

**ORANGE ZONING COMMISSION**  
**MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 24, 2022, SPECIAL MEETING**

*Approved Minutes*

The Town Plan and Zoning Commission held a Special Meeting on Thursday, February 24, 2022, at 6:00 p.m. It was an online remote meeting.

Oscar Parente, Esq., Chairman  
Paul Kaplan, Esq., Secretary  
Kevin Cornell, Esq., P.E.  
Tom Torrenti, P.E.

Jack Demirjian, Zoning Enforcement Officer  
Tamara Trantales, Administrative Assistant

Chairman Parente welcomed everyone to the Special Meeting of the Town Plan and Zoning Commission. He introduced the TPZC members and staff for the record. Chairman Parente noted that this meeting is being conducted over Zoom. He stated that Vice-Chairman Judy Smith was not able to attend this meeting.

Zoning Enforcement Officer Jack Demirjian introduced Erik Woyciesjes, RKG Associates, David Fink, Housing Consultant, and Andy Cirioli. Mr. Cirioli stated that he is standing in for Eugene Livshits, Planner at South Central Regional Council of Governments (SCRCOG). He presented a quick overview of what would be presented this evening. He stated that Orange would have a unique plan, created for Orange's needs. Mr. Cirioli noted that the goal is to be inclusive.

Mr. Woyciesjes displayed a graphic of Housing Goals from SCRCOG. He stated that the aging population is mostly living in owner occupied, single-family homes in Town. A brief discussion ensued regarding the pandemic, rising sale prices and high rents in Orange.

Mr. Fink noted that SCRCOG is not here to create a plan for Orange. It is up to Orange to decide what is best for the Town. A brief discussion ensued. Mr. Fink stated that they would take notes to guide us, yet the TPZC still has control.

It was noted that some towns in Connecticut are reassessing their industrial properties. They are considering adding overlays over residential/industrial zones, so they can be prepared if more residential or industrial uses come to town. Chairman Parente stated that the Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) distinguishes areas which are more suitable for future housing developments.

Commissioner Kaplan stated that this commission has approved projects for younger people who are unable to live in town because they cannot afford it. Zoning Enforcement Officer Jack Demirjian stated that the Smith Farm project has an affordable component to it. The Firelite project has mixed use with apartments. Commissioner Cornell stated that he would like to continue in that direction. Chairman Parente stated that the Firelite project is geared towards younger people who want to stay in town yet cannot afford to purchase a house at this time of their lives. Chairman Parente noted that the commission is not interested in multi-family apartment units in the residential zone. Mr. Fink agreed and noted that industrial properties are valuable to have as well. Discussion ensued.

Mr. Fink stated that other towns have found that if they approach owners of vacant stores, including those in strip malls, they may consider re-zoning to allow housing. Discussion ensued.

Commissioner Cornell suggested having an engineer review bordering towns to see if Orange could tie into their sewers. Discussion ensued. ZEO Demirjian stated that there are a few large parcels on Fernbrook and Willard roads, just off Rt.34. Discussion continued.

It was noted that Mr. Cirioli would send the commission goals in mid-March. In the future, there would be group meetings, paired with other towns. A draft plan will be sent to the commission by the first week of April, with the final plan submitted by June first. Orange will have opportunities to provide feedback. There would be generic strategies with contacts to help Orange reach its goal. A brief discussion ensued.

A motion was made by Paul Kaplan and seconded by Kevin Cornell to adjourn the special meeting. The motion carried with the vote recorded as follows: Kaplan, aye; Cornell, aye; Torrenti, aye; Smith, aye. The vote was recorded as 4-0 to accept and approve the motion.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Tamara Trantales,  
Administrative Assistant