

TOWN OF SOMERS - ZONING COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday, September 5, 2023, 6:30pm



CALL TO ORDER 6:30pm, members present: Karl Walton, Jim Formica, Chris Locatelli, Dan Fraro, Howie Coro and Shane Manning. Also present Jennifer Roy, ZEO, Staff Liaison and Carl Landolina, Town Attorney Absent: Doug Ferro

NEW BUSINESS:

Chris Locatelli made a motion to add agenda items:

1. Presentation for proposed solar array at 159 South Road, Somers
2. Watchaug Road airstrip and hanger, proposed variance request

Shane Manning seconded the motion, no discussion, all in favor, motion carried.

Tim Coon from J.R. Russo & Associates presented a proposed 3.85-megawatt solar array to be placed on 159 South Road, Somers. This project must go to the Connecticut Siting Council, the developer is seeking feedback from the Town of Somers Zoning Commission prior to filing an application with CT Siting Council. A presentation was given, and discussion held.

Karl Walton commented that he would prefer to see a public hearing held by the CT Siting Council, considering the location of the array and the visibility from the road. Attorney Landolina commented that once an application is filed, the Town is notified, and the Board of Selectmen can formally provide that concern to the CT Siting Council.

Jennifer Roy advised the commission that there is currently an appeal before the Zoning Board of Appeals for her denial of a building and zoning permit for a new hanger at 120 Watchaug Road. The property is now owned by the Jarmoc's, who own several parcels in town, and they are tobacco farmers. The Jarmoc's applied to construct a new hanger, approximately 8,000 square feet in size. The property has an existing variance from 1972 for an airstrip and hanger, which was approximately 3,500 square feet.

Ms. Roy advised the Jarmoc's that the proper steps to take would be to revise the original variance. In turn, the Jarmoc's counsel had provided a suggested variance request with conditions. Ms. Roy is asking the Zoning Commission for input on those conditions. Discussion was held.

The commission suggested that the ZBA consider the hours of operation, as well as lighting for the airstrip. Ms. Roy will pass the information along.

DISCUSSION/POSSIBLE DECISION:

1. Application #23-003: Mark and Karen Murdoch, 359 Mountain Road, Somers seeking a modification of the Special Use permit and Site Plan; for operation of farm winery, amending the conditions of approval:
 - #3 regarding parking, increasing the number of parking spaces 195,
 - #4 allow food trucks,
 - #5 outdoor amplified music and
 - #6 pop-up tents maximum size of 12' x 12'; andallow an 8' x 40' storage container at the rear of the Sugar House.

Attorney Carl Landolina started discussions with the commission regarding how to approach each request. Attorney Landolina states they should begin with looking at Section 7 of the Zoning regulations for site plan considerations. Discussions were held regarding each request, parking, food trucks, amplified music, canopies and the storage container.

Discussions on each item continued. Attorney Landolina suggested he work with Jennifer Roy to come up with some proposed motions, along with some additional conditions for each, for the commission and have this for the next meeting. The commission members agreed with Attorney Landolina.

Jim Formica made a motion to table the discussion/decision to the October 2, 2023 meeting. Chris Locatelli seconded, all in favor, motion carried.

MINUTES:

May, 1, 2023 – Jim Formica made a motion to approve the minutes, Chris Locatelli seconded, all in favor, motion carried.

July 5, 2023 – Jim Formica made a motion to approve the minutes, Chris Locatelli seconded, all in favor, motion carried.

July 19, 2023 – Jim Formica made a motion to approve the minutes, Chris Locatelli seconded, all in favor, motion carried.

August 21, 2023 – Jim Formica made a motion to approve the minutes, Chris Locatelli seconded, all in favor, motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT: Jim Formica made a motion to adjourn, Shane Manning seconded, all in favor, motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:30pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Jennifer Roy