

Zoning Commission Minutes 03/06/2017



TOWN OF OLD SAYBROOK Zoning Commission

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Robert C. Friedmann, Chairman
Mark Caldarella, Vice Chairman
Geraldine M. Lewis, Secretary

Madeline B. Fish
J. Colin Heffernan

Alternate Members
Michael Cianfaglione
Joanne Gadon
Vacancy

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES Monday, March 6, 2017 – 7:00 P.M. Town Hall, 302 Main Street 1st Floor Conference Room

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Robert Friedmann called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Attendant Members

Robert Friedmann

Madeline Fish

Geraldine Lewis

Joanne Gadon, Alternate

Michael Cianfaglione, Alternate seated for Mark Caldarella

Absent Members

J. Colin Heffernan

Mark Caldarella

Attendant Staff

Chris Costa, Zoning Enforcement Officer

There were three audience members present.

III. REGULAR BUSINESS

A. MINUTES

MOTION to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of February 21, 2017 as presented; **MADE G**
Lewis: SECONDED: M Fish; VOTING IN FAVOR: R Friedmann, M. Fish, G Lewis, M
Cianfaglione ABSTAINING: None: OPPOSED: None; APPROVED: 4-0-0.

B. CORRESPONDENCE

MOTION to approve Invoice #42556 in the amount of \$462.50 from Branse & Willis, LLC.;
MADE: G Lewis: SECONDED: F Friedmann: VOTING IN FAVOR: R Friedmann, M. Fish, M
G Lewis, M Cianfaglione; ABSTAINING: None. OPPOSED: None. APPROVED: 4-0-0.

IV. DISCUSSION

A. Temporary Signs

Old Saybrook Chamber of commerce Sign Task Force

Suzie Beckman, Director of Economic Development and Judy Sullivan, Director of the Chamber of
Commerce and Lauren Harris, Harris Outdoors presented.

The Sign Task Force presented ideas for the Commission to consider:

1. Modifiable, movable signs allowing 3-5 style options that conform to design standards to include materials, size, location and duration.
2. Sign Registration and Permit Process required in conjunction with other sign permits, ensuring compliance with regulations and standards and are used in other towns
3. Compliance to include stickers to indicate a permit was obtained and assistance in business self-policing.
4. Partner with the Chamber of Commerce Businesses, contributing to education and communication of regulations; assisting in compliance with sign and other regulations and preventing the need for sign sweeps.

J Sullivan stated that the Chamber has received numerous calls and emails seeking help on the use of temporary signs. C Costa, Zoning Enforcement Officer spoke with the Board of Directors for the Chamber of Commerce and shortly thereafter a Sign Task Force was created. J Sullivan stated that it was determined that the A-frame sign presented the best advertisement for the various merchants and their businesses.

L Harris stated that her business utilizes a temporary A-frame sign which is extremely cost effective and provides a great return while maintaining the character of the Town.

S Beckman stated that there are around 195 independent "mom and pop" owned boutique stores and keeping the costs and investments low are an important part of preserving businesses in-town.

J Sullivan stated that the Task Force worked to identify portable signs that are acceptable to the Architectural Review Board and to Zoning related to materials, size, history and location and duration.

R Friedmann noted that there are twenty-two definitions in the Zoning Regulations related to signs. R Friedmann stated that the Zoning Commission tried loosening up on the sign regulations several years ago and he noted that there is no application fee associated with the installation of a temporary sign and there are no additional fees incurred after implementation of temporary signs. R Friedmann stated that the temporary signs have received complaints from the Town as well as from the Economic Development Commission. R Friedmann questioned how the current proposal will accomplish a different outcome than that which was previously demonstrated to fail.

J Sullivan indicated that many businesses do not know the regulations and she stated that an education process must occur. The Chamber and the Sign Task Force is willing to assist with that process, and she suggested the limitation of signage to one type of temporary sign for retail customers.

F Friedmann suggested as an option, the use of changeable, portable signs that are displayed on-premises only during the hours of operation. The Zoning Commission regulates sign size, height and location, however they cannot regulate content. R Friedmann suggested that the Chamber and the Sign Task Force might assist business owner's with the content of the sign.

