

**COVENTRY PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF MONDAY, APRIL 14, 2025**

1. CALL TO ORDER

By: Pollansky

Time: 7:01 p.m.

Place: Annex & Zoom

		PRESENT	ABSENT
REGULAR MEMBERS:	Bill Jobbagy, Chairperson		X
	Brian Murray	X	
	Darby Pollansky, Vice Chairperson	X	
	Carol Polsky, Secretary	X	
	Eric Thomas	X	
ALTERNATE MEMBERS:	Steve Reviczky		X
	Mindy Gosselin	X	
	VACANT		
STAFF:	Jana Roberson, AICP, Director of Planning & Development	X	
	Heidi Leech, Land Use Administrative Assistant	X	
	Natalia Yeschick, Recording Secretary	X	

2. ROLL CALL/SEATING OF ALTERNATES

Alternate member Mindy Gosselin is sat for Chairperson Bill Jobbagy

3. AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS

Ben Funk of 83 Mason Street and his wife live in the Village Residential Zone. They also own the lot across from their home which has a historic, brick structure on it. Funk stated they are considering putting in an art studio/gallery in the brick structure, but the Zoning Regulations do not allow a home occupation there because it is not on the same parcel with the house on it. Pollansky suggested the Funks stay and we discuss after the three hearings.

MOTION: Move to add the following items to the agenda:

Under New Business, add items:

c. Possible Zone Change, Ben Funk of 83 Mason Street

Motion by: Pollansky

Seconded by: Thomas

Discussion:

Voting:

For: Pollansky, Polsky, Murray, Thomas, Gosselin

Against: None

Abstain: None

Motion unanimously approved

4. PUBLIC HEARINGS

a. PZC-25-2 – Proposed modification of the Zoning Map in the vicinity of 1409 Main Street to reclassify the entire 2.05-acre parcel as Village Gateway Zone.

Roberson mentioned this is a continuation of the public hearing opened at the March 24, 2025 meeting.

Attorney Timothy Herbst spoke for his client. He mentioned a few observations from the staff report; he stated staff has acknowledged to the commission that the language cited in the POCD appears to support the proposition of changing the zoning designation for the parcel. Herbst believes the main parcel with the thin tail that goes out to Woodland Road, in theory and in principle it makes logical sense consistent with the goals and objectives in the POCD to change the zoning classification to the property, however, there is concern about the tail. Regarding the tail of property, a correspondence has been submitted to the commission through the Director of Planning and Development, correspondence from 2018 that was sent to his client by his lawyer at the time. Herbst also included a site plan for a previous approval for a large office building with primary access off of Woodland Road. Herbst surveyed the

area/property and stated there are several other commercial type uses in the vicinity of the property that would support and justify the changing of the zoning designation. Additionally, Herbst noticed on Woodland Road it is steep elevation topography and there was a concern about ingress and egress on Woodland Road. Herbst mentioned we do not know what will ultimately be developed on this property and does not believe the ingress/egress discussion is appropriate for this application, as we are discussing a change of zone at this time. We also do not know what will be going on the property, and we do not know if emergency access will be needed. By approving this zone change, you are now having specific standards in your regulations that are going to allow you to approve, deny, or approve with any conditions you deem appropriate any specific application for that property.

Leo Papas asked what the plan is for the property. Roberson responded that Herbst addressed this question. The zone change application does not come with any suggestion of future development. A zone change is purely to change the land use regulations affecting this parcel, it is not to propose any particular development. Roberson goes on to say it is important to consider the zone change on its own merits and not with consideration for a specific development proposal, but rather any development proposal that would comply with new zoning boundaries if they were to be adopted. The suggestion is to move it to the Lake Residential Zone to the Gateway Zone.

Roberson referenced that Herbst's position on the accessway is that you could condition specific development plans at some point in the future. The Planning and Zoning Commission cannot condition a site plan review application, just like you cannot condition a zone change application, as was discussed at the last meeting. You cannot condition a site plan review application that meets your regulations. The only time the Planning and Zoning Commission may condition an application is for a special permit and you must have a good reason. The accessway is part of this zone boundary change application. Roberson stated that now is the appropriate time to talk about the accessway because they are proposing now that it be added to the Gateway Zone.

