

**REGULAR MEETING
TOWN OF BOZRAH
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
February 11, 2021**

Chairman Steve Seder called the regular meeting of the Town of Bozrah Planning and Zoning Commission to order at 7:02 PM, on Thursday, February 11, 2021. The meeting was held via Zoom video/teleconference.

Members present: Stephen Seder (Chairman), Scott Barber (Vice Chairman), Nancy Taylor, Manny Misarski, Steve Coit (alt.).

Members absent: Steve Gural, Seymour Adelman (alt.), Frank Driscoll (alt.).

Others present: Glenn Pianka (Board of Selectmen), Katey DeCarli, P.E. (ZEO/WEO/CHA), Sam Alexander, AICP (Town Planner/SCCOG), Brandon Handfield, P.E. (Yantic River Consultants), David Gesiak (Applicant), Ray Barber (Resident), Jack Santo (Resident).

Chairman Steve Seder called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM. Mr. Seder appointed Steve Coit to sit in place of Steve Gural.

1. Review and approve the minutes of the December 10, 2020 regular meeting:

Manny Misarski made a motion to accept the December 10 minutes as presented. Scott Barber seconded the motion.

VOTE UNANIMOUS – MOTION APPROVED

2. Review correspondence pertaining to agenda items:

Sam Alexander (Town Planner) noted that the Commission received a staff memorandum pertaining to the application #01-00-2. Sam Alexander also stated that the Inland Wetlands & Conservation Commission has not yet ruled on the application.

3. Hear the report of the Zoning Enforcement Officer:

Katey DeCarli, P.E. (ZEO/WEO) ongoing zoning enforcement issues in town, and Commissioners were able to ask questions.

Ms. DeCarli reviewed the status of the Town's on-going legal action regarding abandoned camp trailers at Houghton Road and Route 2. Ms. DeCarli mentioned that the owner of 117 Lake Road may appear before the Commission for a pre-application discussion regarding a campground Special Permit application.

Commissioners asked about the status of a draft Short-term Rental Ordinance. This will be sent again to Commissioners. Glenn Pianka (Board of Selectmen) stated that the draft ordinance will be brought up again at the next Board meeting with the intent to move forward toward a Town Meeting.

4. New Business:

#01-00-21. David J. Gesiak, LLC. 216 Norwich, Ave. Lebanon, CT: Seven-lot subdivision, southeast corner of Bozrah Street and South Road (Map, 14, Lot 046).

Brandon Handfield, P.E. (Yantic River Consultants) overviewed the project for the Commission. The proposed subdivision is for seven (7) lots on 35.5 acres of land. The lot is zoned RU-1. The entire subject parcel is undeveloped and largely wooded; there is a former farm field on one of the proposed lots. The lot has not been subdivided since the adoption of subdivision regulations. There are three wetland areas: a pit containing wetlands on lot 2, a stream in steep cut on lot 7, and a centrally located wetland system in a low point on lots 1, 4, 5, 6, and 7.

Homes are shown on each lot in flat areas near the road frontage. Adequate buildable area is provided and shown, with all proposed lots shown as being in compliance with the zoning regulations for RU-1. Limits of clearing on the flatter areas near the road, stone walls run in the rear of the clearing limit on a number of properties.

Mr. Handfield is proposing dedication of a strip of land fronting lots 4, 5, 6, and 7, to be deeded to the Town to bring the width of the town right-of-way of South Road up to 50 feet.

The plans have been referred to Uncas Health District for determination of well and septic system adequacy. Driveways fronting on Bozrah Street will need to be referred to CT Department of Transportation (CT DOT) District 2 prior to lot development.

The Commissioners had an opportunity to ask questions of Mr. Handfield. Steve Seder asked about a driveway right of access for lot 1. There is a deeded easement in favor of the subject parcel, over a neighboring property, which may run with lot 1, but it is not proposed to be used in the subdivision plan. Brandon Handfield went over extant woods roads on the parcel.

Mr. Handfield mentioned that two lots are proposed to be over ten (10) acres, so that agriculture may be allowed on those lots. Mr. Handfield also noted that a fee-in-lieu of open space is proposed.

Scott Barber asked about the right-of-way land dedication on South Road. Mr. Handfield explained the purpose. Mr. Barber stated that he believe the developer should pay for any improvements. Mr. Handfield noted that his client is proposing to improve the shoulder. Mr. Barber stated he was concerned about traffic safety in and around the intersection of South Road and Bozrah Street. Mr. Handfield answered that he will be working with CT DOT District 2 to make sure that driveways meet the site line requirements for the 85th percentile speed; he does not intend to do a detailed traffic study. He stated the lots will produce a conservative estimate of 40 cars a day, fewer four at a peak hour period. He believed the impact to the South Road and Bozrah Street intersection to be negligible. Mr. Barber stressed the importance of looking at the impact to the intersection.

