

REGULAR MEETING, HELD IN-PERSON, MINUTES FEBRUARY 28, 2022
FOR THE EASTON PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

Note: These minutes, prepared to comply with Section 1-225 of the General Connecticut Statutes, is an approximate record of matters discussed and actions taken by the Commission at the meeting, but has not yet been reviewed by the commission for accuracy or completeness and is therefore subject to change or correction.

Chairman, Raymond Martin, called the Regular Meeting, held in-person, to order at approximately 7:05 pm.

Regular Members present: Raymond Martin, Alison Sternberg, Ross Ogden, Robert Maquat and John Foley

Alternate Member present: Jay Habansky and Raymond Ganim

Alternate Member absent: Lou DiPietro

For the record: All five regular members were present for voting purposes.

Public Hearing:

SP-21-03, Special Permit Application, Submitted on behalf of James and Sandra K. Wright, 467 Judd Road, Easton, by Freedom Forever, LLC, to install ground-mounted solar, as depicted on Site Location Maps submitted by Freedom Forever, LLC and on a Limited Property Boundary Survey, Prepared for James Wright, 467 Judd Road, prepared by Jason Edwards, L.S., J. Edwards & Associates, LLC, Engineering and Surveying, dated December 12, 2021.

Present at the meeting was Eli Kuh, Branch Coordinator, and David Stichter, Sales, from Freedom Forever. Eli Kuh presented the application and stated that there were two proposed ground mounted solar arrays, 150 feet from any property boundary and not visible from any property.

Discussion was held regarding the mounting of the system to the ground. Eli Kuh stated that it was mounted on 6 ft. monotube piers, 2 rows per array, 5 piers in each.

Discussion was held regarding the size of the system, 16kw. David Stichter stated that the size of the system was based on annual usage. Discussion was also raised about the maintenance. It was stated that Freedom Forever warranties it for 10 years and that the manufacturer warranties it for 25 years with an expected life of 30 plus years.

The owner, Jim Wright, briefly spoke about his return on investment.

Discussion was held regarding the safety of the ground mounted solar. Mr. Kuh stated that they install a screening mesh on the back of the arrays, that the wires are underground and that there is no electrical risk.

The Chair opened the public hearing up to the public. No one from the public spoke.

REGULAR MEETING, HELD IN-PERSON, MINUTES FEBRUARY 28, 2022
FOR THE EASTON PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

Public Hearing:

SP-21-03, Special Permit Application (continued):

The chair noted the following items for the record:

1. Special Permit Application SP-21-03 with several attachments
2. Legal Notice in the Fairfield Citizen February 18, and February 25, 2022.
3. Comments from Health Officer, Eren Ceylan, dated February 7, 2022.
4. Comments from Police Chief Richard Doyle, dated 1/24/22.
5. Comments from Wetlands Enforcement Officer, Mark DeLieto, dated January 24, 2022.
6. Comments from Zoning Enforcement Officer, Mark DeLieto, dated January 21, 2022.
7. Set of five pictures of Site Location submitted by Freedom Forever
8. One-page letter from Eli Kuh, Branch Coordinator, Freedom Forever, Findings of the Special Permit Criteria for ground mounted solar received January 20, 2022. The Chair went through each item in this letter.
9. Limited Property Boundary Survey Prepared for James Wright Depicting a portion of 467 Judd Road, Easton, Connecticut, dated December 12, 2021, denoted as the record map.

The chairman closed the public hearing at approximately 7:25pm.

Motion was made by Robert Maquat, seconded by Ross Ogden, to approve SP-21-03, Special Permit Application, submitted on behalf of James and Sandra K. Wright, 467 Judd Road, Easton, by Freedom Forever, LLC, to install ground-mounted solar as it is consistent with the findings of the Special Permit Criteria, Section 8440 of the Easton Zoning Regulations, Items 1. Thru 11., and incorporate the following Department reports as part of the findings:

1. Report from Health Department, Eren Ceylan, dated February 7, 2022
2. Report from Mark DeLieto, WEO, dated January 24, 2022.
3. Report from Mark DeLieto, ZEO, dated January 21, 2022.
4. Report from Police Dept, Chief Richard Doyle, dated January 20, 2022.

Reference was also made to the record map, "Limited Property Boundary Survey Prepared for James Wright Depicting a portion of 467 Judd Road, Easton, Connecticut, dated December 12, 2021". The vote was unanimous, 5-0, motion carried.

New Business

- Statement by Chairman Martin – The Chairman addressed the misconception expressed by some Townspeople that the Planning and Zoning Commission is pro-commercialization. The Chair vehemently stated that the Planning and Zoning Commission is not pro-commercialization, noting items the Commission worked hard on, such as the pathway along Sport Hill Road, which the Town did not approve, and the Village District, which was removed from the proposed Draft Easton Zoning Regulations.