Pollansky asked Roberson if the modification was the appropriate way to address this. Roberson responded that you may modify a boundary proposal as you see fit.

Murray asked what the reason is that it was subdivided with the tail? Herbst responded that is how the lot was split and is what is referred to as a free split. Herbst also clarified something he stated, the site plan review if it does not comply with your regulations, you do not have to approve it. It is Herbst's position that with respect to special permit conditions there is a lot of case law that provides guidance to all Planning and Zoning Commissions about reasonable conditions that can be attached to approval consistent with promoting and protecting public health, safety, and general welfare. Pollansky asked if it was because of acreage requirements?

Roberson responded they had to make both lots conforming, so all zoning regulations would apply, but how they choose to divide it was their choice. Pollansky stated if they were to modify and take that tail, would that make the front lot be rezoned non-conforming? Roberson stated no, they both have appropriate frontages, they do not need rear access. Pollansky confirmed with Roberson that the rear access can remain but does not have to be rezoned.

Thomas asked if it would remain as residential? Pollansky stated yes. The zoning on Woodland is all residential.

Roberson stated it is important to correct the record on the neighborhood zoning. Roberson did property research. The zone boundary included in application and is also on our town GIS website is an old zone boundary. Roberson showed the correct zoning and the Woodland Road frontage. The official zoning as of our last amendment includes the vacant parcel on Woodland Road in the gateway zone that shares a property boundary with the parcel that is subject to review now. The site shown in 2005 had been approved for a professional office development, and that approval has since expired.

Roberson showed photos of Woodland Road in the area they are proposing be changed to commercial. Roberson pointed out the width of Woodland Road being between 17-18 feet wide, which is very narrow, as well as a residential driveway. She also showed the accessway where the tail would be. Being that the road narrows and is residential in character, it is a good reason to not include the accessway of this parcel in the gateway zone. The rest of the zone change is consistent with the POCD, it is identified as a development parcel, and would be nice to redevelop this parcel for either residential or commercial use. The property has been owned by the current owner since 2013. The lot split was recorded in October of 2024. Redeveloping the parcel would be consistent with your goals for the gateway zone.

Roberson did speak with the Fire Marshal and they mentioned it would depend on what the proposal is, and we do not have a proposed use or a development plan. Pollansky stated we are not eliminating the tail, it is still usable even if we eliminated it from the gateway zone aspect. Roberson stated potentially for fire access, typically if it were a commercial use, the driveway to a commercial use is part of the commercial use. You cannot have a commercial driveway going through a residential zone to a commercial use on the other side of the residential zone. The good news is this parcel has frontage on a state route (Rte 31/Main Street) where there are good site lines and there is no issue with access on Main Street.

Herbst asked when calculating lot coverage and allowable square footage for a parcel, does the town include the entire parcel when determining allowable lot coverage? Roberson responded that this question is not answered by our zoning regulations, however, because a gateway zone does not have stringent coverage requirements, the maximum lot coverage in the village gateway zone is 80%. Herbst responded it could potentially be problematic to have two

separate zoning designations on one piece of property when you receive a commercial application. Herbst pointed out there are two parcels on Woodland Road that were approved for Gateway, and although an expired approval, there was a large office building that was approved for that parcel with access onto Woodland Road. There is a focus tonight on the tail and the speculation this could potentially be an access point and this might be problematic, when there is precedent for an approved office building having access on Woodland Road. Herbst is having trouble understanding how this is going to have such a detrimental impact on Woodland Road if the entire lot is zoned Gateway and that one piece of property is brought into conformity with the other two parcels on Woodland Road that have already been zoned for that purpose.

Thomas asked if Roberson is referring to the pinch point on Woodland Road in the narrowing of the road at the end of the existing commercially zoned properties. Does that narrowing of the road continue roughly 17-18 feet as you continue into woodland through the residential area? Roberson responded, yes.

