



TOWN OF OLD SAYBROOK  
**Zoning Commission**

302 Main Street • Old Saybrook, Connecticut 06475-1741  
Telephone (860) 395-3131 • FAX (860) 395-1216  
www.oldsaybrookct.org

*Mark R. Caldarella, Chairman*  
*Geraldine M. Lewis, Vice Chairman*  
*John Henry, Secretary*  
*Robert C. Friedmann*  
*Laura Gray*

**Alternate Members**  
*Justin Terrible*  
*Brenda Dyson*  
*Michael Kelly*

**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**  
**HYBRID MEETING**

Wednesday, January 17, 2024 – 7:00 P.M.  
Town Hall, 1st Floor Conference Room  
302 Main Street, Old Saybrook

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Vice Chairman G. Lewis called the meeting to order at 7:07 P.M.

**II. ROLL CALL**

Attendant Members: G. Lewis, L. Gray, seated alternates B. Dyson, M. Kelly

Absent Members: M. Caldarella, R. Friedmann, J. Henry, J. Terrible

Attendant Staff: C. Costa, ZEO/Town Planner; J. Galli, Recording Clerk

Three members of the public attended with two more via Zoom.

**III. REGULAR BUSINESS**

**A. MINUTES**

**MOTION to APPROVE** the Regular Meeting Minutes of January 3, 2023 as presented  
**MADE:** G. Lewis **SECONDED:** L. Gray **VOTING IN FAVOR:** G. Lewis, L. Gray, B.  
Dyson, M. Kelly **OPPOSED:** None **ABSTAINING:** None **APPROVED:** 4-0-0.

**B. CORRESPONDENCE**

An invoice for \$2,336 was received from Halloran & Sage for legal counsel.

**MOTION to APPROVE** payment of invoice # 111429531 in the amount of \$2,336 to  
Halloran & Sage for legal counsel as presented **MADE:** G. Lewis **SECONDED:** L. Gray  
**VOTING IN FAVOR:** G. Lewis, L. Gray, B. Dyson, M. Kelly **OPPOSED:** None  
**ABSTAINING:** None **APPROVED:** 4-0-0.

**C. ELECTION OF REPRESENTATIVE TO IWWC**

**MOTION to nominate and elect** M. Caldarella as representative to IWWC as presented  
**MADE:** G. Lewis **SECONDED:** M. Kelly **VOTING IN FAVOR:** G. Lewis, L. Gray, B.  
Dyson, M. Kelly **OPPOSED:** None **ABSTAINING:** None **APPROVED:** 4-0-0.

#### IV. PUBLIC HEARINGS

**“Van Wilgen’s Garden Center” Application for Special Exception Use** for a garden center development with two seasonal greenhouses, shed/outdoor display area and parking on 18,362 s.f. property at 1560 Boston Post Road, Map 26/Lot 30, Gateway Business B-4 District, Coastal Area Management Zone.

*Applicant: Stanislaw Szewczyk    Agent: Attorney Edward M. Cassella*

At the request of the applicant, the opening of this hearing has been continued to February 21, 2023.

**MOTION** to continue opening of Public Hearing for **“Van Wilgen’s Garden Center” Application for Special Exception Use** for a garden center development with two seasonal greenhouses, shed/outdoor display area and parking on 18,362 s.f. property at 1560 Boston Post Road, Map 26/Lot 30, Gateway Business B-4 District, Coastal Area Management Zone to the regularly scheduled meeting of Wednesday, February 21, 2024 at 7 P.M. in Old Saybrook Town Hall, 1st Floor Conference Room as presented **MADE:** M. Kelly **SECONDED:** G. Lewis **VOTING IN FAVOR:** G. Lewis, L. Gray, B. Dyson, M. Kelly **OPPOSED:** None **ABSTAINING:** None **APPROVED:** 4-0-0.

#### V. DISCUSSION

##### A. **“Contractor’s Storage Building” Preliminary Discussion**

23 Schoolhouse Road, Map 27/Lot 26, Gateway Business District

Owner: 23 Schoolhouse Road, LLC. Agent: Anthony Ruitto

Mr. Ruitto purchased the property and experienced flooding issues along the neighboring property Save-A-Tree. To alleviate the flooding, he dug along the property line and added trap rock to address the flooding issue and installed a 6’ high fence. Ruitto is working with J. Wren to prepare a Special Exception application. As part of the application, a perimeter landscaping buffer is required by the Zoning Regulations. The perimeter landscaping buffer area is the same area that is dug out and filled with trap rock for drainage. To install the landscaping, the rocks would need to be dug out. The area where the traprock is located currently has a 6’ high fence creating a buffer along the Saigon City and Save-A-Tree properties.

