



TOWN OF LEDYARD

Land Use/Planning/Public Works Committee

Meeting Minutes

741 Colonel Ledyard Highway
Ledyard, Connecticut 06339

Chairman
Kevin J. Dombrowski

Regular Meeting

Monday, May 1, 2023

6:00 PM

Town Hall Annex - Hybrid Format

In -Person - Council Chambers - Town Hall Annex

Join Zoom Meeting from your Computer, Smart Phone or Tablet:

**[https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88272288587?
pwd=bERFcVdjRmszRFc1MHFrRy9WMXpYUT09](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88272288587?pwd=bERFcVdjRmszRFc1MHFrRy9WMXpYUT09)**

Or by Audio Only: Telephone: +1 646 558 8656; Meeting ID: 882 7228 8587; Passcode: 766319

I CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Councilor Paul at 6:05 p.m. at the Council Chambers, Town Hall Annex Building.

Councilor Paul welcomed all to the Hybrid Meeting. He stated for the Town Council Land Use/Planning/Public Works Committee and members of the Public who were participating via video conference that the remote meeting information was available on the Agenda that was posted on the Town's Website - Granicus-Legistar Meeting Portal.

II. ROLL CALL

Present: Gary Paul
S. Naomi Rodriguez
Absent: John Marshall

In addition, the following were present:

Juliet Hodge, Director of Land Use
Roxanne M. Maher, Administrative Assistant

III. RESIDENTS & PROPERTY OWNERS COMMENTS

None.

IV. PRESENTATIONS / INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

None

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION to approve the Land Use/Planning/Public Works Committee Regular Meeting Minutes of March 6, 2023.

Moved by Councilor Paul, seconded by Councilor Rodriguez

VOTE: 2 - 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: Gary Paul

SECONDER: S. Naomi Rodriguez

AYE: 2 Paul and Rodriguez

ABSENT: 1 Marshall

VI. OLD BUSINESS

1. Continued discussion and possible action to periodically review the list of town owned property; and update accordingly for the “Assignment of Administrative Control”.

The LUPPW Committee reviewed the oversight assignment changes they made at their March 6, 2023 and April 3, 2023 meetings. The Committee agreed that they did not have any additional changes at this time. They noted with this year’s update exercise that a number of properties were being assigned to the Conservation Commission. Therefore, they agreed before finalizing the List to forward to the Town Council for action, that they would like to obtain input from the Conservation Commission to make sure the additional assignments were in-keeping with their work.

Director of Land Use Juliet Hodge questioned what “*Administrative Control*” involved, noting that some properties were listed as “*Mayor to Sell*” stating that the Mayor could not just sell property, explaining that it may be part of a Conservation or Open Space Subdivision. She also stated that other parcels may be required as be part of a “Subdivision” in which case those properties should be under the Administrative Control of the Planning & Zoning Commission. She went on to state that some properties could have a catch basin/drainage on it, and therefore, should be assigned to a Commission. She stated that she would review the GIS System to verify that the types of properties she mentioned were being assigned to the appropriate department/commission.

The LUPPW Committee explained that the note “*Mayor to Sell*” was only a note and not a change in the administrative assignment of the property. The suggestion/notes were pertaining to small slivers of land, which an adjacent property owner may be interested in buying, putting the property back on the tax rolls and removing it from the town’s responsibility. Councilor Paul stated that the List of Administrative Control could be updated anytime should something change.

Administrative Assistant Roxanne Maher explained the “*Assignment of Administrative Control of Town-Owned and Town-Leased Property*” was an Appendix to the

“Resolution Establishing Administrative Control of Town-Owned or Town-Leased Properties”. She noted that she would send the LUPPW Committee and Ms. Hodge the Resolution which defined "administrative control" as follows:

“Having the authority to grant permissions for temporary use of the property by groups or individuals; and having the authority to make minor improvements or enhancements to the property which will not change the overall character or use of the property; and having the responsibility to maintain the property in such a way that its present uses may be continued; and having the responsibility to protect the Town from civil or criminal liability in connection with the property”.

The Resolution also stated:

“....the Town Council or the Town Meeting retains the responsibility for deciding when any Town owned real property shall be permanently altered, capitally improved, used for totally different purposes, leased, or transferred; subject only to the stipulations and approvals which State or Federal laws may require”.

Councilor Paul stated that he would send a memo to Conservation Commission Chairman Michael Marelli to request their input regarding the updated oversight assignments pertaining to the Conservation Commission. He stated that the LUPPW Committee would defer action on the “Assignment of Administrative Control of Town-Owned and Town-Leased Property” to their June 6, 2023 meeting.