Thomas asked when the former commission approved the commercial development in 2005, was that property already zoned the Gateway? Roberson responded, yes.

Ben Funk of 83 Mason Street asked if the width of Woodland Road is fixed or can it be altered and some of the land in question be used to widen that road? Funk is assuming the road is town property and we have a bit of an easement. Roberson responded that any road can be widened.

Papas stated Woodland Road is not town property, and it is private. Roberson is not aware of it not being a town road, but there are some easements over it. Roberson will get confirmation of the status of Woodland Road.

Thomas is wondering why the letter dated April 11, 2025 was being received today and not discussed in the beginning of the public hearing? Herbst responded they wanted to review the staff report and review the comments from the last meeting and confer with his client and discuss these issues that were raised in the letter, that was the reason for sending it.

Leech reviewed the town engineer's spreadsheet, and it says starting at Lake Street, .63 of Woodland Road is town road. Roberson mentioned this spreadsheet shows what roads are town roads, and what roads are private roads. Roberson suggested we get confirmation on the status of the road. Herbst would like to know what town or agent would be responsible for verifying whether a road is a town road or a private road. Pollansky would like clarification just to make sure, and if we have the opportunity to continue, we can get additional information.

Murray asked how strongly does he feel he wants this tail included in the gateway zone? Herbst responded they feel very strongly it should be included.

Roberson offered to make a graphic to show the land use current uses as dictated by the assessors field cards.

The hearing is continued to the April 28, 2025 meeting.

b. PZC-25-3 – Special Permit application for a new Single-Family Dwelling (tear down/rebuild) on an undersized/non-conforming lot at 90 Avery Shores in the LR Zone; Applicant/Owner: David Blakely.

Polsky has been sat as chair for Pollansky.

Polsky asked if anyone in the audience would like to comment.

Hansen of 74 Avery Shores is requesting the drain at the bottom of the ditch be moved over a few inches so it will not drain onto her property. Additionally, the public road has been turned over to the town, and part of the property that is being added is part of the town right of way, Hansen is wondering if the proposed foundation for the parking area is allowed since it is being proposed in the towns right of way.

Roberson pointed out the engineer and surveyor for the application is on Zoom, Andrew Bushnell, and suggested he speak to the property boundary concerns.

Blakely explained he bought the property up the road and it has been his for some time. Blakely also explained there is a right of way in front of everyone's house. Additionally, Blakely mentioned the wall/fence that is a requirement for him to put up was imposed by the town.

Roberson explained the comments were addressed to Bushnell. Bushnell stated this is the only situation he knows of where the decision of the association was to offer everyone in the association along Avery Shores a chance to be deeded the area to the edge of the pavement and that would be the property line. Bushnell explained that Blakely took them up on that offer so he now owns to the edge of the pavement. The town was looking for a 5 foot easement beyond the edge of the pavement, and the fence is more than 5 feet from the edge of the road. Roberson reiterated the town owns to the edge of the pavement. Bushnell responded that the property line for what the town owns is the right of way and what Blakely owns is the edge of

the pavement/road.

Hansen stated it is not just the 5 feet from the road edge that is the right of way, it is the entire 50 feet. She looked at the copy of the association deed that was turned over and they said the land was turned over, so there is a conflict in the deeds. Hansen said it should be verified. She also clarified that she is referring to the proposed retaining wall.

Thomas reviewed comments from the Town Engineer, it says he reviewed the proposal and he is satisfied with the design.

Roberson explained there have been many conversations about Avery Shores and her understanding is the edge of the pavement is the property line. Hansen stated that is not what the deed says. Roberson replied that a deed may say one thing and at a later date be modified by other deeds. It is not necessarily all on one deed. However, Roberson cannot comment on that as the surveyor is putting their professional license on the plans to confirm the property boundaries has shown the property going to the edge of the pavement and that is consistent with her understanding of Avery Shores drive. Hansen replied the land was turned over but the right of way was retained and the association has the intention for the right of way be turned over to the town.

