

**CITY OF TORRINGTON  
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION  
MINUTES  
February 9, 2011**

Present: Richard Calkins, Chairman  
Greg Mele, Vice Chairman  
Greg Perosino, Member  
Paul Summers, Member  
Donna Greco, Alternate  
Christine Mele, Alternate

Also Present: Martin Connor, AICP, City Planner

Not Present: Doris Murphy, Member and Inland Wetlands Liaison  
Jim Bobinski, Alternate

**1. Call to Order:** Chairman Calkins called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m., Torrington City Hall Council Chambers, Room 218, 140 Main Street, Torrington, CT

**2. Attendance/Announcement by Chairman:**

Chairman Calkins announced present and serving this evening will be Commissioners Greg Mele, Greg Perosino, Paul Summers, Donna Greco, Christine Mele and Richard Calkins. Also present is Martin Connor, City Planner.

March 24, 2011 is the meeting of the Connecticut Federation of Planning and Zoning Agencies. Commissioners who wish to attend please speak to Martin Connor.

**3. Minutes for Approval:**

a. 1-26-11

MOTION by Mr. Perosino to approve the 1-26-11 minutes, seconded by Mr. Mele, motion carried with Mr. Summers and Ms. Mele abstaining from voting.

**4. Old Business:**

a. Site Plan 995  
Applicant: Angelo Alduini, Jr.  
Location: 51 Brewer Street  
Proposal: 50' x 45' metal storage building

Mr. Calkins announced this matter will be tabled per the request of the applicant.

MOTION by Mr. Perosino to table this item, seconded by Mr. Mele, unanimously carried.

5. **New Business:**

- a. Request for Extension, mylar filing for two lot subdivision  
Applicant: Stephen & Caroline Siegfried  
Location: 272 University Drive  
Proposal: Request for 90 day extension to file recording mylar maps

Mr. Connor recommended granting the 90 day extension

MOTION by Mr. Summers to GRANT a 90 day extension, seconded by Mr. Perosino, motion unanimously carried.

- b. Review of Sign Regulations, Part 2 - Nick Iannacito

Nick Iannacito appeared before the Commission, Intern for the Planning and Zoning Office, he is a recent graduate of the University of Connecticut. His project is to go through the Torrington Sign Regulations, make recommendations to improve the regulations, suggest improvements and make enforcement easier. Mr. Iannacito involved the participation of local businesses through a survey. Compared to surrounding towns, Torrington has the most lenient regulations, not too strict to enforce a uniform sign regulation. The new regulations that have been drafted are easy to read and comprehend. Mr. Iannacito reviewed the proposed new regulations and his recommendations. (7:10 p.m.)

The total maximum square footage of signage reworked by Zoning Officer Kim Barbieri was reviewed. Grand opening signs were discussed.

Mr. Iannacito thanked his advisor, Dr. Frances Moulder, and exclusively thanked Kim Barbieri for outstanding revisions to the regulations, and City Planner Martin Connor for answering many questions. This has been an enlightening experience for Mr. Iannacito.

Mr. Calkins stated Mr. Iannacito has done an excellent job balancing the needs of the business, and town regulations to prevent littering the landscape with signage. Mr. Calkins commended Nick's enthusiasm, knowledge and ability to get the job done. Mr. Connor noted the public should know before Nick tackled the actual regulation itself, he also spent time doing research on signage including Supreme Court cases and Nick did an excellent report which was shared with the Commission, so the Commission could understand what the sign laws are, not just locally, but across the country.

Ms. Mele stated she has gotten much positive feedback from business owners who were frustrated and angry with the sign regulations. Mr. Iannacito worked well with everyone, a job well done.

Mr. Iannacito stated his goal was to see if there could be some balance between business and government.

Mr. Connor stated the next step is, if the Commission wishes to move this forward, it would be sent to the Regional Planning Agency and possible schedule a public hearing. Mr. Calkins agreed.

MOTION by Mr. Perosino to set a public hearing of March 23, 2011 for a change to the Torrington Sign Regulations, seconded by Mr. Summers, motion unanimously carried.

- c. Special Exception 11-255 and Site Plan 998  
Applicant: Rick's Auto Parts Inc.  
Location: 16 Ricciardone Avenue  
Proposal: Creation of parking lot in R-6 Zone (set public hearing)

MOTION by Mr. Summers to set a public hearing date of March 9, 2011, seconded by Mr. Mele, unanimously carried.

