



**Town of Cromwell  
Planning and Zoning Commission**

***REGULAR MEETING  
7:00 P.M. TUESDAY FEBRUARY 20, 2024  
TOWN COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
CROMWELL TOWN HALL  
41 WEST STREET***

***Minutes and Record of Votes***

RECEIVED FOR RECORD  
Mar 12, 2024 11:58A  
JoAnn Doyle  
TOWN CLERK  
CROMWELL, CT *[Signature]*

**Present:** Chairman Alice Kelly, Vice Chairman Michael Cannata, Ann Grasso, Nick Demetriades, Douglas Kalinowski, Andrew Holt, Vincenzo Marfella, Robert Donohue, Jonathan Comtois

**Absent:** Brian Dufresne, Paul Cordone, Ken Rozich

**Also present:** Zoning Compliance Officer Bruce Driska, Director of Planning and Development Stuart Popper, Mayor James Demetriades, Town Council Members Julia Aurigemma and Stacy Dabrowski

**1. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 7:05pm by Chairman Kelly.

**2. Roll Call**

The presence of the above members was noted.

**3. Seating of Alternates**

A motion was made by Michael Cannata and seconded by Doug Kalinowski to seat Andrew Holt, Robert Donahue and Jonathan Comtois as alternates. All were in favor; the motion passed.

**4. Approval of Agenda**

A motion was made by Michael Cannata and seconded by Ann Grasso to approve the agenda with the amendment to add application #24-03, Town of Cromwell, 1 Donald Harris Drive, Athletic Facilities as item 7c under new business. All were in favor; the motion passed.

**5. Development Compliance Officer Report:**

Mr. Driska said his report is the package and asked if there were any questions.

**6. Director of Planning and Development Report:**

Mr. Popper said they have added a section on the town website with current business' in town. He said this is on the EDC page and we will update as businesses open and close. Mr. Popper said we will also maintain a list of properties for lease and we will eventually add that to the website as well. He said they have found it is only two to three real estate agents that handle most listings in town. He said that the number of vacant properties is mostly large acreage sites.

Mr. Popper said Popeye's submitted their updated mylars today so hopefully that is moving forward soon.

**7. New Business: Accept and Schedule New Applications:**

- a. Application #24-01: Request to modify the Site Plan (remove sidewalks) at West Street Commons on Mystique Lane. West Street Commons is the Applicant and the Owner.

Mr. Popper said this is a private development so it will be a business item on the agenda.

A motion was made by Michael Cannata and seconded by Robert Donohue to accept and schedule application #24-01 for the March 19, 2024 meeting. All were in favor; the motion passed.

- b. Application #24-02: Request for a Special Permit under Section 2.2.C.4 of the Zoning Regulations to allow for School operations and training at 84 Hicksville Road in the Residence 25 (R-25) Zone District. Adelbrook, Inc./Adelbrook Hilltop Preschool and Daycare is the Applicant and Adelbrook, Inc. is the Owner.

Mr. Popper said this will be a school in a residential zone so it will be a public hearing.

A motion was made by Michael Cannata and seconded by Ann Grasso to accept and schedule application #24-02 for a public hearing on March 19, 2024. All were in favor; the motion passed.

- c. Application #24-03 Town of Cromwell, 1 Donald Harris Drive; application for an athletic facility.

Mr. Popper said that the applicant has relinquished the approval of the previous application so they can submit a new application. He said it is up to the Commission if they want to schedule a public hearing for this application.

A motion was made by Michael Cannata and seconded by Ann Grasso to accept and schedule application #24-03 for a public hearing to be held on April 4, 2024. All were in favor; the motion passed.

Mr. Popper reminded Chairman Kelly that a call for general public comments was not included in the agenda.

Chairman Kelly asked if there were any members of the public who wanted to speak regarding anything not on the agenda.

Mayor James Demetriades, 272 Skyview Drive said he felt it was best that the Town of Cromwell Athletic facility application came back to this Commission for a public hearing. He said it will eventually go before the Town Council where we will review it and have public meetings to invite the citizens to provide feedback. He thanked the Commissioners for scheduling a public hearing.

