

**PLANNING and ZONING COMMISSION  
Monroe, Connecticut  
MEETING MINUTES  
January 21, 2021**

Via computer, tablet, or smartphone at this link: <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/147541701>  
Via phone at: +1 (408) 650-3123 Access Code: 147-541-701

**Meeting:** Planning and Zoning Commission                      **Meetings are Video and Audio Recorded**  
Regular Meeting  
7 Fan Hill Road, Monroe, Connecticut

**Present:** Michael O'Reilly, *Chairman*  
Bruno Maini, *Vice Chairman*  
Ryan Condon, *Secretary*  
Leon Ambrose, *Commissioner*  
Robert Westlund, *Commissioner*  
Ronald Schneider, *Alternate*  
Domenic Paniccia, *Alternate*  
Nicole Lupo, *Alternate*

**Absent:** William Agresta, *Planning and Zoning Administrator*

**Also Present:** Georgia Contois, *Planning and Zoning Secretary*  
Rick Shultz, *Town Planner*  
Barbara Schellenberg, *Special Land Use Counsel*  
Sarah Stroud, *Recording Secretary*

**OPENING of MEETING**

1. **CALL TO ORDER & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**  
Chairman O'Reilly called the meeting to order at 7:03p.m., and reviewed the procedures for this virtual meeting.
2. **ROLL CALL & SEATING OF ALTERNATES** (if required)  
Commissioners were seated on roll call.
3. **GENERAL PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PERIOD** – None

**PUBLIC HEARINGS**

4. **SEP-2020-01, File #1621A – 390 Monroe Turnpike – B-2District**  
Special Exception Permit / Site Development Plan Application for improvements to existing McDonald's Restaurant consisting of a complete façade demolition with new façade design replacement and alteration of drive-through to provide two (2) separate drive-through access lanes each with menu boards, as well as related site and parking modifications. McDonald's Real Estate Company (owner/applicant).

The public hearing was continued February 4, 2021.

5. **ZCA-2020-03, File #1016D – 1585 Monroe Turnpike – Proposed SB2 District and Redevelopment Master Plan**  
Petition by Stevenson Properties, LLC (Kimball Family Investments, LLC/Jill Kimball) for the rezoning of an approximate 40.19 acre property located at 1585 Monroe Turnpike (Assessor Map 150, Lot 1) from a Business District 2 (B-2) to a proposed Stevenson Business District 2 (SB2), which SB2 District is the subject of a separate pending Zoning Text Amendment Petition (RAA-2020-04, File #1011E) also proposed by Stevenson Properties, LLC.

The public hearing was continued February 4, 2021.

**6. SDP-2020-01, File #139 – 64 Cambridge Drive & 4 Independence Drive – I-2 District**

Site Development Plan Application proposing three phases over a period of ten (10) years of site related activity, including: construction of a one-story office building measuring 2,360 square feet with associated grading, parking and site utilities; stormwater management improvements for current and future not yet proposed site development; and extensive land filling of approximately 1.3 million cubic yards of material involving approximately 75,575 truck trips (based on 24 tons per truck) to restore an unauthorized quarry. Astro Land Holdings LLC and Spacely Land Holdings LLC (owner/applicant).

The application was withdrawn by written request, received to the Planning and Zoning Department on January 21, 2021.

**7. SEP-2020-05, File #1625A – 615 Main Street – B-1 District**

Special Exception Permit Application for proposed Change in Use from general retail to an “Outdoor and Indoor Sales of Accessory Outdoor Amenities” retail use, including site improvements related thereto, for property located Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting Agenda Page 2 of 3 Meeting Date: 1/21/2021 at 615 Main Street (Assessors Map 70, Lot 10) located in a Business District 1 (B-1). Scott Honigsberg, Eastern jungle Gym (applicant), John Cooke, Pitcairn Inc. (owner).

Commissioner Condon read the public notice for the record.

Mr. Schultz read the exhibits for the record.