- d. Zone Change  
Applicant: Omran Bahia  
Location: East Main Street and Fern Drive (Assessor Map 125-16-2)  
Proposal: Change R10s to R6 zone (set public hearing date)

MOTION by Mr. Perosino to set a public hearing date of March 9, 2011, seconded by Mr. Mele, unanimously carried.

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MOTION by Mr. Summers to add an item to the agenda by a 2/3rds vote, seconded by Mr. Perosino, unanimously carried:

- Applicant: Centro Heritage Spe. LLC  
Location: 1 South Main Street  
Proposal: Increased sign square footage, Section 5.15.4F)

MOTION by Mr. Perosino to set a public hearing date of March 23, 2011, seconded by Mr. Mele, unanimously carried.

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Mr. Connor noted for the Commission he has met with the City Ordinance Committee regarding the Low Impact Development section of the ordinance that the Commission was recommending they change. The Ordinance Committee reviewed it favorably and has set a public hearing.

**6. Public Hearings scheduled for 7:30 p.m., February 9, 2011, Council Chambers, Room 218, City Hall, 140 Main Street, Torrington, CT**

- a. Site Plan 994  
Applicant: Torrington Development Corporation  
Locations: Proposed improvements to the existing city-owned parking lot on the south side of existing City Hall Avenue. The improvements will reconfigure the lot to eliminate the existing dead-end condition in addition to providing a drop-off area serving the rear of the upper Main Street properties.
- . Extension of City Hall Avenue from its current terminus to East Main Street (Route 202)
  - . The reconfiguration of the parking area between the extended City Hall Avenue and the rear of the properties fronting Main Street (Route 800).
- Proposal: Torrington DOWNTOWN Improvements - Phase I  
(Public hearing continued from 1-26-11)

At 7:30 p.m. Chairman Calkins announced this is a continued public hearing, which began on January 26, 2011. Mr. Calkins announced present and serving will be Commissioners Greg Perosino, Greg Mele, Donna Greco, Christine Mele, Paul Summers and Richard Calkins.

Also in attendance is City Planner Martin Connor.

Attorney Peter Herbst, 365 Prospect Street appeared as a member of the Board of Directors and Project Committee Chairman of the Torrington Development Corporation. Also present are Board Members, Bill Baxter, Executive Director; Jack Baer, President of United Construction and Engineering; Vic Muschell, Vice President, of Muschell and Simoncelli; Eleanor Carbone, Secretary, a member of Torrington City Council; Ryan Bingham, Mayor, City of Torrington; Aurora Daly of Daly Travel and Treasurer of Artwell Gallery; Tyson Chamberlin, of Chamberlin Granite; Mike Menard, Director of Torrington UCONN branch; Jeff LaLonde, President of Torrington Savings Bank and past President of the TDC; Marc McEachern, Executive Director of Torrington Historical Society; Joe Paganini, Professional Engineer; JoAnn Ryan from the Northwest Connecticut Chamber of Commerce; and Marie Soliani, Torrington City Council member.

Mr. Herbst noted three people not present this evening who have been extremely active in their support, they are State Senator Andrew Roraback; Michelle Cook, State Representative and State Representative Roberta Willis.

Tonight's proposal is for Phase I of the Municipal Development Plan, the MDP. Mr. Herbst outlined the history of this proposal.

Vince McDermott, Senior Vice President, of Milone and MacBroom appeared before the Commission. Also present was Gary Fontinella. Presentation followed.

Mr. Connor read his memo to the Commission dated January 10, 2011.

Member of the Board of Directors Vic Muschell and Mayor Bingham appeared and spoke in favor of the proposal.

Glen Royals appeared before the Commission in opposition but thanked everyone for their hard work on this project. He expressed concerned about no funding in place, or a scaled map that proves the size of the roads or their usefulness.

At 8:58 p.m. Chairman Calkins declared the public hearing closed.

Mr. Calkins expressed his leanness of this proposal, especially the way we would be turning over the traffic flow control of the five way intersection over to the State of Connecticut DOT, and not the City of Torrington overseeing this matter.

**MOTION to APPROVE Site Plan 994**

**Applicant:** Torrington Development Corporation

**Locations:** Proposed improvements to the existing city-owned parking lot on the south side of existing City Hall Avenue. The improvements will reconfigure the lot to eliminate the existing dead-end condition in addition to providing a drop-off area serving the rear of the upper Main Street properties.