Thomas brought up Hansen's other comment regarding the footing drain and asked if there is a response from the engineer or applicant. Hansen reiterated she would like the drain in the ditch to be moved to make sure the flow does not go on her property. Thomas confirmed the ditch Hansen is referring to is the footing drain with the engineered rip rap.

Bushnell responded once the drainage comes out of the pipe, it is going to go perpendicular to the contour which is parallel to the property and it should stay on Blakely's property. If it is graded per plan, there will be no drainage runoff onto her property. Blakely explained the plan is pictorial and not to scale, it may look like it is discharging 3 more degrees towards Hansen's property but in reality there will be stones, and the discharge will be going towards gravity. Additionally, it is a footing drain, the water from the road is not relevant to the discharge coming out of that drain.

Hansen suggested putting a berm. Blakely responded there is already a berm that is graded away from their property. Roberson explained the contours are directed towards the lake and not the neighboring property.

Reindell, owner of lots 13-18, is wondering what the height difference is for the proposed new home compared to the existing home? Blakely responded this will be a single ranch with a walkout basement. They are not building a three-story building. From the road it will be just

what you see now, which is a single level house. Roberson also explained it will be closer to the road, but it will appear to be a single story from the road.

Polsky closed the hearing.

c. PZC-25-4 - Special Permit application for a new Single-Family Dwelling on an undersized/non-conforming lot at 272 Pine Lake Drive in the LR Zone; Applicant: Andrew Laroche, Owner: Lakefront Lifestyle, LLC.

Roberson read legal notice.

Polsky re-sat Pollansky as chair.

Murray recused himself from this hearing.

In attendance is Mark Peterson, professional engineer of Gardner & Peterson Associates, LL. Peterson explained there is an existing residence on the parcel. The parcel is just under three tenths of an acre. This was created from a map from the late 1920's that consisted of 5 parcels that were combined. The property is approximately 100 feet along the road, and 125 feet from front to back and it backs up to Eagleville Lake. The property is surrounded by other single family parcels on both sides and across the street. The permit plan was put together based upon the survey they completed, health department and wetland commission approval has been obtained. The footprint on the parcel will be 26x28. The new home will meet the zoning setbacks. Peterson is asking for approval to move forward with construction.

Thomas asked for Peterson to explain the ownership of the Willimantic River shoreline, relevant to the line showed on the existing and proposed maps shown. Thomas' understanding is the State of CT owns to a certain elevation, but he isn't sure it is reflected. Peterson responded that his understanding is the rear parcel is the Willimantic River, they did find two property pins along that rear boundary. They are doing a closing line, which is a mathematical line to determine the parcel area.

Thomas asked if any reference was made to if it is still true the State of CT has an elevation line they own. Usually it would be part of the record, and Thomas does not see any reference. Peterson responded they are using the deed, locating the edge of the water and also have things noting the rear boundaries of the property. Thomas pointed out the edge of the water fluctuates. Peterson agrees, the 20 foot rear yard can move slightly as the water moves. They

have also kept the proposed house 57 feet away from the water, which is significantly more than required for the rear yard zoning setback.

Thomas also asked that looking at the existing lot coverage when looking at the application it references the house is still there, but the house is not there. What are you using when you reference existing lot coverage and proposed lot coverage? Peterson responded he is basing it off of the existing conditions at the time of their survey when there was a house. Thomas asked what the lot coverage percentage was? Peterson responded that the existing pervious area was 755 square feet, the proposed pervious area is 826. Thomas clarified Peterson is referring to impervious surface area Peterson said yes, and that gives a proposed 6.7% coverage. Thomas saw a table listed that has some information which did not include impervious coverage in the calculation. Roberson mentioned deck and stairs listed under "Proposed Impervious Area" are considered permeable.