Kevin Solli of Solli Engineering was present on behalf of the applicant. He introduced Mike Lambert from Solli Engineering.

Mr. Solli reviewed the current location and proposed future location of the business for the Commission. He explained the company is looking to expand their business and better define their use. He noted the outdoor display area being proposed.

Mike Lambert of Solli Engineering was present on behalf of the applicant. He reviewed the layout of the parking lot being proposed that will eliminate the elevated sidewalk and current ADA ramp on the site. He explained the sidewalk that will be made of the pavers sold by the business as a way to display their installed product. He noted the removal of the current pavement to create a “backyard” display area; this area will be fenced with various fencing to showcase the installed fencing sold by the business. He listed the types of items that will be on display outside of the building.

Mr. Lambert reviewed the landscaping plan for the Commission. He stated that the area along Main Street that will have the overgrown trees removed and replaced with new plantings. Mr. Lambert explained there is minimal trash created on the site, so a typical dumpster and dumpster pad are not necessary. He reviewed the area that will hold the Town issued trash bins.

Mr. Lambert reviewed the utilities on the site. Mr. Lambert noted the existing dark sky compliant lighting on the site that will be maintained and relocated on the site. Mr. Solli clarified the operations of the business. He noted there is no point of sale on the site where a customer would take the product home the same day.

Mr. Solli reviewed the model renderings of the site for the Commission.

Mr. Solli asked the Commission for questions and comments.

Mr. Schultz asked where the applicant’s team stood with the Town Engineer on the storm water drainage. Mr. Solli explained that because their runoff runs to a catch basin maintained by the Town there would be no issue with the application as long as their plans were reviewed with DOT for the changes to the parking lot. He explained he did not feel this would be an issue because the one way entrance and one way exit change being made should be an improvement to the area.

Mr. Solli noted there was a request for a photometric plan, but he felt because the lighting on the site is being maintained and just relocated a photometric plan is not needed.

Mr. Schultz advised that the ARB is satisfied with design of the project and it appears this project will be an overall improvement to the site.

Commissioner Lupo asked if the entire display area will be fenced. Mr. Solli confirmed the whole area would be surrounded by fencing.

Commissioner Schneider expressed concern about there being sufficient signage for the one way entrance and exit. Mr. Solli explained the goals of the parking lot design to reduce any traffic issues.

Commissioner Westlund asked if there would be any deliveries stored on the site or any other heavy truck traffic on the site. Mr. Solli explained the headquarters is located in New York and no deliveries or products would be stored or brought to the site.

Commissioner Ambrosey asked about turnaround for a truck in the parking lot. Mr. Solli explained his conversation with the Town Engineer regarding the parking lot and the lack of need for a turnaround. He stated they believe it to be unnecessary land disturbance. Commissioner Ambrosey clarified a "Do Not Enter" sign will be included at the mouth of the one way exit. Mr. Solli confirmed the sign is planned to be installed. Commissioner Ambrosey asked for the details of the plantings being proposed for the site. Mr. Solli reviewed the proposed planting list.

Commissioner Condon asked if there was any concern of light spillage to abutting properties with the relocations of the lighting. Mr. Solli explained the lights are being pulled back further from the lot lines.

Chairman O'Reilly opened the hearing to public comment.

- Ron Bunovsky of 76 Holly Place was present to speak on the application. He expressed concern about the curb cuts along Main Street. He asked if anyone from the state has been consulted regarding what impact this project will have to the curb cut issues along Main Street.

Mr. Solli responded to Mr. Bunovsky comments. He advised DOT will be consulted and will review the project. He reiterated that he believes the one way entrance and exit will improve upon this area of Main Street.

Mr. Solli requested the public hearing be closed.

The public hearing was closed.

