

PLANNING & ZONING  
COMMISSION  
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TOWN HALL ANNEX  
238 Danbury Road  
Wilton, Connecticut 06897

**WILTON PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION MINUTES\***  
**MARCH 11, 2024 REGULAR MEETING**  
**(CONDUCTED ELECTRONICALLY VIA ZOOM)**

**PRESENT:** Chairman Rick Tomasetti, Vice-Chairperson Melissa-Jean Rotini, Secretary Eric Fanwick, Commissioners Jill Warren, Mark Ahasic, Anthony Cenatiempo, and Christopher Pagliaro; excused absences were Christopher Wilson and Kenneth Hoffman

Also present was Town Planner Michael Wrinn

**REGULAR MEETING**

- A. CALL TO ORDER at 7:00 PM** by Chairman Tomasetti
- B. SEATING OF MEMBERS** – Members present were seated by Chairman Tomasetti
- C. PUBLIC HEARINGS**
  - 1. SDP#9-23 – Lupinski**, for property located at 53 Sugar Loaf Drive, Assessor's Map#35, Lot #3; in R-2A Zoning District; consisting of 1.0+/- acres; owned by Robert Lupinski; construct/rebuild existing retaining wall and associated site grading.

Mr. Cenatiempo recused himself.

Attorney Murphy began by saying that there were major changes made to the plan and approach, and that Mr. Quinn had composed a letter detailing the changes that was forwarded to the neighbors. Mr. Murphy then began detailing the changes to The Commission. Mr. Tomasetti interjected, stating that this project would now be incorporating significant changes, and that The Commission would not be able to perform their due diligence without studying the actual, revised, plan.

A motion was then made to continue the hearing until the March 25<sup>th</sup> meeting. The motion was seconded, and passed unanimously.

2. **SP#515, 131 Danbury Wilton Dev AMS LLC (an affiliate of AMS Acquisitions, LLC), 131 Danbury Road**

CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARING TO MARCH 25, 2024 MEETING

3. **CHZ#24-406, 131 Danbury Wilton Dev AMS LLC (an affiliate of AMS Acquisitions, LLC), 131 Danbury Road**

CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARING TO MARCH 25, 2024 MEETING

#### **D. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON PUBLIC MEETING ITEMS**

1. **SDP#9-23 – Lupinski – 53 Sugar Loaf Drive**

The hearing will be continued at the March 25<sup>th</sup> meeting.

#### **E. COMMUNICATIONS**

1. **8-24 Referral – DPW**  
Seeley Road Bridge Easements

Mr. Frank Smeriglio, Director of DPW, detailed the referral. A grant was received to refurbish the Seeley Road bridge which would include new guiderails and asphalt over the bridge. To perform this work, there would need to be work done around the bridge, which would require obtaining grading easements and temporary easements to the three abutting properties. Mr. Steve Santacroce then presented the easement plan, detailing the impact of the easements upon the three abutting properties. The intent for this meeting was to receive a positive referral with the next being negotiations with the property owners.

A motion was made for a positive referral, which was seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

2. **8-24 Referral – DPW**  
Musket Ridge Road Easements

Mr. Smeriglio detailed the referral, which is a culvert replacement across Musket Ridge Road with four properties that are affected.

A motion was made for a positive referral, which was seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

### **3. Economic Development Commission**

#### Discussion of completed sign survey

Very difficult to read signage which impacts the ability to find businesses in town. The survey drew responses from 34 business surveys and 240 public surveys. The two main conclusions were: 1) signs make a difference; and 2) Wilton signs are not effective with regard to clarity and visibility, they do not effectively provide direction to the town center, and design is very inconsistent. Regulatory inflexibility also has an impact on temporary signage and supplemental signage for locations that are set back from the road, as do landlord restrictions.

In response to the question “what are some effective signs in Wilton?”, the number one response was that there are no effective signs in town (38%), followed by Wilton Hardware/Nova Café (12%) and Rise Donuts (5%).

Based on the finding, the EDC presented ten recommendations to the Board of Selectmen in the following categories: visibility/readability, process improvement, directional signs to amenities, and special considerations.