Thomas stated they have been looking at recent applications where impervious pavers were being put underneath due to runoff concerns, he was wondering how it was different or if it was up to the applicant to decide. Roberson responded there would be wooden stairs. Thomas thought he saw concrete slabs. Peterson confirmed it is a wooden deck. Roberson responded that since it is a wooden deck with gaps and surface underneath is permeable, we would consider all of that permeable. It was based on the fact they were not included in lot coverage, those would be permeable. Roberson also mentioned we do not have detail on the stairs, however there is a detail in the architectural plans on the deck. Peterson responded the deck will be consistent all the way through the stairs and deck, it will be pressure treated with gaps in between. Thomas has a concern about the slope of that land, and wanting to know what the ground condition would be underneath the steps, what would the final grade be roughly in that area? Peterson responded they are showing some re-grading.

Roberson explained there was an issue with erosion. Town staff, including the wetlands agent and Leech went to the site. Leech explained what she saw on the site, when they first went out the silt fence was not installed to the plan, they were expecting to demo and reconstruct right away, they were not aware they needed a special permit. Beutler and Leech did an inspection and contacted the builder, additional sedimentation and erosion controls were installed such as hay bales and another line of silt fence by the lake, another row above where they installed the septic tank and along the sides. Beutler returned to the site on Monday for an inspection and said it was in good shape.

Thomas pointed out the applicant is still referring to outdated guidelines from the State of CT for erosion and sediment control. This was brought up previously with the engineer. As of 2024 there should be reference to the new guidelines. At minimum this should be updated in the application.

Roberson stated she does not have a written report from the town engineer, however it was reviewed and signed off on. Roberson believes the town engineer is satisfied by the plans, which were also approved by the wetlands commission. She also noted this is a special permit and like other special permits, reasonable, justified conditions may be added.

Caroline Dowd of 303 Pine Lake Drive asked if the proposed home is within the same guidelines of the previous structure. Peterson responded it is in a similar location to what was previously there. Roberson explained it is almost the same footprint and will be almost in the same location, and will be 1.5 stories.

Marie Patulik of 194 Pine Lake Drive asked if it will be only one story and not two stories. Roberson pulled up the architectural design. Laroche explained they were looking at the road side and it would be two story. Roberson showed the roof line is at 30 feet, 9 inches.

Thomas was hoping we would have some discussion regarding some of the questions raised about how they took care of the property. We would benefit from having more discussions. Thomas is also curious if we would be hearing from the town engineer. Roberson responded there is no report, however he reviewed it with the wetland commission and did not have any changes. Roberson suggests a site walk to see the property, and consider buffering vegetation along the water. The elevation of the dam is at the limit of the flood zone. There are some things you can look at. Pollansky is surprised the wetlands commission did not suggest mitigation of some sort for vegetation.

Gosselin is curious to know what the lot currently looks like as far as a vegetation perspective.

Thomas stated it appeared to him from reading the wetlands permit conditions there seems to be deference to town staff/town engineer to look at things like potentially additional E&S controls and potential work at the lake edge. Thomas is not sure where we as a commission can go without stepping on the inland wetlands decision process. Gosselin responded they normally put in if they were to talk about additional plantings, when it says "activities involving work at the lake edge," it is just so staff knows when work is being done so there can be a closer oversight.

Roberson stated it is part of the commissions jurisdiction that if site plans that were approved by inland wetlands, then any changes would have to get examined by staff to determine if that was a minor modification or not. Roberson believes that a vegetative buffer is within the scope of your authority and if it were intended to protect the water, the wetlands commission would likely not be opposed to that.

Gosselin would like to know if there is grass up to the lakes edge. Peterson responded there would be seed in all disturbed areas, to the tree line and the house.

Laroche mentioned they intend to revegetate the shore line consistent with DEEP standards. Thomas responded they are encouraged to hear that. Thomas responded that the water quality of Eagleville Lake is still considered to be fully supporting for the designated uses determined by the State of CT, it also has federal designation for the recreational water trail. Water quality would be valued if it has to be a restored area.

Pollansky closed the hearing.

5. OLD BUSINESS

a. PZC-25-2 – Proposed modification of the Zoning Map in the vicinity of 1409 Main Street to reclassify the entire 2.05-acre parcel as Village Gateway Zone.

