

**Minutes  
Hartford Planning Commission  
Community Meeting  
Proposed Zoning Changes  
February 1, 2021**

**Attendance**

**Planning Commission Members:** Bruce Riddle, John Reid, Robin Adair Logan, Toby Dayman, Dave Sherman, Dillon Bianchi, and Dennis Brown

**Selectboard Liaisons:** Planning Commission Liaison Kim Souza

**Staff:** Planning and Development Director Lori Hirshfield, Zoning Administrator Jo-Ann Ells and Town Planner Matt Osborn

**Members of the Public:** Scott Milne, John Lippmann, Adrian Sass, Norman Watts, John and Ann Ohaus, Dave Izzo, Michael Reese, and Woody Rollins

Bruce Riddle called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. and read the Act 92 open meeting script.

**Discussion of Possible Zoning District Change Route 4, West Gilson Avenue and Cross Street in Quechee from Highway-Commercial (HC) to Quechee Commercial/ Residential (QCR)**

Matt Osborn shared a map of the current zoning district, explained what the map portrays and described the zoning district boundaries. He stated that the proposal includes changing the name of the zoning district to “Quechee Commercial/Residential (QCR),” and that as drafted the new uses (single-unit dwellings, two-unit dwellings, multi-unit dwellings and mixed-use) are proposed to be conditional uses. He reviewed other proposed changes that include changing some permitted uses to conditional uses or eliminating the use all together.

Jo-Ann Ells gave an overview of the permitting process for permitted and conditional uses. She explained that for uses listed in the **p**ermitted **U**se column, the Planning Commission must grant Site Development Plan Approval before a Zoning Permit may be issued. For uses listed in the **c**onditional **u**se column, the Planning Commission must grant Site Development Plan Approval and the Zoning Board of Adjustment must grant Conditional Use Approval before a Zoning Permit may be issued. She clarified that one-**unitfamily** and two-**unitfamily** dwellings are exempt from Site Development Plan Approval from the Planning Commission.

Lori Hirshfield noted that uses in the permitted use column are uses that generally could be placed on any lot in the zoning district, while uses in the conditional use column might not work in all locations.

Matt Osborn reminded the Commission that at the first community meeting on January 25, 2021, there was general support for residential and mixed uses being added to the zoning district. He noted that a member of the public expressed concern with the potential for commercial development on West Gilson Avenue, another member of the public expressed the desire that their entire parcel be in the zoning district and that the Commission was split on if single-**unitfamily** and two-**unit family dwellings** should be permitted or conditional uses.

Matt Osborn reviewed the conditional use criteria.

Matt Osborn noted that the discussion has been limited to changing uses and not changing the boundary of the zoning district. He stated that staff would need time to do additional research before supporting changes to the district boundary lines.

John Reid voiced support for single-unitfamily and two-unitfamily dwellings being permitted uses. Robin Adair Logan agreed.

Dave Sherman stated that he agreed with John Reid and added that he did not think changes to the district boundary should be discussed at this time.

Toby Dayman stated that the boundary lines should be discussed at some point, but not now. He noted that he was comfortable with single-unitfamily and two-unit family dwellings being permitted or conditional uses and that multi-family and mixed-use should be conditional uses.

Dillon Bianchi voiced support for single-unit family and two-unit dwellingsfamily being permitted uses.

Bruce Riddle asked for public comment.

Ann OHaus asked what the changes would mean for her family's lots on Woodstock Road and Izzo Place that are split by the zoning district. Jo-Ann Ells noted that the original house is currently a legal non-conforming use and since the change would allow residential uses it would be easier to redevelop the lot residentially. She added that it *might* be possible to subdivide and create a house lot on the corner of Woodstock Road and Izzo Place, but that she would need to do some research.

Attorney Michael Reese introduced himself and explained that he represents property owner Woody Rollins who owns property on West Gilson avenue. He stated that his client would like the zoning district boundary moved so that the structures on his property would be in the new zoning district. He stated that he felt this was the right time to discuss the change to the boundary, conditional uses would protect the neighbors, and that it would allow for the adaptive re-use of the historic structures.

Bruce Riddle explained that changes to district boundaries need to be done very carefully and this has not been reviewed. He noted-suggested that Woody Rollins ~~should~~ discuss his plans to redevelop the property with staff.

Woody Rollins expressed ~~frustration concern-~~ that revisions to the zoning district boundaries topic was is not being considered at this time. not being discussed.

Lori Hirshfield stated that ~~it takes time to consider~~ changes to district boundaries for his property as well as other properties that have been suggested need to be evaluated and include community discussions. She added that this would take time and delay action on the use changes now before the Planning Commission. -She recommended- that boundary changes be considered separately. and the topic should be discussed separately from the use changes.

Michael Reese voiced skepticism that the issue would have enough momentum to move forward separately given all the work that is required for changes to the Zoning Regulations.

Woody Rollins ~~argued-stated~~ that now is the time to review the proposal and slow down the amendment process to include the topic. He noted he did not understand the urgency to move forward quickly.

Adrienne Sass stated that she believed the north side of West Gilson Avenue- should be residential and not commercial which does not fit in with the neighborhood. She stated that she prefers that the new uses be conditional, but that she trusts the Planning Commission to make the choice.

Scott Milne asked if the changes affect the Quechee Interstate Interchange (QII) zoning district and if there are concerns from the Regional Planning Commission. Bruce Riddle stated that the QII zoning district is not included in the changes, and no concerns are anticipated from the Regional Planning Commission.

### **Review and Approve Planning Commission Report for the QCR Zoning Change**

Matt Osborn shared the draft report on the screen. He noted that this is the standard ~~required~~ report and it is required to move forward with a zoning bylaw amendment. He pointed out that the report would be changed to reflect that single-~~unitfamily~~ and two-~~unitfamily~~ dwellings would be designated as permitted uses. He gave an overview of the report.

Bruce Riddle added that the last sentence of the objective of the district “Development should fit in with the character of the site and the surrounding area with attention given to scale and massing” is very important.

There were no questions or comments.

John Reid moved to approve the report. Robin Adair Logan seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

### **Review and Approve Planning Commission Report for the Highway Commercial/Residential (HCR) Zoning Change**

Matt Osborn reviewed the report for the HCR zoning change as last discussed at a community meeting held on January 19, 2021.

There were no questions or comments.

Dennis Brown moved to approve the report. John Reid seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

### **Next Steps**

Matt Osborn explained that the next step would be to schedule a Planning Commission Public Hearing and that staff would get back to the Commission with some dates and to send notices to the Planning Commission chairs of adjoining municipalities, the Two Rivers-Ottawaquechee Regional Commission and the Department of Housing and Community Development.

**Adjournment:** At 6:36~~5~~ p.m., John Reid made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously.