



TOWN OF NEWTOWN
PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION
MINUTES
Regular Meeting
Council Chambers, 3 Primrose Street
September 7, 2017, 7:30 P.M.

Present: Mr. Mulholland, Mr. Mitchell, Mr. Swift, Mr. Corigliano, Ms. Cox, Ms. Manville, Mr. Taylor

Also Present: George Benson, Director of Planning

Mr. Mulholland opened the meeting at 7:35 PM

Discussion and Possible Action Items

Mr. Mitchell read the call for the hearing: Application 17.11 by James and Katherine King for a Special Exception located at 121 Huntingtown Road to construct a covered horse riding ring under Newtown Zoning Regulation § 3.01.300 and 3.01.325 as shown on plans titled "Zoning Location Survey Prepared for Katherine King, 121 Huntingtown Road, Newtown Connecticut", last revised 7/3/17".

Mr. Mulholland asked to hear from the applicant. James and Katherine King, 121 Huntingtown Road described the proposed covered riding ring as a 60' x 100' structure with 5' knee wall sides and 27' to the peak of the roof. Ms. King said its footprint is actually smaller than normal, but it was designed to adhere to the standards in the Zoning Regulations. The ring is proposed at 100' from all property lines and will be located behind their existing barn. Ms. King explained that the ring is to allow their personal use and small business a longer season because they will be much more protected from the elements by being underneath a covered ring. A Commissioner asked if there would be coverings or screens on the sides. Ms. King was not planning to at the time of construction but had considered some type of screening as an option. Mr. Swift asked why the structure was so tall. Mr. King explained the height of horses with riders, which causes the lowest height for the roof to be approximately 18'. There were no additional stalls being added.

Mr. Mulholland asked to hear from the public. Adrian Armanini, 118 Huntingtown Road, is directly across the street from the King Family. He was concerned about the visual impact from this new structure. He looked at plans with the Commissioners and said he currently looks at their riding areas and barn. Ms. King explained the positioning of the ring behind their barn. Commissioners asked about existing or planned landscaping. The King's said they'd entertain adding some plantings to the front of the property to buffer the view from across the street. Mr. Swift again was concerned about the height of the structure. Mr. Benson explained that it was a normal height and size and met all of the requirements of the regulations.

Mr. Mitchell made a motion to close the hearing. Mr. Taylor seconded. All members were in favor. The hearing was closed at 8:50 PM.

Mr. Mitchell made a motion to approve application 17.11 as outlined on the application and submitted plans dated 7/3/17. Mr. Corigliano seconded. All members were in favor.

Scoreboard at Glander 3 Field, Fairfield Hills Campus

Mr. Benson introduced Ed Marks, Chairman of the Parks and Rec Commission, who discussed the Glander 3 Field Scoreboard with the Commissioners. He said the main part of the sign is 4' x 8' with a top piece showing the sponsor for the sign. The top piece would be an additional 19" x 8". Commissioners were given a mockup of the sign. Mr. Swift asked about the location of the scoreboard in relation to the field and trails. Mr. Marks described the location as right/center outfield, as out of line with the trails as possible. Mr. Mulholland was concerned about the top piece to the sign. He didn't think the language was correct to show donation of the sign and not the entire field. He thought it was also very large in comparison with the other text on the sign. Mr. Corigliano asked if adding "Donated by..." would help. Ms. Cox also suggested putting the smaller piece on the bottom. After deliberating, Mr. Mulholland asked Mr. Marks to submit another mock up showing the small piece at the bottom and adding "donated by..." while trying to use smaller font. The topic will be revisited at the next meeting of September 21, 2017.

Borough of Newtown Zoning Regulations, Landmark Property Overlay Zone

Mr. Benson introduced the Borough Zoning Landmark Property Proposal and told the Commissioners that it is still in the early stages. He didn't want to get too far into the details until the Borough made more revisions and became more specific with their description and restrictions for the proposal. The general idea is to allow certain historical buildings to apply to an overlay zone which will allow specific leeway's to encourage commerce. This was brought on by the Edmond Town Hall which is not financially independent. Mr. Benson explained that the building will most likely never be independent, but allowing more light professional use would help ease the burden on taxpayers. The uses that were discussed are not unlike permitted professional uses for the Borough. Mr. Mitchell mentioned lawyers and accountants. The intent is to keep the same Main Street character and not to encourage or allow large commercial use. Mr. Mulholland asked PZ Commissioners to review the POCD that mention the Borough for the next meeting to have a more detailed conversation. There were members of the public who wished to speak on the topic.

Jim Gaston, Borough Warden, submitted a 9 page document explaining his concerns with the proposal and some suggestions. He believes that the protection for historical integrity of the Borough and Main Street is best delegated to the Historic District. Mr. Gaston was concerned about signage and ADA compliance. He encouraged PZ not to endorse the proposal without significant rework or to deny it completely. Mr. Mulholland explained that the Borough and Town Planner are making modifications and narrowing the scope of the proposal. If PZ denies support for the regulation, Borough Zoning can still approve it with super majority.

Robert Hall, 5 Nettleton Ave, explained the situation with the Edmond Town Hall as two year project to find a way to bring more income to the property. His wife, Margot Hall, is on the Board of Managers and agreed with the ongoing effort. Mr. Hall agreed that the current proposal is very broad but if written correctly will prove practical and financially viable for the ETH and a handful of other properties that may make use of this overlay. Mr. Benson named some of those properties to be the Inn, the Ambulance Garage, and the Library. These are not buildings with slated projects or changes,

but may need to make use of space in a different way than had originally been planned for some time in the future. Mr. Benson mentioned that one of the ideas being discussed is only allowing this overlay to be applicable to municipally owned buildings. Mr. Gaston had also mentioned this as a suggestion. Mr. Mulholland said this topic will be revisited at the October 5th meeting and reminded Commissioners to look at the POCD.

Borough of Newtown Zoning Regulations, Village District Regulation Amendment

Mr. Benson then described the Village District regulation amendment as a way to allow certain projects to go through the application process without requiring an architect. This would eliminate sometimes unnecessary costs to the property owner depending on the size and span of the project. The Commissioners all agreed that this was a helpful amendment to the Borough Regulations and Mr. Mulholland will send a letter.

Land Acquisition- Parcels located at 125 Great Quarter Road and 78 Mountain View Road

Mr. Benson gave Commissioners GIS maps of the two parcels currently being looked at by the Conservation Commission on 125 Great Quarter Road and 78 Mountain View Road for Open Space Land Acquisition. Mr. Swift wondered why we are acquiring such small parcels. Mr. Benson said that Rob Sibley has been working on acquiring small parcels that were subdivided into mostly unusable lots in many areas around town. There are more parcels coming each year, and the idea is to eventually connect the pieces to have a large space of conserved land. Many of the properties are in back taxes or have been passed down to relatives that don't even know they have them. Mr. Sibley has spent many years contacting owners of these little parcels. All members of the Commission were in favor and a letter will be sent to Mr. Sibley and the Conservation Commission.

Other

Mr. Benson mentioned regulations that will be in front of the PZ at the next meeting for public hearing. Mr. Mulholland reminded Mr. Benson of signage changes at Pizza Palace. Mr. Benson will have an enforcement officer look into it.

Minutes

Mr. Mitchell made a motion to accept the minutes of August 3, 2017. Mr. Taylor seconded and the minutes were approved.

Adjournment

Mr. Corigliano made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Swift seconded and the meeting of September 7, 2017 was adjourned at 9:16 PM.

*Respectfully submitted,
Georgia Contois, Clerk*