Mayor Demetriades also told the commissioners that he had two Cromwell High School students with him that were filming a documentary about town government. He asked if the Commissioners could stay after the meeting to conduct some short interviews with the students. He also said they are recording the meeting from the back of the room as well. Student Jacob Brightman said he will conduct the interviews for the documentary and Student Aryan Chanda said he is helping Jacob with the camera work.

Mr. Vasilios Lefkaditis said he owns the Cromwell Commons Shopping Center and said he wanted to share a plan that they have been developing to get some feedback before they go any further with the planning of the project. He said that they would like to build 150-200 apartments on top of the shopping center. He said they would need to ask for a zone change from commercial zone to a mixed use zone. Mr. Lefkaditis asked if the Commissioners had any feedback about that.

Mr. Kalinowski asked if they had enough parking for that. Mr. Lefkaditis said they have 580 spots and based on the regulations they have 280 free parking spots. Mr. Popper said it would have to meet the parking regulations which are 2.5 spots per every 1,000 square feet and 1.5 spots for every apartment. Mr. Cannata said we will have new parking regulations soon and they will have a new requirement due to the problems we have encountered in the past. Mr. Lefkaditis asked when this will happen and Mr. Popper said probably early spring. Mr. Lefkaditis said this would be a unique situation since the spaces would be empty at night when residents would be coming home since the businesses are not open at night.

Mr. Demetriades asked if they would consider affordable housing and Mr. Lefkaditis said it depended on the number of units they could build.

Chairman Kelly asked how tall the structure would be and Mr. Lefkaditis said 3 stories. Mr. Popper said this zone would allow for 55 feet high buildings. Ms. Grasso asked about a parking garage and Mr. Lefkaditis said there probably wasn't enough room. Ms. Grasso asked if it would be possible to use the space were Beautiful People was located and Mr. Lefkaditis said he would have to ask the engineer.

Mr. Kalinowski said it is a nightmare to take a left hand turn out of the Starbucks onto Route 372. Mr. Popper said this kind of project would be under the review of the DOT.

Chairman Kelly asked if they could put up a fence behind the Pizza Pie and Chinese restaurant building since it is very unattractive back there. Mr. Lefkaditis said he will bring it up with maintenance and grounds crews.

Mr. Marfella said the Firestone corner is a mess during the day, especially the back side by the tree line. Mr. Lefkaditis said he will bring it up with Firestone.

**8. New Business:**

**9. Public Hearings:**

- a. The adoption of the 2024 Town Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD). The Town of Cromwell Planning and Zoning Commission is the Applicant.

Chairman Kelly reads the public hearing notice dated February 7, 2024.

A motion was made by Michael Cannata and seconded by Ann Grasso to open the public hearing for the adoption of the POCD. All were in favor; the motion passed.

Mr. Stuart Popper, Cromwell Director of Planning and Development said he will present the POCD and will highlight different parts of the plan and 3 appendices. He said a new complete street plan which is ADA compliant is required before we can apply for any new grants so that is in my budget for this coming year. He said that many recommendations within the POCD are not the prerogative of any one group but we know in the future we will seek grants that require some of these recommendations. Mr. Popper said that we can continue the public hearing to the March meeting if needed and said he is open to any questions the Commissioners or public may have. Mr. Popper said that he was very pleased with SLR Consulting and they continue to work with them on the zoning regulations.

Mr. Popper read a letter from Ms. Diane Wiegert, 75 Geer Street, Cromwell. She had questions on the Industrial/Business park land on Geer Street and how it is shown and what the land use category is the future land use map.

Mr. Popper read a letter from Mr. James Rude, 25 Highridge Road, Cromwell. Mr. Rude expressed his concerns about light, noise and sound pollution and the impact the various levels of development have on existing neighborhoods.

Mr. Popper read a letter dated February 20, 2024 from the Lower Connecticut River Valley Council of Governments. The COG staff expressed concern about the future of agriculture in Cromwell.

Mr. Popper said we held an open house and had surveys available for public outreach.

