

APPROVED / REVISED  
MINUTES  
INLAND WETLANDS BOARD MEETING

March 4, 2008

Present: Michael Autuori  
Joseph Fossi  
Nelson Gelfman  
John Katz  
Phil Mische  
Rebecca Mucchetti, Chairman  
Patrick Walsh, Vice Chairman  
Lillian Willis

Absent: Peter Chipouras

Also Present: Betty Brosius, Inland Wetlands Agent  
Linda Caponetti, Recording Secretary

*A Planning and Zoning Commission public hearing was held prior to the meeting.*

At 8:35 p.m. Chairman Mucchetti called the meeting to order.

**PENDING ITEMS**

There were no pending items.

**NEW ITEMS**

There were no new items.

**BOARD WALKS**

There were no walks to be scheduled.

**REQUESTS FOR BOND RELEASES/REDUCTION**

There were no requests for bond release or reduction.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

There was no correspondence.

**MINUTES**

**Mrs. Willis motioned, seconded by Dr. Autuori, to approve the minutes of February 12, 2008. The motion passed, 8-0.**

Hearing no further discussion, the Chairman adjourned the meeting at 8:37 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Caponetti  
Recording Secretary

APPROVED / REVISED  
MINUTES  
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION MEETING

March 4, 2008

Present: Michael Autuori  
Joseph Fossi  
Nelson Gelfman  
John Katz  
Phil Mische  
Rebecca Mucchetti, Chairman  
Patrick Walsh, Vice Chairman  
Lillian Willis

Absent: Peter Chipouras

Also Present: Betty Brosius, Director of Planning  
Linda Caponetti, Recording Secretary

*A public hearing was held prior to the meeting.*

At 8:38 p.m., Chairman Mucchetti called the meeting to order.

**PENDING ITEMS**

1. **#2008-003-REV(SP):** Revision to Special Permit required by Section 9.2.A.7.e.ii of the zoning regulations to modify building #3 and parking layout on property located at **35-37 Danbury Road and 16 Roberts Lane** in the B-1 zone. Appl./Owner: Eppoliti Realty Co., Inc. Auth. Agent: Douglas MacMillan. *Received 1/15/2008. Walked 2/10/2008. Public hearing commenced 3/4/2008 and continued to 3/11/08.*

**Chairman Mucchetti** noted that the public hearing had been continued to 3/11/08, and the item was tabled.

2. **#2008-009-REV(SP):** Revision to Special Permit required by Section 9.2.A.7.e. for exterior modifications to existing building located at **66 Grove Street** in the B-2 zone. Owner: 66 Grove Ridgefield, LLC. Auth. Agent: Madaket Beach Developers, LLC. *Received and Tabled 2/5/2008. 65-day action period ends 4/10/2008. For action( pending receipt of AAC report).*

The applicant, Andrew Toth of Madaket Beach Developers, was present to represent the property owner. **Chairman Mucchetti** asked the applicant to explain the request, and noted that the project had been reviewed by the Architectural Advisory Committee.

**Mr. Toth** displayed drawings and referred to them repeatedly in describing the project. Mr. Katz asked if the presentation would incorporate the AAC's comments and recommendations. It would not, Mr. Toth reported. Chairman Mucchetti suggested that, during his presentation, Mr. Toth could speak to the comments from the AAC.

Mr. Toth described the site, which currently includes a flat roofed concrete block building. The topography is such that the building is in part one story, and, on the northern side, two story. One of the posted drawings illustrated the proposed building on an aerial photograph, with the town house units superimposed on the site. Mr. Toth described the improvements the applicant was intending for the building. The existing flat roof would become a gable roof, and the exterior walls would be replaced with stone and cement plankboard. There would be two towers, he said, one on the NW corner off Grove St., and the second, on the SE corner off Old Quarry.

The Commission objected almost universally to these towers, which objection was in agreement with the AAC's comments regarding the proposed roofline.

**Mr. Katz** asked that the AAC's comments be read into the record.

**Planner Brosius** read the comments, and explained that the AAC had reviewed the application a week prior, and requested additional design studies and information. Most of the comments involved the roofline. The AAC felt that the suggested gables, towers and cupolas were not compatible with "the existing style and fenestration of the building," and the proposed treatment of the roof was "inappropriate." They suggested a simpler roof design, but allowed that, if the traditional look was important to the applicant, the windows could be changed to individual windows and aligned with the gables above.

**The Chairman** asked Mr. Toth to address the concerns put forth by the AAC, especially those regarding the roofline, which, the Chairman said, was "dramatically different than what is there." Mr. Toth agreed that it was.

