

**TOWN OF POMFRET
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
MINUTES – SPECIAL MEETING/PUBLIC FORUM
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 11, 2007 AT 7:00 PM
POMFRET COMMUNITY SCHOOL CAFETERIA**

In Attendance: Commission Members-Walter Hinchman, Michael Wolchesky, Charles Boster, Maureen Nicholson, Robert Blackmer, Leah Schad, Phil Allegretti, Alternates Carolyn Hopkins, Tony Amaral. First Selectman James Rivers, Town Planner James Rabbitt. Approx. 30 citizens.

I. Open Meeting – Meeting opened at 7:10 PM by Walter Hinchman. Walter gave a brief history of the evolvement of zoning within Pomfret, noting subdivision and land use regulations dating back to 1968. He stated tonight's meeting was to gather information from citizens. He invited and encouraged people to attend regular Planning and Zoning meetings as well. He then opened the floor for comments.

II. New Business

1. Gathering Information from the Public Regarding Planning and Zoning in the town of Pomfret. The following citizens made these comments and/or observations:

Chris Surdam: Retail sales in all zones should be considered. Zoning Complaints and Junk Car Ordinance-these complaints should be received only from people living in close proximity to where complaint is made against. Size of deciduous trees needs to be looked at – he does not feel the Regulations refer only to commercial building. 9,000 lb. GVW restriction needs to be revised. Non-conforming use eliminated after one year of non-use should be eliminated.

Ann Hennen: She stated she felt Zoning was essential. Strong Regulations are necessary to preserve property values.

Bev Champany: In speaking with other towns it seems their commissions have much more flexibility. She also sited an example of a mobile home that needs to be replaced, but can't be as they are not allowed. This needs to be looked at.

Tim McNally: He stated that in addition to the Regulations was the aspect of how people are treated. The citizens should be viewed as the customer by Commission and Board members and Town employees. It should be remembered that not all applicants know all aspects of Regulations and they need to be helped in a respectful manner.

Bob Lussier: He felt the definition of 'expansion' needs to be made clearer. Does the current refer to 25% of floor space, income, square footage? Also, when it was just Planning in Town things seemed to be based on more common sense. Issues now seems to become too complicated and drawn out. The 9,000 GVW restriction now would include even Ford 350's with dual wheels. This needs to be looked at. Procedures for complaints should be in place so the ZEO has documentation.

Carol Rogers: She read a letter from Katerina Witkowski as Katerina could not be present – the letter stated hazardous materials are defined but not used in the body of the Regulations. Discharge and storage should be addressed and Regulations put in place regarding hazardous materials. She felt Routes 44, 169, and 101 should be included in the Village District and Home Occupations are fine as currently written. The size of Commercial vehicles allowed should not be changed without restrictions put into place. A copy of the letter was submitted and Carol Rogers stated she would like to echo Katerina's sentiments.

Chris Surdam: Prohibition of Nissan and Quansett huts should be reviewed.

Howard Bursen: Everyone wants what is good for the Town. It took a long time to get Zoning and he would like to keep it.

Bill Gould: He stated that he travels through the northeast quite often and finds that the landscape is very much a built environment. Pomfret offers open views of space. Maintaining that openness is what he believes people are here for. Also, many dissatisfied with Zoning Regulations are probably not present, being uncomfortable with this setting and lacking time to attend. He proposes the Commission go out and meet and talk with people to get further input.

Murray Buckner: Moved here from the southwest part of the State, attracted by the rural character. He was thrilled when Zoning was put in place and hopes it continues.

Chris Surdam: Property values really only matter twice – when you are selling your house or borrowing against it. People live on their property, not just in their houses. People should be allowed to do whatever it is they enjoy provided it is not egregious or polluting-this should spill from hobbies to business.

Lizette Rimer: She has seen many Open Space articles this year. It seems there are many progressive ideas to preserve the character and still let people do what they want.

Jim Potrzeba: Zoning was voted down in the past. Originally it was stated it was needed to control just lot size and set backs. It has grown and expanded. The internet provides many articles where zoning has actually done damage by over restricting. He thinks things need to be kept simple and basic.

Bev Champany: In-law apartments need to be looked into. Also, anonymous complaints should not be taken and the accused person should be notified.

Tom Garrett: In the past Board members have sought out violations. If they do so, they should recuse themselves when the matter comes up to the Commission. Nobody here wants no rules in place but want to see the rural character maintained. In-law apartments are also an important area to look at. Small commercial craft stores should be allowed. If a complaint is made against one person or address, then others of a similar violation need to be addressed as well.

Chris Surdam: Will the Commission accept comments in writing from those who would rather not speak, and have those letters be put into record?

Walter Hinchman stated anything in writing will be received at the Town Hall and will be put into the Correspondence section of the Planning and Zoning meetings. Walter asked if there were any further comments. There were none, and he asked

if the people present had a sense of what they would like to see prioritized. The following points were listed:

Home Occupations

Open Space

Open Space with Development Plans

Multi-Family

PZC Members out to meet with public-prioritizing businesses first.

III. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 8:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Bonnie Ryan, clerk

Date approved _____