

ORANGE ZONING COMMISSION  
MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 16, 2021 MEETING

Unapproved Minutes

The Town Plan and Zoning Commission held a meeting on Tuesday, November 16, 2021, at 7:00 p.m., lower level, Orange Town Hall, 617 Orange Center Road, Orange, Connecticut.

Oscar Parente, Esq., Chairman  
Judy Smith, Vice-Chairman  
Paul Kaplan, Esq., Secretary  
Tom Torrenti, P.E.  
Kevin Cornell, Esq., P.E.

Jack Demirjian, Zoning Enforcement Officer  
Tamara Trantales, Administrative Assistant  
Robin Gengaro, Recording Secretary

Chairman Parente welcomed everyone to the meeting. He asked those seated at the table to introduce themselves for the record.

Review of the Minutes from the November 3, 2021 meeting.

A motion was made by Paul Kaplan and seconded by Judy Smith to accept and approve the Minutes from the November 3, 2021 meeting, as amended. The motion carried with the vote recorded as follows: Kaplan, aye; Smith, aye; Torrenti, aye; Cornell, aye; Parente, aye. The vote was recorded as 5-0 to accept and approve the motion.

There were no additional comments.

Old Business

None

New Business

None

Report of the Zoning Enforcement Officer

Zoning Enforcement Officer Jack Demirjian stated that copies of recent abatement orders have been sent to the commission members. ZEO Demirjian stated that he will prioritize pertinent issues for upcoming meetings. A few of the topics which will be discussed are cannabis and outdoor dining.

There were no additional comments.

PUBLIC HEARINGS: 7:00 p.m. – (2)

Chairman Kaplan read the legal notice into the record.

SPECIAL PERMIT APPLICATION- Submitted by Robert and Tracy Bocek. For property known as 658 Ridge Road. For the construction of a 70 x 90' indoor sporting facility for private use.

Attorney Kevin Curseaden, 3 Lafayette Street, Milford, stated that he is representing the Boceks. Attorney Curseaden displayed the proposed plan and an aerial view of the property.

ORANGE TOWN HALL  
TOWN PLANNING OFFICE  
617 ORANGE CENTER ROAD  
ORANGE, CT 06485  
2021 NOV 22 PM 3:48  
Michael A. Gengaro  
TOWN CLERK

He noted that the existing shed/garage would be removed if this proposal were to be approved.

Attorney Curseaden gave a brief history of the application process. Mr. Bocek was initially told he needed a variance from the Zoning Board of Appeals. After appearing at ZBA meetings, Town Attorney Vin Marino stated that a variance was not needed for this proposal. His reasoning is that the allowed coverage in 1987, when the subdivision was created, was 15%. Ground Coverage is currently 10%. Attorney Marino believes that the Boceks comply with the regulations which were in place when the subdivision was created. A lengthy discussion ensued.

Attorney Curseaden stated that this proposal is for an allowed accessory use. They needed to appear before the Commission because the height and size of the proposed structure exceeds what is allowed under the regulations. Attorney Curseaden noted that this building would replace the existing garage for storage. There would also be an exercise area, a basketball court and an area for gymnastics.

Mr. Bocek stated that his children are very active in sports. This facility would be for private use only. The building would have heat and electricity yet no plumbing. Discussion ensued. Mr. and Mrs. Bocek stated that the building would be 400 feet from the road. The only neighbor who is close to the Boceks is supportive of this proposal.

Chairman Parente asked for comments from the public. There were none.

A motion was made by Paul Kaplan and seconded by Judy Smith to close the public hearing. The motion carried with the vote recorded as follows: Kaplan, aye; Smith, aye; Torrenti, aye; Cornell, aye; Parente, aye. The vote was recorded as 5-0 to accept and approve the motion.

Commissioner Cornell stated that accessory structures coming before the commission for approval have increased in size over the years. Discussion ensued regarding possible size limits. Chairman Parente stated that the Commission reviews and considers each Special Permit application on its own merits.

Commissioner Cornell opined that the size of the proposed structure is much larger than he expected. He believes that the proposal is too intense. Discussion ensued. Chairman Parente noted that this proposal would not generate extra traffic. Extra buffering is not necessary in this case; it is a unique lot. He noted that the aerial view of the property was helpful. Chairman Parente stated that he does not see a problem with this application.

Chairman Parente stated that he is not focused on the size of the structure as much as the aesthetics and whether it affects the neighbors. He does not believe this structure would affect anyone. Chairman Parente added that the commission has discretion with Special Permit applications. All factors must be considered, not just size. A brief discussion ensued.

A motion was made by Tom Torrenti to accept and approve the Special Permit Application for 658 Ridge Road, to construct a 70 x 90' indoor sporting facility for private use. As nobody seconded the motion, the motion failed.

A motion was made by Paul Kaplan and seconded by Kevin Cornell to deny and reject the Special Permit Application for 658 Ridge Road, to construct a 70 x 90' indoor sporting facility for private use, citing that the structure is too intense for the size of the lot. The motion carried with the vote recorded as follows: Kaplan, aye; Cornell, aye; Smith, aye; Torrenti, nay; Parente, nay. The vote was recorded as 3-2 to accept and approve the motion.

There were no additional comments.

Chairman Kaplan read the legal notice into the record.

PETITION TO AMEND THE ORANGE ZONING REGULATIONS-Submitted upon the initiative of the Town of Orange Planning and Zoning Commission. To amend Article III Section 383-26 I 4(a) & Article XIX Sections 383-186 and 383-187: Off-street parking in the Residential District to include updated standards for commercial vehicles.

After a brief discussion, Commissioner Cornell stated that gross vehicle weight needs to be changed to curb weight in the regulations. The Commission concurred.

Zoning Enforcement Officer Jack Demirjian stated that a current issue is differentiating between commercial and combination plated vehicles. He explained the difference between them. He noted that combination plated vehicles, such as pickup trucks, are allowed to be parked at a resident's house. A brief discussion ensued. ZEO Demirjian stated that if this amendment is approved, one vehicle with advertising is allowed to be parked at a residence. Chairman Parente stated that the regulations do not permit commercial enterprise to operate in the residential zone. Discussion continued. Commissioner Cornell suggested that language regarding school buses should be added to the regulations.

Chairman Parente stated that the public hearing would remain open. The commission will continue discussion on this topic at a future zoning meeting.

Shelby Zold, 839 College Road, stated that she has a complaint regarding a landscaper in her neighborhood. She was urged to call the Zoning Department and to speak with ZEO Demirjian.

There were no additional comments.

A motion was made by Paul Kaplan and seconded by Tom Torrenti to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried with the vote recorded as follows: Kaplan, aye; Torrenti, aye; Smith, aye; Cornell, aye; Parente, aye. The vote was recorded as 5-0 to accept and approve the motion.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:23 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tamara Trantales,  
Administrative Assistant