Commissioner comments/concerns:

1. Were respondents asked if they were aware of the alternative signage program. There appears to be a general unfamiliarity with the program which should be addressed. Mr. Avallone expressed the opinion that there could be supplementation to the alternative signage package that could take into account results from this survey and add more flexibility.
2. Inconsistent design of the signage, and how this could be reconciled with the ability for a business to advertise using their logos and colors. Joe stated that perhaps there could be general parameters in terms of visibility, readability, and clarity, taking into account the branding needs.
3. From all the responses it can be determined that work needs to be done on the sign regulations, including directional signage and how to obtain temporary signage. The PZC needs to create a set of standards and make changes to the design regulations, taking into account that Wilton Center and Danbury Road are quite different, street facing businesses have different needs than non-street facing businesses, and overall issues pertaining to temporary signs.
4. Limitations on state roads bases on state regulations.

### **4. Pre-Application – Toll Brothers, Inc. – 15 Old Danbury Road**

#### 204-Unit, Multi-family Development

Ms. Lisa Feinberg began by saying that this presentation will detail a revised design based on feedback from the Commission during an earlier presentation in October, 2023.

Seelan Pather (Beinfeld Architecture) presented the overall plan, before and after slides, and some the PZC and ARB comments that were responded to.

1. Consider modifying the shape of the building to have more meaningful openness, and reduce the perceived scale. As a result, the plan created two structures, each five stories, linked by a 1.5 story structure in the middle, with the two structures creating an active courtyard between them. There would also be two other passive courtyards. The overall view would be perceived at three buildings separated by courtyards, lessening the visual density.

The 1.5 story structure (adjacent to train station) would act as the entryway and reception and would act as the building's branding, based on steel and glass train station facades.

2. Increase the number of below grade parking spaces and reduce surface parking. Parking was reduced or removed from the north and south areas. Approximately forty surface spaces were removed and moved to the below grade.
3. Enhance the connection between the redevelopment and the new pedestrian bridge. The sidewalk system became more prominent, wrapping around the entire development, with the central courtyard offering greater accessibility. Additionally, a paved node would be created at the drive aisle crosswalk to the train station.
4. Create a visual gateway to the town, giving special attention to the elevations that face the pedestrians, bridge, and Ridgefield Road. Three building facades that frame visual interest. Trees in the internal courtyard. Framing of entryway/reception structure. The three facades create a permeable visual.
5. Signage. A rendering was shown that illustrated a sign at the top of one of the buildings. The design of the signage would be a key consideration. Upper level decks were also added to give the appearance of greater activity and create visual interest.
6. Incorporate additional vertical interest. With the creation of two buildings versus just one, response to the natural topography would facilitate meeting zoning height requirements, and create interest as the site responds to the declining elevations.
7. Materials, landscaping, and sustainability concerns were addressed by Mr. Pather, including the retrofitting of the existing stormwater management system, infrastructure for solar panels, 2% of parking spaces having EV chargers,

Some Commissioner comments included:

1. Want to see views from other perspectives, including Danbury Road and coming out of Wilton Center;
2. Provide more information relating to sustainability and amenities;
3. Location of EV chargers;
4. Sign on the top of the building; opinions were split regarding placement and whether there should be a sign at all.

The next steps before an application is submitted to the ARB is to resolve the existing zoning questions, and meet with the Commission again to address their comments.

**5. Wilton 2019 POCD**

Discussion of status and implementation

Create a Plan Implementation Committee to determine the perspectives of other town departments, with a person from each department participating on the committee. That participant would be chosen by their specific department.

Mr. Wrinn will compose a letter indicating to the various departments that as part of POCD a committee is being formed and that a Zoom meeting will be scheduled. In preparation, please review the department's section of the matrix and provide a progress report as well as who from the department will participate on the committee.

**F. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – February 26, 2024 Regular Meeting**

The February 26, 2024 Meeting Minutes were amended to correct the spelling of Ms. Rotini's name at the bottom of page three. Minutes were approved unanimously as amended.

**G. ADJOURNMENT**

**UPCOMING MEETING**

March 25, 2024 – Planning & Zoning Commission Regular (Electronic) Meeting – 7:00 PM

**Respectfully submitted by Rich Callahan – Recording Secretary**

**\*MINUTES HAVE NOT BEEN REVIEWED BY THIS COMMISSION AND MAY BE SUBJECT TO REVISION IN FUTURE MINUTES. FULL AUDIO RECORDING OF MEETING IS AVAILABLE AT: <https://www.wiltonct.org/node/86/minutes-agenda>**