Section 63 of the Regulations allows with the approval of the Commission the substitution of a fence for perimeter landscaping for screening. A. Ruitto proposes to keep the fence with rocks for drainage and create a more extensive perimeter landscaping buffer along the Save-A-Tree property line where there is no fence and along the Mitchell property line. Ruitto offered to install trees and buffer plantings larger than the minimum required if he can keep the drainage and substitute the fence as screening on the other area of the property.

The Commission did not object to the proposal and advised Mr. Ruitto that they looked forward to reviewing his application in the future.

**B. “Gulf Station/Sam’s Store” Preliminary Discussion**

685 Boston Post Road, Map 36/Lot 102, Shopping Center B-2 District

*Owner/ Agent: Syed Kazam*

S. Kazam presented. He would like to replace an air pump that is irreparable with a combo air pump/vacuum unit. He would also like to relocate it closer to the road which would obstruct a parking space, because he said that would be a safer spot for it. There is no zoning survey in the file, no accurate site plan and no plans that are up to date for the property. Mr. Kazam would like the Commission to waive their previous requirement of an A2 Survey due to cost.

The Commission agreed that an A-2 survey is required – that important information would be obtained from it especially if it’s compliant with parking. Kazam then asked if he can replace the unit with the newer combo unit in the same location. The Commission questioned whether this would add another use to the special exception permit and had concerns that opening the doors to vacuum the car would obstruct more parking spaces. Their advice to Kazam was to either get a survey done or replace the air pump with another air pump in the same location with no vacuum component.

**VI. WORKSHOP**

Discuss problematic regulations for possible text amendments.

C. Costa explained to the new members that periodically the Commission will amend regulations as needed. In this round, she discussed adding a definition for Shopping Center, proposed text changes to clarify roof top deck language, billboards, B&B transient lodging and walkways. She would like to Amend Section 63 to remove Bonding language. She also discussed minor changes to requirements for accessory apartments. The Commission was in agreement with the draft text. Costa will email absent members the draft for review.

**VI. COMMITTEE, REPRESENTATIVE & STAFF REPORTS**

- **105 Middletown Avenue** – Costa advised the Commission of an application to modify a variance approval for rooftop decks and an appeal of her decision refusing to modify a ZBA approval. Costa gave new members a brief history of recent issues regarding approvals of roof top decks. The ZC instructed the ZEO to prepare comment to the ZBA.
- **Signs/flags** – Land Use will be continue taking further steps to enforce unauthorized sign usage.
- **1231 Boston Post Rd** – Little Pub is waiting will be applying to the Zoning Commission for a modification to their Special Exception Permit to permit the extension of their parking lot, expand their outdoor seating permit to make the Covid seating areas permanent and extend their permit to include agricultural uses. This would require the merging of adjacent lots that are currently under the same ownership. The pub is waiting for a revised survey and has retained Joe Wren to prepare the special permit. While the permit application is being prepared, the pub has requested to relocate the chicken coop

adjacent to the goat enclosure. The Zoning Commission advised that the ZEO could handle administratively while the pub is preparing their application.

## VII. ADJOURNMENT

**MOTION** to adjourn the meeting of January 17, 2024 at 9:06 P.M. to the regularly scheduled meeting of Monday, February 5, 2024 at 7 P.M. in Town Hall, 1st Floor Conference Room as presented **MADE:** G. Lewis **SECONDED** L. Gray **VOTING IN FAVOR:** G. Lewis, L. Gray, B. Dyson, M. Kelly **OPPOSED:** None **ABSTAINING:** None **APPROVED:** 4-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Joanne Galli  
Land Use Clerk

NEXT REGULARLY SCHEDULED  
HYBRID MEETING

**Monday, February 5, 2024 at 7:00 P.M.**  
Town Hall, 1st Floor Conference Room  
302 Main Street, Old Saybrook

Check our website for dial in information and additional meeting documents.

[Zoning Commission web page](#)

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