

SUBJECT TO APPROVAL

**MADISON PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
PLANNING MEETING MINUTES
February 4, 2016**

The regular planning meeting of the Madison Planning and Zoning Commission was conducted Thursday, February 4, 2016, at 7 p.m., in Meeting Room A at Madison Town Campus.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Chairman Ronald Clark, Vice Chairman Francine Larson, Secretary Christopher Traugh, James Matteson, Thomas Burland, John K. Mathers, Amanda Kaplan, Joel Miller, and Joseph Bunovsky, Jr.

MEMBERS ABSENT

None

ALTERNATES PRESENT

Brian Richardson, Richard Chorney, Elliott Hitchcock

OTHERS PRESENT

Town Planner David Anderson, Zoning Enforcement Officer John De Laura, Town Engineer Michael Ott.

The planning meeting of the Madison Planning and Zoning Commission was called to order at approximately 7 p.m. by Chairman Ronald Clark.

Presentation from Police Chief Drumm regarding a proposed emergency communications tower.

Madison Police Chief John Drumm stated that this is the second phase of replacing a communications tower on the town campus and he asked the Planning and Zoning Commission for guidance. Ed Brunt, representing Madison's Emergency Communications, described the project.

Chairman Clark stated that this is not an application; it is strictly informational.

Renovating the equipment center was the first phase of the project, which is a computer wireless network for the dispatch center, according to Mr. Brunt. An engineering firm evaluated the current tower, which was first installed on the town campus in 1994, according to Mr. Brunt. In the second phase of the project, plans are to install a 140-foot monopole tower inside a 32' x 60' fenced enclosure; there will also be a prefab concrete shelter, generator, and diesel tank to run the generator, according to Mr. Brunt. Placement of the tower is expected to be near the Arts Barn, where it is pretty well hidden; the new tower will be 20 feet taller than the current structure, according to Mr. Brunt. He passed out a document to the Planning and Zoning Commission, which included a description of the project and its various phases, photographs, and contour maps. Still to be accomplished is site engineering, the digging of a 40-foot deep soil test pit, and more research before permits can be obtained and construction of the tower is started. In discussing possible placement of the tower, Mr. Brunt stated that it could be built near

the skate park, but a portion of the skate park would have to be taken away, and a variance would be needed from the Zoning Board of Appeals.

Police Chief Drumm stated that this communications tower is very critical to the emergency center's needs; twice, the current tower has failed. He thanked Town Planner David Anderson, Zoning Enforcement Officer John De Laura and Town Engineer Michael Ott for their input and asked the Planning and Zoning Commission which would be the best way to go.

Commissioner Joel Miller asked whether the northwest side of the arts barn had been considered, so there would not be a need to take away a portion of the skate park, but Chairman Clark stated that the land drops off significantly in that section, and the tower would have to be taller than 140 feet if placed there. Mr. Anderson stated that if the Planning and Zoning Commission feels comfortable with having the application go before the Zoning Board of Appeals for a variance, the Planning and Zoning Commission could assist by sending a letter supporting the variance because this is a unique situation.

There are a lot of mandates, state and federal requirements, because this is critical infrastructure equipment needed for homeland security, and there are many critical components to protect, such as Interstate 95, railroads, and gas lines, according to Police Chief Drumm. Madison's emergency services has taken the initiative to partner with the state, in an effort to prepare the town to be host to Clinton or Guilford, according to Police Chief Drumm. The dispatch center has been built to handle the capacity of Hammonasset State Park, which is situated in Madison, has at least 20,000 guests a day in the summer and over a million and a half people visiting every year, according to Police Chief Drumm. Mr. Brunt explained that the state was awarded federal money, which it used to invest in a fiber optic network, allowing it to operate the Connecticut Telecommunications System (CTS), and Madison is only the second police department to connect to the CTS. This CTS connection allows Madison to get every state Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) frequency, so that when someone calls 911 on a cell phone to report an emergency at Hammonasset, everyone knows immediately where to respond, according to Mr. Brunt.