**Mr. Toth** defended the roofline, saying that, at the meetings before the AAC on the townhouses, it was clear that a New England look was wanted. This would be represented by, say, a Colonial or a Cape Cod style building. Those styles would not include a flat roof. Mr. Toth noted that he had been in the business for 23 years, and said that the large overhangs suggested by the AAC are representative of a Federal style building, which could include dentil moldings. He referred to the building across the street on Old Quarry, (which houses the animal clinic), as "very traditional looking." It has "a huge roofline with gables and windows in it," he said. The applicant was attempting to incorporate that styling with a Colonial style gable roof, he said, adding that it would be possible to "soften the roof lines and eliminate some of the cupolas," but, maintaining the gable roof was important to the applicant.

**Mr. Katz** asked how the towers fit with any of that intent. Mr. Toth said that the owner chose to “demarcate the building and its entrances [from the street] in that way.” It was actually more of a personal architectural choice, he said.

**Dr. Autuori** said that the AAC may not object to the roofline if the windows were changed. He agreed with Mr. Katz, however, about the cupolas.

**Mr. Toth** said that Dr. Autuori made a good point in suggesting that the applicant “adjust the windows” to try to achieve more of a Colonial look. He felt that their proposed roof was not very intrusive and, if the windows blended in, the look would be in keeping with that style.

**The Chairman** mentioned the Commission’s objection to the turrets. Mr. Toth said that they were “a trademark of the owner’s.” Mr. Katz compared them to McDonald’s “trademarks,” “which Ridgefield has eschewed, as well.”

**Mr. Walsh** noted that the comparison with the building across the street was not a fair one, since the one building is built into the side of a large hill, and the other sits up on top of a large hill. Discussion continued about the comparative size and height of the two roofs, and the visual impact of their rooflines. Mr. Walsh also objected to the cupolas. Mr. Toth said that there is a cupola on top of every unit in the townhouse development, and noted that this had come before the AAC, as well.

**Mr. Fossi** asked for the specific height and overall dimensions of the cupolas, which Mr. Toth could not provide at that time. Mr. Fossi felt the cupolas on top of the towers were “way out of proportion” to the rest of the building.

An animated discussion ensued about the cupolas.

**Mr. Katz** said he feels it’s a mistake for an applicant to come into Ridgefield with a desire to bring a particular builder or applicant’s “signature” on their buildings. He felt that the towers were offensive and would “denigrate all the architectural aesthetics” which had gone into the balance of the building. He felt it was ridiculous to compare the cupolas on the towers with those on the surrounding residential units, which were an interesting part of a complex of architectural elements making up an aesthetic façade, broken up in a variety of ways.

**Planner Brosius** asked Mr. Toth to explain and define the scope of the roofs, which he did. There is no actual gable on top of the roof, but a façade of gables around the perimeter of the flat roof.

**Dr. Gelfman** felt that the real problem was that the windows didn’t go with the roof, and one or the other needed to be changed.

**Mr. Toth** said that he would speak with the architect.

**Mr. Katz** said that Mr. Toth should be complimented on his choices for the siding.

Following the presentation, the Commission agreed by consensus that design changes were needed. The applicant will request further review when drawings have been revised.

## NEW ITEMS

3. **#2008-017-SP:** Special Permit application required by Section 9.2 of the Ridgefield Zoning Regulations to convert an existing service station (Citgo Gas Station – Rte 7/35) to a mini-market with related site improvements on property located at **603 Danbury Road** in the B-2 zone. Owner: Seven Ridgefield Realty Corp. Appl.: Standard Petroleum. Auth. Agent: Donnelly, McNamara and Gustafson, P.C. *65-days to commence public hearing ends 5/8/2008. For receipt, schedule walk and public hearing.*

**Chairman Mucchetti** introduced the application and suggested a site walk for 3/9/08 and a public hearing for 4/8/08. Mr. Katz motioned, seconded by Dr. Autuori, to acknowledge receipt of the application and to schedule the site walk and public hearing as recommended by the Chairman. The motion passed, 8-0.

4. **#2008-020-REV(SP):** Revision to Special Permit application required by Section 9.2.A.7.e for modification to the site plan to include access/egress changes required by CTDOT/STC, installation of a free-standing sign and building signage on property located at **46-50 Danbury Road** (Walgreen's Pharmacy) in the B-1 zone. Owner: Sherwood Island, LLC. Appl.: Readco, LLC. Auth. Agent: Wayne Fraser. *65-day action period ends 5/8/2008. For receipt and schedule walk if necessary.*

**Chairman Mucchetti** mentioned that the Connecticut STC (State Traffic Commission) had issues with the relocation of the access to the property, and the AAC had issues with the height and location of the sign. She suggested a site walk for the application, for 3/9/08. Dr. Autuori motioned, seconded by Mrs. Willis, to acknowledge receipt of the application and to schedule a site walk as recommended. The motion passed, 8-0.

