

**TOWN OF SOMERS
ZONING COMMISSION
P.O. BOX 308
SOMERS, CONNECTICUT 06071**

**ZONING MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
SEPTEMBER 22, 2008 - 7:00 p.m.
TOWN HALL**

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Rob Martin called the regular meeting of the Zoning Commission to order at 7:00 pm. Members Rob Martin, Jill Conklin, and Alternates Dan Fraro (seated for Blinkie Calder) and Paige Rasid (seated for Wes Smith) were present and constituted a quorum. Town Planner Patrice Carson was also present.

II. MINUTES APPROVAL: April 7, 2008 (regular meeting) & September 8, 2008

A motion was made by Dan Fraro; seconded by Jill Conklin and unanimously voted to approve the minutes of April 7, 2008 and September 8, 2008 as written.

III. OLD BUSINESS

a. DISCUSSION/POSSIBLE DECISION: SITE PLAN APPLICATION FOR TWO INDUSTRIAL BUILDINGS, 65 SUNSHINE FARMS DRIVE, BARNES

Steve and Debbie Barnes presented their application to the Commission.

The plans have been reviewed by the Planning Commission, and Town Engineer, Mervyn Strauss, is in the process of reviewing them. A motion had been made by the Planning Commission to recommend approval of the plan as presented, subject to the Town Engineer's review. Planning found that the plan fits within the Plan of Conservation and Development in that it uses vacant and industrially zoned land to expand the use. At this time Ms. Carson has not heard from the Town Engineer or the Fire Marshall regarding the Barnes application. She said that the Sanitarian and the Inland Wetlands and Erosion Control Officer have signed off on the application.

The Barnes' restated their intent to have no lights behind the new buildings and not to create a new driveway into the property unless required for fire lane access, etc. They presented their plan again to the Zoning Commission and explained how they will create a buffer on the Shooner property line.

The Commission agreed that they need to wait until hearing back from the Town Engineer and the Fire Marshall to decide on the application. The next Zoning meeting will be October 6, 2008.

b. OTHER – There was no other Old Business.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

a. MODIFICATION OF SPECIAL USE PERMIT APPLICATION FOR GOLF CENTER, 349 MAIN STREET, DRIVING RANGE 349 MAIN STREET, LLC

Tim Coon of J.R.Russo & Associates spoke on behalf of the applicant, and Gil Rivard, also a representative of the applicant, was in attendance. Mr. Coon presented the applicant's plans for an 18-hole miniature golf

course with ADA access on the 18.7-acre property. The golf course will be built alongside the existing driving range on the property.

Mr. Coon showed the commission the plans of the proposed golf course. The property abuts the Scantic River on the North and Main Street to the South. The course will have three separate water features and will be well landscaped. The main water feature will consist of a 12-foot waterfall. The self-contained water features are designed to recycle the water after a one-time fill with occasional topping off.

The required parking was calculated with the assistance of Ms. Carson using prescribed standards. The parking plan of 82 spaces was designed to accommodate future needs when a food service establishment is created. At this time the applicant requests that construction of 30 parking spaces be deferred until the extra parking is required. The food service is not a part of this application. They plan to relocate the parking area so as to minimize disturbance to the intermittent stream that flows on the property. The applicant intends to install a drainage system in the parking area to collect and treat runoff prior to discharge.

The construction will take place in a 100-year flood zone. Because part of this flood zone will be filled in, they will excavate to offset the loss of flood storage capacity. The Town's Flood Manager, Steven Jacobs, has reviewed the plan and has provided a letter stating that the Town requirements are met. They have applied to FEMA for a Letter of Map Revision (LOMR) that is required for work in flood zone areas. It usually takes between 1-3 months to obtain this once applied for. Ms. Carson will clarify with Steve Jacobs whether the FEMA approval will be required before any permitting is allowed.

A netting barrier will separate the driving range from the golf course. The photometric plan prepared for the site indicates that there will be no spillover from the lighting. There will also be lighting around the perimeter of the golf course and the parking lot. After hours lighting consists of motion detector and solar powered lights. The area around the Porta-Potties and the building is lit all night.

At this time the proposed sign will meet Town requirements of 15 square feet. However, the applicant will be requesting a variance in the future for a larger sign.

Currently, toilet facilities consist of Porta-Potties. When the food service begins a septic system will be required. The current dumpster location on the east side of the lot will be moved and screened because it would obscure the view of the water feature from the road. After construction there will be no need for large truck deliveries at the site.

Ms. Carson explained to the Commission that this is a "fully loaded" plan with beautiful landscaping. She offered the Commission an opportunity to view the DVD provided by the applicant that shows similar projects.

The applicant is eager to begin construction before the frost sets in so that next spring the finishing work can begin as soon as possible. It will only take 6-8 weeks to install the golf course once the rough grading and site work are done.

A motion was made by Ms. Conklin; seconded by Mr. Fraro and unanimously voted to accept the application for Driving Range 349 Main Street LLC's modification of a Special Use Permit for a golf center at 349 Main Street, refer the application to the Planning Commission, and set a Public Hearing for the application on October 6, 2008 at 7:00 pm. in the Town Hall.

b. OTHER – There was no other New Business.

V. DISCUSSION: PLAN OF CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT

a. RIDGELINE REGULATIONS – REVIEW DRAFT & DISCUSS FORESTER JOE VOBORIL’S COMMENTS

The Commission had reviewed the draft regulation and Mr. Voboril’s comments in preparation for this meeting. At a previous meeting Ms. Carson had offered to bring the assessor’s map overlaid with a topographic map, however producing this map will not be easy. Bob Cafarelli, the Director of Public Works, has offered to assist in using CAD to create the map. It is hoped to be available in the future.

The Commission and Ms. Carson discussed their review comments on the draft item by item. Ms. Carson thoroughly noted the Commission’s suggestions, questions and concerns. She will research any unanswered questions and will create another draft regulation that incorporates the Commission’s ideas.

A draft regulation with changes has been forwarded to the Conservation Commission and will be reviewed by them at their next meeting.

A Public Discussion of the proposed regulation will tentatively be scheduled for the October 6, 2008 Zoning Commission meeting. A draft of this regulation will be posted on the Town website for public review. Ms. Carson will contact the Journal Inquirer to see if they would write an article on the proposed regulation to make the public aware.

VI. STAFF/COMMISSIONER REPORTS – There were none.

VII. CORRESPONDENCE AND BILLS

Zoning Enforcement Officer, Linda Kieft-Robitaille, has addressed all the current zoning enforcement issues. She has asked the Commission if there is a project or concerns that they feel could use her attention.

The following projects were suggested by the Commission:

1. To review the survey produced by the Economic Development Commission.
2. To drive through the Town proactively seeking zoning violations, as this has been an issue discussed by citizens.
3. When driving through the Town she can note ridgeline view areas to be considered by the Commission.

There were no bills.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Mr. Fraro; seconded by Ms. Rasid and unanimously voted to adjourn the September 22, 2008 meeting of the Zoning Commission at 8:34 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Wesley Smith, Secretary

Jeanne Reed, Recording Secretary

MINUTES ARE NOT OFFICIAL UNTIL APPROVAL AT A SUBSEQUENT MEETING.