

MEETING MINUTES OF PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
FEBRUARY 11, 2020

The West Haven Planning & Zoning Commission held a Regular Meeting on Tuesday, February 11, 2020, in the Harriet North Room, 2nd Floor, City Hall, 355 Main Street, West Haven, CT at 7:00 P.M.

PRESENT: Commissioners Hendricks, Biancur, Sullivan, Suggs, Mullins, Vecellio, ZEO Conniff, Assistant City Planner Killeen, Corporation Counsel Tiernan, Councilperson Quagliani. Absent were Alternate Commissioners Johnson and Milano.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Commissioner Biancur made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of January 28, 2020 Regular Hearing and Meeting, seconded by Commissioner Mullins and passed.

Organizational Meeting

Commissioner Mullins made a motion for Mr. Killeen to preside over the nominations, seconded by Commissioner Sullivan and passed.

Mr. Killeen opened up the floor for nominations for Chairman of the Planning and Zoning Commission.

Election of Officers:

Chairman – Commissioner Suggs made a motion to nominate Kathleen Hendricks as chairman, seconded by Commissioner Biancur. Mr. Biancur moved that nominations be closed, seconded by Mr. Suggs. Motion passed unanimously 5 – 0. The Commissioners then voted unanimously to elect Kathleen Hendricks as Chairman.

Chairman Hendricks then asked for Nominations for Vice-Chairman of the Planning and Zoning Commission.

Vice-Chairman – Commissioner Sullivan made a motion to nominate Commissioner John Biancur as Vice Chairman, seconded by Commissioner Suggs. Commissioner Sullivan made a motion to close nominations, seconded by Commissioner Suggs. Motion passed unanimously 5 – 0. The Commissioners then voted unanimously to elect John Biancur as Chairman.

Chairman Hendricks then asked for Nominations for Secretary of the Planning and Zoning Commission.

Secretary – Commissioner Biancur made a motion to nominate Commissioner Christopher Suggs as secretary, seconded by Commissioner Mullins. Commissioner Mullins made a motion to close the nomination, seconded by Commissioner Sullivan. Motion passed unanimously 5 – 0. The Commissioners then voted unanimously to elect Christopher Suggs as Chairman.

Regular Meeting

1. Discussion of Building Permit Issued for 248 Brown Street in the Village District

Greg Milano sent a summary to the commissioners of his thoughts on the above building permit, which was granted and located in the Village District.

Chairman Hendricks asked for staff's process on transmittal of information to other commissions/departments when amendments or changes are made to the regulations. ZEO Conniff stated a list was given to the building official since this subject has come up. Staff has also been diligent in mapping the Village District. Mr. Killeen stated it is the responsibility of the Planning and Zoning office to determine whether the Village District regulations apply to a specific Building Permit.

After adoption of amendments to the Zoning Regulations, staff is required to prepare and publish a legal notice of decision in a local newspaper with broad circulation (New Haven Register is the newspaper used for West Haven). Staff provided a history of Building Permit approvals for the subject property. In this case, those permits dated back to April and June. In September, the Building Department issued a permit for columns and railings before the effective date of the regulation which was October 7th. Another permit was issued on January 23 because the Building Department informed the property owner that the porch was in disrepair, which was after the effective date and is considered a separate permit and not part of the first one. Attorney Tiernan stated public safety is the priority. Ms. Hendricks stated it was unknown to the Commission that this process had started back in April. Commissioners discussed that there is still no architect on board for the Historic District to provide guidelines. Mr. Killeen stated he has spoken to three architects in the past and they still seem to be interested. A Village District project is expected to come before the Commission during April, and Mr. Killeen would like to advertise for an architect to serve in the review capacity under the regulation and to write a report for this project.

Attorney Tiernan explained the ZEO has the authority over the Planning and Zoning commission when it comes to zoning enforcement. If a mistake was made in this case, it should be acknowledged on the record to reinforce the use of the regulation on other properties in the district. Chairman Hendricks stated maybe effective dates need to be pushed out farther in order for staff to be able to process the changes correctly. Attorney Tiernan suggested staff give a staff report on their activities at future Commission meetings. Chairman Hendricks stated she requested the meeting tonight to get the other commissioner's feedback on what, if anything, should be done regarding pulling this permit or not. The commissioners all agreed that this was a mistake, a learning experience, and there is no need to pull the permit. Chairman Hendricks also suggested ID cards for P & Z personnel when visiting properties. Chairman Hendricks apologized to staff and there was no ill intention toward staff.

2. Executive Session - none

3. Adjournment: 8:10 p.m.

Commissioner Sullivan made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Mullins and passed.