

**TOWN OF MANCHESTER  
MINUTES OF BUSINESS MEETING  
HELD BY THE PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION/  
INLAND WETLANDS AND WATERCOURSES AGENCY  
FEBRUARY 21, 2024**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

In Person: Eric Prause, Chairman  
Patrick Kennedy, Vice Chairman  
Michael Stebe, Secretary  
Teresa Ike  
Chris Schoeneberger  
Daniela Luna  
Michael Farina

**ALTERNATE MEMBER SITTING  
FOR APPROVAL OF MINUTES  
ONLY:**

In Person: Bonnie Potocki

**ALTERNATES PRESENT:**

In Person: Maliha Ahsan

**ABSENT:**

Zachary Schurin

**ALSO PRESENT:**

In Person: Megan Pilla, Principal Development Planner  
Gary Anderson, Director of Planning & Economic  
Development  
Electronically: David Laiuppa, Environmental Planner/Wetlands  
Agent  
Nancy Martel, Recording Secretary

The Chairman opened the Business Meeting at 10:25 P.M.

3 SQUARED, LLC – For a special exception under Art. II, Sec. 24.02.01(j) for a mixed-use multi-family development at 14 North Main Street. – Special Exception (PSE-0058-2023); Erosion & Sedimentation Control Plan (ESC-0001-2024)

Special Exception (PSE-0058-2023)

**MOTION:** Mr. Kennedy moved to approve the special exception under Art. II, Sec. 24.02.01(j) for a mixed-use multi-family development at 14 North Main Street, with the modifications as specified in a staff memorandum from:

1. Megan Pilla, Principal Development Planner, dated February 21, 2024;

and with the condition that 12-15 months after issuance of the first certificate of occupancy, the applicant submit to the Town's traffic engineer for review an updated Traffic Impact Statement and Assessment by a professional engineer licensed in the State of Connecticut, including an assessment of the crash data in the vicinity of the site and observations of queuing related to the signal, the site driveways, and the all-way stop intersection on Oakland Street at Woodbridge Street; and that Town Staff may require additional restrictions at the site driveways, including but not limited to a right-turn-only restriction for vehicles exiting the site, based on the result of said assessment.

Mr. Schoeneberger seconded the motion.

**MOTION:** Mr. Farina moved to amend the motion to change the condition from 12-15 months to 12 and 30 months. Mr. Stebe seconded the motion. Mr. Prause, Mr. Stebe, Ms. Ike, Ms. Luna and Mr. Farina voted in favor of the motion. Mr. Kennedy and Mr. Schoeneberger voted against the motion. The motion to amend the motion passed five to two.

All members voted in favor of the amended motion.

Mr. Kennedy felt it was sufficient as is.

Mr. Prause offered that this is exactly the type of development encouraged in the POCD.

Mr. Stebe and Mr. Farina offered their opinions about the project.

The reason for the approval is that the proposed activity meets the special exception criteria in Article IV, Section 20.

Erosion & Sedimentation Control Plan (ESC-0001-2024)

**MOTION:** Mr. Kennedy moved to certify the erosion and sedimentation control plan for construction of a mixed-use multi-family development at 14 North Main Street, with the modifications as specified in a staff memorandum from:

1. Megan Pilla, Principal Development Planner, dated February 21, 2024.

Mr. Schoeneberger seconded the motion and all members voted in favor.

TRA CONSULTING – Pre-application discussion for possible distribution warehouse development at 71 & 81 Commerce Road.

Mr. Tom Riley, Architect, introduced himself. He stated that they are in a pre-purchase agreement for the above properties. Mr. Riley described the location of the property, abutters, zoning, and history. Access to the site via Chapel Road, Batson Drive, and Commerce Road was reported.

The proposal is for a 150,000 sq. ft. warehouse distribution/industrial facility to be developed on spec. The building will accommodate one to three tenants and will be entered via Commerce Road.

The loading docks will be located at the furthest point from residences. Mr. Riley explained the proposed parking for the building.

To date, Mr. Riley stated, they have met with Staff and reviewed the zoning regulations. He displayed the plans and renderings of the site. He noted that the property has not been purchased and they are in the process of due diligence. Mr. Riley commented that he met with David Laiuppa, Wetlands Agent, in the field to review potential wetlands on the site. The wetlands that were not previously flagged presented an issue to the developer.

Mr. Christian Alford, Professional Engineer and Land Surveyor, introduced himself, stating that they surveyed the property. He gave a history of the property and displayed the plans from 2020. In 2003, a portion of the property was leveled off in preparation for building, which created wetlands in the area. The plans for the wetlands were described, as well as the storm water treatment.

