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REC'D BY: me

**SUFFIELD PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
October 20, 2025**

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

Also Present: Bill Hawkins, AICP, Director of Planning & Development
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.
Ms. Bromage read the legal notice for the public hearing.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT - None

III. PUBLIC HEARINGS

File # 63-2009H: Request for special permit renewal for an earth removal operation located on Phelps Road, Map 5, Block 9, Lots 46A & 48. Applicant – Murray A. Phelps III.

Mr. Hawkins explained that the renewal is submitted every two years to preserve the owner's right to operate an earth removal site as a preexisting condition and to allow the Commission to review compliance with the original approval conditions. He read his 10/15/2025 report into the record, noting minimal site activity since the 2023 renewal. Consulting Town Engineer Dana Steele reviewed the application and found no need for additional conditions. The applicant also maintains a bond with the Finance Department. Mr. Winne opened the hearing for public comment; none were received.

Mr. Guilmartin moved to close the public hearing. The motion was seconded by Mr. Dunn and passed unanimously 6-0-0.

File # 2025-9: Request for special permit/site plan approval for two emergency service radio towers located at 911 Mountain Road Map 19H, Block 24, Lot 17-2 and 776 Thompsonville Road. Map 75H, Block 44, Lot 48. Applicant – Suffield Police Department.

Chief James Canon of the Suffield Police Department outlined the project's history and the need to upgrade the existing communication towers to current safety standards, achieving 95% coverage in town. He noted that this project is part of a broader emergency services radio system upgrade approved by town referendum 2.5 years ago.

Todd Stacy of Goosetown Communications presented the application, explaining that the proposed tower heights and locations are necessary to meet coverage and safety requirements.

Mr. Hawkins read his 10/16/2025 report into the record, reviewing existing and proposed conditions and confirming that the towers can be approved by special permit under Section III.E. of the regulations. He noted that the tower plans were fully engineered, reviewed, and certified by a professional engineer. Consulting Town Engineer Dana Steele also reviewed the application and recommended no additional conditions.

Commission members discussed the need for the tower replacements in light of the Town's size and topography.

Mr. Winne opened the hearing for public comment.

Ellen Taylor-Stearns of 875 Mountain Road expressed concern about potential impacts on her already inconsistent cell service. It was explained that the new equipment should not affect cell service, and suggestions were offered to help improve her reception.

Jim Richardson of 916 Mountain Road spoke in support of the application.

With no further comments from the applicant or the public, Mr. Winne called for a motion to close the public hearing.

Ms. Golembiewski moved to close the public hearing for File # 2025-9. The motion was seconded by Mr. Dunn and passed unanimously 6-0-0.

File # 2025-10: Request for a two lot resubdivision located at 190 East Street North. Map 88H, Block 55, Lot 23. Applicant – Brick Turf, LLC.

Brian Denno of Denno Land Surveying and Consulting, LLC., presented the application on behalf of Brick Turf, LLC., describing the 61-acre parcel, of which 58 acres are preserved farmland. When the preservation agreement was established, a 2.3-acre portion was excluded to allow for potential residential development. Brick Turf, LLC. now seeks to subdivide that area in accordance with Suffield's subdivision regulations.

Mr. Denno noted that the proposal has been approved by the Conservation Commission and the WPCA and that the property is served by Connecticut Water. The plans include an agricultural buffer due to surrounding farm activity. He explained that, at most, two homes could be built, though no house plans are proposed at this time. He also requested waivers for sidewalks, curbs, gutters, streetlights, and open space, citing existing preserved land and the intent to convey the lot to a family member for no consideration.

Mr. Hawkins read his 10/16/2025 report into the record, confirming with the State Department of Agriculture that the 2.3-acre area is not under development rights and is eligible for subdivision. He stated that the plan meets all regulatory requirements.

Mr. Winne opened the hearing for public comment.

Michael Steinberg, 121 East Street North, referenced the Town's Plan of Conservation and Development with respect to preserving views, emphasizing farmland preservation and the taxpayers' contribution to purchasing the development rights.

Moustafa Sharaf, 50 East Street North, questioned the proposed house location.

Steven Camerota, 85 East Street North, expressed concern over what he considers insufficient notice of the meeting, questioned the legality and completeness of the application, and argued that the subdivision could impact the viability of the surrounding farmland.

The Commission discussed farmland preservation and the request for an open space waiver. Mr. Winne then called for a motion to close the public hearing. Ms. Bromage moved to close the hearing for File #2025-10; Mr. Guilmartin seconded, and the motion passed unanimously, 6-0-0.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

File # 63-2009H:

Mr. Guilmartin moved to approve File #63-2009H with the 15 conditions listed in Mr. Hawkins report of October 15, 2025 and with a limit of 50 trucks per week. The motion was seconded by Ms. Golembiewski and passed unanimously 6-0-0.

File # 2025-9:

Ms. Bromage moved to approve File #2025-9 as submitted. The motion was seconded by Mr. Guilmartin and passed unanimously 6-0-0.

File # 2025-10:

Commission members discussed farmland preservation and the request for an open space waiver. Mr. Winne suggested that a fee in lieu of open space could be appropriate but waived if the property is transferred to a family member without compensation. Ms. Sinopoli requested additional time to review the legal concerns raised during the hearing. Mr. Guilmartin commented that the application and presentation demonstrated due diligence, and Mr. Winne confirmed that the parcel in question was excluded from the 2013 development rights purchase.

Mr. Guilmartin moved to approve the requested waivers for File #2025-10, seconded by Ms. Golembiewski. After discussion, most members agreed to postpone the decision to review the hearing materials further and possibly consult legal counsel. Mr. Guilmartin noted that scenic vistas are not a strong legal basis for denial. He then withdrew his motion and moved to table the decision until the November meeting. Ms. Sinopoli seconded, and the motion passed unanimously, 6-0-0.

V. NEW BUSINESS

File # 2025-11: Request for a special permit for a school/education center, Hilltop Academy Inc. located at 1353 Mountain Road, West Suffield Shops. Map 16H, Block 24, Lot 1.

Applicant – Gina Martin-Ryan.

Ms. Bromage made a motion to accept File 2025-11 and set the public hearing for the November 17th regular meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Dunn and approved unanimously 6-0-0.

File # 2025-12: Request for a special permit for a dance studio located at 2 Bennett Road. Map 71H, Block 52, Lot 11-2. Applicant – The Dance Studio. LLP.

Ms. Bromage made a motion to accept File 2025-12 and set the public hearing for the November 17th regular meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Dunn and approved unanimously 6-0-0.

File # 2025-13: Request for a text amendment to add Section V.Z. Keeping of Pigs, to the Zoning Regulations. Applicant – Suffield Planning and Zoning Commission
Ms. Bromage made a motion to accept File 2025-13 and set the public hearing for the November 17th regular meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Dunn and approved unanimously 6-0-0.

VI. REPORTS

Chairman – None

Director of Planning & Development – Mr. Hawkins reported that construction has begun on the road at the Kings Meadow subdivision and that he will update the Commission on its progress. He also noted that this was Mr. Winne’s final meeting after twenty years of service, expressing appreciation and thanks from the staff and Commission members.

VII. MINUTES

Ms. Bromage moved to approve the minutes of the September 15, 2025 regular meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Dunn and approved 5-0-1, with Ms. Golembiewski abstaining as she was not at the meeting.

VIII. CORRESPONDENCE - None

IX. ADJOURNMENT

With nothing further to come before the commission, Ms. Bromage made a motion to adjourn at 9:15 PM. The motion was seconded by Ms. Golembiewski 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