

**TOWN OF COLUMBIA**  
**PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION**  
Adella G. Urban Administrative Offices Conference Room  
323 Route 87, Columbia, CT  
**Monday** April 25, 2022 7:00 pm  
**Regular Meeting on Zoom**  
**MINUTES**

**Members Present:** Chairman Rick Nassiff, Vice-Chair Vera Englert, Thomas Currier, Alex Bothell, Justin Riendeau, and Larry Preston (Alternate)

**Members Excused:** Robert Powell, Richard Napolitano, Ed Madrak (Alternate), and Walter Tabor (Alternate)

**Staff Present:** Town Planner Paula Stahl and Board Clerk Joshua Stern

**Others Present:** Ann Dunnack and 1 other

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** R. Nassiff called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM.
2. **ROLL CALL AND SEATING OF ALTERNATES:** L. Preston was seated for R. Powell.
3. **ADDITIONS/CHANGES TO AGENDA:** None
4. **APPROVAL OF PZC REGULAR MEETING MINUTES of April 11, 2022**  
R. Nassiff **MOVED** to **APPROVE** the Minutes of April 11, 2022. T. Currier **SECONDED. MOTION PASSED 6:0:0**

**5. AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS**

**OPEN PUBLIC HEARING**

**PZC 2122-05** Proposed Zoning Regulation Amendments to address changes by State Legislature

<b>Item 1. Multi-family housing</b>	<b>Item 3. Required revisions for Purpose</b>
<b>Item 2. Recreational Cannabis</b>	<b>Item 4. Language revision for "Character"</b>

R. Nassiff opened the public hearing at 7:05.

1) Multi-family housing: P. Stahl said State legislation was passed about a year ago requiring every town in Connecticut to allow multi-family dwellings. These developments will be permitted anywhere in a town unless it adopts regulations restricting them to certain areas. P. Stahl and R. Nassiff outlined the proposed regulations, which allow multi-family housing in the CM-1 and CM-2 zones by special permit. R. Nassiff said the Commission could refine the permitted location of multi-family housing in the future.

Ann Dunnack asked about the definition of affordable housing. She said she feels affordable housing should be sprinkled throughout the Town rather than concentrated in one place. R. Nassiff said the permitted location of multi-family housing could be expanded in the future. He and P. Stahl also clarified the difference between affordable housing and multi-family housing.

2) Recreational Cannabis: R. Nassiff outlined the proposed regulations. P. Stahl said the State legislation considers cannabis retailers, dispensaries, and hybrid retailers as retail businesses. The State statutes go into effect July 1, at which point cannabis retail and manufacturing will be allowed anywhere in a town unless it adopts regulations prohibiting or restricting this activity.

R. Nassiff noted that the proposed regulations allow cannabis retail but not growing or manufacturing. He said concern has been expressed about the impact of growing and manufacturing operations in the Town, and the door may be opened to those operations once the industry is more thoroughly understood. The number of cannabis retailers in Columbia is limited to one.

3) Required Revisions for Purpose: R. Nassiff and P. Stahl said the revisions to the Statutory Purpose section were made to comply with new State regulations.

4) Language Revisions for "Character": P. Stahl said the State recently passed legislation prohibiting towns from considering "character" in their decisions. Most of the proposed wordsmithing changes substitute the phrase "physical characteristics" or simply delete the word "character."

Under section 52.7.16, Commercial Horse Operations, J. Riendeau proposed to delete "and 3) not adversely affect the property values of neighboring properties." The Commission agreed.

At 7:44, R. Nassiff **MOVED** to close the public hearing on all four items. V. Englert **SECONDED**. **MOTION PASSED 6:0:0**

**6. NEW BUSINESS (Discussion/Possible Action)**

**6.1 PZC 2122-05** Proposed Zoning Regulation Amendments to address changes by State Legislature

<b>Item 1. Multi-family housing</b>	<b>Item 3. Required revisions for Purpose</b>
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R. Nassiff **MOVED** to adopt the multi-family housing regulations as presented, effective June 1, 2022. A. Bothell **SECONDED**. **MOTION PASSED 6:0:0**

R. Nassiff **MOVED** to adopt the recreational cannabis regulations as presented, effective June 1, 2022. A. Bothell **SECONDED**. **MOTION PASSED 5:1:0** with V. Englert opposed.

R. Nassiff **MOVED** to adopt the revisions for purpose as presented, effective June 1, 2022. V. Englert **SECONDED**. **MOTION PASSED 6:0:0**

R. Nassiff **MOVED** to adopt the language revisions for "character" with section 52.7.16 modified, effective June 1, 2022. L. Preston **SECONDED**. **MOTION PASSED 6:0:0**

**7. OLD BUSINESS: None**

**8. REGULATION REVISIONS (Discussion)**

**8.1. Discussion on Subdivision Regulation revisions**

There was no discussion of the subdivision regulation revisions. R. Nassiff and J. Riendeau will meet as a subcommittee with P. Stahl.

**9. COMMUNICATIONS AND REPORTS**

P. Stahl said the public hearing on May 9 will be in person as the State had not yet extended the authorization of remote meetings in time for the required public notifications.

**10. COMMISSION OPEN DISCUSSION: None**

**11. AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS: None**

**12. EXECUTIVE SESSION: Pending Legal Action per State Statutes Section 1-200(6)(B)**

The Commission did not go into executive session.

**13. ADJOURNMENT**

R. Nassiff **MOVED** to adjourn. V. Englert **SECONDED**. **MOTION PASSED 6:0:0**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:56 PM.