

THE ZONING COMMISSION
Town of New Fairfield
New, Fairfield, CT 06812
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
DATE: August 7, 2024
TIME: 7:30 pm
Virtual Meeting Via Zoom

Call to Order

John Moran called the meeting to order at 7:35 pm.

Present

John Moran, Kevin VanVlack, Mark Lamanna, Jane Landers (absent), Gabriel Gouveia (absent), Tomas Kavaliauskas (alternate), Ken Huwer (alternate), and Town Official Zoning Enforcement Officer Evan White.

John Moran elevated Tomas Kavaliauskas and Ken Huwer to voting members.

Public Comment

None

Public Hearing

- 1) **P-24-002 – Petitioning for Affordable Housing Regulation in New Fairfield Zoning Regulations to propose an Amendment to Sections 3.5.5.B., 3.5.5.C.1., 3.5.5.I., 3.5.5.M., and 3.5.8.A. of The Zoning Regulations of the Town of New Fairfield. Applicant Attorney Neil Marcus on behalf of Christian DaCunha.**

Attorney Neil Marcus on behalf of the applicants stated that both owners are present at the meeting. He stated that at the last meeting the commission raised two questions. The first question was regarding the scope of this approval, if given. He stated that there are very few sites in town that would qualify due to the distance that is required to be located from a commercial zone with no changes to the frontage. Matt Rose shared a map of the town showing the 1500-foot circumference from the business commercial district in town. He went thru all the parcels in the given area that are 4+ acres. The only parcel that was found is off of Silver Hill which is residential but does not have enough frontage. All other parcels found were 5+ acres. The second question was regarding the exact unit count and bedroom count as proposed. Christian DaCunha stated they are proposing five buildings with eight units per building which consist of two 2-bedroom units and six 1-bedroom units. He stated that for affordability there are less 2-bedroom units than 1-bedroom units to appeal to the senior community. He also stated that they are proposing the maximum size of the building be changed from 6 units to 8 units per dwelling as a matter of economics to make the units truly affordable housing.

Jennifer Pappas, 18 Charcoal Ridge Road East, questioned what it is stopping the area from becoming low incoming housing if it is approved as affordable housing. Anita Brown, 5 Autumn Ridge Road, encouraged the commission to look closely at this petition. She stated that after looking at the draft of the POCD that the median age is 46 which is 37% of the population. The demographic trends are projected to continue.

Kevin VanVlack made a motion to close the public hearing for P-24-002 – Petitioning for Affordable Housing Regulation in New Fairfield Zoning Regulations to propose an Amendment to Sections 3.5.5.B., 3.5.5.C.1., 3.5.5.I., 3.5.5.M., and 3.5.8.A. of The Zoning Regulations of the Town of New Fairfield. Applicant Attorney Neil Marcus on behalf of Christian DaCunha. Mark Lamanna seconded the motion. Motion Passed.

John Moran	Yes
Kevin VanVlack	Yes
Tomas Kavaliauskas	Yes
Mark Lamanna	Yes
Ken Huwer	Yes

Business Items

- 1) **P-24-002 – Petitioning for Affordable Housing Regulation in New Fairfield Zoning Regulations to propose an Amendment to Sections 3.5.5.B., 3.5.5.C.1., 3.5.5.I., 3.5.5.M., and 3.5.8.A. of The Zoning Regulations of the Town of New Fairfield. Applicant Attorney Neil Marcus on behalf of Christian DaCunha.**

Kevin VanVlack made a motion to approve P-24-002 – Petitioning for Affordable Housing Regulation in New Fairfield Zoning Regulations to propose an Amendment to Sections 3.5.5.B., 3.5.5.C.1., 3.5.5.I., 3.5.5.M., and 3.5.8.A. of The Zoning Regulations of the Town of New Fairfield. Applicant Attorney Neil Marcus on behalf of Christian DaCunha. Mark Lamanna seconded the motion. Motion Denied.

John Moran	No
Kevin VanVlack	No
Tomas Kavaliauskas	No
Mark Lamanna	No
Ken Huwer	No

John Moran stated that his goal is to have the commission hire an outside consult to rewrite the regulations that includes inputs from all other commissions in town.

Minutes

- 1) Kevin VanVlack made a motion to approve the June 20, 2024 Zoning Commission Special Meeting Minutes as presented. Tomas Kavaliauskas seconded the motion. Motion Passed.

