

The Public Hearing opened at 7:07 PM.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Doug Dubitsky (Chair), Ken Fortier (Vice-Chair), Randy Godaire, Dave Garceau, Eric Beer, Helen Weingart, Alternate Dan Pearce, Alternate Peter Haines.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Alternate Bill Ireland.

ALTERNATES SEATED: None

ALSO PRESENT: Zoning Enforcement Officer (ZEO) Jay Gigliotti, First Selectman Juan Roman, Selectman Joe Pinto and Recording Clerk Kathleen Scott.

CONTINUATION OF PUBLIC HEARING FOR:

SP22-163-64-66 Willimantic Road- Mehak Realty, LLC- Special Permit Application for Gasoline filling station and convenience store per section 5.3.B.m:

D. Dubitsky was not here for the initial Public Hearing but watched the video and reviewed the minutes and is confident to sit in on this hearing. A letter was received from Kahan, Kerensky & Capossela LLC (applicant's Attorney) asking to continue the Public Hearing and grant an extension to the deadline for closing the Public Hearing to review notes from the staff and Towne Engineering. The Commission will extend the Public Hearing until next month and move forward tonight with the Public Hearing to hear testimony from the public.

- ZEO J. Gigliotti reported that the extension will go to the April meeting with a total of 65 days allowed for extension time (leaves 30 days). Once the Public Hearing is closed, the Commission has 65 days to make a decision and it is important to state the reason for their decision for the record. Revised plans have been received since the last meeting (about 2 weeks ago) and are posted on the website.
- D. Dubitsky commended Vice-Chair K. Fortier for filling in as Chair at the last meeting.

The hearing was opened for public comment.

Public comments in favor of the proposed gas station in-person and online: None

Public comments opposed to the proposed gas station in-person:

- Shirley Fiasconaro of 68 and 46 Willimantic Rd lives right next door and expressed concerns with how a gas station will affect surrounding property values.
- Pete Fiasconaro of 68 and 46 Willimantic Rd expressed concerns with the new plans (RM1 and L1) – removal of a large 100+ year-old oak tree; extended fencing in the buffer that also has a sign, light post and leaching field (inappropriate use); curb cut that encroaches the buffer and decreases sight line making it dangerous pulling out of his driveway.

Public comments opposed to the proposed gas station on-line:

- Don Slowik of 108 Willimantic Rd asked if Windham Water Works has been notified, is this proposal compatible with Development Review Checklist as part of the Natchaug Healthy Watershed Protection Plan and if the Core of Engineers has been notified (fresh water wetlands is in their jurisdiction). He also expressed concerns with Inland Wetlands not seeing the need for a Public Hearing, air pollution from diesel truck fumes that is detrimental, and storm water culvert with wash of diesel fuel that empties directly into the pond about 100 ft. from the boundary line.
- Jennifer Sprague of 82 Miller Rd expressed concerns about the need for another gas station in that area with a dangerous curve.

Public comments opposed to the proposed gas station in-person:

- Jeff Woodward of 63 Willimantic Rd asked if there will be another chance for public comment (there will be an opportunity to speak next month with the applicant's representative here to respond to comments).
- Diana Alvarez of 36 Phoenixville Rd asked if the process will be prolonged with the applicant given time to listen to the recordings and fix items commented on tonight (there is a statutory time frame with limited number of extensions allowed).
- Shirley Fiasconaro referred to Section 5.2 Rural Agricultural Resident District pg. 14 regarding comment about proposed use affecting property values.
- Jeff Woodward asked who pays for monitoring the property with the significant amount of engineering involved (staff and outside engineers (if necessary) will review as built drawings for compliance with approval and various inspections will be done by the building inspector who is very thorough).

Public comments opposed to the proposed gas station online:

- Don Slowik asked if the inside of the building can be altered (would need revised special permit) and asked if an Independent Environmental Impact study was done with a site visit (Inland Wetlands approved the application that was necessary before coming to Zoning).

Motion to continue the Public Hearing (7:42 PM) until next month on April 14, 2022, by E. Beer, seconded by D. Garceau. All in favor, motion carried.

Respectfully submitted by,
Recording Clerk Kathleen Scott