- . Extension of City Hall Avenue from its current terminus to East Main Street (Route 202)

- . The reconfiguration of the parking area between the extended City Hall Avenue and the rear of the properties fronting Main Street (Route 800).

**Proposal:** Torrington Downtown Improvements - Phase I

with the following condition:

1. Prior to final construction plans and project implementation, the City Engineer Ed Fabbri, P.E.'s comments and suggestions contained in his memo to the City Planner dated 1/6/11 shall be addressed.

The site plan improvements are consistent with both the Downtown Municipal Plan (MDP) and the Torrington Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD), adopted January 12<sup>th</sup> and effective January 19, 2010. The approval of this plan is an important first priority of the POCD. Mr. Calkins slated Alternate Commission Member Donna Greco for absent Commission member Doris Murphy. Motion seconded by Mr. Perosino, motion carried with Mr. Calkins opposed to the motion. Voting in favor of the motion are Donna Greco, Greg Perosino, Greg Mele, and Paul Summers.

b. Site Plan 996 and Special Exception 11-254

Applicant: Church of St. Maron, aka St. Maron Church  
Location: 613 Main Street (Assessor Maps 119 Block 8 Lots 1, 2/1, 2/2, 3, 4, 5)  
Proposal: Expansion of an existing church and parking lot

At 9:02 p.m. Chairman Calkins opened the public hearing and stated serving on the public hearing will be Commissioners Greg Perosino, Greg Mele, Donna Greco, Christine Mele, Paul Summers, and Richard Calkins. Also present is City Planner Martin Connor.

Mr. Mele read the legal notice which was published in the Republican American.

Todd Parsons of Lenard Engineering appeared representing the applicant. Richard Kaiser, project architect and Father Larry, church pastor and Sam Slaiby, member of the Building Committee were also present.

Mr. Parsons and Mr. Kaiser gave presentations, referring to site maps.

Mr. Connor read his memo to the Commission dated February 3, 2011.

Ajilio Recidivi appeared in favor of the proposal. This project will be good for the north end of Torrington.

Sam Slaiby, 204 Benham Street, Torrington, appeared in favor of the proposal. This institution has remained for 100 years, the longest running. St. Maron's has been a spiritual and cultural center for the community. This renovation is a leap of faith, both spiritual and community. Many institutions have moved to the outskirts, they have considered moving out of the north end. They recognize what their church means to the community and will stay in the north end and will strengthen the community.

Marie Soliani, member of St. Maron's, appeared in favor of the proposal. This project is long overdue, including the handicap access which has prevented people from attending services.

No further comments.

At 9:29 p.m. Chairman Calkins declared the public hearing closed.

MOTION by Mr. Mele to APPROVE Site Plan 996 and Special Exception 11-254

Applicant: Church of St. Maron, aka St. Maron Church  
Location: 613 Main Street (Assessor Maps 119 Block 8 Lots 1, 2/1, 2/2, 3, 4, 5)  
Proposal: Expansion of an existing church and parking lot  
with the following conditions:

1. The applicant shall file an application for a grading permit. A bond estimate for the cost and installation of the erosion and sedimentation controls in accordance with the approved plan shall be prepared by the applicant's engineer. A bond for the erosion and sedimentation controls in an amount acceptable to the City Engineer and in a form acceptable to the Corporation Counsel shall be posted prior to beginning construction on the project.
2. The applicant shall submit a bond estimate to be reviewed and approved by the City Planner for the proposed landscaping. A bond in a form acceptable to the Corporation Counsel shall be posted prior to issuance of the Zoning Permit. 25% of the posted landscaping bond shall remain in place for one year after the landscaping plan has been fully implemented to ensure successful growth of the plantings.
3. The applicant shall submit proof of merger for the three northern lots to be used for church purposes as one lot; and a proof a merger for the two southern lots currently being used for commercial purposes as one lot. The proof of merger shall be submitted to the City Planner's Office prior to issuance of a Zoning Permit.
4. A driveway access easement agreement between the Church and Torrington Savings Bank shall be reviewed by Corporation Counsel and filed on Torrington Land Records prior to issuance of the Zoning Permit.

MOTION seconded by Mr. Perosino, unanimously carried.

7. **Adjournment:**

MOTION by Mr. Summers to adjourn at 9:32 p.m, seconded by Mr. Mele, unanimously carried.