John Moran - absent	abstain
Kevin VanVlack	Yes
Tomas Kavaliauskas	Yes
Mark Lamanna - absent	abstain
Ken Huwer	Yes

- 2) Kevin VanVlack made a motion to approve the July 10, 2024 Zoning Commission Regular Meeting Minutes as presented. John Moran seconded the motion. Motion Denied.

John Moran	No
Kevin VanVlack	No
Tomas Kavaliauskas	No
Mark Lamanna	No
Ken Huwer	No

Dana Ulibarri, the recording secretary, will go over the tape and clarify the statement by Tomas Kavaliauskas regarding having two goats on a two-acre property.

- 3) July 17, 2024 Special Meeting – Tabled until the next regular meeting

Correspondence

Zurzola Letter – Kevin VanVlack read the Zurzola letter (see enclosures). John Moran stated that the town engineer is looking into this and feedback will be shared at the next regular meeting.

Enforcement Actions

- 20 Cloverleaf Drive
- 10 Manning Street
- 6A Sawmill
- 28 Lovell Avenue
- 11 Pickett Road

6 & 8 Fox Run
6 & 4 Great Meadow
57 Sawmill Road
2 Dunham Drive

Additional Items

None

Adjournment

John Moran made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:47 pm. Kevin VanVlack seconded the motion. Motion Passed.

John Moran	Yes
Kevin VanVlack	Yes
Tomas Kavaliauskas	Yes
Mark Lamanna	Yes
Ken Huwer	Yes

*Respectfully submitted by
Dana Ulibarri, clerk*

Enclosure

Zurzola Letter

Received by email on 08/08/2024 @ 3:47 p.m.
by Chrystie M. Bontempo, Asst. Town Clerk, New Fairfield

Zurzola, 57 Gillotti Road - Re: crosswalk

Robert Zurzola <karzurzola@gmail.com>

Sun 8/4/2024 4:45 PM

To: Zoning Commission <zoning@newfairfieldct.gov>

Cc: bos <bos@newfairfieldct.gov>; bos <bos@newfairfieldct.gov>; Jean Green <jgreen@newfairfieldct.gov>

Caution: External (karzurzola@gmail.com)

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Dear Members of the Zoning Commission,

We are writing to express our concern and opposition to the proposed installation of a crosswalk with flashing beacons and rumble strips in front of our residence at 57 Gillotti Road. While we understand the importance of pedestrian safety, we believe that this particular proposal may have unintended negative consequences for the residents in our neighborhood, including our family.

Firstly, the installation of rumble strips will significantly increase noise levels. The rumble strips, in particular, are designed to alert drivers and can cause considerable noise disturbance every time a vehicle passes over them. As someone who lives directly in front of the proposed site, we are concerned about the impact this will have on the peace and quiet of our home, especially during the night and early morning hours. School is only in session for 180 days, but we will have to hear the noise of these rumble strips 365 days a year.

Additionally, the flashing beacons will introduce a constant source of bright, flashing lights. This could be quite disruptive to the comfort and well-being of the residents, particularly for those with bedrooms facing the street. The continuous flashing could interfere with sleep and overall quality of life.

Moreover, we believe there is an alternative that would be more suitable and less intrusive for residents. There is only a crosswalk at Meeting House, and elementary students are safely crossed by a police officer. Why would that not be the case for the middle/high school students? There are other towns close by with middle/ high schools on main roads, and they do not have rumble strips and flashing beacons. Ridgefield, for example, has a middle/high school campus and a security guard crosses the students.

Last year, the options were to put a crosswalk at East Lake Road, by the new exit driveway, or not have one at all. In a year, we have gone from not at all, to flashing beacons and rumble strips. We were told when we met with the First Selectman recently that a crosswalk “was in the original plans”, but when this issue was discussed last year, not having a crosswalk was an option. So what has changed? There has never been a crosswalk there, and students have crossed the road for the almost 30 years we have been here. Although they have never had hundreds of cars coming at them when they tried to cross. That is the biggest

issue in the morning. And rumble strips won't address that. But having an adult, whether a security guard or police officer, cross the students, would address that issue.

We kindly request that the commission reconsider the current proposal and explore other options that would enhance pedestrian safety without compromising the tranquility and quality of life for residents like ourselves. We are more than willing to discuss this matter further and provide additional input if needed.

Thank you for your time and consideration of our concerns. We look forward to your response and hope for a solution that balances both safety and residential comfort.

Sincerely,

Kelly and Rob Zurzola

57 Gillotti Road