Mr. Anderson stated that once it is known whether a variance is needed for the project, a timeline for approval will be determined. This is for public safety, the Planning and Zoning Commission would need a site plan design, and it would write a letter to the Zoning Board of Appeals supporting a variance, Chairman Clark explained.

The Planning and Zoning Commission would need to receive a special exception modification application, which requires notification of adjacent property owners located 500 feet from the parcel, according to Mr. Anderson.

Discussion regarding steps forward for review of mobile food truck regulations.

Mr. Anderson asked the commission how it wants to move forward in reviewing the mobile food truck regulations—would the commission want to delegate it to a subcommittee or would all twelve members of the commission want to work on it together? Mr. Anderson stated there was a story in the newspaper about how the city of New Haven is overhauling its ordinance on food truck operations, and so far it has decided four areas in the city could be used by food trucks,

except that one of those four parcels belongs to Yale, and Yale is reluctant to have someone else determine use for its property. Other towns are also struggling with the issue of food trucks and how to regulate them, according to Mr. Anderson.

Commissioner James Matteson stated that Madison's Planning and Zoning Regulations currently has nothing in it specific to food truck operations, but the Board of Selectmen enacted an ordinance which is specific to the use of food trucks on the town owned Academy site; that ordinance states that those who wish to operate food trucks on private property need to obtain approval from the Planning and Zoning Commission.

Commissioner Miller suggested one of the quickest ways to partition it would be to determine what might be allowed on a commercial private property...look for the easiest situations on which to make determinations. Commissioner Joseph Bunovsky stated he believes the Planning and Zoning Commission should have a regulation on it. Commissioner Matteson stated the food trucks should be limited to a commercial zone. Chairman Clark stated there are questions that need to be answered, such as: What value are food trucks? Are they harmful? Should they not be allowed? He also stated he would like to know what the Chamber of Commerce, the Economic Development Commission, and residents feel about food trucks in town. They don't pay any taxes and they don't hire anyone, Chairman Clark stated. Anything that is done has to be done in accordance with the town Plan of Conservation and Development, Commissioner Miller said. Vice Chairman Francine Larson stated she is in agreement with Commissioner Miller, in that commercial properties should be discussed first. Her initial thought is food trucks should not be allowed on residential property, but questions arise on how to allow food trucks and how to restrict them.

Mr. Anderson stated that it is clear that something needs to be done to the zoning regulations for food truck operations, and he stated it should be by special exception permit.

Discussion continued on how to approach creating a regulation for food truck operations, whether to communicate through emails or whether to have the town planner write questions that the commissioners would take time to answer on their own and then bring forward at a meeting. Vice Chairman Larson had suggested that each commissioner go home and do the homework of writing down individual preferences on restrictions or allowances. Secretary Christopher Traugh stated that emails would still comprise a meeting, Planning and Zoning Commission meetings should be in public, and all of these discussions should be in public. Vice Chairman Larson agreed.

Mr. Anderson stated that there is an obligation to move this to the top of the Planning and Zoning Commission list; it would be put on the agenda for the next Planning and Zoning Commission meeting, if the agenda is not too heavy. If the agenda is heavy, it would be put on the agenda for the commission's next planning meeting in March. Mr. Anderson then noted that this particular planning meeting had a 90-minute time limit, which had already elapsed.

Though the commission had originally planned to break out into work sessions on the housing diversity and affordability study and sign regulations, that was postponed.

Commissioner Matteson made the motion to adjourn at 8:35 p.m.; it was seconded by Commissioner Chorney and unanimously approved.

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Vote to adjourn passed, 9-0-0.

IN FAVOR: Chairman Clark, Vice Chairman Larson, Secretary Traugh, and Commissioners Kaplan, Bunovsky, Mathers, Matteson, Miller, and Burland.

OPPOSED: None.

ABSTAINED: None.

Respectfully submitted,
Marlene H. Kennedy, clerk