



Town of Griswold



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GRISWOLD PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

PUBLIC HEARING and REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

OCTOBER 12, 2010

GRISWOLD SENIOR CENTER

1. Public Hearing (6:15 P.M.)

Gail Rooke-Norman, Chairman called to public hearing to order at 6:16 P.M. The quorum consisted of members Rooke-Norman, McKinney, Kinnie, DeGuire, and Alternate Erica Bevis who was seated for absent member John Taylor. Additionally, Town Planner and Pro tempore Recording Secretary Carl Fontneau and ZEO Peter Zvingilas were present.

Rooke-Norman read the call of the public hearing for SE 01-11 DelMac LLC, for C-2 property at 134 Preston Road, applicant request approval of Special Exception for 101 room hotel of four stories with 67.5- foot building height including the pitched roof and with additional length to include an indoor swimming pool and accessory water feature play area with some additional parking spaces different from a previously approved hotel at the same site. Applicant representatives from Stadia Engineering began by presenting all the certified mail receipts for abutting neighbors entitled to receive them. Mario Tristany introduced Brian Byrnes of Commercial Construction Group that would be building the hotel after special exception approval. Tristany described the project with some changes from an earlier hotel and water line extension approval (SE 05-06) at the 134 Preston Road site including an extension of the building to include the indoor swimming pool, adjacent passageway to an attached 60 x 75 foot, 42 foot high, building which includes an indoor water play feature solely for hotel guests, some additional parking spots to support the extra rooms (from 90 to 101), and the relationship to a generic 4000 square foot restaurant also the same site which would come in for more specific permitting when the developer and the architectural appearance are determined. (Alternate Larry Laidley joins other PZC members and alternates at 6:21 P.M.)

Tristany continued to describe the hotel configuration and its building height at 67.5 feet since a previous flat roof design had been changed to a peaked roofline to better conform to village architectural design criteria in C-2 and C-1 zone. Tristany reviewed parking requirements for both the hotel and the generic restaurant (assuming 2440 square feet public area) and answered several questions about the parking requirements which totaled 151 spaces required and 158 available. The adjacent gas station/travel center had a separate parking requirement fulfilled although there would be additional cross parking easement language throughout three the

combined project uses eventually. He represented that the landscaping requirement of 30% was achieved by the 1.5 acres landscaped area total in the four acre total disturbed area planned for around the hotel. Landscaping plan reflected one similar to the earlier but extended to the south where there were minor increases in the size of the hotel building and parking lot. Tristany showed dimensional examples of two Hampton Inn and Suites signs that were located also on the site plan, one six foot high free standing sign in the accessway and one 125 foot-high proposed pylon sign adjacent to SR 630 having a 345 square foot for visibility to Interstate Route 395. Tristany represented that this pylon sign could be made higher than the 100 foot height in the zoning regulation by the discretion of the PZC in the Special Exception process. Parking space count conformance was discussed again. Additional building height of 67.5 feet was explained again as largely a result of the sloped roof and not any additional floors (still would be four stories).

Gary Giroux, P.E. of Stadia Engineering then began to discuss stormwater drainage and provisions for internal traffic pattern and access to the hotel buildings. Curblines from the internal access way were the same as the previous 2006 approval as well as the general circulation around the site. Original ConnDOT access approval letter for the internal accessway onto Route 164 in 2006 was included for completeness of the application to the project file along with earlier traffic studies that were used to determine absence of traffic light at the Preston Road intersection. Stormwater drainage management plan had similar design than earlier approval with the relatively small incremental volume from additional rooftop and parking lot impervious area handled by the already constructed stormwater retention system at the rear of the site. PZC members questioned whether the accessway and hotel site needed to be raised in elevation because of changes to the adjacent travel center site and whether any change of elevation might change the stormwater volume off the hotel site. Giroux answered that the access way and hotel site would be raised about one foot pretty uniformly to improve the workability of the site and that this would not change the volume of stormwater or ability of the existing basins and proposed piping to handle the stormwater.

PZC member asked about the lighting plan. Tristany responded that lightpoles with full-cutoff fixtures were distributed throughout the parking lot on the site plan with no additional ones for the slightly larger parking lots. Byrnes stated that there would be no additional wall packs on the side of the hotel building. Tristany reviewed briefly the details of the proposed plan for conformance to requirements for the special permit and site plan for this approximate \$14 million dollar plus project. In the project file, there are earlier (for comparison) and presently revised drainage calculations, information/letter on traffic impact and small increase to be expected with additional rooms, a letter from Griswold WPCA stating available capacity for addition rooms over original approval, correspondence relative to water availability, a letter from ConnDOT approving the road access for hotel, restaurant, and travel center, records of meetings/review by Fire Marshall and a letter from Fire Marshall dated October 7, 2010/clarified for fire lane striping on October 12, 2010. Both the consulting Town Engineer's and the Fire Marshall's positive review letters dated October 12, 2010 were discussed briefly since it referred to some minor modifications to the site plan for fire lane striping on both sides of the front door, review of more detailed fire protection design and capacity information at building permit review stage, and some relocation/easing of the turning radius from accessway to hotel parking lot being required on a revised site plan. Giroux suggested that the more exact pipe flow calculation needed by the Town Engineer would not present any difficulty because the Town required minimum 15 inch diameter stormwater pipe diameter which would more than handle the

predicted stormwater volumes for piping in the stormwater design. Bevis also asked how large the indoor pool would be. Byrnes responded that it would be at least 500 square feet although the exact size would be determined during the building permit review stage.