Continued to the next meeting of April 28, 2025 at 7:00 pm

b. PZC-25-3 – Special Permit application for a new Single-Family Dwelling (tear down/rebuild) on an undersized/non-conforming lot at 90 Avery Shores in the LR Zone; Applicant/Owner: David Blakely.

Polsky has been sat as chair for Pollansky, and has re-sat Murray.

MOTION:

Motion to approve application PZC-25-03 - Special Permit application for a Single Family Dwelling on an undersized/non-conforming lot at 90 Avery Shores Drive in the LR Zone in accordance with all submitted documents and testimony with finding that it meets the criteria of section 4.02 non-conforming lots, section 6.04 Lake Residential Zone, and section 7.13 Special Permits of the zoning regulations, and including the following conditions:

- 1) A pre-construction meeting is required with Town Staff prior to the start of any land clearing, demolition, or construction activities**
- 2) The certificate of approval from the Eastern Highlands Health Department, Inlands Wetlands Agency, and Planning and Zoning Commission will be added to the draft final plans. Draft final plans will be checked by the land use office prior to printing on archival material. Final plans on archival material will be signed by the commission chairs and recorded in the Town Clerk's office. A paper set is to be filed with the land use office.**
- 3) The record of special permit including conditions of approval must be recorded in the Town Clerk's office.**

- 4) **The approval shall be conditioned on the continued maintenance of the storm water infiltration structure. A notice of stormwater maintenance shall be recorded on land records in the Town Clerk's office in accordance with section 4.04.06 of the Coventry zoning regulations.**
- 5) **The driveway opening shall not be widened beyond the existing 30 feet.**
- 6) **No zoning permit shall be issued and no work shall commence until all permit conditions are met.**

Motion by: Murray

Seconded by: Thomas

Discussion: Thomas asked to clarify condition 4 and would like to know what the water infiltration structure is.

Roberson asked to address maintenance of the plunge pool.

Voting:

For: Murray, Polsky, Gosselin, Thomas

Against: None

Abstain: None

Motion unanimously approved.

MOTION:

Motion to add a condition:

- 7) **The Plans are approved subject to the removal of the rain garden cross section detail and the addition of a maintenance schedule for the driveway sediment collection plunge pool.**

Motion by: Murray

Seconded by: Thomas

Discussion: None

Voting:

For: Murray, Polsky, Gosselin, Thomas

Against: None

Abstain: None

Motion unanimously approved.

Pollansky has been re-sat as Chair.

c. PZC-25-4 - Special Permit application for a new Single-Family Dwelling on an undersized/non-conforming lot at 272 Pine Lake Drive in the LR Zone; Applicant: Andrew Laroche, Owner: Lakefront Lifestyle, LLC.

Murray has recused himself.

MOTION: Move to approve application PZC-25-04 special permit application for a Single-Family Dwelling on an undersized/non-conforming lot at 272 Pine Lake Drive in the LR Zone in accordance with all submitted documents and testimony with the finding that it meets the criteria of section 4.02 non-conforming lots, section 6.04 Lake Residential Zone, and section 7.03 Special Permits of the zoning regulations and including the following conditions:

- 1) A pre-construction meeting is required with Town Staff prior to the start of any land clearing, demolition, or construction activities.**
- 2) The certificate of approval from the Eastern Highlands Health Department, Inlands Wetlands Agency, and the Planning and Zoning Commission will be added to the draft final plans. Draft final plans will be checked by the land use office prior to printing on archival material. Final plans on archival material will be signed by the commission chairs and recorded in the Town Clerk's office. A paper set is to be filed with the land use office.**
- 3) The record of special permit including conditions of approval must be recorded in the Town Clerk's office.**
- 4) No zoning permit shall be issued and no work shall commence until all permit conditions are met.**
- 5) A plan to reestablish appropriate vegetation along the entire riparian zone as per DEEP guidance is to be submitted by the owner/applicant to town staff for approval.**

Motion by: Gosselin

Seconded by: Polsky

Discussion: None

Voting:

For: Pollansky, Polsky, Thomas, Gosselin

Against: None

Abstain: None

Motion unanimously approved

Murray is un-recused

6. NEW BUSINESS

a. 8-24 Referral for Composting Facility at the Department of Public Works.

