, and if they come

with specifications for installation. Mr. Taylor said he is not responsible for inspecting structures nor would he have information on the specifications, that information he said would be provided by the Building Department. The Commission had brief discussions on grandfathering in the existing structures, procedure, and specifications for assembling greenhouses and hoop houses. It was suggested by Mr. Sheehan, if the proposal goes forward, that a notice could be put in the newspaper saying that the Town will be adopting new regulation for hoop houses and in order to be grandfathered in you must have a building permit...

Mr. Taylor stated that under Section II. DEFINITIONS, he has added the following:

**GREENHOUSE:** *A building made mainly of glass or other transparent or translucent material in which the temperature or humidity can be regulated for the cultivation of plants.*

**MEMBRANE STRUCTURE:** *A structure with a frame consisting of tubular metal, plastic, wood or any other framing material and covered with plastic or other membrane fabric material. Also known as a "hoop house". Not to be construed with greenhouse (see section II Definitions).*

**CUSTOMARY HOME OFFICE OR OCCUPATION: (Last Paragraph)**

*Commercial operations such as massage therapists, tearooms, antique shops, barbershops, beauty shops, etc, are not to be considered customary home occupations.*

**DRIVE-THRU:** *A vehicular lane with storage in a line of approach to a bank facility or retail pharmacy only, which permits bank customers to conduct banking business or pharmacy customers to purchase prescription drugs. This use requires a special permit.*

Mr. Taylor read the section of the regulations pertaining to Customary Home Office or Occupation, and then he explained the reasons for the change to add massage therapists. There was a brief discussion on changing the verbiage of the proposed amendments, after which it was decided to keep it the same.

Mr. Taylor briefly discussed the reason for adding drive-thru for a retail pharmacy to the regulations. He added that they have only allowed drive-thru for banks, but it is time to bring the town into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century and now allow it for a retail pharmacy.

Lastly, Mr. Taylor stated that he would like to put something back into the regulations under Section IX. SIGNAGE; *(8) All signs shall be located behind the street line.* Mr. Taylor said that there was a regulation prior to 2004 stating that all "signs shall be located in back of street line", but removed after 2004. Mr. Taylor reported that a certain part of the regulations for street signs is not clear and could be challenged; putting it back in the regulations would take out any guess work and would allow him to enforce it. It was discussed and decided to take out the words "in back of" and insert "behind the" to the proposed change. There was a brief discussion on what is not allowed by the State with regards to street signs. With nothing further, Chairman Bauchiero asked if the members would like to accept the application and set a public hearing date, and if so, he asked for a motion. Mr. Sheehan made the motion to accept the application and set the public hearing date, [after brief discussion] the public hearing date was set for September 21, 2009; and take out the wording "in back of" under the proposed Section IX. SIGNAGE, to read "behind the" seconded by Mr. Ravenola. Motion carried unanimously 4-0-0.

### III. REPORTS

Mr. Hawkins handed out the latest changes he had made to the Plan of Conservation and Development [PoCD]. He stated that his changes are an update from the 1999 Plan and made the assumption that the vision for the Town has not changed much over the past ten years. He mentioned there are a few pieces of text missing, with the exception of that; he confidently assured the Commission that they are ready to go the next level and meet with and possibly hire a Consultant to help facilitate the discussions at the future public workshop meetings. There is \$10,000 available in the consultant use line item which could be used to hire a consultant; Mr. Hawkins said he is looking forward to meeting with a few. Mr. Hawkins proposed a projection for setting up workshops in late September or October, with the target date of July 1, 2010. Mr. Sheehan asked if anybody other than Mr. Hawkins has worked on the Plan. Mr. Hawkins stated that he has been the only one working on the Plan to date, with input from Commissions and Committees. Mr. Winne and Mr. Sheehan had some ideas and comments for Mr. Hawkins on studies and strategic plans on the growth of the town. In terms of outreach, there was a brief discussion on different ways to set up workshops to get the public involved but, the overall consensus was that the consultant would help them with that aspect. There was a brief discussion to possibly adopt the PoCD as a working document verses updating the Plan every ten years. Mr. Hawkins said he will continue to put together information as he receives it, during which he will meet with some consultants.

Chairman Bauchiero informed the Commission that when Mr. Carboneau left they no longer have a representative to attend the Capitol Region Council of Governments [CRCoG] meetings and asked if anybody would be interested in volunteering their service as being the Commissions representative. Mr. Sheehan said he would be interested as long as it does not turn out to be a conflict for him, he said he would check with his attorney and let the Commission know.

#### **IV. MINUTES**

Chairman Bauchiero asked if there were any changes or comments to the June 15, 2009 regular meeting minutes. With none the Chair asked for a motion. Mr. Sheehan made the motion to approve the June 15, 2009 minutes with no changes, seconded by Mr. Ravenola. Motion carried unanimously 4-0-0.

#### **V. ADJOURNMENT**

Chairman Bauchiero asked if there was anything else the Commission wanted to address. With none, the Chair asked for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Conley made the motion, seconded by Mr. Ravenola to adjourn the August 17, 2009 regular meeting at 8:00 p.m. Motion carried unanimously 4-0-0.

Respectfully Submitted,

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John O'Malley, Secretary

cc: Assessor, Building Official, Conservation Commission, Economic Development Director, Selectmen, Town Clerk, Town Engineer, Zoning Enforcement Officer, Commission Counsel, File