

**SALEM PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION  
(PZC)  
REGULAR MEETING  
Salem School  
OCTOBER 22, 2013  
7:00**

Present: R. Amato, M. Darling, G. Walter, V. Smith, D. Bingham, R. Savalle, K. Buckley, G. Fogarty, Alt, R. Serra (SECCOG Planner)

Absent: H. Green Alt., Vacancy Alt

Guests See File Copy

**CALL TO ORDER:** R. Amato called the meeting to order at 7:06.

**PUBLIC HEARING:** **Town of Salem Planning & Zoning Commission.** The following zoning map and zoning regulation changes are proposed with possible action

1) Zoning map.

The zoning map change would create a “Village Center District” along Hartford Road in the vicinity of the Town Hall. Starting south of Music Vale Road it would extend north along Hartford Road to approximately Rattlesnake Ledge Road. On the west side of Hartford Road the District would be bordered by Witch Meadow Brook and on the east side of Hartford Road the District would be bordered by Harris Brook between Music Vale Road and Round Hill Road. Continuing north of Round Hill Road on the east side of Hartford Road the District follows property lines to Rattlesnake Ledge Road, beginning at 20 Round Hill Road and extending to 3 Rattlesnake Ledge Road.

2) Zoning regulation.

The zoning regulation would create a “Village Center District” regulation which would allow for residential and non-residential uses under certain conditions on a minimum of 40,000 square foot parcels. Additionally existing Section 10 “Parking” and 13 “Signs” of the regulations would reference the Village Center District.

D. Bingham read the legal notice into the record.

R. Amato gave the background on the proposed “Village District Zone” and how it has come to the point of a Public Hearing.

R. Serra explained what the area looks like now and what it would look like, and what would be allowed if the “Village District Zone” was adopted.

R. Amato invited the audience members to comment on the proposed regulations and map.

Jim Miller-Morgan Road

Stated he lives in historic district and never was notified that he lives in a historic district. He thought a lot of the proposed changes were arbitrary and he was concerned about the changing of the road. J. Miller wanted to know how he got in the historic district.

Betsy Butts-Hartford Road

What are restricted properties and who owns the vacant lot and were they notified R. Serra stated the vacant lot owners were notified. The restricted lots either had development restrictions or were owned by The Nature Conservancy and were therefore unavailable for development.

Robert Ross-48 Round Hill Road

The village district boundaries are very arbitrary. Some properties are in the zone but others right across street are excluded.

R. Serra stated that the properties that are included all touch Route 85.

It was pointed out that there were some properties that do not touch Route 85.

Wayne Dorsey-(address not stated)

Stated the permitted uses are vague. He is concerned about a restaurant or bar opening and serving alcohol right down the street from the school. He worries how it will affect the school children.

Barbara Jewett-1 Morgan Road

Stated she does not want her property in the zone.

Dale Scovell-222 Hartford Road

Has had a problem with the town zoning. Whenever he wants to fix his house up he gets a cease and desist order from the town. He has tried to get historical grants to fix up his house. What will the new regulations mean? He stated there are empty store spaces at the four corners.

Andy Frausini-225 Hartford Road

Stated he likes some of the new improvements to the area, such as the trail, sidewalk and improved track at the school. He wanted to know if it will increase his property value and what would be the tax liability if property value goes up? He wanted to know if it was possible to either be included in the zone or not included in the zone.

Jim Miller-Morgan Road

Stated his property does not border Hartford Road.

Kelly Sanders-1 Morgan Road

Concerned about the regulations including the landscaping rules. She stated rules need to be cleaner.

Jim Fogarty-New London Road

Stated he does not live in the proposed zone but thought there were still too many questions left unanswered. He stated that when he was on the Board of Selectman and they reviewed the previous draft of the Village Center Zone there was a focus on the Zemko property which was recently purchased by the town. He stated that the parcel was too small if the intent is economic development.

Sue Spang-129 Hartford Road

Stated she was there on behalf of the Salem Recreation Commission and also as an abutter to the proposed zone. She stated she thought the recreation complex should be excluded from the zone. She cannot see how lighting or a new structure could be made to look historic.

S. Spang stated that as an abutter she could not imagine living next to a movie theatre or restaurant. Most people bought their houses in this zone because it is residential.

