

PLANNING AND ZONING DEPARTMENT
QUARTERLY REPORT: OCTOBER 1, 2010 – DECEMBER 31, 2010

The Planning and Zoning Commission met ten times this quarter--three times in October, five times in November, and twice in December. Extra meetings were scheduled in November and December to accommodate the two pending 8-30g affordable housing applications.

On October 5, the Commission adopted zoning map and regulation amendments for a new Noroton Heights Redevelopment Zone. Those took effect on October 24. On October 20th, the Commission issued two referral reports related to the 2 Renshaw Road and 35 Leroy Avenue. On October 26, the Commission approved a redevelopment of the Cookhouse restaurant into a new Mini of Fairfield car dealer. Demolition of the existing building is expected to occur in January or February. A change to subsection 586 of the Zoning Regulations regarding Inclusionary Zoning was passed by the Commission in November and took effect on November 28, 2010. At its December 15th meeting, the Commission approved a Special Permit for the Darien Arts Center, as well as a new yogurt shop in the former Flowers by Jun site at 1029 Boston Post Road, and a new restaurant for the first floor at 21 Tokeneke Road.

Actions by type this quarter:

- Site Plans/Business Site Plans: 2 approved; 1 amendment approved
 - Amendments to the Zoning Map: 1 granted
 - Amendments to the Zoning Regulations: 2 granted
 - Coastal Site Plan Review: 4 granted, 1 withdrawn, 1 amendment approved.
 - Flood Damage Prevention: 5 approved, 1 withdrawn, 1 amendment approved.
 - Land Filling/Excavation: 3 approved, 1 withdrawn
 - Special Permit: 2 granted
 - Mandatory Referral Reports issued: 2
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Total Number of Projects*: 16 applications, 1 amendment approved.

*Total number of projects does not equal number of actions, because some applications include multiple permits.

8-30g affordable housing applications.

A Public hearing was held on November 2 for the 57 Hoyt Street 8-30g affordable housing application, which was subsequently continued to November 23 and December 7. Thus far, six+ hours of public hearings have been held on that matter, and another public hearing is scheduled for January 18. A public hearing was held on November 9 on the Tokeneke Road/Pheasant Run application which was subsequently continued to November 30 and January 4. Thus far, 3+ hours of public hearings have been held. Over the next two quarters, the Commission expects to close the public hearings on these two applications, and make a decision within 65 days of the close of each of the hearings.

The P&Z Director met with representatives from the Department of Justice on Friday November 19, which included a tour of affordable housing within Darien. Also in November, Fred Conze was re-elected by the Commission to serve as Chair, with Joe Spain as Vice-Chair. John Marr was re-appointed by the Commission to serve as their SWRPA representative.

A certificate of affordable housing completion (the moratorium) took effect on November 2, 2010. It will remain in effect until November 2, 2014. That decision was re-affirmed in a December 10, 2010 letter from DECD.

Upcoming work includes review and action on applications for docks on Five Mile River Road, Long Neck Point Road and Delafield Island Road. At its January 11th meeting, the Commission will consider the request for a referral report under CGS 8-24 for an easement in front of 8 Midbrook Lane. In late January, filling and regrading applications will be heard for properties on Stephanie Lane, Fox Hill Lane, and Weeds Landing.

The Environmental Protection Commission (EPC) met once each month this quarter. Overall, seventeen permits were processed at those three meetings. In October, they approved eight applications and one amendment, and one application was withdrawn. In November, they approved three applications and one amendment. In December, they approved five applications. Overall, sixteen (16) applications were approved, two amendments were approved, and one application was withdrawn. The seventeen applications were the most acted upon in one quarter since mid-2008. At their January 5 meeting, the EPC will hold public hearings on two items—a proposed new driveway on Brookside Road for the Country Club of Darien, and a new house to be constructed on Woods End Road. A second January meeting will not be needed.

The Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) met once in October, once in November, and once in December. In October, four applications were processed—two were granted, and two were withdrawn. One application was processed in November, and it was denied. Two applications were processed in December—both were granted. Based upon the seven (7) applications acted upon, this has been the lightest quarter for the ZBA in over 15 years. Three applications will likely be processed at their January 19th meeting. In mid-November, ZBA alternate Anthony Simari resigned, and that vacancy still exists. Gary Greene was elected Chair, taking over for Vic Capellupo, who had served as ZBA Chair for many years. The Board of Selectmen did re-appoint Vic Capellupo to the ZBA at their December 13th meeting.