RESULT: CONTINUE

2. Continued discussion regarding the progress of enforcing regulations to address blight issues.

Director of Land Use Juliet Hodge provided a Blight Report which was distributed and attached to the Agenda on the meeting portal for tonight’s meeting. She stated the new Zoning Enforcement Officer Mr. Alex Samalot began today, noting that he was currently enrolled in the Connecticut Association of Zoning Enforcement (CAZEO) Certification Program. She stated because he was not already CAZEO Certified that there would be a significant amount of training involved. She stated that Mr. Samalot’s first assignments would be to take on the List of the Blighted Properties and Junk/Unregistered motor vehicle cases. She stated Ledyard had a lot of enforcement issues that needed to be addressed noting that the former Zoning Enforcement Officer John Herring retired in December, 2022 and the position has been vacant for a number of months.

Ms. Hodge continued by noting Ordinance #300-012 (rev. 1) “An Ordinance Concerning Blight and Public Nuisance for the Town of Ledyard”. She stated although the Ordinance was well written she had questions regarding the Blight Enforcement Officer and the Citation Hearing Committee. She suggested rather than have a Blight Ordinance that blight should be addressed in the Zoning Regulations, or the Ordinance should name the Zoning Enforcement Officer as the Blight Enforcement Officer. She stated in reviewing past Blight Issues that there were people she did not know that were serving as the Blight Enforcement Officer. She also questioned if the Zoning Enforcement Officer was issuing a Blight Letter

whether they would sign the letter as the Zoning Enforcement Officer or the Blight Enforcement Officer.

Administrative Assistant Roxanne Maher explained Ordinance #300-012 (rev. 1) “*An Ordinance Concerning Blight and Public Nuisance for the Town of Ledyard*” (revised updated in 2019) was nearly identical to the City of Groton’s Blight Ordinance, which has been tested and has stood up in court. She noted per the Ordinance the Blight Enforcement Officer does not have to be the Zoning Enforcement Officer, but that they could be Zoning Enforcement Officer, in which case the person would be wearing two hats and would sign blight letters as the Blight Enforcement Officer, noting that there were a number of employees who perform multiple roles in Ledyard. She also explained that the Citation Hearing Committee would be stood up when needed, similar to the Architectural Review Board. She stated Ordinance #300-012 (rev. 1) was written to provide flexibility in who could serve at the Blight Enforcement Officer; and so, that it would not be limited to the person having to be the Zoning Enforcement Official. She stated that this was purposely done for a variety of reasons. She stated per the Ordinance the Mayor would appoint the Blight Enforcement Officer, noting at one time it was Mayor Rodolico’s executive assistant Mark Bancroft and that there were others, who were not the Zoning Enforcement Officer, that has served in that role.

Ms. Juliet Hodge went on to explain if a property becomes uninhabitable and was condemned that under Connecticut’s **Uniform Relocation Assistance Act** (CGS § 8-266), individuals and businesses who were displaced from their place of residence as a result of the state or local government code enforcement activities that caused them to be displaced that the state or town was required to provide comparable living. She stated that the town currently did not have a budget for these types of expenses.

Councilor Paul questioned how long the town would have to provide/pay to relocate displaced individuals. Ms. Hodge stated although she has not read the entire **Relocation Assistance Act** (CGS § 8-266) that the town would have to pay for the relocation expenses until the property became habitual again. She noted as an example that if a home was condemned because the boiler was not working that once the boiler was repaired/replaced that the people would return to their home.

RESULT: CONTINUE

3. Status update regarding security and safety concerns regarding Park on East Drive

Councilor Paul stated although he did not have a Report regarding the Park on East Drive that the Community Relations Committee and the Parks and Recreation Commission were planning to meet with the area residents at the Park.

Councilor Paul went on to note that the Parks & Recreation Commission with the Community Relations Committee have also talked about touring/visiting the many recreational parks in town such as:

- Aljen Heights Park
- Erickson Park
- Highlands Lake
- Bush Pond - Lantern Hill Waterfront Park (Graham Property)

Councilor Paul stated with the warmer weather that they anticipated the activity at the Park on East Drive would increase. He stated work that was done to improve safety such as the lights, clearing the brush along the entrance, locking the gate, the wood chips around the playscapes and other work that was done looked great!

RESULT: CONTINUE

4. Any other Old Business proper to come before the Committee.

None.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

1. Any other New Business proper to come before the Committee.

None.

IV ADJOURNMENT

Councilor Paul moved the meeting be adjourned, seconded by Councilor Rodriguez.

VOTE: 2 - 0 Approved and so declared, the meeting was adjourned at 6:41p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Gary Paul
Committee Chairman
Land Use/Planning/Public Works Committee

DISCLAIMER: Although we try to be timely and accurate these are not official records of the Town.