

TOWN OF ESSEX
PLANNING COMMISSION
DRAFT MINUTES
JANUARY 13, 2022

Note: This meeting was in-person and virtual on Teams.

PLANNING COMMISSION (PC) PRESENT:

IN PERSON: Dustin Brusco; PC Chair; and Ned Daly.

VIRTUAL: Josh Knox, Vice-Chair; John Mangan, Clerk; David Raphael; Jonathan Schumacher; and Tom Furland.

OTHERS PRESENT:

IN PERSON: Owiso Makuku, Community Development Director; Sharon Kelley, Zoning Administrator; Darren Schibler, Planner; Jean O’Sullivan, Economic Development Coordinator; Jesse Caswell; Sally Fleury; John Doane; Bryan Currier; and Joe Flynn.

VIRTUAL: John Stuart; Dawn Fleury; Paula Duke; and Ken Pidgeon.

Chairman Brusco called the meeting to order at 6:34 p.m.; called out the Commissioners who were in attendance virtually and in person; noted the change to the Agenda; explained how to participate virtually; and provided the public oath.

AGENDA ITEM 1: PUBLIC COMMENTS: Sharon Kelley called out minor corrections to the 113 Brigham Hill Road draft approval letter. Darren Schibler called out minor additions to the 108 & 110 Center Road consent item. No one took issue with these changes.

AGENDA ITEM 2: CONSENT AGENDA:

- **SITE PLAN AMENDMENT: Pidgeon Brothers, d/b/a Rail Park, LLC:** Proposal to bring 287 River Road into compliance for the continued operation of a contractor’s yard located at 287 River Road in the Industrial (I1) Zone. Tax Map 4, Parcel 7.
- **BOUNDARY LINE ADJUSTMENT: Brad & Renee LaFountain:** Proposal to convey 2.94 acres to 109 Brigham Hill Road from 113 Brigham Hill Road located in Agricultural Residential District (AR). Tax Map 14, Parcels 15-602 & 18.
- **BOUNDARY LINE ADJUSTMENT: Towers Trust & John Doane d/b/a Essex Cubed Property, LLC:** Proposal to convey 0.12 acres from 108 Center Road to 110 Center Road located in the Center (CTR) & Business Design Control (B-DC) Overlay. Tax Map 58, Parcels 1 & 3.

AGENDA ITEM 3: PRELIMINARY/FINAL & BOUNDARY LINE ADJUSTMENT-

PUBLIC HEARING: Towers Trust & Sally Fleury A Revocable Living Trust: Proposal for a 6-lot subdivision located at 108 Center Road & 18 Towers Road in the Center (CTR) & Business Design Control (B-DC) Overlay. Tax Map 58, Parcels 1 & 1-3.

Darren Schibler, Planner, presented this application. He reported that the PC has seen this application twice already as the original sketch hearing was continued to a second meeting and ultimately was approved. He noted that changes were made to the water and sewer design which

50 resulted from Public Work’s suggestion. A condition to capture this change was incorporated
51 into the staff report. Schibler reported that this approval was strictly for the subdivision of lots
52 and that future development of lots 4 & 5 would require site plan review by the Planning
53 Commission. Schibler reported that the Selectboard formally approved the right-of-way, which
54 is subject to an appeal period.

55
56 Joe Flynn & Bryan Currier stated that they only represented Towers Trust and Sally Fleury with
57 this application. Currier stated that they read the staff notes and have nothing to address with the
58 report.

59
60 **Commissioner Daly MOVED and Commissioner Mangan SECONDED a MOTION to**
61 **Open the Public Hearing. The MOTION passed 5-0.**

62
63 There were no public comments.

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65 **Vice-Chair Knox MOVED and Commissioner Daly SECONDED a MOTION to Close the**
66 **Public Hearing. The MOTION passed 5-0.**

67
68 **Commissioner Schumacher MOVED and Commissioner Mangan SECONDED a**
69 **MOTION to approve the aforesaid application, subject to the Findings and Conditions of a**
70 **Staff Report dated January 13, 2022. The MOTION passed 5-0.**

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72 **AGENDA ITEM 4: MINUTES 12/9/2021:**

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74 **Commissioner Daly MOVED and Commissioner Schumacher SECONDED a MOTION to**
75 **approve the 12/9/2021 minutes as written. The MOTION passed 5-0.**

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77 **ITEM 5: OTHER BUSINESS:**

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79 Owiso Makuku introduced the new part-time Economic Development Coordinator, Jean
80 O’Sullivan. Jean stated that she looks forward to working with everyone and asked the PC
81 where they want to see growth and how they want to facilitate same. Commissioner Daly asked
82 how the role works with the Economic Development Commission (EDC). Owiso stated that
83 Jean will be staff for the EDC. Jean’s direction will come from the EDC, however she can also
84 bring her ideas to the EDC. Owiso noted that Jean will take over and compile the new database
85 list so that Essex is aware of who is in town and what needs businesses need. Jean stated that the
86 wants to talk to the PC to see what are the strengths and where to go from there.

87
88 Chairman Brusco reported that the Housing Commission Chair invited the PC to their meeting to
89 get synergy going. Brusco asked the PC if anybody would like to directly engage by attending a
90 Housing meeting (held from 3:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.); or would the PC like to invite the group to
91 its meeting. Brusco stated that this is a resource “we should look to leverage.”

92
93 Commissioner Daly stated that the “resource” works on both sides. Daly noted that he sat in on
94 an inclusionary zoning meeting and stated that “they have not been that affective.” He noted that
95 Mia gave the PC a good presentation at the last PC meeting.

96

97 O’Sullivan stated that the legislature has been trying to find a way to make affordable housing
98 work.

99

100 Commissioner Furland stated that he works and could not make a 3:00 p.m. meeting.

101

102 Commissioner Mangan stated that he would like to have the Housing Commission come to the
103 PC meeting.

104

105 Makuku noted that the Housing Commission invited the Selectboard and Trustees and, both the
106 town and village PC as they are looking for some cross dialog. Chairman Brusco suggested they
107 EDC needs to be “more gelled” and, it might help to have a better understanding of their
108 mission.

109

110 Chairman Brusco reported that he spoke with Makuku and they are looking at the January 27th PC
111 meeting for a high level planning function. Staff is trying to get a facilitator to layout highlights
112 for the year, noting that everyone will have a chance to put down their ideas. Chairman Brusco
113 suggested that it would be good if this could be done in person, however virtual will still be in
114 place.

115

116 Sharon Kelley suggested that it may be too confusing to invite the Housing Commission to the PC
117 meeting until the PC figures out its own direction for the year. Everyone agreed. Brusco stated
118 that he did not want to ignore the request of the Housing Commission. It was agreed to invite the
119 Housing Commission to a PC meeting. Commissioner Daly stated that they need to identify
120 “what” and then develop and set targets. The remaining Commissioners agreed, and to include
121 staff. Makuku confirmed that Regina Mahoney from CCRPC, will be at the next PC meeting.

122

123 Schibler reported that the next meeting will be held in person and virtually with ‘Zoom’.

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125 The meeting adjourned at 7:21 p.m.

126

PLANNING COMMISSION

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By: _____
Dustin R. Brusco, Chair

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