**The following three public hearings regarding Elderly Affordable Housing were opened simultaneously:**

8. **RAA-2020-07, File #1014E – Zoning Text Amendment – Elderly Affordable Housing District**  
Zoning Regulations Text Amendment Petition by Mutual Housing Association of Southwestern Connecticut Inc. dba CT Housing Partners proposing the establishment of a new "Affordable Housing" Zoning District restricted to at least one resident per residential unit or apartment being an elderly person 62-years or older and all units/apartments being rentals at 100% affordable as defined pursuant to CGS §8-30g, along with associated District land use regulations and standards, including applicable density, lot area and bulk standards. Mutual Housing Association of Southwestern Connecticut Inc. dba CT Housing Partners (applicant petitioner).
9. **ZCA-2020-04, File #1017D – 195/201/211 Main Street – B-2 to AH District**  
Zone Boundary Change Petition by Mutual Housing Association of Southwestern Connecticut Inc. dba CT Housing Partners proposing the rezoning of current Business District 2 (B-2) zoned property (Assessor Map 18, Lots 39, 40 and 41) to a newly established Affordable Housing (AH) District, for which the establishment under Zoning of said new Zoning District is the subject of a separate Zoning Petition (RAA-2020-07, File #1014E). Mutual Housing Association of Southwestern Connecticut Inc. dba CT Housing Partners (applicant petitioner), Graystone Group Ltd.
10. **SDP-2020-05, File #145 – 195/201/211 Main Street**  
Site Development Plan Application for the development of a new 49-unit single building elderly affordable housing development, including site improvements related thereto, for property located at 195, 201 and 211 Main Street (Assessor

Map 18, Lots 39, 40 and 41), for which the establishment under Zoning of said new Zoning District and the designation of such over the subject parcels on the official Zoning Map are subject to separate Zoning Petitions (RAA-2020-07, File #1014E and ZCA-2020-04, File #1017D, respectively). Mutual Housing Association of Southwestern Connecticut Inc. dba CT Housing Partners (applicant petitioner), Graystone Group Ltd.

Dave Hoops, attorney, was present on behalf of the applicant, Connecticut Housing Partners.

Mr. Hoopes reviewed the affordable housing regulation for the Commission. He requested if the Commission would hear all three off the public hearings at once. Chairman O'Reilly agreed to hear the three public hearings in tandem.

Commissioner Condon read the public notices for the record.

Mr. Schultz read the exhibits for each file in to the record.

Mr. Hoopes reviewed the purpose and mission of Connecticut Housing Partners (CHP). He advised this application is for an elderly housing project under the affordable housing regulations. He reviewed the process they have taken with Land Use Staff so far, including the text amendment application being presented tonight.

Steve Gulick, Vice President of Realty for CHP, was present on behalf of the applicant. He expressed the applicant's excitement for this project.

Emily Weckman of To Design was present on behalf of the applicant. She reviewed the location of the parcels for the Commission. She noted the two existing homes on the property that would be demolished. She advised this application proposes 49 units for senior housing. She reviewed the site improvements for the project, including the parking lot, retaining walls, and lighting.

Dave Bjorklund of Spath-Bjorklund was present on behalf of the applicant. Mr. Bjorklund reviewed the drainage system designed for the project. He noted a series of galleys under the parking lot would be used to store the increased runoff from the site. He stated their system would meet all Town and state requirements for water quality.

Mr. Bjorklund reviewed the area where the septic system would be located. He advised the septic would need to be approved by the Town and state because of the size.

Joe Balskus of VHB was present on behalf of the applicant. Mr. Balskus reviewed the traffic review preformed for the Commission. He noted the current traffic conditions of Route 25 and the crash history for the area. He advised the sight lines exceed what is required by the state. Mr. Balskus stated this project would have a very low generation of traffic.

David Goslin of Crosskey Architects was present on behalf of the applicant. Mr. Goslin reviewed the layout of the building for the Commission. He noted the units, lobbies, and amenity spaces. He noted the amenity spaces include a common laundry, chapel, nurses' station, and dining area. Mr. Goslin reviewed the layout of the units for the Commission.

Mr. Goslin displayed the renderings of the building for review by the Commission. He reviewed the materials that are being proposed for the siding, roofing, and faux chimneys. He noted the two tone siding design for the building and the finish for the trims.

