

SHELTON PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, March 12, 2025
Shelton City Hall (In Person & Virtual)
54 Hill Street, Shelton, CT 06484

PZC Commissioners Present:

Virginia Harger, Chairwoman
Charles Kelly, Vice-Chairman
Elaine Matto, Secretary
Ruth Parkins
Robert Cristiano
Jimmy Tickey (Joined at 6:14 p.m.)
Matt McGee, Alternate (Seated for Comm, Tickey from
6:13 p.m. until 6:14 p.m.)

TRANSCRIBED, BUT
NOT YET REVIEWED OR
APPROVED BY SPZC

Also Present:

Attorney Francis Teodosio, Corporation Counsel
(Joined at 6:13 p.m.)
Alexandrea Castro, Asst. Planning and Zoning Admin.
Stephanie Charboneau, Stenographer
Sarah Vournazos, Recording Secretary

PZC Commissioner Excused:

Win Oppel, Alternate

USB disks, correspondences, and attachments are on file in the City/Town Clerk's office and the Planning and Zoning office. Minutes are on the City of Shelton website: www.cityofshelton.org.

I. Call to Order

Chair Harger called the meeting to order at 6:06 p.m.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

All those who were present rose and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. Roll Call

Chair Harger identified members present and gave the meeting protocol.

IV. Applications for Certificate of Zoning Compliance

1. Galbi, 801 Bridgeport Avenue, for a sign.

Chair Harger indicated that Galbi is a Korean steakhouse and Comm. Kelly mentioned that Galbi means "ribs" in Korean. Mr. David Gunia, Fountain Square, Shelton, CT addressed the Commission. He mentioned that the window dressing is part of their theme. Chair Harger informed staff to have the applicant "definitely" come back to the Commission before they install.

Motion made by Comm. Parkins, seconded by Comm. Kelly to approve the logo, the two lines identifying the tenant on the front of the building, the two

lines identifying the tenant on the side of the building and not the window dressing. On a voice vote taken by Chair Harger, the PZC voted 6 – 0 in favor of, with no Commissioner voting no or abstaining.

2. Woodside Plaza, 725 Bridgeport Avenue, for a sign.
Comm. Kelly and Comm. Parkins relayed they are interested in where the signs will be placed for the individual businesses.

Motion made by Comm. Parkins, seconded by Comm. Cristiano to approve the sign. On a voice vote taken by Chair Harger, the PZC voted 6 – 0 in favor of, with no Commissioner voting no or abstaining.

Mr. Brian Desanty, ABC Sign Corp., Bridgeport, CT addressed the Commission. He indicated the letters will be illuminated on a raceway which will go on the brick. Chair Harger informed staff to contact the applicant and for them to prepare an overall sign plan for the tenant signs.

3. Orcas Family Cuts, 415 River Road, for a sign.
Comm. Kelly indicated that the sign subcommittee would like to make sure that the brackets are anchored to the building and not just to the canopy. Chair Harger noted her concern about the sign already being installed without an approval. She strongly expressed that she would like the applicant to attend their next meeting and said, “no ifs, ands or buts.” She would like any business which opens in the City of Shelton to do their due diligence and make sure they are aware of the sign process.

Motion made by Comm. Kelly, seconded by Comm. Tickey to table the sign for denial for Orcas Family Cuts. On a voice vote taken by Chair Harger, the PZC voted 6 – 0 in favor of, with no Commissioner voting no or abstaining.

4. Total Mortgage, 410 Howe Avenue, for a sign.
Comm. Kelly recommended approval for the sign “as is.”

Motion made by Comm. Tickey, seconded by Comm. Cristiano to approve the sign. On a voice vote taken by Chair Harger, the PZC voted 6 – 0 in favor of, with no Commissioner voting no or abstaining.

5. The Commissary, 1-3 Huntington Street, for a sign.
Comm. Kelly recommended approval for the sign “as is.” Comm. Parkins noted she would not like the sign to be any larger than the Huntington Paint sign, “just so there is some visual balance.”

Motion made by Comm. Parkins, seconded by Comm. Kelly to approve the sign as is and to not make it any larger than the Huntington Paint sign. On a voice vote taken by Chair Harger, the PZC voted 6 – 0 in favor of, with no Commissioner voting no or abstaining.

