

PLANNING AND ZONING DEPARTMENT
QUARTERLY REPORT: OCTOBER 1, 2008 – DECEMBER 31, 2008

The Planning and Zoning Commission met nine times this quarter—three times in October, four times in November, and twice in December. One of the November meetings and the two December meetings were needed to meet workload requirements. Most of the November 18th meeting was dedicated to a public hearing and deliberations on the proposal for portable temporary lights at the High School. The November 20th meeting was a morning meeting which lasted fifteen minutes to approve portable temporary lights at the High School and act upon two other matters. The lights at the high school were implemented, and the Commission expects to receive a report from the Board of Education regarding that project sometime in the next month or two.

Actions by type this quarter:

- Administrative Section 339: 1 granted
 - Site Plans: 4 approved; 1 denied
 - Coastal Site Plan Review: 2 granted; 1 withdrawn, 3 amendments approved
 - Amendments to the Zoning Regulations: 1 granted, 1 denied
 - Amendments to the Zoning Map: 1 denied
 - Flood Damage Prevention: 2 granted
 - Land Filling & Regrading: 6 approved, 1 denied, 1 withdrawn
 - Special Permit: 3 granted, 1 amendment approved
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Total Number of Projects*: 16 applications, 3 amendments.

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

The Commission met on November 6 regarding the Oak Crest application. This was the final night of three public hearing nights (hearings also held on September 9 and September 30) totaling about ten hours. Subsequent deliberations were held, and a decision is likely on January 6, 2009.

A public hearing was held on a proposal for Inclusionary Zoning put forth by the Commission. Deliberations and possible decision on that matter could occur in January.

Work in Upcoming Quarter:

At their January 6 meeting, the Commission expects to act upon most, if not all, of the pending applications. They will also be reviewing a request by the Youth Commission to continue holding summer camp at Town Hall, and reviewing and discussing a draft Design Guidelines document prepared by DRI. The January 13th public hearing will be a continuation of the public hearing on the Allen O'Neill redevelopment application held on November 25 and December 9.

The Planning and Zoning Commission has put forth amendments to both the Zoning Regulations and Subdivision Regulations from the Stormwater Management Report and Draft Regulations prepared by Tighe & Bond, October, 2008. A public hearing has been scheduled for January 27.

The Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) met three times this period—on October 15, November 12 and December 17th. They acted upon six applications in October, two in November, and six in December. Of those, ten were granted (or granted with stipulations), one was granted in part/denied in part, two were denied, and one was withdrawn. The fourteen applications processed this quarter

were the fewest of any quarter since the fourth quarter of 1996, when fourteen were acted upon. There are seven applications on the ZBA's January agenda.

The Environmental Protection Commission (EPC) met five times this quarter—twice each in October and November and once in December. At those six meetings, they acted upon eleven applications. Of those, eight were granted, two denied, and one withdrawn. In October six applications were acted upon; in November four; and in December two. At their upcoming January 7th meeting, they have three applications on the agenda, with one of those on for a public hearing (305-309 Middlesex Road). This quarter, EPC staff prepared a press release regarding flooding/leaves in wetlands. That was published in the two Darien newspapers in late October.

Also this period, one application was granted for an amendment to the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Map. In the next two quarters, staff will be working on the annual update of the Wetlands Map, and a public hearing will be scheduled and held.

The Architectural Review Board met three times this period—once each month—on October 21, November 18, and December 16. This quarter, the ARB reviewed applications for: signage for JP Morgan Chase Bank at 454 Boston Post Road; a new awning for 1063 Boston Post Road; a new veterinary office on Noroton Avenue; a sign for Merrill Lynch at 1020 Boston Post Road; and the redevelopment of the Allen O'Neill project.

A total of 78 Zoning Permits were acted upon this period. Of those, 34 were acted upon in October, 26 in November, and 18 in December. Zoning Permits issued this quarter include the foundation permit for the new Whole Foods Market, new staff housing for the Country Club of Darien, and a replacement building for the former IHOP property at 71 Boston Post Road. This is the fewest number of Zoning Permits received and acted upon in over ten years. Three permits were issued for new replacement residences (“teardowns” at 19 Renshaw Road, 14 Crane Road, and 330 Hollow Tree Ridge Road aka 3 Nutmeg Lane), three new signs, and five permits for new pools/hot tubs. The three new house permits issued this quarter were the fewest since 2002.

Overall in 2008, 32 Zoning Permits were issued for new residences. This is slightly more than ½ of the 58 permits issued for new residences in 2007 (there was a decline of a little less than 50%). Similarly, the number of new pool/spa permits declined by 33% (from 31 to 21).

Also this quarter, Department staff spent time on one return of record to court due on January 9, and worked on the Town Affordable Housing Plan. Staff continues to work with the State on applicable FEMA grants for three properties—two on Cherry Street and one on Crimmins Road. We expect to get final, official word on those grants sometime in January 2009.

**ZONING PERMIT ACTIVITY
 THIS QUARTER**

	<u>OCT-08</u>	<u>Average</u>	<u>NOV-08</u>	<u>Average</u>	<u>DEC-08</u>	<u>Average</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>AVERAGE</u>	<u>PROPOSED</u>
	<u>permits</u>	<u>Review</u>	<u>permits</u>	<u>Review</u>	<u>permits</u>	<u>Review</u>	<u>permits</u>	<u>TIME</u>	<u>STANDARD</u>
		<u>Time</u>		<u>Time</u>		<u>Time</u>		<u>TIME</u>	<u>AVERAGE</u>
AA Additions/Alterations—Residential	0	N/A	0	N/A	0	N/A	0	N/A	10
AA Additions/Alterations—Commercial	0	N/A	0	N/A	0	N/A	0	N/A	16
AS Accessory Structure	3	10	0	N/A	1	15	4	11.25	8
CA Commercial Tenant Fit-Up	1	6	1	3	0	N/A	2	N/A	10
DG Access. Structure/Detached Garage	0	N/A	1	0	0	N/A	1	N/A	17
F Foundation Only	0	N/A	2	55	3	20	5	34	N/A
FAB Finish Attic/Basement	2	6	1	6	0	N/A	3		6
FR Flood Repair	0	N/A	0		0	N/A	0	N/A	N/A
M Miscellaneous	4	9	3	2.66	1	0.5	8	5.5	6
N/DW New Residence or Commercial Bldg.	2	35.5	3	21.33	1	26	6	26.8	18
P Pool and/or Spa	1	19	2	42	2	3.5	5	22	15
R Remodel and/or Renovate	2	17.5	3	4	4	6.25	9	8	5
RA Residential Alterations	16	12.125	10	20.2	6	10.5	32	14.1	11
RR Re-Roof	0	N/A	0	N/A	0	N/A	0	N/A	9
S Sign	3	4.66	0	N/A	0	N/A	3	N/A	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:	34		26		18		78		

Source: CityView