5. **#2008-021-SP:** Special Permit application under Section 9.2 as required by Section 3.3.D.2. to allow a design studio within residence located at **225 South Salem Road** in the RAA zone. Owners: Amy and Scott Russell. Appl.: Amy Russell. *65-days to commence public hearing ends 5/8/2008. For receipt schedule walk and public hearing.*

**Chairman Mucchetti** introduced the application and suggested a site walk for 3/9/08 and a public hearing for 4/8/08. Mrs. Willis motioned, seconded by Mr. Katz, to acknowledge receipt of the application and to schedule the site walk and public hearing as recommended by the Chairman. The motion passed, 8-0.

6. Proposed amendments to the zoning regulations *for discussion* c/o PD.

**Chairman Mucchetti** asked the Planner to explain the four proposed amendments.

**Planner Brosius** said she and Zoning Enforcement Officer, Richard Baldelli, had put together a list of minor changes they felt were necessary to some of the regulations:

- 1) Sec. 3.3.D (Accessory Apartments); 2) Sec. 8.3.C and 9.3.H (Village District Procedures); 3) Sec. 3.4 (Accessory Structures); and 4) Sec. 10 (APPENDIX).

After brief description of all four, which were introduced as corrections or improvements/clarifications to language in the regulations, the Planner recommended a public hearing for 4/22/08, to allow time to make the proper statutory referrals to the regional planning agencies.

**Mr. Katz** motioned, seconded by Mr. Fossi, to schedule a public hearing for the proposed amendments for 4/22/08, as suggested by the Planner. The motion passed, 8-0.

Regarding the meeting scheduled for 3/18/08, **Chairman Mucchetti** noted that an email from Christine Lodewick had been received by the office. Her son-in-law, Mr. Nico Larco, is a well recognized professor of Architecture and Planning at the University of Oregon, whose specialty is site design and the proliferation of suburban multi-family housing. He will be in Ridgefield from March 17-19, and had offered to come and speak to the Commission.

**The Planner** noted that Professor Larco has been giving speeches across the country. Suburban multi-family housing is the largest growing housing market in the United States since 1970, he states, with one in four units in suburbia being alternatives to the single family home. This housing type is typically 30 – 40 units per acre, and provides a model for bringing density into suburbia. While the growth of suburban multi-family housing has had an increasing impact on the physical and demographic nature of suburbia, he says, the physical development of suburban multi-family housing and its relationship to adjacent uses has remained largely uninvestigated.

The Planner felt it would be beneficial to have Mr. Larco come and speak. She felt this was a good opportunity for the Commission and other groups and individuals who could be invited, as well. It was suggested that the Commission accept this invitation and issue a press release advising the community of the details.

## COMMISSION WALKS

The Commission added the following three applications to the 3/9/08 site walk schedule, as noted above:

- **#2008-017-SP:** Special Permit **603 Danbury Road**, Seven Ridgefield Realty Corp.
- **#2008-020-REV(SP):** Revision to Special Permit **46-50 Danbury Road**, Sherwood Island, LLC
- **#2008-021-SP:** Special Permit **225 South Salem Road**, Russell

The following site walk had been previously scheduled for 3/9/08:

- **#2008-013-REZ:** petition to rezone **Sunset Lane** and **30 Grove Street**; Zawacki

## REQUESTS FOR BOND RELEASES/REDUCTION

There were no requests for bond release or reduction.

## CORRESPONDENCE

Chairman Mucchetti noted the following correspondence:

- Copy of letter from David Grogins, Town Attorney, to the State Office of Policy and Management, re the Route 7/35 sewer district.
- Letter from the Planner to Peter Seirup regarding installation of exterior lighting at the Jesse Lee Memorial Methodist Church.
- Memo to the Commission regarding the temporary sign approved for R.A.C.E. (Ridgefield Action Committee for the Environment).

## MINUTES

**Mrs. Willis** motioned, seconded by Mr. Fossi, to approve the minutes of February 12, 2008, noting the need for a correction on page 5, regarding a statement made by Commissioner Walsh. The motion to approve the corrected minutes passed, 8-0.

Hearing no further discussion, the Chairman adjourned the meeting at 9:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Caponetti  
Recording Secretary