

Planning & Zoning Commission

54 East Main Street
Clinton, Connecticut 06413

DRAFT Minutes

Ad-Hoc Regulations Committee

Special Meeting

Via Videoconference

Thursday, June 24, 2021

5:00 p.m.

Members Present: Alan Kravitz, Adam Moore, Ellen Dahlgren, Martin Jaffe, and Walter Clark

Staff Present: Kathy King (ZEO), John Guskowski (Consulting Planner)

The meeting was convened at 5:02 p.m.

- 1) Bees and Roosters. Kathy King noted that several residents had expressed interest in beekeeping, and John Guskowski stated that while in theory a beehive could be considered a “customary accessory use” to a residential use, it was probably better to create a specific allowance for beekeeping. He presented a proposed guideline based on a recent publication on “Zoning for Livestock: A Guide for Connecticut Municipalities” using model regulations from the Town of Ellington, which placed a specific hive number on lots over ½ acre. He also noted that the Town Attorney had a concern with the recently-adopted regulations concerning roosters vs. hens. Kathy King stated that the regulation language stated that “roosters **may** be permitted on lots over three acres,” which wasn’t precise. John Guskowski recommended that the language be clarified that roosters should be prohibited on lots smaller than three acres. The Committee discussed the matter and, by consensus, agreed to forward the proposal to the full Commission.
- 2) Commercial Vehicles in Residential Zones. Kathy King stated that she had received some neighbor complaints about large commercial vehicles being parked overnight in residential areas. The current regulation in Section 28 allows for one commercial vehicle, but not more than 1 ½ tons in GVW. This is much smaller than most commercial vehicles that would be used for standard contractors, and perhaps there should be a relaxed standard. John Guskowski stated that he had worked with Kathy King and Lisa DeMaria on a proposed update and shared the draft regulation which included several types of common commercial vehicles, as well as suggesting that they could be parked in an existing driveway. The Committee discussed different types of commercial vehicles and the reasons for allowance within residential properties. There was general agreement that the Commission should bring this proposal to public hearing.
- 3) Sheds as accessory use. John Guskowski noted that the existing regulations concerning relaxed setbacks in Section 26.4 for accessory structures is a big cumbersome and could include playscapes and gazebos that might interfere with neighboring property line issues. Staff suggested a simple replacement of the accessory structure language with a simple reference to “free-standing sheds.” There was general agreement that the Commission should bring this proposal to public hearing.

- 4) Lot Coverage in Commercial Districts. John Guskowski stated that over the past few months, several property owners and developers raised the questions about the different lot coverage percentages in different business (B) zoning districts, which is 80% in B-1, 60% in B-2, and 90% in both the B-3 and Marina Districts. The Committee discussed the matter and agreed that there was not any substantial geographic or geological difference in these areas, which all (other than Marina) tend to be along either East or West Main Street. John Guskowski proposed that the coverage could be normalized across all Business zones as well as reduced in the Marina district, which would further help protect water quality. There was general agreement that the Commission should bring this proposal to public hearing.
- 5) Pools within 100 ft. of Tidal Wetlands. Kathy King noted that she'd had some concerns about the inconsistencies with development elements that are, and are not, subject to Coastal Site Plan Review, per Section 18.3. While minor structural modifications such as additions, fences, wall, etc. were exempt, except within 100' of tidal wetlands, pools, decks, docks, and detached accessory buildings that could have similar impact to tidal wetlands were exempt even within 100'. The proposal therefore was simply to clarify that those other accessory structures should be regulated and reviewed. There was general agreement that the Commission should bring this proposal to public hearing.
- 6) Recreational Marijuana Producers and Dispensaries. Following the State's legalization of recreational cannabis use by adults, John Guskowski reviewed the authorities of local Zoning Commissions with the Committee and discussed the licensing caps that would allow only a single cannabis retail establishment in Clinton. He noted that while a number of communities are considering a moratorium on the permission of these establishments with no clear pathway to determining the correct path. The Committee discussed the matter and agreed that there was no clear mandate on the issue. John Guskowski suggested putting the question to a public hearing to elicit community input. Instead of a moratorium, he presented the option of proposing to regulate the single potential cannabis retail operation similarly to package stores, which require a public hearing, Special Exception, separating distances, etc. He shared the draft proposal amending the package store provisions of Section 12. There was general agreement that the Commission should bring this proposal to public hearing.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
John Guskowski
Consulting Town Planner