

PLANNING & ZONING
COMMISSION
Telephone (203) 563-0185
Fax (203) 563-0284



TOWN HALL ANNEX
238 Danbury Road
Wilton, Connecticut 06897

WILTON PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION MINUTES*
FEBRUARY 21, 2024 SPECIAL MEETING
(CONDUCTED ELECTRONICALLY VIA ZOOM)

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

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. WORK SESSION**

1. Discussion with ARB/VDDAC – Report and work product, expectations

Mr. Tomasetti commented that ARB/VDDAC member terms are two years, and, currently, all terms coincide with each other, and expired in October 2023. He asked how the terms can be staggered so as to not all member terms ending concurrently. Mr. Tomasetti allowed each ARB/VDDAC member up to five minutes to speak to the P&Z Commission.

Each candidate then detailed their professional experience and their work on Wilton town commission/boards/committees.

There was then a discussion of issues such as enhanced communications, ARB compliance with regulations, and roles and expectations of the ARB/VDDAC.

Verbiage from a candidate, stating that an application having been reviewed by the ARB was “approved” and that the process was complete despite the regulation stating that the ARB is advisory to the PZC, was questioned. Mr. Quinlan stated that they understand the goal of the

ARB, which is to prepare the application, visually, before it moves on to the PZC, and this should be made clear to the applicant.

Mr. Quinlan questioned the PZC's critiquing of the visuals after the ARB/VDDAC has worked with the applicant. Ms. Rotini then commented that the PZC, by state law, would address areas that are not within the purview of the ARB/VDDAC, such as planning and regulation changes. ARB responsibilities would be design related.

Mr. Gardner commented on that initially the ARB referred to a checklist. He also commented that if as ARB fulfills their responsibilities, they sometimes can stray into planning (i.e. setbacks, heights, density). He would like greater clarity with regard to what the ARB should be focused on to minimize these situations. Ms. Rotini stated that the ARB review criteria are in the P&Z regulations.

Mr. Sanders then discussed the creation of a complementary document/handbook which could provide applicants with greater insight into ARB review criteria, such as architectural items in context with Wilton's architectural tradition. Ms. Rotini stated that this would need to be an amendment to the regulation.

Mr. Sanders suggested that a member of the ARB/VDDAC to attend PZC Zoom meetings to possibly provide insight to the Commission on how decisions were arrived at by the ARB relating to the application in the hands of the PZC.

Mr. Tomasetti spoke to what he believed would address questions from the ARB relating to the beginning of the process; if regulatory issues existed, should applications be looked at first by the PZC, then passed back to ARB, then back to PZC. He stated that with the completion of the Master Plan, which covers most of Wilton's commercial zone, its explanation of how applicants could achieve regulatory compliance is in effect a vetting process. Applications would then be submitted ready to be evaluated by the ARB. Pre-applications can address the bulk/mass of the building and regulatory compliance, and ARB can address materiality.

A question was asked about the format of reports created by the ARB. Mr. Wrinn stated that there is a very specific checklist online that including lighting, signage, landscaping, materials, et al. A comment was made suggesting that a format could include commentary to enhance the report and give it context for the PZC.

Mr. Tomasetti wanted to discuss the lack of voluntarism relating to town commissions and boards, and if this could be/should be outsourced in the absence of volunteers, to which Mr. Sanders replied that while it is hopeful that Wilton can continue to attract potentials for fill board and commission positions, it will be necessary to look outside of Wilton. Mr. Tomasetti then asked about signage and at what level there needs to be involvement of the ARB and if there is too much time spent on minutiae. Mr. Gardner commented that while a goal is to minimize visual pollution, there needs to be some measure of uniformity.

All candidates assented to being discussed during the executive session during the upcoming P&Z regular meeting on February 26.

D. PLANNING & ZONING DISCUSSION/POSSIBLE ACTION

1. **Discussion** of possible appointments to the VDDAC and recommendations to the Board of Selectman for ARB

This will be taken up at the meeting on February 26.

E. ADJOURNMENT

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>**