

***Borough of Newtown
Zoning Commission
Newtown, Connecticut***

**THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO APPROVAL BY THE BOROUGH OF NEWTOWN ZONING
COMMISSION**

Minutes of the Meeting of February 12, 2020

Minutes of the Meeting of the Borough of Newtown Zoning Commission on Wednesday, February 12, 2020 in the Lower Meeting Room, Edmond Town Hall, 45 Main Street, Newtown, Connecticut. Mr. Nelson called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Commission Members Present: Doug Nelson, David Francis, Claudia Mitchell, Margaret Hull and Doug McDonald.

Commission Members Absent: Brid Craddock.

Staff Present: Maureen Crick Owen, Clerk, and Rob Sibley, Borough ZEO.

Also Present: 6 members of the public and one press.

Motion was made by Mrs. Mitchell and seconded by Mr. Francis to accept the minutes of the January 8, 2020 meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

Chairman's Report: None.

Borough Zoning Enforcement Officer's Report: None.

Old Business: none

New Business:

1. Residential apartments as a residential accessory use: Mr. Nelson said that apartments in the Borough, whether detached or attached, are not an allowed use. Mr. Nelson noted that although they are illegal, there are many accessory apartments at residential properties in the Borough. Mr. Nelson estimated that there might be several dozen. Mr. Sibley reviewed draft recommendations with the members for proposed text amendment. Mr. Nelson said that this was worthy of addressing. Mr. Sibley said without zoning regulations to address this, he would need to start with violations if complaints are made. Mr. Sibley said if the regulation was passed, then he would send a notice to correct and the owner would be required to file an application. Discussion ensued regarding process for detached apartment (i.e. special exception).

2. Residential multi-family housing: Mr. Nelson asked the members to discuss in general thoughts/ideas regarding residential multi-family housing in the Borough. Mrs. Mitchell said the density of the whole Borough should be considered. Mr. Francis said that there is a potential of a school becoming vacant which might be an obvious potential for apartments. Mr. McDonald said repurposing an existing building is different than building new apartments. Mrs. Hull said that you need to keep in mind that the development needs to be in keeping with the character of the Borough. She said she thinks all residents cherish Main Street. Mrs. Hull read Article 1 – Purpose of

the zoning regulations which in part states: "They are designed to lessen congestion in the streets, to secure safety from fire, panic, flood and other dangers, to promote health and the general welfare, to provide adequate light and air, to prevent the overcrowding of land, to avoid undue concentration of population, to facilitate adequate provision for transportation, water, sewage, schools, parks and other public requirements, to conserve the value of the buildings and to encourage the most appropriate use of land throughout the Borough of Newtown." She said that she feels that multi-family housing is not appropriate use in the small densely populated area. Mr. Francis said in looking ahead multi-family housing in Hawley School or the Middle School could be real possibilities.

3. Proposed signs: none

4. Acceptance of new applications: Mr. Nelson said that they were officially accepting two applications from the Town of Newtown. The first is to amend the zoning regulations to add Borough Landmark Buildings regulations. The second application is to designate Edmond Town Hall as a Landmark Building. He said the public hearing would for the two applications would be at their March meeting.

The next regularly meeting is scheduled for March 11, 2020 at 7:00 p.m.

Mr. Francis made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:05 p.m., seconded by Mrs. Mitchell and unanimously approved.

Respectfully Submitted,

Maureen Crick Owen
Clerk