

**APPROVED
Minutes
Hartford Planning Commission
August 1, 2022**

**THIS MEETING WAS CONDUCTED IN COMPLIANCE WITH
THE VERMONT OPEN MEETING LAW
IN PERSON WITH ELECTRONIC PARTICIPATION AVAILABLE**

Present: John Reid, Chair, Bruce Riddle, Vice Chair, Dillon Bianchi, Robin Adair Logan, Toby Dayman, John Heath, Colin Butler, Kim Souza, Selectboard Liaison, and Jo-Ann Ells, Zoning Administrator

Absent: None

John Reid read the Hybrid Meeting Script and took a roll call.

Administrative Matters

1. Minutes

Bruce Riddle moved to approve the minutes of June 20, 2022. John Heath seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

John Heath moved to approve the minutes of June 27, 2022. Dillon Bianchi seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

2. Administrative Permits

Jo-Ann Ells explained that an administrative permit was issued to Cover Home Repair for interior use changes including new bookstore space, new office space, new storage/workshop space.

3. Availability for the next Public Hearing

All Commissioners anticipated being available for the September 12, 2022 hearing.

4. Public comment

Marie Alvin asked why the Planning Commission had switched from Remote to Hybrid Hearings. John Reid noted that it was anticipated that prior applications would draw large crowds so for everyone's safety due to COVID the Hearings were remote.

Heidi Duto asked for clarification on the day and date of an upcoming Planning Commission meeting.

Public Hearing

John Reid opened the Public Hearing, read the hybrid hearing script, took a roll call, administered the oath, asked that people giving testimony state their name and mailing address, and explained the hearing process.

1. Application #22-12 by St. Paul's Episcopal Church (owner) and Twin Pines Housing Trust (applicant) for Final approval of a Planned Development under section 260-47 of the Hartford Zoning Regulations on proposed lot 43-0074-001, 747 Hartford Avenue, in a VR-C zoning district. (Continued from June 27, 2022.)

Andrew Winter of Twin Pines Housing Trust and Nate Stearns of Sheehey, Furlong and Behm were present.

Jo-Ann Ells noted that the Planning Commission granted Preliminary Approval of the application in May of 2022 and did not request any new information for Final Approval.

Nate Stearns reiterated that the application is for Final Approval of a Planned Development and that Preliminary approval was granted in May of 2022. He noted that the conditions placed on Preliminary approval were administrative and were being addressed.

Nate Stearns read section 260-6 D 2 of the Subdivision Regulations which states "Approval of a preliminary plat shall not constitute approval of the subdivision, but rather it shall be deemed an expression of general concurrence with the design submitted subject to the applicant's meeting whatever conditions may be imposed for final approval. Prior to approval of the final subdivision plat, the Commission may require additional changes as a result of further study of the subdivision in final form or as a result of new information obtained."

Colin Butler questioned if the denial of the Low Barrier Shelter proposed by The Haven on the adjacent lot altered the parking for the Twin Pines application. Nate Stearns stated that it would free up some parking spaces.

John Heath asked about capacity of the structure. Andrew Winter stated that while two people could live in a unit, based on Twin Pines experience at Parkhurst it was unlikely that this would occur. He noted only one couple has resided at Parkhurst and he expected this pattern to continue.

John Heath thanked the public for their comments and input.

John Heath stated that he had the following concerns:

- Lack of quality recreational space
- Change to the historic character of the neighborhood
- Removal of a historic structure
- Adequacy of parking and snow removal
- Comments from the public

- A divided community

He noted that a smaller scale project would be more appropriate.

Robin Adair Logan stated that she shared John Heath's concerns, thanked the public for their engagement, stated that she was concerned with the proposed demolition.

John Reid asked for Public Comment.

Patti Holmes, 196 Kings Highway (residence)/247 Wilder Street (owner), stated that allowing more homeless adults is a mistake since problems already exist in the area. She suggested locating the project next to DHMC or the VA Hospital where residents could get services. She expressed concern with housing people who don't want to work or seek help, property values, and asked that comments from non-Hartford residents not be considered.

Joe Trottier, caretaker for the Advent Campground, stated that he is concerned that the public is not being informed, the Valley News is not reporting or under-reporting complaints, the campground has been vandalized by people associated with The Haven, and people who support the project are not well informed. He noted that he is part of a group that has been formed to get information out and that a lot of people are afraid to speak up.

John Reid noted that he was not sure what authority Joe Trottier was relying on to base his opinion on.

Joe Trottier stated that a lot of people do not want to work or refuse to work. He suggested going back to the days of the Civilian Conservation Corps. John Reid noted this question is outside of the Planning Commission's jurisdiction.

Leslie Black, 117 Wilder Street, asked the Planning Commission to think about the broader picture including the current housing climate which is getting worse. She stated that she thought the project fits well with the mix of structures in the area, and noted a lot of unfounded fear has been generated. She asked that the Commission to consider what the project will mean to its residents.

Marie Alvin, Demers Avenue, stated that she hears stories from people who are afraid due to what is happening today. She stated that while she understands the needs, she questions the location and the clustering homeless people together. She suggested that a mixed income development would be better. She stated that the building was not in character with the area, that a density bonus should not be allowed, there is not adequate open space, and that the renovation of the existing house for several families should be considered. She commented that the Commission has a duty to the Town of Hartford and should stop listening to people from out of town. She questioned parking and the location of the proposed curb cut.