REGULAR MEETING, HELD IN-PERSON, MINUTES FEBRUARY 28, 2022
FOR THE EASTON PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

New Business(continued):

The Chair stated that the Commission was made up of several different professionals whom he introduced: Jay Habansky, Zoning Official for multiple municipalities; Attorney Raymond Ganim, Real Estate Attorney, John Foley, Construction; Ross Ogden, Investment Real Estate Developer; Alison Sternberg, Realtor, and the Chair, Raymond Martin, Commercial Real Estate Broker. The Chair stated that none of the experts noted, which sit on the Planning and Zoning Commission have any conflict of interest and have a primary responsibility to protect the Town with their individual areas of competency.

Zoning Enforcement Report:

The Zoning Enforcement Officer (ZEO), Mark DeLieto, was present. He gave an update on the following Zoning Violations and submitted a report dated 2/28/22:

120 Maple Road –The ZEO stated that the Marshal has to reserve the owners of 120 Maple Road.

740 Stepney Road–The ZEO stated that he tentatively scheduled a meeting with Peter Neunteufel for tomorrow.

570 Morehouse Road – The ZEO stated that no recent complaints received; nothing to report.

1074 Black Rock Road –No report at this time. This item is in litigation.

504 Judd Road – No update at this time.

50 Abbey Road – A warning violation letter was sent regarding excessive illumination, violation of Section 6330 1. (a. thru e.).

Review and Approval of Minutes

- Minutes of Regular Meeting December 13, 2021 – This item was tabled from the prior meeting as only two of the members present were at that meeting and that did not represent a quorum. Voting members were Raymond Martin, Alison Sternberg, Ross Ogden, Robert Maquat and Jay Habansky, who was appointed to vote in place of a regular member; they all attended that meeting. Motion was made by Raymond Martin, seconded by John Foley, to approve the Planning and Zoning Commission Minutes of Regular Meeting December 13, 2021, as presented. The vote was unanimous, 5-0, motion carried.
- Minutes of Regular Meeting January 10, 2022 - Motion was made by John Foley, seconded by Alison Sternberg, to approve the minutes for Easton Planning and Zoning Commission Regular Meeting January 10, 2022, subject to adding the address of 50 Abbey Road to the last paragraph of the Zoning Enforcement Officer Report. The only other person voting was the Chair, Raymond Martin. The vote was unanimous, 3-0, motion carried.

Unfinished Business

- Discussion/Possible Action – Zoning Regulation Amendment – Temporary Moratorium on Cannabis Establishments. The Chair tabled this item. Secretary will resend Cannabis Amendment to the Commission.

REGULAR MEETING, HELD IN-PERSON, MINUTES FEBRUARY 28, 2022
FOR THE EASTON PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

Unfinished Business (continued):

- Discussion/Possible Action – Petition for Changes and Additions to the Easton Zoning Regulations submitted by neighbors of 59 Tranquility Drive. A new petition was submitted. February 27, 2022. This item was briefly discussed; it contained an addition of Subsection a. of Item 1., Section 2440, Agriculture. Discussion was held that there should be criteria for this type of Site Plan Approval. The new petition should be circulated to the Agricultural Commission. This item will be discussed at a future meeting.

Announcements/Correspondence – No discussion

Unfinished Business:

- *GIS Project* – Create GIS portal for Agri-Tourism – Brief discussion; MetroCOG is involved with the on-line portal, at no cost.
- Review Subdivision Regulations – Brief discussion; this item is in legal.

Added to the Agenda:

Motion was made by Raymond Martin, seconded by Robert Maquat, to add to the agenda the discussion of the road signage for the “Welcome to Easton Signs”. There was a brief discussion of the Easton sign competition opened up to all children K-8 and 9-12. It was noted that the competition would be judged by the Arts Council and the Arts Center. Justin Giorlando stated that under the current budget there would be two wood signs 4’ x 5’ erected on two 4’ posts and that two more signs, possibly three, in next year’s budget. He stated that the first two signs, this year, were being proposed in the primary locations: the entrance on Sport Hill Road from Fairfield and the Four Corners; basically, on the state highways.

Justin Giorlando stated that most capital items are done with grants and noted the pathways around Samuel Staples Elementary School as an item which may be done in coordination with Parks and Recreation, as well as others.

At approximately 8:15 pm, there being no other business to be conducted, motion was made by Robert Maquat, seconded by Ross Ogden, to adjourn the meeting. The vote was unanimous, 5-0, motion carried.


Margaret Anania, Recording Secretary