After no comments from the general public and some additional review of contents of the project file, DeGuire MOVED, Seconded by McKinney to Close the Public Hearing for SE 01-11 at 7:47 P.M. Motion passed unanimously.

II. Public Hearing

Gail Rooke-Norman called the second public hearing to order at 7:48 P.M. with a quorum consisting of members Rooke-Norman, McKinney, Kinnie, and DeGuire as well as alternates Laidley (seated for John Taylor) and Bevis.

Rooke-Norman read the call of the hearing for SRC 01-11 Town of Griswold, PZC initiated draft changes to Griswold Zoning Regulations for several sections involving signs largely. Town Planner was asked to go through an explanation of the suggested text changes to the Town Regulations and to discuss the specific input from Mark Branse, the consulting Town Attorney. In proposed changes to Town of Griswold Zoning Regulations in Section 6.2.1 clarification changes were suggested changing “parcel” to “lot” in several places since there was a definition of lot in the regulations and clarifying language for house of worship, public or private school, and public library was suggested. A new proposed section 15.3.7 permitting limited message boards for banks and financial institutions with time/temperature signs was also clarified as not pertaining to any additional separate sign, not increasing the size of existing display signage, and limiting the message board to 25% of the existing area. In a new suggested sign regulation as Section 15.4 some clarification was suggested in Section 15.4.2 “permitting” such sponsor sign rather than “exempting” them as long as the size of each single sponsor sign was limited to 32 square feet.

Borough Zoning Regulation changes were discussed for two new sections (Section 13.7.12 and 13.7.13) of the sign regulation Section 13. Very similar clarification changes only were suggested by the Town Attorney’s comments and by the Town Planner explaining these draft section since the texts were almost identical to Town Zoning Regulation changes discussed earlier in the hearing for sections 15.3.7 and 15.4.

There were no additional questions or comments from PZC members and no comments received from the general public. After some consensus check, Bevis MOVED, SECONDED by Kinnie to close the public hearing for SRC 01-11 at 8:23 P.M. Motion passed unanimously.

III. Regular Meeting (7:00 P.M.+)

Gail Rooke-Norman called the regular meeting to order at 8:24 P.M. with a quorum consisting of members Rooke-Norman, Mc Kinney, DeGuire, and Kinnie and alternates Bevis (seated for John Taylor) and Laidley.

Under item 4A and after minor discussion, DeGuire MOVED, SECONDED by McKinney TO APPROVE AS PRESENTED the Minutes of the Public Hearing and Regular Meeting of September 13, 2010. MOTION passed unanimously.

Under item 5. Correspondence, Rooke-Norman suggested that the first two items could be covered under the ZEO report, that the third item was informational, and that a fourth item, a letter dated September 30, 2010 from John Faulise, Boundaries LLC, was also informational in nature.

Rooke-Norman then began item 6 of the agenda consisting of Matters Presented for Consideration:

Under item 6A, a renewal application for a home occupation permit (ZP 04-08) for Steven Gruchawaka at 551 Shetucket Turnpike, Griswold, to conduct computer consulting and art/crafts. After consulting with the applicant about the absence of changes in conditions of size and the home occupation details from the applicant and the absence of complaints in the past three years in the file from the ZEP, McKinney MOVED, SECONDED by DeGuire TO APPROVE RENEWAL OF HOME OCCUPATION PERMIT ZP 04-08 for an additional term of three years from October 12, 2010 to October 12, 2013. MOTION passed unanimously.

Under agenda item 6B, Tim Lagase of 80 Chiou Drive, Griswold requested an official ruling OR 01-11 to determine if a earthen berm can be placed below an existing six foot fence so that the fence could be made to comply with the six foot maximum height requirement above the “existing” grade without complying with setback requirements and getting a building permit for a fence over six feet (about eight feet) high. PZC members discussed the request, had no difficulty with the appearance of this fence or its configuration, but had concerns about setting a new precedent about modifying existing grade to comply with fence height limitation. Several members suggested that a better route might be for the applicant to apply to ZBA for a variance of the height and rear setback requirement given the fact that the attractive fence had already been installed on piers about 16 to 24 inches high because of the rocky and irregular rear boundary line including a stonewall. After some discussion and a motion which failed to be seconded, Bevis MOVED, SECONDED by McKinney to direct the applicant to the ZBA for the two variances. Motion passed unanimously.