Mr. George Logan displayed photos of the wetlands and noted that only 15-20% are wetlands by soil type. He delineated and described the wetlands.

**MOTION TO CONTINUE PAST 11:00 P.M.:** Mr. Stebe moved to continue the meeting past 11:00 p.m. Mr. Farina seconded the motion. Mr. Prause, Mr. Kennedy, Mr. Stebe, Ms. Ike, Mr. Schoeneberger, and Mr. Farina voted in favor of the motion. Ms. Luna voted against the motion. The motion passed six to one.

Mr. Riley stated that they sought to present the plan and receive feedback from the Commission.

Mr. Farina stated that he would be generally supportive of the proposal.

Mr. Stebe referred to a prior discussion about loading docks, and Ms. Pilla reminded the Commission that a special exception is required for anything more than seven loading bays. He asked about the sizes of trucks and Mr. Riley stated that, based on prospective tenants, they would entertain larger trucks and noted that, when they get into a formal application, they will engage a traffic engineer.

Mr. Kennedy remarked that this is a relatively conventional warehouse development in an Industrial zone. He is open to substituting a better wetland for an accidentally created wetland.

Ms. Potocki asked about the height of the building in reference to the residences and lighting. Mr. Riley stated that they have not formalized the height, but they will be adding buffering. He went on to explain the proposed lighting, which will be dark sky compliant.

Mr. Laiuppa noted that the wetlands onsite are tricky, which he detailed.

Mr. Prause observed that there are many warehouses in the area, but this property is up against the neighborhood in East Hartford, which may turn into a large public hearing.

HARTFORD HEALTHCARE CORPORATION – Pre-application discussion for possible zoning regulation amendment proposal regarding signage permitted on medical office buildings.

Attorney Matt Ranelli, Shipman & Goodwin, representing Hartford Healthcare, introduced himself. Attorney Ranelli is seeking feedback on their proposal. Hartford Healthcare operates at 376 Tolland Turnpike, which abuts I-84. He referred to the Town’s signage regulations, which also entertain exceptions for things within the public interest that otherwise will not interfere with the neighborhood.

The regulation limitations were described in terms of size and setback by Attorney Ranelli. This location does not fit the issues contemplated in the regulation. The Commission could consider an exception similar to that relating to gas stations and motels. There is not a direct view of the sign and it would not interfere with the fabric of the neighborhood.

Attorney Ranelli stated that they drafted proposed language mirroring the Town regulations for motels and gas stations. He informed the Commission that HHC applied for a variance four years ago, but the Zoning Board of Appeals did not feel it qualified as a hardship.

Mr. Farina stated that he would be generally supportive.

Mr. Prause noted the regulation Art. IV, Sec. 13.10.06.04: Medical clinic, medical office and medical services building adjoining or abutting across the street from a restricted access highway and zoned General Business may erect a wall sign facing the restricted access highway and not exceeding 20 sq. ft.

Mr. Schoeneberger stated that this is an unintended consequence and was supportive.

Ms. Potocki speculated that this could open it up to other applicants and Attorney Ranelli reiterated that the language is quite narrow.

**DISCUSSION: MUNICIPAL FINES FOR INLAND WETLANDS VIOLATIONS**

Mr. Prause referred to Ms. Pilla’s research on the subject matter and inquired how many towns reported that they do not have a regulation. Ms. Pilla responded that she did not hear from anyone specifically stating that they do not have anything, only those answering in the affirmative.

The discussion was postponed to a future meeting.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

February 5, 2024 – Public Hearing/Business Meeting

**MOTION:** Mr. Farina moved to approve the minutes as written. Ms. Luna seconded the motion and all members voted in favor, with Ms. Potocki seated in place of Mr. Kennedy.

**ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS**

- Upcoming Training Opportunities
  - In-house training session – March 18, 2024, beginning at 5:45 P.M. (prior to the regularly-scheduled meeting)

Ms. Pilla informed the Commission that the Planning Department has received four proposals from potential consultants regarding the comprehensive zoning regulations update. The Steering Committee will interview some of the candidates, narrow it down, and choose one.

**RECEIPT OF NEW APPLICATIONS**

There were no new applications.

**MOTION TO CLOSE:** Mr. Farina moved to close the Business Meeting. Ms. Ike seconded the motion and all members voted in favor.

The Business Meeting was closed at 11:35 P.M.

March 4, 2024  
Date

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Eric Prause, Chairman

**NOTICE: A DIGITAL RECORDING OF THIS BUSINESS MEETING CAN BE HEARD IN THE PLANNING DEPARTMENT.**