

TOWN OF THOMPSON
ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS
Tuesday, April 21, 2015
SPECIAL MEETING

MINUTES

PRESENT: D. Roy, Chairman
K. Beno, Vice-Chairman
A. David Babbitt
L. Lavallee, Alt.
R. Faucher, Sr., Alt.
K. Cunha, Alt.

ABSENT: John O'Connell
D. Kress

ALSO PRESENT: M. A. Chinatti, Recording Secretary
Members of the Public

1. Call to Order – Chairman Roy called the April 21, 2015 Special Meeting to order in Room 1, Thompson Public Library/Community Center, at 7:01PM.
2. Roll Call and Seating of Alternates – The roll was called; a quorum was present; L. Lavallee seated for J. O'Connell.
3. Public Hearings/Possible Action:

- a. **ZBA 15-02:** David Held, Provost & Rovero, Inc., applicant, TLC Group, LLC, owner, for property at 693 Riverside Dr. Request Determination that proposed driveway location (approx. 110' from property line) is less nonconforming than current driveway location (approx. 20' from property line).

David Held, Provost & Rovero, Inc. P.O. Box 191, Plainfield, CT, representing the applicant, presented the application. Using a site plan, he explained existing and proposed conditions for the subject property. He stated there is currently a package store, three (3) mobile homes and a concrete pad that previously had a mobile home on it which has since been demolished. He stated that proposed is construction of a Dunkin' Donuts, removal of the three (3) mobile homes and remodel of the existing package store, which would remain.

D. Held continued, stating that the Regulations require a minimum 150' separation distance from a street intersection for a driveway cut, and that

the site currently has a driveway cut immediately adjacent to Mason Terrace, at its intersection with Riverside Drive, serving the package store, and another on the north side of, and directly adjacent to, the package store. He stated the driveway cuts located on Mason Terrace at the easterly property boundary will be eliminated. He stated that both existing driveway cuts on Riverside Drive will be eliminated two (2) new driveway accesses will be provided, one a two-way (access/egress) drive, and the other a one-way drive (egress only).

He continued, stating the two-way drive will be approximately 140' from the intersection with Mason Terrace, which is 10' short of the 150' requirement, which is the reason the applicant is requesting a determination that the proposed 140' separation distance would be a less nonconforming condition than the existing condition. He stated that the Board's approval would reduce that nonconforming situation, the proposal meets all of CT DOT's site line requirements and a site line easement is currently in negotiation.

D. Held stated the applicant hopes to start construction this summer; however, that may be delayed to the fall due to permitting/timeframes.

R. Larkin, 686 Riverside Drive, stated he would love to see this happen because the neighborhood needs some work, and the package store could use some work. He stated the trailers need to go. He stated the location is a good spot for a Dunkin' Donuts and it would bring some jobs to town.

J. Duquette, 703 Riverside Dr., stated that the corner is very dangerous. She stated she hears what they want to do, and expressed concern that the lot isn't that big and it was put up as a trailer park. She continued, stating that there are numerous accidents on that corner and she understands a Dollar Tree or something will be going up on the other side of the street. She noted that the area is extremely congested around 2:30 in the afternoons with the school bus traffic. She reiterated that the corner is dangerous.

(M/S/C Beno/Babbitt) to close the public hearing. **Carried unanimously.**

(M/S/C Kirby/Babbitt) to approve the determination that the proposed driveway location, approx. 140' from the Mason Terrace/Riverside Dr. intersection, is less nonconforming than the current condition. D. Babbitt stated this will be a tremendous improvement to the community and it is badly needed. **Carried unanimously.**

- b. **ZBA 15-03:** Capital Development Partners LLC, applicant, Henry A. Deming Trust, owner, for property at 0 Riverside Dr., Assessor's Map

65/Block 94A/Lot 18. Variance requested from Article VI, Section 5 Off-Street Loading, to eliminate the required loading space.

Rod Szwelicki, VHB, 100 Great Meadow Rd., Wethersfield, CT presented the application. He stated that the request is for variance of Section 6, Article 5 of the Regulations, which requires a retail use to provide a 12' x 60' delivery loading space. He stated the hardship is the very challenging topography – a severe slope leading down to the French River, and the environmental constraints due to wetland areas on the site.

He stated a 2900 s.f. building is proposed, with 45 parking spaces and utilities. He stated the site has been laid out to minimize land disturbance and maintain green space. He stated the current design abuts the beginning of the very steep slope.

D. Babbitt asked if there isn't a loading area that can be used in that area, to which R. Szwelicki responded there is not a designated loading area. He stated trucks can easily move around within the site. He continued, stating a loading dock is shown on the plan, but it is not a 12' x 60', and to meet the 12' x 60' would create much more disturbance on the site and encroach on the wetlands, require construction of retaining walls, etc. He stated that the loading dock is on the west side of the building, and that the site is also designed to accommodate truck movement. He stated that 53' delivery trucks will deliver product on a weekly basis. He stated what is proposed is not a "dollar store" but a "general store".

K. Beno asked when construction would begin if the Board approved the variance, to which R. Szwelicki responded probably in the summer.

K. Cunha asked if a problem with DOT is anticipated, to which R. Szwelicki responded that is the reason for the driveway location as it is proposed, and if DOT requires a bigger site line that will be worked out with the abutting property owner to the north to obtain an easement.

R. Larkin, 686 Riverside Dr., stated that it sounds like they are trying to preserve as much of the wetlands as possible. He also stated that the town needs the jobs and tax base, and reiterated jobs are needed. He stated it would be nice to see someone doing something for the town.

(M/S/C Beno/Lavallee) to close the public hearing. **Carried unanimously.**

(M/S/C Babbitt/Lavallee) to approve the variance request. K. Cunha stated he does not see a problem with the request. D. Babbitt stated his experience with Dollar General has been fantastic, and that there are a number of residents in that area that have to walk to where they are going

and there is little opportunity to purchase things. He stated it would be positive for the town and positive for the village as well. He stated his thought that the proposal is a "win-win" situation for the community and supports it strongly. R. Faucher stated if it's okay with the State it's okay with him. D. Roy stated it is a plus for the town and the people in the town, and a very good move. **Carried unanimously.**

4. Adjournment

(M/S/C Babbitt/Beno) to adjourn at 7:26PM. **Carried unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted,
M.A. Chinatti, Recording Secretary