Under agenda item 6C, PZC members considered the contents of the project file and testimony in the first of this evenings public hearings for SE 01-11 DelMac LLC requested approval for a Special Exception for a 101 room hotel with a building height of 67.5 feet and increased length to accommodate an indoor swimming pool and a walkway to an accessory water play area feature. PZC members reviewed some of the items presented in the public hearing record. McKinney expressed some concern over the parking issue and compliance to the number required versus number needed on the side was confirmed. Since the accessory building for the water play area would only be for hotel guests, it should not increase the necessary parking space number. DeGuire expressed some concern about the proposed height of one of the proposed signs (125 feet versus 100 feet in regulation Section 15.3.6). There was some consensus that 100 feet should be high enough for visibility on Route 395 where the pylon sign was located on the site plan. DeGuire also referred to comment two of the Fire Marshall letter needing fire line striping about fifty feet on either side of the front door of the hotel added to the site plan and comment on the Town Engineer review letter about the need for confirmatory final pipe drainage calculations for the stormwater drainage system on the south end of the hotel parking lot where changes had been made to the site plan. A question about the maximum building height was answered from review of the elevations diagrams in the project file at 67.5 feet to include the sloped roof for better architectural conformance. Estimates for the site restoration and the estimated site inspection cost set aside from the non-building related site preparation estimates were discussed briefly from the Town Engineers review letter. Except for a few minor necessary revisions to the plan and some language in a possible action motion to address some concerns discussed by some PZC members, there appeared to be

a substantial record of conformance of the project file and testimony to requirements of the zoning regulations for a Special Exception and site plan review.

After some further discussion over language of the suggested site plan revisions and conditions of approval necessary for a motion for action on the permit application, McKinney MOVED, SECONDED by DeGuire, TO APPROVE SPECIAL EXCEPTION SE 01-11 based on the site plan sheets dated 10/10/2010 C-2 to C-5 and D 60 and with the following revisions to the site plan or conditions of approval before the Special Exception Document and final mylar site plans are signed for filing with the Town Clerk:

1. Revisions to the site plan to move the accessway and improve turning radius as suggested by DeLuca letter of 10/12./2010;
2. Passbook account negotiable by Town of Griswold drawn on a Connecticut bank for \$25,000 site restoration fund to be retained through Certificate of Occupancy and \$23,250 for engineering inspections during construction for conformance to approved site plan balance to be refunded after Certificate of Occupancy is issued;
3. Letter describing final approval of fire protection design relative to available capacity from Fire Marshall before building permit for hotel construction issuance;
4. Payment of reasonable application review fees to consulting Town Engineer (CLA Engineers, Inc.)
5. Revisions to site plan sheet for fire lane striping at entrance of hotel and at curbs as outlined by revised letter from Fire Marshall dated 10/12/2010;
6. Final calculation of pipe drainage adequacy of stormwater system by applicant for review and signature by consulting Town Engineer from review letter dated 10/12/2010;
7. Height of pylon identification sign to be reduced to 100 feet maximum including sign totalling 345 square feet to be revised and located on site plan sheets.

MOTION with above seven conditions of approval PASSES unaminously.

Under agenda item 6D, the possible changes to zoning regulations in both the Town and the Borough under SRC 01-11 were considered. Chairman and Town Planner briefly reviewed some minor clarification changes from the earlier public hearing that were non- substantive in nature (that is, not making the proposed regulations any more restrictive) in response to Town Attorney review and suggestion.

For the suggested changes to the Town of Griswold Zoning Regulations, Laidley MOVED, SECONDED by DeGuire to add amended language to Section 6.2.1 and make it effective on November 9, 2010. Motion passed unanimously.

DeGuire then MOVED, SECONDED by Laidley to add as amended Section 15.3.7 and make it effective on November 9, 2010. Motion passed by affirmative votes except nay by McKinney.

DeGuire MOVED, SECONDED by McKinney to add as amended Section 15.4 and make it effective November 9, 2010. Motion passed unanimously.

For the suggested changes to the Borough of Jewett City Zoning Regulations, McKinney MOVED, SECONDED by DeGuire to add new sections 13.7.12 and 13.7.13 as amended consistent to the Town sign regulations and make them effective on November 9, 2010. Motion passed unanimously.

Under agenda item 7, Additional Business, item 8, Old Business, item 9, New Business there were no comments or discussion from PZC members.

Under agenda item 10, Reports from the Enforcement Officer, Peter Zvingilas reported that he had not yet seen an expected form for a possible appeal of a referral under the blight ordinance. He added that this was information only to the PZC since the blight ordinance was within the jurisdiction and purview of the Board of Selectmen. Zvingilas mentioned that he had sent a letter to regional manager of Rite Aid suggesting that Slater Avenue sidewalk repair would need to be done in order to prevent closure of this entrance and to preserve access integrity of the approved site plan for the parking lot. The bottle recycler Bergeron on North Main Street had not submitted an application for renewed storage container as yet although he had received information and application materials. This matter as well as the removal of the building on the Pleasantview lot where approved townhouses would later be built would thus be continuing to some kind of court date through consulting Town Attorney Eric Knapp.

Under agenda item 11, Adjournment, there being no further business, DeGuire MOVED, SECONDED by Laidley TO ADJOURN THE MEETING at 9:17 P.M. Motion passed unanimously.

Minutes respectfully submitted for review,

Carl S.Fontneau, Town Planner and Pro Tempore Recording Secretary.