

**DRAFT MINUTES**  
Town of Canton  
Canton Planning Commission  
Regular Meeting  
Monday, April 1, 2013, 7:30 p.m.  
Library Community Center, Room F  
40 Dyer Avenue, Canton, CT

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Call to order of the Meeting Agenda of April 1, 2013 at 7:34

**ROLL CALL:** Rosemary Aldridge, Bruce Mortimer, Michael DiPinto, David Evans and Andrew Magnan **Not Present:** Jonathan Thiesse, David Freeman **Also Present:** Neil Pade, Town Planner.

**REGULAR MEETING**

**NEW BUSINESS:**

1. Referral #375; 325 Commerce Drive; Assessor's Map 35; Parcel 3330325; Zone: Industrial Park District, and 50 Old River Road; Assessor's Map 34; Parcel 38; Zone SB. Connecticut General Statute Section 8-24 Review and Report for the acquisition of 325 Commerce Drive and development of a public works facility on that site, and the demolition of the existing public works facility located at 50 Old River Road. Town of Canton, applicant/owner.

The town is looking to acquire this land for the construction of an approximately twenty thousand square foot municipal highway garage. The existing garage is a four thousand square foot horse barn.

Mr. Pade went through the POCD which documents the use of the Canton Commerce Center to attract high-value office industrial development with the idea that it was to achieve attractive new construction in a campus-like setting. The industrial park has 90 of the town's limited amount of area acres to manage industrial activity. This area has good access to public water and sewer and is close in proximity to major transportation routes. This area was previously approved as an industrial park to accommodate up to 12 buildings in the range of 20 to 25 thousand square feet.

The acquisition of Commerce Drive consumes a piece of land intended for industrial development. The site will have more opportunity to minimize conflicts between incompatible land uses due to its location in the industrial park. The facility is located on a road that is intended to carry industrial traffic. Should the town or owners of adjacent property decide to build out the industrial park, the town would want to make sure that putting the garage on this site does not undermine future activities by being less attractive, not having appropriate landscaping, building facades, etc. The town has a responsibility to the tax payers not to build the most expensive building but must mitigate the responsibility with the future growth potential.

The public works garage cannot be a special exception use on its own in a residential district. As the garage is a fundamental need, the zoning commission wrote a regulation with specific standards to protect adjacent residential properties – setting noise standards, screening standards, set back and buffering standards, etc. These standards made it difficult to find a site that would fit the facility and adhere to the standards.

The 375 Commerce Drive lot may be an alternate site for the public works garage as it has the potential for expansion of not only the building but expansion of the land. There may be wetlands issues that would impede the ability to use all of the land. Additionally, bringing the garage closer to the existing residential neighborhood may cause concern from neighbors.

Concerns about how much the residents use Commerce Drive to access the trail and the concern about increasing truck traffic was addressed. Now that the trail is complete, sidewalks could be installed as each lot is built out. The two cul-de-sacs that do not connect directly to Griswold Farms have paper roads, the town could possibly pave two ten-foot wide paths along the paper roads to allow pedestrians and cyclists to connect thus having three options from leaving Griswold Farms to get to the trail.

**MOTION:** by Mr. DiPinto for Referral #375; 325 Commerce Drive; Assessor's Map 35; Parcel 3330325; Zone: Industrial Park District, and 50 Old River Road; Assessor's Map 34; Parcel 38; Zone SB. Connecticut General Statute Section 8-24 Review and Report for the acquisition of 325 Commerce Drive and development of a public works facility and related work, improvements and equipment on that site and the demolition of the existing public works facility located at 50 Old River Road. Town of Canton, applicant/owner to be consistent with the Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) provided that the development of this site be done with sensitivity to the anticipated future property values of the industrial park and with sensitivity to nearby residential areas. Seconded by Mr. Evans.

**ADDITIONAL MOTION:** by Mr. DiPinto that while the Planning Commission finds the site at 325 Commerce Drive to be generally consistent with the POCD, we recommend the Board of Selectmen consider the following alternatives in their final deliberations:

1. 375 Commerce Drive could be considered a better site because of the potential for future expansion;
2. Laying out a new parcel within the area of 425, 375 and 325 Commerce Drive potentially using a combination of acquisition, land swapping, and/or reclassification of open space to create a more optimal location. The objective in creating this site is to ensure a buffer between the commercial park and residential, move the site of the town garage to abut the proposed new southerly buffer to minimize the impact on the values of the remaining commercial lots. To create a buffer between the commercial development and residential properties that doesn't currently exist (as shown in Exhibit A). Second by Mr. Evans.

**VOTE:** Aldridge-yes; Mortimer-yes; Evans-yes; Magnan-yes; DiPinto-yes.

**OTHER BUSINESS:**

1. Approval of minutes of 2/4/13, as corrected; Approval of minutes of 12/3/12 as submitted.
2. Potential Zoning Regulation Amendments for review under CGS 8-3a(b)
  - a. Section 7.6, Protective Provisions Concerning Front Yard Compatibility
  - b. Section 62.10 Access Management

Mr. Pade spoke about developing a mechanism in which the town could respect the historic street lines in the Canton Green, Collinsville and Canton Center districts without zoning amendments and allowing owners interested in working on their property or adding new structures to the property the ability to do the work as allowed by right or with a special permit. Front setback requirements may be adjusted to include an average of existing property setbacks where the setbacks do not conform to current setback requirements. Mr. Pade will discuss this matter with Zoning and then bring it back to the Planning Commission when necessary

3. Draft Zoning Regulation Re-write meeting on Wednesday, April 3 will address business districts and use classification.
4. Discussion of Plan of Conservation and Development Update. Two meetings are scheduled on April 15 and 29, 2013.

**ADJOURNMENT: MOTION:** by Mr. Evans to adjourn at 9:45 pm. Second by Mr. DiPinto.

**VOTE:** Aldridge-yes; Mortimer-yes; Evans-yes; Magnan-yes; DiPinto-yes.