

APPROVED MINUTES
SUBCOMMITTEE ON PROPOSED ZONING LEGISLATIVE CHANGES
SPECIAL MEETING held via Zoom

These minutes are a general summary of the meeting and are not verbatim transcription.

August 28, 2020

Present: John Katz
Rudy Marconi
Karen Martin
Rebecca Mucchetti
Ben Nneji

Absent: Robert Hendricks

Also Present: Aarti Paranjape, Recording Secretary

1. Call to order

Chair Ms. Martin called the meeting to order at 2:01 PM.

2. Discussions:

- (Contd.) Zoning Legislative Changes
- Letter from the Chair of Planning & Zoning Commission

Ms. Martin updated the members she has posted a comment about the proposed legislative changes on the CT Planner's Listserv to gather the input from the other towns in the State about this proposed Zoning change. She said that the Greenwich Planning & Zoning Chair contacted her stating that in July few of the towns (Greenwich, New Cannan, Darien, Westport, Wilton) had taken an initiative and met to discuss briefly the topic of House Bill to Desegregate CT. She added that the next meeting is scheduled on Tuesday September 01, where Ms. Mucchetti, Chair of Ridgefield PZC has also been invited.

Ms. Mucchetti added that she intends to attend the meeting and will share concerns on behalf of the Planning & Zoning Commission of Ridgefield.

Mr. Marconi recapped that CCM had informed him about this bill. He added that earlier he had mentioned that this bill could be discussed at the Special session in September, however, after speaking with Sara Bronin, it is less likely that this topic will be discussed at the Special session and more likely that it be addressed in the regular session in January.

The members acknowledged the letter written by Ms. Mucchetti on behalf of the Planning and Zoning Commission. Everyone commended the content of the letter, stating

that Ms. Mucchetti covered the concerns and supports and the letter which will make an impact on the discussion on the bill at the session.

Mr. Marconi added that multiple letters will make a greater impact. He said he will approach the Board of Selectmen to draft a similar letter.

The members discussed to include the points of concern and support.

Mr. Katz said that the 2020 POCD includes the character of the town. He added that the State cannot force small towns to change their character to accommodate affordable housing.

Ms. Mucchetti said that Desegregate CT pushes the Town to expand and modernize the sewer systems in order to accommodate more housing plans which is an issue for towns with small sewer districts.

Mr. Marconi said, in fact, there have been cases where the State has denied the expansion when some town had approached to expand their sewer systems. He said when Redding approached about the expansion of its sewer system to accommodate housing at Georgetown. The Redding was directed to take care of the Wiremill Project before pursuing the housing development.

Mr. Nneji commented that a lot of communities all over the country are facing the housing development problem. He said that companies are planning multi housing systems which are not an eyesore but create neighborhoods which blend and keep the character of towns. He added that he will collect information on “middle-income” housing typologies.

Mr. Katz said that the Desegregate CT is pushing the towns to have fewer single family homes but more of multifamily homes which will help more families to move in these town which were not in the reach of the families due to unaffordability.

Ms. Mucchetti stated that the Planning and Zoning Commission is going to discuss the Desegregate CT and this subcommittee at their September 10 meeting and thereafter will finalize the letter which will be distributed with the Board of Selectmen. She added that the concept of middle housing is supported by the Subcommittee and will be reflected in the letter as opposed to a concern in the first draft letter which she had written.

The members discussed the talking points which will be consistent when the Board of Selectmen write the letter. Following talking points will be included in the letter:

Concerns:

- Preserving the Character of Town
- Protect Single Family Zoning and remove the decision making from local zoning to regional authority
- Expand areas of Operation beyond fifteen miles of the neighboring municipalities

Support:

- Accessory Dwelling
- Middle Housing
- Training of the Planning & Zoning Commission members

4. Approval of Minutes

- **August 21, 2020**

Mr. Nneji motioned and Mr. Katz seconded to approve the minutes as amended. Motion carried 5-0-0.

Members decided to meet twice a month. The next meeting is scheduled on September 11, 2020.

Mr. Nneji motioned and Ms. Mucchetti seconded to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried 5-0-0.

Hearing no further Chair Ms. Martin adjourned the meeting at 3:12 P.M.

Respectfully submitted by,

Aarti Paranjape