

**SUFFIELD PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
April 17, 2023**

Present: Mark Winne, Chairman
Ginny Bromage, Secretary
Leon Litvak
Christine Sinopoli
Jacob Byrnes, Alternate
Ross Wilcox, Alternate

Absent: Erin Golembiewski, Vice Chairman
Tracy Hespelt
Jeff Girard, Alternate

Also Present: Bill Hawkins, AICP, Director of Planning & Development
Ellie Binns, Administrative Assistant

I. ROLL CALL

Chairman Winne called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM at the Senior Center. In the absence of Ms. Golembiewski and Ms. Hespelt, Mr. Winne appointed Mr. Wilcox and Mr. Byrnes as voting members for this meeting.

Ms. Bromage read the legal notice for the public hearing.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT – None

III. PUBLIC HEARING

File 2023-1 – Public hearing for the Town of Suffield’s proposal to opt out of the parking requirements set forth in Connecticut General Statutes Section 8-2(d)(9).

Mr. Hawkins read his report into the record, which explained the Connecticut General Statute that became effective on October 1, 2021. He also reviewed the procedure to opt out of the State requirements so that existing parking standards in the Zoning Regulations remain in effect. After the public hearing, the Commission may affirmatively vote to opt out of the parking requirements in the Statutes, post a legal notice of the decision within 15-days, and then the Board of Selectmen could complete the process by voting in favor of opting out with a two-thirds vote. Mr. Hawkins discussed the current zoning regulations for parking which all require more parking spaces than those in CGS Section 8-2(d)(9).

Commission members discussed handicapped spaces, which are regulated by the State Building Code. It was noted that these spaces should be in addition to the count of parking spaces required.

Mr. Winne opened the hearing to comments from the public.

Joe Plourde, 25 Barry Place stated that the parking should be based on local zoning regulations.

John Murphy, 18 Downing Way also stated that the regulations should be controlled locally.

Robert Martin, 169 South Main Street noted that the State regulation was unrealistic for Suffield considering the lack of public transportation.

Eric Boone, 65 Barry Place submitted a letter to the Commission, which he read into the record explaining his background in parking and how the State regulation is not applicable to Suffield's needs. He also noted that Suffield's ADA parking space requirements are vague and he suggested they be codified.

Robert Parks, 30 Barry Place submitted an email, which was read into the record supporting the exclusion from the State regulation noting that most families have two cars.

Tom Elmore, 615 Mather Street submitted an email, which was read into the record stating his opposition to reducing the number of parking spaces in Suffield's regulations and noting that there should be more visitor parking.

Commission members discussed the number of Towns in the region and State that chose to opt out of the State parking requirements.

With no further discussion or comments from the public, Ms. Bromage moved to close the public hearing. The motion was seconded by Mr. Litvak and passed unanimously 6-0-0.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

File 2023-1 - Public hearing for the Town of Suffield's proposal to opt out of the parking requirements set forth in Connecticut General Statutes Section 8-2(d)(9).

Ms. Bromage made a motion that the Planning & Zoning Commission affirmatively decides to opt out of the parking requirements set forth in CT General Statutes Section 8-2(d)(9) for the following reasons:

- The Suffield Zoning Regulations require at least 2.5 parking spaces per unit for multifamily developments; 2 spaces per unit for multifamily developments in the Town Center Village District Zone; 1.5 spaces per unit for Housing Opportunity District multifamily developments; and at least 2 dwellings per unit for all other dwelling units.
- The standard established by CGS 8-2(d)(9) does not ensure there would be sufficient on-site parking for multifamily projects.
- There are no public transportation options in Suffield, and therefore most residents have at least one vehicle.

The motion was seconded by Mr. Litvak and approved unanimously 6-0-0.

The Commission would like to amend the current Suffield regulations to reflect that handicap spaces should be counted in addition to the required spaces.

V. NEW BUSINESS

File 2023-2 – Request for a special permit/site plan modification to build a 21,600 SF multi-tenant commercial building located at 1300 East Street South.

Applicant: Kevin Deming, Map 71H, Map 58, Lot 2.

Ms. Bromage made a motion to accept File 2023-2 and set the public hearing for the May 15th regular meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Litvak and approved unanimously 6-0-0.

VI. REPORTS

Chairman – None

Director of Planning & Development – Mr. Hawkins reported that former Town Engineer Gerry Turbet agreed to come out of retirement for ten hours a week as interim Town Engineer for a transition period. The First Selectman intends to work with J.R. Russo & Associates to handle the engineering work as they do other municipalities. J.R. Russo will not be taking on any new subdivisions or site plans that would need to be presented before the towns' regulatory commissions while they are acting as the Town Engineer in order to avoid conflicts of interest. Mr. Hawkins also reported that Chad Kuzontkoski started as the Economic Development Specialist on April 10th and will be working 18 hours per week.

VII. MINUTES

Ms. Litvak moved to approve the minutes of the March 20, 2023 regular meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Byrnes and approved unanimously 6-0-0.

VIII. CORRESPONDENCE – None

IX. ADJOURNMENT

With nothing further to come before the commission, Ms. Bromage made a motion to adjourn at 7:50 PM. The motion was seconded by Mr. Litvak and approved unanimously 6-0-0.

Submitted,

Ginny Bromage, Secretary

cc: Assessor, Building Official, Conservation Commission, Selectmen, Town Clerk, Town Engineer, Zoning Enforcement Officer, Commission Counsel