Joe Duncan-320 Hartford Road

He asked the Commission if they have thought of what the zone would look like if it was built out as the new regulations would allow. He asked if the Commission wanted to encourage people to subdivide. He wondered what the Commission had in mind when they drafted the regulations. Duncan informed the members of the amount of traffic his business gets which is in the zone and to imagine that happening to all the properties that would be allowed in the proposed zone if developed into mixed use.

Susan Nikirk-30 Morgan Road

Stated change has to happen but it is not easy. Need to look ahead and make it plain. We should right the vision and make it plain.

Brendan Gigliotti.-343 Hartford Road

Why does the proposed district go all the way down to Rattlesnake Ledge Road? If the property does not meet the 40,000 square feet and does not meet the setbacks does it get grandfathered? He wondered why vertical siding was not allowed in the proposed district, many barns have vertical siding.

Steve Buck-167 Norwich Road

Representing the Board of Education stated they would prefer not to be included in the zone. He stated that the state regulations should trump town regulations when the school is considering a renovation. He stated the new regulations should not cause the tax payers more money.

Josh Chopp-243 Hartford Road

Asked how many houses do you want in this zone.

Betsy Butts-376 Hartford Road

Opposed to project if economic development is the objective. She does not want her property to be included in the zone.

John Gilbert-Pratt Road

Asked the Commission, where are we going with this in 25 years? Is Route 11 going to be finished by then? Stated there were a lot of empty buildings at the four corners.

Ed Chmielewski-Beckwith Hill Road

Thanked the Commission for all their hard work. Heard many concerns and questions. Did the Commission ask for all the resident's comments and concerns? Were other boards and commissions consulted?

Josh Chopp-243 Hartford Road

Stated he wanted a straw vote of the people in the audience who did not want the proposed village district zone.

R. Amato stated that a straw vote was not appropriate

Ed Chmielewski-Beckwith Hill Road

Wanted to know why a vote could not be taken, asked that a straw poll be allowed.

Joe Duncan-320 Hartford Road

Stated that if the district was to be adopted then agriculture should be a permitted use. Does the town have a special events policy?

R. Serra responded that it did not.

He also suggested that the renovation and reconstruction portions of the proposed regs be omitted.

Jim Miller-Morgan Road

Wanted to know what the next steps for the Commission were.

R. Amato stated the Commission would take the input from the Public Hearing and discuss what direction to go in.

K. Lyden-Forest Drive

Thanked the Commission for the efforts and explained that the Public Hearing is part of a process the Commission has to go through.

Gail Frausini-225 Hartford Road

Wanted to know if there will be a discussion on the tax base.

D. Bingham stated there would only be changes to the tax base if the use changed.

D. Bingham discussed the advantages of having mixed use in the proposed zone.

Dale Scovell-Hartford Road

Wanted to know how much of the property in the zone is wetlands.

Wayne Dorsey (no address given)

Stated the proposed regulations needed to be explained better. He cited a neighborhood in East Hampton where neighbors were upset because of loud music in a restaurant going late into the night.

The members discussed the options of closing the public hearing or continuing the hearing.

D. Bingham asked if the town had a plan for the Zemko property which was just purchased. He also asked if a museum would be permitted in the house next to the school as the zone stands now.

K. Lyden stated there are no plans for the front two buildings but that the property is being used by many town organizations.

R. Serra stated that a museum may be allowed in the existing zone depending on who was operating it.

**M/S/C (Buckley/Bingham) move to close the public hearing.**

Some members did not think there would be any new concerns if they continued the public hearing. It was noted that if they change the proposed regulations then a public hearing would be needed at that time.

**Vote: Approved Unanimously The hearing was closed at 9:22**

The Commission took a ten minute break..

**PETITIONERS: None**

**PUBLIC COMMENT-None**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING(S): None**

**OLD BUSINESS**

**1. Village Center District**

The members discussed the hearing and the comments they received from the public. They discussed whether to rework the proposal or to not proceed any further with the Village Center concept. Some members thought the Commission's vision for the proposed district was not presented.

R. Serra reminded the members that UCONN will be doing a study of the zone for possible improvements.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**None**

**ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS REPORT/INLAND WETLANDS AND CONSERVATION COMMISSION REPORT:**

- 1. Town Planner Report**-no report

**PLUS/DELTAS:** The Commission discussed the positive and negative aspects of the meeting.

**CORRESPONDENCE:**

**ADJOURNMENT:**

**M/S/C (Walter/Bingham) to adjourn at 10:00 PM. Vote: Approved Unanimously.**

**Respectfully Submitted,**

**Sue Spang**

**Recording Secretary**