The Architectural Review Board (ARB) met once each month this period. At those meetings, they approved ten applications for signage, awnings, and façade changes. In October, they approved three applications. In November they approved five applications, and in December they approved two applications. Of significance are: revised architectural plans for the new YMCA addition; signage for the following new businesses: Swizzles (a new yogurt shop in the space formerly occupied by Flowers by Jun); Kennedy's All-American Barbershop (in the former Roundabout); Mini of Fairfield County (in the former Cookhouse); a new catering service on Tokeneke Road; and Juicewell, a new health-food restaurant at 21 Tokeneke Road. At their January meeting, they will be reviewing revised architectural plans for the pending Tokeneke Road/Pheasant Run 8-30g application.

This quarter, a total of 118 Zoning Permits were issued by the Zoning Officer. Of those, 54 were issued in October, 28 in November, and 36 in December. By type, five were for new houses, and five for signs, as shown on the chart on the next page. There were 20 permits for new houses (both on vacant lots and “teardowns”) issued in 2010—a decrease from 2009, when 23 were issued, and the year before when 32 were issued. This calendar year has seen a total of 489 permits issued, an increase of 103 over last year, but similar to the 484 issued in 2008.

On October 1, the Manager of Community Development Services resigned. Our intern Colleen Clark came back to the Department and worked for 55 hours from December 20-January 7. Her duties included typing, filing, and preparing returns of record for pending litigation matters. This allows the Department to get “caught up” on a variety of work items and projects.

**ZONING PERMIT ACTIVITY
THIS QUARTER**

		<u>OCT-10</u> <u>permits</u>	<u>Average</u> <u>Review</u> <u>Time</u>	<u>NOV-10</u> <u>permits</u>	<u>Average</u> <u>Review</u> <u>Time</u>	<u>DEC-10</u> <u>permits</u>	<u>Average</u> <u>Review</u> <u>Time</u>	<u>TOTAL</u> <u>permits</u>	<u>AVERAGE</u> <u>TIME</u>	<u>PROPOSED</u> <u>STANDARD</u> <u>AVERAGE</u> <u>TIME</u>
AS	Accessory Structure	4	3.0	1	2.0	3	3.66	8	3.1	8
BB	Business Building	0	N/A	0	N/A	0	N/A	0	N/A	N/A
CA	Commercial Tenant Fit-Up	3	15.0	1	4.0	3	3.0	7	8.7	10
DG	Access. Structure/Detached Garage	1	13.0	1	1.0	0	N/A	2	7.0	17
F	Foundation Only	1	17.0	1	5.0	2	14.0	4	12.5	N/A
FAB	Finish Attic/Basement	1	8.0	3	3.7	4	3.75	8	4.26	6
FR	Flood Repair	0	N/A	0	N/A	0	N/A	0	N/A	N/A
M	Miscellaneous	4	2.0	2	0.0	5	1.4	11	1.36	6
N/DW	New Residence or Comm. Bldg.	2	20.5	0	N/A	3	30.3	5	26.4	18
P	Pool and/or Spa	1	13.0	1	4.0	3	8.5	5	8.5	15
R	Remodel and/or Renovate	17	3.0	3	1.6	5	2.2	25	2.67	5
RA	Residential Alterations	17	9.52	15	10.7	6	6.6	38	9.52	11
RR	Re-Roof	0	N/A	0	N/A	0	N/A	0	N/A	9
S	Sign	3	5.0	0	N/A	2	3.5	5	4.4	9
TC	Tennis Court	0	N/A	0	N/A	0	N/A	0	N/A	N/A
TT	Temporary Tent	0	N/A	0	N/A	0	N/A	0	N/A	N/A
TOTAL:		54		28		36		118		

*Note: The average in the New Residence category may be affected by one or more applications that did not include the required stormwater Runoff management plan, and could not be approved until the engineered designed plan was submitted, reviewed, and approved.

Source: CityView

Quar42010.xls