The applicant's team noted and responded to the Land Use Staff's submitted comments.

Mr. Hoopes asked for questions and comments from the Commission.

Mr. Schultz noted the POCD consultant has been following the pre-application process of the application and will be recommending this area for affordable housing in his POCD report. He advised that affordable housing will be required by law in the near future. He explained that when a municipality opposes an affordable housing application that application is typically approved by the courts, and that application typically falls short of the architecture expectations of the town. He

stated this organization has a great track record and this application is a good opportunity for the Town to align with their POCD.

Commissioner Lupo asked if there are any areas of rescue on the second and third floors. Mr. Goslin responded there will be a full sprinkler system as required by code, so a rescue area is not necessary. Commissioner Lupo asked if there will be a generator on the site for those residents dependant on electricity. Mr. Goslin reviewed the area where the diesel generator will be located. Commissioner Lupo asked about the handicap accessibility of the units. Mr. Goslin explain 10% of the units are required to be fully handicap accessible, but there will be handicap options in the units such as bars in the shower. Commissioner Lupo suggested the bus line being brought slightly further down Route 25 for use by residents and staff of this project.

Commissioner Ambrosey asked where the reserve septic system will be located. Mr. Bjorklund noted the reserve septic system would be located next to the main septic system.

Chairman O'Reilly opened the hearing to public comment.

- Ron Bunovsky of 76 Holly Place was present to speak on the application. He noted senior housing he has lived near in the past, and he expressed concern about septic failure. He suggested that properties in Town that have failed septic issues should be studied. Mr. Bunovsky asked for the square footage of the units. Mr. Goslin responded the average unit size is 695 square feet. Mr. Bunovsky asked for the concerns stated by the Town Engineer be listed. Chairman O'Reilly advised he did not believe he had any, and noted all comments were responded to by the applicant earlier in the meeting.
- Mr. Bunovsky asked how many of CHP properties exist in an area that needs a septic system rather than having access to a public sewer. He reiterated his concern about the failing of a septic system of this size. He noted the close proximity to the river. Mr. Bunovsky expressed concern about the traffic and if the parking lot would be sufficient. Commissioner Lupo advised the parking lot was within code. Mr. Bunovsky expressed concern about the amount of water from the laundry units on the property.
- Ray Giovanni of 22 Carmen Lane was present to speak on the application. He has visited a similar facility in lower Fairfield County. He stated he was very impressed with the care of the staff, the size of the rooms, and the overall presentation of the building. He noted the increase of elderly members of the community moving out of Monroe. He applauded the efforts of this group.

Mr. Hoopes addressed the parking concerns expressed by Mr. Bunovsky. He advised at their other properties the parking is more than sufficient, as some units use no spaces.

The public hearings were left open and continued to the next meeting on February 4, 2021.

## **SITE DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

### **11. 200 Monroe Turnpike – LOR District – Aquarion Water Company**

- **SDP-2020-04, File #144** – Proposed expansion of existing parking with the addition of twelve (12) parking spaces in front of an existing office building, including related stormwater management, sidewalk, lighting and landscaping improvements.

Mr. Schultz read the exhibits for the record.

Andrew White of Tighe and Bond was present on behalf of the applicant. Mr. White reviewed the current condition of the site for the Commission. He stated this application to add eleven regular spaces and one handicap space to the parking lot.

Mr. White reviewed the drainage of the site for the Commission. He reviewed swell that runs in to the rain garden being proposed on the site. Mr. White noted the biofiltration seed mix that will be used on the site. He reviewed the landscaping plan for the Commission.

Mr. White noted the two additional lights being proposed in the parking lot. Mr. White reviewed the anti tracking pad and the wattle that will be used in the erosion control plans.

Mr. White asked for questions and comments from the Commission.

Commissioner Paniccia asked to where the excess water will be discharged. Mr. White reviewed the drainage plan.

The hearing was tabled to February 4, 2021.

