

MEETING MINUTES
Town of Granby
Planning & Zoning Commission
Tuesday, January 28, 2025, at 7:00 pm

Present: Eric Lukingbeal, Christine Chinni, Mark Lockwood, Eric Myers, Robert Lavitt, Steve Muller, Brennan Sheahan, and Paula Johnson (unseated)

Also Present: Director of Community Development Abigail Kenyon and Land Use Coordinator Renee Deltenre

1. Call to Order

Chair M. Lockwood called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Seating of Alternates, if applicable

4. Public session, items not on the agenda or subject to a public hearing

None

5. Action on the minutes of December 10, 2024

ON A MOTION by E. Lukingbeal seconded by S. Muller, the Commission voted (6-0-1) to approve the December 10, 2024, minutes as presented. M. Lockwood abstained.

6. Conservation Commission Presentation and Discussion, Proposed Invasive and Native Plant Regulations

Zachary Donais of the Conservation Commission was present via zoom to discuss possible changes to the zoning regulations regarding invasive and native plantings associated with future developments in Granby. This initiative arose several months ago when the Conservation Commission had the opportunity to review and comment on plans for the Cider Mill Heights development, in which invasive plants were included on the proposed landscaping plan. The proposed regulations are meant to encourage native plantings and prohibit invasive species, as they tend to be detrimental to native species and reduce biodiversity.

The Conservation Commission is proposing the addition of a new subsection to the end of Section 4 (Site Plans) of the zoning regulations that includes three requirements: (1) Site plans including invasive plants as identified by the Connecticut Invasive Plants Council shall not be permitted (CIPWG is hosted on the UConn website); (2) Site plans are encouraged to contain Connecticut native species as found in the Vascular Plants of Connecticut checklist (The Vascular Plants checklist is hosted by Conn College); and (3) Cleared areas not being mowed regularly should be seeded with a mix of native grasses and pollinator friendly species whenever possible. The Commission discussed the proposed regulations at length and concluded that the criteria outlined should be used for guidance purposes only and directed staff to revise the proposed regulation.

7. Agricultural Commission Presentation and Discussion, Proposed Right to Farm Ordinance, referral from Board of Selectmen

Agricultural Commission Chair Heather Lombardo was present to discuss the proposed Right to Farm Ordinance, which was referred to the Commission by the Board of Selectmen on December 2, 2024. The intent of the ordinance is to reaffirm the Town of Granby's commitment to farming and agriculture in the community and is heavily based on state statute. H. Lombardo indicated that the ordinance would provide guidance for municipal staff on handling nuisance complaints associated with farming, protect agricultural practices, and educate new residents. The Commission discussed the proposed ordinance at length and questioned the need to replicate state statute in a local ordinance. P. Johnson recommended that the Agricultural Commission consider becoming involved with the update to the Plan of Conservation and Development, which will begin in the next few months. There was a consensus among the Commission to suggest the Board of Selectmen consider a resolution or policy statement that encourages and reinforces the state statute for farming instead of adopting an ordinance.

8. Commission Discussion: proposed revisions and corrections to the Zoning Regulations

A. Kenyon provided an overview of additional revisions and corrections to the Zoning Regulations per discussion that occurred prior meetings. Proposed changes to the stormwater regulations have been removed from consideration at this time since staff is still working with the Town Engineer on said guidelines. Amendments include removing sections that are no longer applicable, correcting cross-references and formatting, updating utility uses, new language regarding simplified site plans, etc. In addition to the amendments discussed, staff received an inquiry regarding the use of Neighborhood Retirement Housing and how the use is defined. Since the use is not defined, nor are any conditions outlined within the zoning regulations, staff prepared a draft regulation for consideration. The Commission deliberated on the proposed regulation and questioned whether the use should simply be removed or if discussion should be tabled until the Granby Center Advisory Committee concludes their study. It was decided to revisit this particular use after the Commission considers other recommendations that may come out of the Granby Center study process.

9. Receive applications and schedule public hearings

- a. **Application seeking a Special Permit under Zoning Regulations Sections 8.6.13 and 8.6.14 for an illuminated freestanding sign and other signs for property located at 21 Hartford Avenue, COCE Zone.**

This agenda item was scheduled for a public hearing on February 11, 2025, at 7:00 p.m.

10. Staff Report and Correspondence

A. Kenyon provided an update on the recent joint meeting that occurred between the Board of Selectmen and Commission on Aging on January 13th regarding the proposals received in response to the Kearn's School RFP. She also noted that the CT Siting Council approved with conditions, the operation of a 4.99-megawatt AC battery energy storage facility located at 100 Salmon Brook Street on January 23, 2025.

11. Commissioner Reports and Correspondence

None

12. Adjourn

ON A MOTION by C. Chinni seconded by S. Muller, the Commission voted (7-0-0) to adjourn the meeting at 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Renee Deltenre
Land Use Coordinator