

**SUFFIELD
PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
July 15, 2024**

Present: Mark Winne, Chairman
Erin Golembiewski, Vice Chairman
Ginny Bromage, Secretary
Brian Dunn
Christine Sinopoli
Leon Litvak
Jeff Girard, Alternate
Jacob Byrnes, Alternate
Geoffrey Kaplan, Alternate

Also Present: Bill Hawkins, AICP, Director of Planning & Development
Dana Steele, P.E., Consultant Town Engineer
Carl Landolina, Commission Attorney
Ellie Binns, Administrative Assistant

The proceedings of this meeting were recorded and are available on the Town website along with the application materials.

I. ROLL CALL

Chairman Winne called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM as a hybrid meeting with eight members in attendance and one member remote.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT

Kevin Zeller, 23 Kings Court spoke concerning the sidewalks that are to be installed in the Kings Meadow subdivision and read aloud his letter of opposition. He also submitted a petition signed by nine residents of Kings Meadow Lane who are opposed to the installation of the sidewalks. Susan Peia, 21 Kings Meadow also spoke in opposition to the sidewalks, noting that their installation may impact her irrigation system and invisible dog fence. She requested a site survey be done.

III. PUBLIC HEARING

File #2024-2- Request for a special permit/site plan approval to convert the buildings located at 156 South Main Street into residential apartments per Section V.U. Adaptive Reuse Zoning Regulations. Applicant: MI 22, LLC., Map 44H, Block 47, Lot 216.

Mr. Winne asked Attorney Amy Blume of Bershtein, Volpe & McKeon P.C. who is representing the applicant, if there was additional information she had to present. She stated that they did not at this time, but would respond to any additional information that was presented.

Mr. Winne then asked Attorney Landolina for clarification on questions that had been raised as to the property being commercial or residential and if it qualified under the Adaptive Reuse

These minutes are not official until accepted at a subsequent meeting.

Regulations. Attorney Landolina began by stating his opinion that the assessor property cards were not a way to determine the use of a property. He explained that it is the chief duty of the commission members to interpret the zoning regulations and to decide if an application complies with the regulations. He also explained that any documents that commission members used to make their determination should be entered into the record so that the applicant has an opportunity to review and respond to them. Ms. Sinopoli did not agree about the assessor's cards. She submitted for the record the assessor's cards that she had reviewed as well as the minutes of the April 19, 2010 Planning and Zoning Commission meeting where the Adaptive Reuse text amendment application was discussed. Attorney Blume had referenced those minutes at the June meeting in an effort to describe the original intent of the regulation and Ms. Sinopoli disagreed with her interpretation.

Mr. Dunn stated that there was no definition in the regulations of residential and Attorney Landolina noted that every word is not defined in the regulations and common definitions from the dictionary or other sources could be used.

Attorney Blume responded that her statement based on the April 19, 2010 minutes was misquoted by Ms. Sinopoli and Attorney Blume had used the reference to talk about using underutilized buildings for residential use. She also stated that the convent and rectory were accessory buildings and uses to the church.

The staff memo by Mr. Hawkins about handicap parking was then discussed. The memo explained the fact that handicapped parking was not required and contained reference material on what that statement was based on. Ms. Sinopoli asked that the definition of the type A and B dwelling units from the International Building Code (IBC) section 1108.6.2 be submitted into the record.

Attorney Landolina explained to the Commission that after the public hearing is closed, members should not continue to gather information to make their decision.

Chairman Winne opened the hearing for public comment.

Kevin Goff, 475 Thompsonville Road spoke in favor of the application as offering housing choice and opportunity. He spoke of the need for this type of housing in Suffield.

Don Miner, 1855 Mapleton Avenue spoke in favor stating this was a first class proposal and cautioned the Commission against decision paralysis.

Eric Boone, 65 Barry Place stated that the Modern Catholic Dictionary defines a rectory as a residence. He submitted a power point presentation showing turning radii for various vehicles including a 200" wheel base fire truck and cautioned the Commission that it was a safety issue.

Robert Parks, 30 Barry Place stated that the adaptive reuse does not fit because these were always residential buildings.

Tom McNerney, 70 Barry Place noted that nobody has proposed a residential development on the property.

Attorney Blume, in response to Mr. Boone's presentation stated that the map that the applicant had submitted showing turning radii was done by their engineer and was an actual calculation which meets the zoning regulations. She also noted that the convent and rectory were not typical residential properties but were accessory buildings and uses of the church.

Town Engineer Consultant, Dana Steele stated that he had reviewed the engineer's drawing and that it meets the regulation and the measurements were accurate and the aisle widths were appropriate.

Mr. Litvak would like a document from the applicant showing the engineer's stamp and a legend on the turning radius plan.

Attorney Blume stated that the applicant will not agree to extend the public hearing and the 35 days that the Commission has to close the hearing is over on Monday, July 22nd. Therefore if the hearing is not closed tonight the last date to continue the hearing is July 22nd.

It was suggested that the engineering plan be updated with the stamp and legend and that the hearing be continued to Thursday July 18th at 7:30 PM as a special meeting so that the new information entered into the record can be reviewed.

Ms. Sinopoli stated that she wanted a lighting plan. Consulting Engineer Steele noted that a lighting plan was not necessary.

With no further comments, Ms. Bromage moved to schedule the continuation of the hearing as a special meeting, to Thursday, July 18th at 7:30 PM at the Town Hall. The motion was seconded by Mr. Litvak and passed 6-0-0.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

File #2024-2- The public hearing was continued to a special meeting to be held at 7:30 PM on July 18th so no action was taken.

V. NEW BUSINESS -None

VI. REPORTS

Chairman – None

Director of Planning & Development – None

VII. MINUTES

Ms. Bromage moved to approve the June 17, 2024 minutes with the correction that Brian Dunn seconded the motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Mr. Dunn and approved 6-0-0.

VIII. CORRESPONDENCE

A letter (email) sent July 15th, concerning File # 2024-2 from Kevin Goff was received and sent out to Commission members and made part of the public hearing record for File #2024-2.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

With nothing further to come before the commission, Ms. Bromage made a motion to adjourn at 9:00 PM. The motion was seconded by Ms. Golembiewski and approved 6-0-0.

Submitted,

Ginny Bromage, Secretary

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