



To: Planning & Zoning Commission

From: Jeremy DeCarli, Planning & Zoning Official

RE: April 5, 2023 Planning and Zoning Commission Regular Meeting – Staff Notes

Date: March 30, 2023

The following are staff notes and comments as they relate to agenda items. Additional information and documents are available on the website. The status of applications is subject to change between the date of this memo and the date of the meeting.

**3. Communications, Liaison Reports, and Public Comments** (Use the “Raise Your Hand” feature to speak)

- A.** A letter was received from Peter Pach concerning the landscaping requirements at 265 West High Street (Global Storage). Staff will be reviewing the existing landscape and will ensure that all requirements are met.
- B.** We received a withdrawal of application for both the zone change and the open space subdivision proposal at 37 South Main Street. The applicant intends to submit a new application consistent with the existing HOD zone.

**6. New Business:**

- A. PZC-23-004: Brittany Hall & Caley Brooks**, 6 Oakum Dock Road, Site Plan Review for Agriculture Buildings, 4.2.C, Map 01C/ Block 9/ Lot 5-1

This application contemplates an agricultural use on the property. As the property is zoned R-2, agricultural site plans must be approved by the Commission.

The current proposal includes several small buildings, a parking area for both those working the farm and any visitors, along with an existing driveway.

Recommendation: The plan meets the requirements of the regulation and should be approved.

- B. PZC-23-005: Lynn Robinson**, 27 North Main Street, Special Permit for conversion to different non-conforming use, 8.2.D, Map 01A/ Block 39A/ Lot 15

This application contemplates the conversion of one non-conforming use to another non-conforming use using the provision found in Section 8.2.D of the Zoning Regulation. Specifically, the proposal is to convert the former bus dispatch and office space in the lower level of the home at 27 North Main Street to a small shop for custom craft work. As this request is for a Special Permit, a Public Hearing is required.

Recommendation: If the Commission desires, a Public Hearing should be scheduled for May 3, 2023.

- C. PZC-006: Jeff Dondero**, 363 West High Street, Site Plan Modification for Landscaping Business Display, Map 01C/ Block 10/ Lot 2A

This application contemplates installing a display on a vacant portion of the property at 363 West High Street, home of DaVinci Pizza. The idea is essentially a showroom without staff or a sales office. Dondero landscape will be displaying sheds and stone products that they use. The use can be classified as a retail store less than 25,000 square feet which is allowed as a Site Plan under Section 5.2 of the Zoning Regulations. The proposed location is within the gravel area to the east of the current restaurant and parking lot.

A review of parking requirements for this use is not standard. Parking requirements are typically tied to building size. In this case, there is no building, and it is not anticipated that visitors would be staying for any length of time.

There is no parking requirement specifically tied to a showroom or unmanned retail area. As such, in accordance with 7.1.B.3, the Commission should determine the most comparable use within the parking requirement table and base the number of parking spaces on the requirements for that use. In this case, Staff recommends considering "Roadside Stand" for a total of between 1 and 5 parking spaces for the use.

The restaurant, including the patio area contains approximately 2000 square feet and seating for 16, requiring between 5 and 10 parking spaces. The property has 21 striped parking spaces (though the striping is mostly worn off). As such, the property has sufficient parking to support the proposed use.

Recommendation: Approve the Site Plan for the reason that it meets the requirements of the Zoning Regulations. If signage is proposed, the Commission could condition the approval on review of signage by staff.

- D. PZC-23-008: Global Self Storage, LLC, 1 Sinco Place, Site Plan Modification to convert use of existing day care building to laboratory/office, installation of four new parking spaces, and installation of new access drive from Middletown Ave in I Zone. Map 06/ Block 14/ Lot 7**

This application contemplates a use change for the building which currently houses MySchool daycare. MySchool is closing, and Metrical, a business which currently occupies another building on the site, is interested in moving into the MySchool building as they continue to grow. In addition to a use change, the application includes a new driveway access to Middletown Avenue, and conversion of the existing play area four new parking spaces. The building in question is approximately 4,000 square feet.

MetriCal is a testing and calibration facility with office space, most closely aligned with a research facility as allowed in the Zoning Regulation. No parking requirements related to this use are found in the regulations, so here again, the Commission is asked to consider the most closely comparable use. Staff recommends looking to the light industrial requirements, which call for between 8 and 16 parking spaces for this use. The site currently includes 7 parking spaces, the additional 4 will bring the total to 11, squarely in the middle of the required parking range.

No other improvements are proposed to the site.

Recommendation: Approve the site plan as it complies with the Zoning Regulation.

**E. PZC-23-007: Town of East Hampton, 7 Summit Street, Site Plan Modification for 12' x 8' greenhouse, Map 05A/ Block 62/ Lot 31**

Center School has been awarded a grant to construct a greenhouse on the property to serve the farm to table program within the schools, where students grow vegetables which get used within the kitchen at the various schools. The proposed greenhouse would be constructed in the island formed by the existing drive aisle and walkways near a utility pole. The Commission is asked to consider this proposal and grant a Site Plan Modification for the installation of the greenhouse.

Recommendation: Approve the Site Plan Modification as it meets the requirements found within the Zoning Regulations for accessory structures.

**F. Discussion: Regional Housing Committee**

As a follow up to the Regional Housing Plan created by the Lower Connecticut River Valley Council of Governments, the COG is in the process of creating a Regional Housing Committee to oversee the implementation of the Plan within the Region. The concept is for each of the 17 towns to participate and have a representative sit on the Committee. At this point, it is up to the Towns to determine whether or not to participate and who the representative should be. Since housing falls under the jurisdiction of planning, it seems prudent to begin the discussion with the PZC and have the Commission send any comments or recommendations to the Council for their consideration. As noted in the Plan, the Committee is intended to be a voluntary association of the municipalities with representation from those that choose to be a part. RiverCOG will provide staffing and support.

Recommendation from the Housing Plan: *“A Regional Housing Commission should be created as a voluntary association of the Region’s municipalities with representation from each community. This Commission could be hosted by RiverCOG, which would provide staffing and support. It is envisioned that the Commission would grow in scope and responsibility over time but remain focused on supporting local efforts to diversify housing stock.”*