6. Citgo, 265 Bridgeport Avenue, for a sign.
Comm. Kelly relayed that the applicant complied with the recommendations of the sign subcommittee. Comm. Parkins mentioned that there is a Subway or something which may be noted in the white area and Ms. Castro said they would have to come back to the Commission.

Motion made by Comm. Parkins, seconded by Comm. Kelly to approve the sign as submitted. On a voice vote taken by Chair Harger, the PZC voted 6 – 0 in favor of, with no Commissioner voting no or abstaining.

7. MJs Ammo Saloon, 514 Bridgeport Avenue, for a business.
Mr. Justin Bruno, Shelton, CT addressed the Commission. He is the applicant and indicated that it is a retail store for firearms, accessories, guns, ammunition and safes but with no live fire. Comm. Parkins inquired about gun shows and Mr. Bruno replied that it is “strictly the sales of firearms for individuals who come in with their permit.”

Mr. Bruno indicated that there is no fire range on site but there is a Milo system, which is like a video game. Comm. Tickey wanted to know about the hours of operation and Mr. Bruno noted he is still working that out. Comm. Cristiano asked Mr. Bruno if he is the permittee and he said that he is the only one responsible for the firearm sales and he is the owner.

Comm. Parkins inquired about the security and Mr. Bruno replied that there will be steel gates which will slide on all of the windows and doors, behind the glass. Mr. Bruno relayed that the property will be monitored for 24 hours per day and for 365 days per year. There will be a full security and alarm system and he stated, “the entire building is a safe.” Comm. Parkins asked about panic buttons and Mr. Bruno said the alarm company could install them.

Attorney Dominick Thomas from Cohen & Thomas, Derby, CT addressed the Commission on behalf of the applicant. He mentioned that PDD #48 was approved in 2004 and it allows for retail sales.

Comm. Parkins mentioned that there is a person from the public who would like to make a comment. Chair Harger noted that it would be appropriate to hear them and Attorney Thomas said, “there is nothing prohibiting the Commission from allowing a member of the public to speak.” However, Comm. Parkins expressed that since they do not allow Alternate Commissioners to participate in the discussion then she does not feel it is right to allow someone from the public to speak and the Commissioners agreed.

Motion made by Comm. Kelly, seconded by Comm. Cristiano to approve the commercial business, MJs Ammo Saloon, with contingencies that there would be no special events, they do not have live fire testing, and there would be two panic buttons installed under the counter. On a roll call vote taken by Chair Harger, the PZC voted as follows:

Comm. Parkins – Nay Comm. Matto – Abstain Comm. Kelly – Aye
Comm. Tickey – Aye Comm. Cristiano – Aye Chair Harger – Aye

The motion passed 4 to 1 to 1.

V. New Business

A. Application #25-01, J&L Enterprise, LLC., at 74 Todd Road (Assessors Map 63, lot 22) in an IA-3 Zone for a Planned Development District, for an five story 89 unit 55 and older multi-family residential building (four story residential, one story parking). Accept and set public hearing.

Motion made by Comm. Tickey, seconded by Comm. Kelly to accept for review and to set a public hearing. On a roll call vote taken by Chair Harger, the PZC voted as follows:

Comm. Parkins – Aye Comm. Tickey – Aye Comm. Cristiano – Aye
Comm. Matto – Aye Comm. Kelly – Aye Chair Harger – Aye

The motion passed 6 to 0.

Add On

Ms. Alexandra Castro, Assistant Planning and Zoning Administrator, addressed the Commission. She noted that an application was received after the agenda was submitted but the timeclock for it would start today.

Motion made by Comm. Parkins, seconded by Comm. Tickey to add Application #24-02 to the agenda. On a voice vote taken by Chair Harger, the PZC voted 6 – 0 in favor of, with no Commissioner voting no or abstaining.

Motion made by to Comm. Tickey, seconded by Comm. Kelly to accept Appl. #24-02, PDD #91, Dominick Thomas for Fountain Square LLC at 745-801 Bridgeport Avenue (Assessor’s Map 28, Lot 18) for a major modification to a PDD to modify the Statement of Uses and Standards to include veterinary care use with a motion to accept for review and to set a public hearing. On a roll call vote taken by Chair Harger, the PZC voted as follows:

Comm. Parkins – Aye Comm. Tickey – Aye Comm. Matto – Aye
Comm. Cristiano – Aye Comm. Kelly – Aye Chair Harger – Aye

The motion passed 6 to 0.