Jo-Ann Ells distributed pictures submitted by Marie Alvin on August 1, 2022.

Scott Holmes, 196 Kings Highway (residence)/247 Wilder Street (owner), questioned how homeless people were going to pay rent, and shared a story where a landowner on Latham Works Lane was unable to evict a tenant using drugs.

John Reid noted that some questions cannot be answered by the Planning Commission.

Lannie Collins, 946 Quechee Hartland Road, noted a lot of people had concerns with the “character of the area” and asked if someone could qualify this term.

John Reid noted it was not clearly defined in the Regulations.

Nate Stearns stated that there had been a lot of speculative fears shared that were aimed at The Haven and not testimony related to the criteria for a Planned Development. He added that the applicant has Preliminary Planned Development Approval, Conditional Use Approval, and Site Plan Approval. He noted that a lot of testimony was hearsay.

Bruce Riddle moved to close the Public Hearing. Colin Butler seconded, and the Public Hearing was closed.

Colin Butler moved to approve the application. Bruce Riddle seconded, and the motion passed 5-2 with Robin Adair Logan and John Heath opposed.

John Heath noted that he voted in opposition because the project is not in harmony with the surrounding area. Robin Adair Logan stated that she would like to see the project in a different location and state that she also voted in opposition because the project is not in harmony with the surrounding area, and added that she was concerned with the proximity to schools.

2. Application #22-19 by Ennis Construction, Inc. (owner/applicant) for approval of a boundary line adjustment between lots 12-7068-000 and 12-7069-000, Robert Frost Lane, Quechee, in the Quechee Lakes Planned Development.

Skip Nalette of Pathways Consulting was present.

Jo-Ann Ells reviewed the draft Findings of Fact.

Skip Nalette stated that the lot line adjustment was due to topography and results in two reasonable building sites.

John Reid noted that both lots need access easements. Skip Nalette explained that the upper site has an existing access easement over Quechee Greenbelt and that due to topography, the site will need an easement to access the conceptual building site at a reasonable grade.

Bruce Riddle questioned why the owner of lot 12-7068-000 would want such a large easement/encumbrance

There was a brief discussion about the history of Quechee Lakes lots using Greenbelts for access and sewer stubs and lines.

There was no public comment.

Bruce Riddle moved to close the Public Hearing. Dillon Bianchi seconded, and the Public Hearing was closed.

Bruce Riddle moved to approve the application. Colin Butler seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

3. Application #22-20 by Q.L. Resorts Limited Partnership (owner/applicant) for approval of the subdivision of lot 07-0083-000 (also referred to as Lot 5C) into two lots, Quechee, in the Quechee Lakes Planned Development.

Nate Stearns of Sheehey, Furlong and Behm, and Skip Nalette of Pathways Consulting were present.

Nate Stearns gave an overview of the application.

John Reid asked why the applicant was requesting a reduction to ten single family homes and not some other number. Nate Stearns explained that this was a result of negotiations with the Quechee Lakes Landowners Association.

Bruce Riddle shared some history of the Planning Commission's desire to have the Quechee Lakes Master Plan updated.

Colin Butler questioned what would prevent someone from asking to develop the 200-acre lot proposed to be designated as Common Land/Open Space. It was noted that converting it to a developable lot would take the concurrence of the Planning Commission, Corporation, and the Quechee Lakes Landowner Association. Colin Butler expressed concern for a future applicant wanting to redesignate the open space lot. Bruce Riddle commented that adding open space is a big benefit.

Ken Lallier, Quechee Lakes Landowner Association employee, explained that the Association has adjacent land that is developed with trails and the intent is to maintain an extended trail network. He noted the trails are using for hiking, biking, and cross-country skiing.

Stuart Tane introduced himself as a Quechee resident and stated that he supported the application. He noted that his property abuts the proposed 200-acre lot, and that at an annual meeting the Quechee Lakes membership approved the proposal. He asked if there is a minimum lot size that would be required or if houses could be clustered together on the remaining 440-acre lot. Nate Stearns stated that this would be determined at the time of application based on the type of dwelling proposed. He added that Act 250 approval would be needed.

Toby Dayman noted some typographical errors in Finding #13.

Colin Butler moved to close the Public Hearing. Bruce Riddle seconded, and the Public Hearing was closed.

Bruce Riddle moved to approve the application with the noted changes. Colin Butler seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

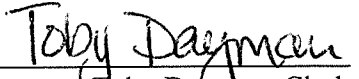
4. Application #22-21 by Northern Stage Company (owners/applicants) for Site Development Plan Approval under section 260-45 of the Hartford Zoning Regulations for a Multi-Unit Dwelling and Performing Arts Facility, lots 45-0150-000, 45-0151-000, and 45-0152-000, 140, 146, 160 and 178 Gates Street, White River Junction, in CB and Design Review Districts.

At the applicant's request, the Hearing on this application was not opened.

Adjournment

At 8:24 p.m., Bruce Riddle moved to adjourn. Dillon Bianchi seconded, and the Hearing was adjourned.

Respectively Submitted,



Toby Dayman, Clerk