Roberson has two site plans. She mentioned the Town received a grant to install the MMI grant (Materials Management Infrastructure) application. The proposal is to add a compost facility that would be able to receive woodchips, leaves, lawn debris, and food waste.

Pollansky asked if once everything is composted if they will give it out. Roberson responded, yes, and the only downside is the runoff.

Pollansky suggested they monitor what is being brought in.

Roberson stated it is an 8-24 referral. A comment was found on compost in the plan of conservation and development under one of the energy efficiency goals. Compost is energy conservation. One of the recommendations is to continue the residential compost program and make more educational resources available that is under a goal to increase residential recycling rates by 5% while concurrently reducing household waste tonnage by 5% over the next 5 years.

A concern Thomas has is the runoff that comes from this, it could be a problem but there are techniques to deal with it.

The commission has endorsed the 8-24 referral for the composting facility at the Department of Public Works.

b. Election of Officers

Pollansky mentioned there was an indirect discussion with Jobaggy regarding staying on as chair versus moving to vice chair, whichever the commission is more in favor of, he is willing to do.

Murray mentioned Pollansky is doing a great job and would not be opposed to nominating Pollansky as chair.

MOTION: Move to nominate Pollansky as Chair, Jobaggy as Vice Chair, Polsky as Secretary.

Motion by: Murray

Seconded by: Polsky

Discussion: None

Voting:

For: Pollansky, Polsky, Murray, Thomas, Gosselin

Against: None

Abstain: None

Motion unanimously approved.

C. Possible Zone change - Ben Funk of 83 Mason Street with his wife.

Roberson brought up the map to have a visual of where the potential art studio may be, which is across from their home and on a different parcel. We cannot directly apply the home occupation standards, and we have no reason to not like this proposal. Roberson asked if they will also have to get a variance to put an addition on? Funk responded that if they do get approval to get a studio, they are contemplating putting on an addition off the back to add a bathroom and a place to wash paint brushes. Pollansky asked if they would connect to the sewer, Funk said yes. Funk mentioned they are just gathering information, he is also speaking to a surveyor about the exact property line.

Roberson explained it is nonconforming structure, even in this zone.

Pollansky asked what the structure is and how big the lot is. Funk responded it is a garage, and it is on .42 acres

Murray asked what they envision for people parking. Funk responded they have parking on their side of the street.

Roberson explained the way the regulations read it is an unusual situation, we can interpret it, or propose a regulatory language change which is the cleanest way to do it.

Pollansky asked what zone the Mason Street Mill is in? Roberson showed the zoning map. Their parcel with the garage, and their house across the street are in Village Residential, the Mills are in Village Center.

Thomas explained we cannot call it a home occupation on the property across the street since there is no residence. Roberson responded we could propose a regulatory language change.

We have to consider how it will be interpreted or used by someone else in the future. Funk would not want to change it from Village Residential. Pollansky suggested specifying something along the line of if there is an existing building across the street so it isn't just an empty lot.

Thomas confirmed with the Funks that this was a property that was purchased separately.

Pollansky asked Roberson to speak with the Town Attorney for guidance.

Roberson explained that moderate impact is when the public is invited in.

Funk explained they would have to make it handicap accessible. The steps and changes they would take would all add value to the property. Funk feels it is important to keep the same residential zone so nothing limits a future owner.

Roberson is looking at a tweak to the home occupation standards to show it is a home occupation across the street. Roberson noted it is a tiered system of low, moderate, and high impact. Only high impact typically comes to the board. Low and moderate impacts are staff approval, Roberson believes this is a moderate impact. The language needs to be pinned down, Roberson will work with the attorney.

Thomas asked what the driveway plans are. Funk responded he is not planning on expanding the driveway, there is a door on the back of the building, and is planning on a walkway to the back on the left hand side.

7. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

a. 1/27/2025, 2/24/25, 3/10/25, 3/24/25

MOTION: *I move to approve the minutes of the January 27, 2025, meeting.*

Motion by: Thomas

Seconded by: Murray

Discussion: None

Voting:

For: Thomas, Murray, Pollansky, Polsky

Against: None
Abstain: Gosselin

Motion approved.

MOTION: *I move to approve the minutes of the February 24, 2025, meeting.*

Motion by: Polsky

Seconded by: Murray

Discussion: None

Voting:

For: Thomas, Murray, Pollansky, Polsky

Against: None

Abstain: Gosselin

Motion approved.

MOTION: *I move to approve the minutes of the March 10, 2025, meeting.*

Motion by: Polsky

Seconded by: Murray

Discussion: None

Voting:

For: Thomas, Murray, Pollansky, Polsky

Against: None

Abstain: Gosselin

Motion approved.

MOTION: *I move to approve the minutes of the March 24, 2025, meeting.*

Motion by: Polsky

Seconded by: Murray

Discussion: None

Voting:

For: Thomas, Murray, Pollansky, Polsky, Gosselin

Against: None
Abstain:

Motion unanimously approved.

8. COMMUNICATIONS – Zoning referrals, etc.

Leech looked at the Mansfield zoning referrals. They are updating some of their definitions such as detention basin, developed area, and disturbed area. They are also updating their livestock regulations, they are looking to ban roosters on anything less than 5 acres, some believe it goes against the State's right to farm ordinance. They are looking to set numbers of livestock per acre, which we do not do. None of their regulation changes affect us, however, Leech believes we should go over our definitions. Leech goes on to say they are looking to update their guinea fowl and turkeys because they are noisy, additionally, Mansfield is regulating rabbits based on square footage, Coventry does not regulate rabbits. There are big updates to the Mansfield zoning regulations, it does have a stipulation for 4-H and FFA education projects as of right.

Roberson mentioned Brooklyn had no regulations for agriculture outside of most residential zones, where you could have chickens but no roosters. Regarding animal units and animals you can have per acreage would be strongly opposed by the farm bureau and agricultural advocates. You could have 100 cattle an acre if you wanted to, and nobody did that, it was never a problem. Roosters can be a problem in high density areas. Roberson would never recommend regulating agriculture with animal units.

Leech mentioned Mansfield is updating their definition of structure, and believes we should also update our definition of structure.

Gosselin mentioned regarding home occupations we should talk to the town attorney about what we had on Mason Street, perhaps check with the Town of Mansfield, they may have seen a similar issue just to see if they have regulations about home occupations across the street. Perhaps talk with their town planner as a more efficient, cost effective way as a first step. Pollansky and Thomas suggested The Last Green Valley that gives advocacy on pieces of proposals that towns look at for proposals may be a good contact for this situation. Roberson mentioned there should be flexibility built into the zoning regulations, Pollansky agrees.

9. MEMBER & STAFF REPORTS

Leech ran a report and started tracking one of the ways we accept blight and zoning complaints

is through our OpenGov permitting system. We started accepting them that way in late 2022. Leech is starting to work on enforcement matters and ran a report on all of the open blight and zoning violations out of the open gov system. A note was made of what the complaints were and any steps that were taken. If there is a question mark or anonymous, that is because they came in as anonymous complaints. Town Council gave the directive that anonymous complaints go to the bottom of the pile because they are often neighbor disputes or spite complaints. Leech will begin addressing these. Polsky asked how Leech decides what is done from here? Leech looks at which ones are causing the biggest issue. Roberson pointed out that these are just complaints for blight and zoning, Leech has also prepared a list of home occupations and is doing reports on every zoning permit that is issued. Roberson let Leech know that 454 Cassidy Hill can be closed.

Thomas is curious about the number of home occupations. Leech does not have this information at this time, but estimates 20-30.

10. ENFORCEMENT

11. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

12. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned by Pollansky at 10:27 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Natalia Yeschick

Natalia Yeschick, Recording Secretary

PLEASE NOTE: These minutes are not official until approved by the Planning and Zoning Commission at the next Commission meeting. Please see the next Commission meeting minutes for approval or changes.