Chairman Kelly asked for members of the public who wanted to speak regarding the POCD.

Ms. Stacy Dabrowski, 3 Robbie Road Cromwell and a member of the Town Council said first she wanted to tell the two students here filming for their documentary tonight that they are doing

a good job by participating in the town government process. Ms. Dabrowski said that 2.2% of the population returned the surveys and many of them were 55 plus years old. She said a large number of survey respondents were not representatives of the town's population and many people are being overlooked. She said an active group of members are seeking out playing fields but 45% of those who responded said that the fields in Cromwell are adequate. Mr. Cannata said we have public hearings and this document doesn't generate actual applications so those people can be heard, but they chose not to respond to this survey. Mr. Popper reviewed the comments in the POCD that recommend more parks and ball fields. Ms. Dabrowski said this document is missing a whole data set. Mr. Popper said this survey was done to gather input not to base the POCD on the study. He said we take what people say with a grain of salt and their thoughts are not the guiding principle of the plan. Chairman Kelly told Ms. Dabrowski she should read through the implementation section and that is the most important part of the plan. Ms. Dabrowski said she is expressing her concern not disputing the work you have done. She said I am just noting the lack of participation from the community.

Mayor James Demetriades, 272 Skyview Drive said in appendix B, the implementation table, that they should add advisory boards such as Library advisory, DEI advisory, Youth Services, Senior Services and Cultural advisory. He said I do not want this to sit on a shelf for the next 10 years. Mr. Popper said he and Mr. Demetriades will discuss the best way to enhance this area of the plan. Mr. Demetriades said the bikes and pedestrian planning is great as well as the sidewalk and open space plan. He said this is a job well done.

Chairman Kelly said in the past the POCD has gone into a drawer and no one has done what they were supposed to do with it. She said we need to continually ask if we are meeting our goals.

Ms. Grasso said she will send her notes to Mr. Popper about the colors in the grids and said some of the blues, oranges, red and yellows are difficult to see. She said that she read all of Ms. Dabrowski's comments and if we only look at the data from the surveys it would be wrong.

Mr. Nick Demetriades said he was happy to see the work being done with the River COG and we can take advantage of other resources. He said this is a guide for us and other Commissions.

Mr. Popper said he can review all of these comments to see how we can make the plan better.

Chairman Kelly called a recess at 8:23pm to change the recording tape. She called the meeting back to order at 8:26pm.

Mr. Popper read the letter from Chairman Kelly dated November 20, 2023.

Mr. Popper said the Commissioners should look at the letters we received and let me know, in your opinion, what we should do with the comments.

Mr. Cannata said that Mr. Rude's comments aren't POCD issues. He said they are regulation and application situations. Mr. Cannata said he felt Ms. Wiegert's comments were the same as well. Mr. Popper said he just wants to make sure that we address all of the comments. He said he will meet with the Mayor to identify the agencies we want to add. He said we also look to define the

words maintain and manage. Mr. Popper said they still need to add some pictures and a cover letter.

The Commissioners discussed the agricultural and industrial uses. Mr. Cannata said we basically have one farm in Cromwell and many micro farms.

A motion was made by Michael Cannata and seconded by Nick Demetriades to continue the public hearing for the POCD. All were in favor; the motion passed.

**10. Commissioner's Comments:**

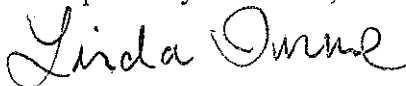
Mr. Cannata said the State Legislature makes us complete the POCD but they do not fund the process. He asked Mr. Popper the price of producing the POCD and Mr. Popper said about \$75,000. Mr. Popper said we need the POCD to apply for grants and right now we have a waiver until this is finalized.

Mr. Nick Demetriades said he sent an email to the Commissioners with a list of River COG legislative sessions.

**11. Adjourn:**

A motion was made by Michael Cannata and seconded by Robert Donohue to adjourn at 8:41pm. All were in favor; the motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Linda Imme".

Linda Imme  
Recording Clerk