Ms. Castro and Chair Harger indicated that the motion is for Appl. #25-02 and not Appl. #24-02.

Motion made by to Comm. Tickey, seconded by Comm. Kelly to accept Appl. #25-02, PDD #91, Dominick Thomas for Fountain Square LLC at 745-801 Bridgeport Avenue (Assessor’s Map 28, Lot 18) for a major modification to a

PDD to modify the Statement of Uses and Standards to include veterinary care use with a motion to accept for review and to set a public hearing. On a roll call vote taken by Chair Harger, the PZC voted as follows:

Comm. Parkins – Aye	Comm. Tickey – Aye	Comm. Matto – Aye
Comm. Cristiano – Aye	Comm. Kelly – Aye	Chair Harger – Aye

The motion passed 6 to 0.

VI. Public Hearing

- B. Application #24-30 Steve Bellis for Stephen Shapiro, proposal to amend the Shelton Planning & Zoning regulations by adding Section 37: Age Restricted Residential Development. Continuation of the Public Hearing; review, discuss and possible action.

Chair Harger relayed that the applicant submitted a written request today for Appl. #24-30 to be continued. Ms. Castro noted that the applicant is “beyond the timeline” and Comm. Parkins wants to be sure that there is a formal extension letter submitted. Chair Harger expressed that if the applicant is not ready for their next meeting, then he has to withdraw his application and there will be fees for his next one.

Motion made by Comm. Parkins, seconded by Comm. Matto to continue the public hearing with the stipulation that we get a formal letter and this is the last extension. On a roll call vote taken by Chair Harger, the PZC voted as follows:

Comm. Matto – Aye	Comm. Cristiano – Aye	Comm. Tickey – Aye
Comm. Kelly – Nay	Comm. Parkins – Aye	Chair Harger – Aye

The motion passed 5 to 1.

- A. Application #24-20, Dominick Thomas for Crown Point II LLC at 0 Bridgeport Avenue and 48 Long Hill Crossroads. (Assessor’s Map 50, Lots 15 & 16) in a LIP zone for a Planned Development District, for a mixed-use commercial development to include a hotel, restaurants, grocery and retail. Continuation of the Public Hearing; review, discuss and possible action.

Chair Harger indicated that Appl. #24-20 was accepted for review on July 10, 2024. The public hearing opened on September 18, 2024 and was continued until November 20, 2024, January 22, 2025, February 5th and 26th, 2025. She mentioned that a 4th revised Statement of Uses and Standards, a 5th revised site plan and a lighting plan were filed by the applicant. She relayed that Attorney Thomas was unable to respond to the public comments at their last public hearing due to a computer issue.

Attorney Dominick Thomas from Cohen & Thomas, Derby, CT addressed the Commission on behalf of the applicant. He mentioned he does not have any responses to make to the public comments previously made and noted that he

will be presenting to the Inland Wetlands Commission tomorrow night. Comm. Kelly inquired about an application for the City of Shelton's WPCA and Attorney Thomas replied that they approved the relocation of the sewer line. Ms. Castro reminded the Commissioners that their regulations require confirmation of sewer connection and that prior to submitting the final site development plans, the applicant needs approval from the WPCA.

Comm. Tickey inquired about a person who would like to speak regarding Appl. #24-20 but Chair Harger pointed out that there has been no new information submitted since the prior public hearing. Comm. Matto said, "we do want the public to feel like they can participate."

A ten-minute recess was observed beginning at 7:06 p.m. and the meeting resumed at 7:16 p.m.

Attorney Francis Teodosio, Corporation Counsel, addressed the Commission. He mentioned that the public hearing is still open and the Commission could follow their protocol or force to have a vote.

Motion made by Comm. Tickey, seconded by Comm. Parkins to allow the public to speak for the public hearing. On a roll call vote taken by Chair Harger, the PZC voted as follows:

Comm. Tickey – Aye	Comm. Parkins – Aye	Comm. Cristiano – Aye
Comm. Kelly – Aye	Comm. Matto – Aye	Chair Harger – Nay

The motion passed 5 to 1.