- **SDP-2021-01, File #146** – Proposed rooftop solar panels and solar panel carport structure over existing parking spaces.

Mr. Schultz read the exhibits for the record.

Mark McGinley of US Green Technologies was present on behalf of the applicant. Mr. McGinley noted this application is for the installation of solar panels on the rooftop of the building and a carport covering 23 of the existing parking spots in the front of the building.

Mr. McGinley reviewed the energy production of the project, 60% will be the rooftop panels and 40% will be the carport.

Mr. McGinley reviewed the carport structure, noting there are no corner posts. He advised this design assists with things like snow removal. He displayed a rendering of the carport for the Commission.

Commissioner Paniccia expressed concern about the wind shear of the carport. Mr. McGinley advised the project is within regulations for wind shear.

Commissioner Westlund asked if any bollards would be used in front of the parking spots. Mr. McGinley advised there is an existing five foot island that will hold the posts. Jamie Nash of Carport Structures was present on behalf of the applicant. He noted the existing island that separates the spaces.

Commissioner Ambrosey asked if there will be lighting under the carport structure. Mr. McGinley confirmed there would be lighting on the underside of the carport.

Mr. McGinley advised these solar panels will offset 70% of the energy used by this facility. He believes this will be a positive project and environmentally conscious project for the Town of Monroe.

The hearing was tabled to February 4, 2021.

## **DELIBERATIONS and DETERMINATIONS**

### **12. PENDING MEETING MINUTES**

- **Minutes – December 17, 2020**  
**MOTION:** WESTLUND – To approve the meeting minutes of December 17, 2020 as drafted.  
**SECOND:** CONDON  
**VOTE:** 5-0 – Approved – Motion Passed  
Ayes O’Reilly, Maini, Condon, Ambrosey, Westlund  
Nays None
- **Minutes – January 07, 2021**  
**MOTION:** WESTLUND – To approve the meeting minutes of January 07, 2021 as drafted.  
**SECOND:** CONDON  
**VOTE:** 5-0 – Approved – Motion Passed  
Ayes O’Reilly, Maini, Condon, Ambrosey, Westlund

Nays                      None

**13. PENDING APPLICATION DELIBERATIONS / DETERMINATIONS**

- **SEP-2020-02, File #1622A – 556 Pepper Street – I-2 District**  
**MOTION:**            **WESTLUND – to ACCEPT Special Exception Permit / Site Development Plan Application** for conversion of a portion of an existing non-conforming single-family home use to a permitted Landscaper business, including related office, driveway, parking, fencing and dumpster improvements. Cesar Rios (owner/applicant).  
  
**SECOND:**            **CONDON**  
**VOTE:**                **5-0 – Approved – Motion Passed**  
Ayes                    O’Reilly, Maini, Condon, Ambrosey, Westlund  
Nays                    None
  
- **RAA-2020-04, File #1011E – Proposed Stevenson Lumber SB2 District**

Mr. Schultz reviewed the application for the Commission.

Commissioner Ambrosey asked why is this application being voted on before the text amendment application is completed.

Mr. Schultz and Ms. Contois clarified the legal progression regarding creating a new zone in a regulation text amendment, and a zone change application. Chairman O’Reilly asked the Commission if they want to deliberate this tonight or wait until the other application closes.

The Commission requested to table the deliberations.

- **SEP-2020-05, File #1625A – 615 Main Street – B-1 District**

The Commission directed Staff to draft an approval.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

**14. REGULATIONS REVIEW/AMENDMENT WORK SESSION**

- None

**15. CORRESPONDENCE/NEW APPLICATIONS**

- None

**16. COMMISSION REPORTS**

Commissioner Condon advised he received an unsolicited email from Peter Metropolis in regards to 64 Cambridge Ave. He forwarded the email to Staff. Staff forwarded the email to the entire Commission.

**17. MEETING ADJOURNMENT**

Polling the Commission and hearing no objections, Chairman O’Reilly adjourned the meeting at 9:50p.m.