



The Planning Commission

Town of New Fairfield
New Fairfield, Connecticut 06812

Regular Meeting Minutes

Monday, February 26, 2024 @ 7:30 pm
Community Room @ 33 Route 37
New Fairfield Conference Room
New Fairfield CT

Commissioners: Ms. Cynthia Ross-Zweig, Chair
Mr. Cory Neumann, Vice Chair/Secretary
Mr. Ernie Lehman
Mr. Gary Reetz
Mr. Keith Landa

Alternates: Ms. Christina McCartney
Mr. Michael Oliva
Mr. Dylan White

Guests:

Call to Order: 7:33 pm

Pledge of Allegiance

Appointments - Ernie Lehman made a motion to elevate Christina McCartney to a voting member for tonight's meeting. Keith Landa seconded the motion. **All in Favor (4-1-0). Motion passed.**

Approve Minutes

Ernie Lehman made a motion to approve the January 22, 2024 Regular Meeting Minutes as presented. Cory Neumann seconded the motion. **All in Favor (3-2-0). Motion passed.**

Ernie Lehman made a motion to approve the February 15, 2024 Special Meeting Minutes as presented. Keith Landa seconded the motion. **All in Favor (5-0-0). Motion passed.**

Correspondence/ Announcements

Budget –

Public Comment - none

New Business

Old Business

Standing Items

Subdivision Log – none

Adjournment

Ernie Lehman made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:19 pm. Christina McCartney seconded the motion. **All in favor. Motion Passes.**

Enclosures

Received by email on 02/27/2024 @ 8:30 a.m.
by Chrystie M. Bontempo, Asst. Town Clerk, New Fairfield

2/25/24

Dear Madam Chair,

My name is Kenneth Huwer and I live on Columbia Drive. While I currently sit on the Zoning Commission, I am writing only as an interested resident.

As I am unable to attend your meeting tonight, I greatly appreciate your willingness to listen to some thoughts on how pedestrian walkways can play an important role in New Fairfield's future.

At the 01/22/24 Planning Commission meeting, I recall a Commission member saying that New Fairfield has trails but they are not used. The comment concerns me in that it was made in a way that someone might infer that walking trails are an inconsequential part of our POCD. There is a significant difference between the isolated, solitary trails we currently have and the concept of a trail network which would provide destinations and connections between areas of interest, by foot or by bike, and which would also accommodate families with strollers and young children.

I believe that a well thought out pedestrian path system, built in phases, and designed to seamlessly connect with the proposed Margerie Reservoir Trail would be a wonderful amenity for town residents. In addition to connecting community-designated districts or hubs in our town (like historic, recreational, cultural, retail), the system could provide a means for individuals and groups to gather in town and walk, jog or bike to various destinations, even to the town beach and beyond.

Imagine a summer afternoon, where a family and friends come together at Tegmier Field to watch a baseball game. Afterwards, they walk down to Memorial Field to enjoy live music at the Gazebo – or have a meal indoors – or a sandwich from Johnnies to enjoy on the (to be built) Town Green -- or grab coffee and danish from the Goodie Shop. Also imagine kids walking and biking from school to teen activities at a future Community Center -- or residents riding bikes to Squantz Pond for a picnic.

The periphery of this path system would be designed as a traditional nature path with trail markers and places to rest etc., while the more centrally located “core” would have hardscape pathways, lighting, benches, natural rock outcroppings, and signage. This portion of the system should be wide enough to accommodate strollers, bicycles and pedestrians simultaneously. It would create a social life line for our community by connecting all our districts. If done properly, New Fairfield would become known as “the town with all the beautiful paths connecting everything”. As an amenity, these pathways will make our residents happier and foster a sense of community. In addition, our town will become a more entertaining place to visit and our businesses will benefit accordingly.

Thank you so much for allowing me to share these thoughts with the Commission.

Sincerely,

Ken Huwer