

TOWN OF COLUMBIA
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
Adella G. Urban Administrative Offices Conference Room
323 Route 87, Columbia, CT
Monday, February 25, 2019 7:00 pm
Regular Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Chairman Rick Nassiff, Vice Chair Vera Englert, Don Schofield, Walt Tabor (Alternate), Larry Preston (Alternate)

Members Excused: Robert Powell, E.J. Starkel, Richard Napolitano, Thomas Currier

Staff Present: Town Planner Paula Stahl, Board Clerk Terri Lasota

Others Present: None

1. CALL TO ORDER:

R. Nassiff called the meeting to order at 7:00pm

2. ROLL CALL AND SEATING OF ALTERNATES:

W. Tabor was **SEATED** for R. Powell; L. Preston was **SEATED** for EJ Starkel

3. ADDITIONS/CHANGES TO AGENDA: NONE

4. APPROVAL OF PZC REGULAR MEETING MINUTES of January 28, 2019:

R. Nassiff **MOVED** to **APPROVE** the meeting minutes of 01/28/2019; D. Schofield **SECONDED**;
MOTION CARRIED 5:0:0

5. AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS: NONE

6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS (Discussion/Possible Action): NONE

7. NEW BUSINESS: NONE

8. REGULATION REVISIONS

8.1. Draft of zoning revisions for commercial businesses

R. Nassiff said that he met with the Planner on the commercial regulation revisions and noted that there were a few points that he would like to focus on. His concern was that the proposed table of uses appeared to be complicated, and the goal is to make the regulations business friendly. From his experience, he felt it was easier to read a list of permitted uses for a zone versus a table. P. Stahl shared examples of how other towns list permitted uses. She said a list would be more flexible in listing similar uses, and to identify the type of approval needed under certain situations. For the next meeting she will provide an example of Columbia's uses in list format.

R. Nassiff asked members to define what type of application should be approved by the Zoning Agent instead of the Commission. Members indicated that a retail business going into a space last occupied by a retail business shouldn't need Commission approval. Members then discussed the situation of a professional office going into a previous retail space; consensus was that if there was no change to the façade, or site layout for parking, drive, or outdoor storage, it would be appropriate for the Zoning Agent to be able to approve. They felt many uses could be approved in the same manner. Members also felt that although a small change to the façade, or a small expansion could be considered appropriate for Zoning Agent approval, that is something that should be considered for a future revision.

P. Stahl observed that the members had concerns with outdoor storage in certain situations. She mentioned that Columbia only regulates outdoor storage containers, but that could be modified to include uncovered outdoor storage such as material supplies or outdoor merchandise displays. She also suggested, for simplicity, to renumber 52.7.4e Motor Vehicle Storage, to this section. R. Nassiff brought up a concern that the current regulation stipulates motor vehicles shall be located not less than twenty-five feet from the edge of any street pavement, and asked members if that was a reasonable distance. Members felt that 25' was not a reasonable distance and should be either reduced or changed to focus on safety and visibility.

R. Nassiff also mentioned that the section on Performance Standards, including noise, needed to be updated. P. Stahl said another section that the subcommittee worked on was on Home Occupations and felt that revision should be deferred to a later date.

P. Stahl said that at the last meeting W. Tabor asked about the 500' distance requirement for public hearing notification and noted that State Statutes give the town the ability to require notification of a public hearing. Towns can set their own definition of who should be notified, if a town opts to require notification, the Statutes set how the mailing should be handled. As an example of different distances, P. Stahl showed the Fairview Farms South subdivision properties that were notified within 500'. She also showed the properties at 100', 200', 300' and respective abutters. Members agreed that 200' would have provided notice to the properties affected.

R. Nassiff said that after adoption of the revised commercial regulations, the town should have a simple brochure of how to do business in Columbia. Members agreed.

9. COMMUNICATIONS AND REPORTS: NONE

10. COMMISSION OPEN DISCUSSION: NONE

11. AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS: NONE

12. EXECUTIVE SESSION: Pending Litigation per State Statutes Section 1-200(6)(B): NONE

13. ADJOURNMENT:

R. Nassiff **MOVED** to **ADJOURN**; W. Tabor **SECONDED**; **MOTION CARRIED 5:0:0**

The meeting was **ADJOURNED** at 8:39 pm

Respectfully submitted by Terri Lasota, Board Clerk

Please see the minutes of subsequent meetings for approval of these minutes and any corrections hereto.