Chair Harger opened up the public portion and the following member spoke regarding Appl. #24-20:

1. Ms. Julie Vostinak, Shelton, CT addressed the Commission. She referenced the proposed housing development above the parcel, noting that it is a bit "misleading" that the residents of Hawks Ridge are "okay with others buying homes above a development." She mentioned that she bought her home without having a development below her.
2. Attorney Brian McCann, Pullman & Comley LLC., Bridgeport, CT addressed the Commission on behalf of Hawk's Ridge. He asked the Commission to consider the buffer areas along Long Hill Cross Road. He mentioned that the City of Shelton's Planning and Zoning regulations provide for a driveway in an LIP Zone to not occur in a residential setback and said, "that's going to be nearly impossible on the upper half of this property."

Attorney Thomas replied to the residents' comments. He relayed that his client has agreed to extend the buffer beyond the PDD.

Motion made by Comm. Parkins, seconded by Comm. Kelly to close the public hearing. On a roll call vote taken by Chair Harger, the PZC voted as follows:

Comm. Cristiano – Aye	Comm. Tickey – Aye	Comm. Matto – Aye
Comm. Parkins – Aye	Comm. Kelly – Aye	Chair Harger – Aye

The motion passed 6 to 0.

VII. Public Portion

Chair Harger asked if there was anyone from the public who wished to comment

1. Mr. Mike Fidel, Shelton, CT addressed the Commission. He is the President of the Home Owner's Association for Hawk's Ridge. He mentioned that he formed a group of owners and attorneys and said, "I think it turned out pretty well between the experience of this group of the P and Z members, plus the attorney, plus the developer listening to our wants and needs."
2. Mr. Thomas Harbinson, Shelton, CT addressed the Commission. He referenced Robert's Rules of Order, noting that a member may abstain from voting on a motion for any reason but if a member recuses themselves then they have to state why.

Mr. Harbinson mentioned the approval of Appl. #23-08 and stated that "the proposal put forth that the abiding city-owned parcel of permanently protected open space, since deed restricted from residential use was a non-residential area, and provided qualification as such for the subject parcel to be in a transition area, your Commission approval accepted that precedent." He noted that the Conservation Commission wrote a letter on March 12, 2025 regarding PDDs being interpreted as transition areas between open space parcels and residential zones. He said, "the PDD is continuing to impact our community when used for residential development despite the guidance recommendation from the plan of conservation and development update in 2017."

VIII. Other Business

B. Comments from Chairperson and Subcommittee Chairpersons

Chair Harger expressed her condolences to Attorney Teodosio of the passing of his brother-in-law.

C. Staff Comments

No comments were made.

D. Minutes for Approval

- i. February 19, 2025

Motion made by Comm. Parkins, seconded by Comm. Cristiano to approve

the February 19, 2025 minutes as submitted. On a roll call vote taken by Chair Harger, the PZC voted as follows:

Comm. Parkins – Aye Comm. Cristiano – Aye Comm. Kelly – Aye
Comm. Tickey – Aye Comm. Matto – Aye Chair Harger – Abstain
The motion passed 5 to 0 to 1.

ii. February 26, 2025

Motion made by Comm. Kelly, seconded by Comm. Parkins to approve the February 26, 2025 minutes as submitted. On a roll call vote taken by Chair Harger, the PZC voted as follows:

Comm. Parkins – Aye Comm. Cristiano – Aye Comm. Kelly – Aye
Comm. Tickey – Aye Comm. Matto – Aye Chair Harger – Abstain

The motion passed 5 to 0 to 1.

A. Executive Session: 2 Mohawk Drive, 801 Bridgeport Avenue

Motion made by Comm. Cristiano, seconded by Comm. Kelly to into Executive Session with inviting Attorney Teodosio to attend. On a voice vote taken by Chair Harger, the PZC voted 6 – 0 in favor of, with no Commissioner voting no or abstaining.

Motion made by Comm. Kelly, seconded by Comm. Cristiano to come out of Executive Session at 8:02 p.m. and with the notation that no votes were taken. On a roll call vote taken by Chair Harger, the PZC voted as follows:

Comm. Parkins – Aye Comm. Kelly – Aye Comm. Matto – Aye
Comm. Tickey – Aye Comm. Cristiano – Aye Chair Harger – Aye

The motion passed 6 to 0.

IX. Adjournment Chair Harger adjourned at 8:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Vournazos
Recording Secretary