R Friedmann stated that the ideal would be an A-frame sign that is located on-site, not on the right-of-way, and one that would be visible to passers-by traveling at 30 miles or more per hour. R Friedmann stated that in the past the allowance of an A-frame was permitted to be installed for up to 15 days in a row, 4 times per year for a total of 60 days on the calendar.

J Sullivan stated that the Sign Task Force will continue their work and bring back a formal proposal to the Zoning Commission and work with the Commission on refining the process.

B. "Motor Vehicle Storage and Permitted Uses"

380 & 400 Boston Post Road, Assessor's Map 53, Lot 5, Map 42, Lot 15
Gateway Business B-4 District
Owner: Saybrook Realty Acquisitions Agent: Joe Wren, P.E.

Joe Wren, Indigo Land Design presented on behalf of this application. 400 Boston Post Road is New England Power Equipment and the business owner recently purchased 380 Boston Post Road. This lot is currently vacant and Saybrook Ford has been storing new automobiles on that particular site. J Wren stated that the use is accessory to the building located at 400 Boston Post Road which is the principal building. The parcels are separate and there is no proposal to merge them. J Wren stated that he is here to determine what is required to continue operations.

R Friedmann stated that if a parcel is separate you cannot have an accessory use as the only use on the parcel. Accessory has to be accessory to something else on the parcel. In the B-4 District a permitted use is a parking lot and you can have a parking lot as a primary use without having to have a building and a business. The ZEO is concerned that if this is a parking lot, it is then subject to parking lot regulations and setbacks. R Friedmann stated that vehicles may be parked on that site that is owned by the auto dealership, however the business owner shall not conduct vehicle sales in the parking lot.

The current use at 380 Boston Post Road is for overflow parking for Saybrook Ford. J Wren stated that the John Deere Building is limited in space and if it is expanded the property at 380 Boston Post Road will use some of that site for the overflow of John Deere equipment as well.

R Friedmann stated that as related to uses, if it is a parking lot it means that vehicles that drive on the road with a license plate can park there. However, vehicles used for construction-like activities or farming that are parked in what otherwise would be a parking lot, and it now becomes outdoor storage which is different from a parking lot.

R Friedmann stated that if you have vehicles from the John Deere operation park on the lot next door, it then becomes outdoor storage for a business that is not on-site, and outdoor storage must be an accessory to some other aspect of a business use on the same lot. If they have farm equipment that is displayed outdoors onsite and they have too many for storage at 400 Boston Post Road, and they place some of those vehicles on the other property site, now they are outdoor storage at 380 Boston Post Road as an accessory use where there is no primary use at 380 Boston Post Road.

R Friedmann stated that you can have storage as a special exception use. The regulations state that there is a special exception application process and the applicant would be required to outline on a plan what would be parking and what would be storage, etc. Further, the applicant must demonstrate on an on-site plan the 25-foot front landscape buffer area that is not paved and not used for parking and storage, and other site improvements must be reflected on the site plan. If there is no building proposed or no site improvements, the applicant must demonstrate compliance with the regulations regarding setbacks.

J Wren stated that for now the applicant will continue storing Ford vehicles on the property at 380 Boston Post Road.

V. WORKSHOP: Zoning Regulations

Action: Discuss regulation fixes/housekeeping and possible amendments.

The Commission discussed possible housekeeping amendments and will continue the discussion to the next meeting.

VI. COMMITTEE, REPRESENTATIVE & STAFF REPORTS

No reports.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION to adjourn the meeting at 8:32pm. to the next regularly scheduled Zoning Commission meeting on Monday, March 20, 2017 at 7:00 p.m. at Town Hall, 302 Main Street, 1st Floor Conference Room, Old Saybrook. **MADE:** M. Fish: **SECONDED:** R. Friedmann: **VOTING IN FAVOR:** R. Friedmann, M. Fish, J. Lewis, M. Cianfaglione; **ABSTAINING:** None; **OPPOSED:** None. **APPROVED:** 4-0-0.

Respectfully Submitted

Stella Beaudoin
Recording Clerk