Scott Barber asked about having the Town Engineer review the right-of-way dedication. Sam Alexander stated that he wanted to get through the first meeting prior to that review. Mr. Barber asked about the fee-in-lieu of open space. Mr. Alexander stated that the Commission's past practice is to require \$1,800 per new lot, for a total of \$10,800.

Scott Barber asked about property boundary markers; he noticed that at least one corner there were no pins proposed. Mr. Handfield responded that new lot lines are proposed to be monumented or marked with pins. One pin was missing on the plans (at lots 1 and 7). He is open to the Commission's interpretation of marking external property boundaries. Mr. Barber stated that it would be beneficial to mark all boundaries.

Scott Barber asked about the schedule. There is no public hearing required; however, the Commission may hold one. Mr. Barber expressed concern for neighbors over potential use of the deeded access in favor of lot 1. The town does not allow shared driveways currently. Mr. Handfield explained that there is no benefit to use the deeded access, and a new driveway is proposed to front on the road. Steve Seder stated that the deeded access pre-exists the application. Mr. Handfield explained that lot 1 could not be subdivided further per the zoning regulations.

Steve Coit stated that the subdivision plan is well done. Steve Seder and Scott Barber echoed the statement. Nancy Taylor expressed that the South Road, Bozrah Street intersection is dangerous and emphasized importance of sight line distances. Ms. Taylor requested a closer look at the land dedication along South Road. Mr. Taylor expressed that the open space fees may have changed. There was discussion on the most recent convention for open space fees, the Commission asked the Town Planner to look into it.

Steve Seder stated, in regards to Bozrah Street sight lines, that the property does not reach the intersection. Mr. Barber expressed that the CT DOT District 2 will need to look at the sight line distances. Mr. Seder stated that the Commission may want to discuss with CT DOT the safety issue at a later point. Mr. Handfield located every driveway to provide a 500-foot sight line. If CT DOT does not provide feedback prior to a decision, they will certainly be involved in permitting any individual driveway prior to lot development.

Manny Misarksi stated that the subdivision plan is well done. Mr. Seder stated that the Commission will move forward following a decision from the Inland Wetlands and Conservation Commission. Glenn Pianka stated that the Board of Selectmen will also be involved in the decision to accept the land dedication on South Road. Glenn Pianka expressed that he felt the stone wall should be reused in the area of South Road.

5. Affordable Housing Plan discussion and next steps:

Sam Alexander began a presentation overviewing results from the Affordable Housing Plan survey received to date. Mr. Alexander reviewed the draft plan sections that were provided to the Commission to-date.

Mr. Alexander also discussed next steps in the process for the Affordable Housing Plan. A public workshop will be held on February 25th at 6:30pm, over Zoom. He will issue a press release to the Norwich Bulletin and advertise the meeting in This Week in Bozrah.

Steve Seder asked about the number of affordable housing units the State expect the Town to have. Sam Alexander explained that the Town does not need to produce a certain number of affordable housing units. Sam Alexander explained the impact of CGS Section 8-30g and the Town's status under that law. Mr. Alexander stated that he believed the State's goals for affordable housing will ultimately have a greater impact on local control of development, so it is important for the Commission to show it is doing due diligence in addressing affordable housing.

6. Public comment period:

Jack Santo (resident) stated that he believe the applicant for #01-00-21 was proposing to reconstructing the stone wall on South Road after moving it. Mr. Santo asked about access to open space. It was explained to him that no open space was proposed. Mr. Santo stated that he believed sight lines would be adequate. Mr. Santo spoke about the history of traffic safety at the Bozrah Street, South Road intersection. He believes the intersection is ok, but the only solution to any safety issues is to drop the grade of the road. Mr. Barber reiterated that CT DOT should look at the intersection. Mr. Santo explained that CT DOT should install an on-demand traffic light to replace the blinking light.

Steve Seder stated that Steve Gural has not been attending meetings. Mr. Gural agreed to become and alternate, elevating Steve Coit to regular member. Action by the Board of Selectmen is required.

7. Review general correspondence:

Notices from abutting towns were received.

8. Such other business as the Commission may vote to hear:

There was none. Scott Barber made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Nancy Taylor seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 8:36 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Samuel Alexander
Town Planner/SCCOG