

**ORANGE ZONING COMMISSION**  
**MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 16, 2022 MEETING**

*Approved Minutes*

The Town Plan and Zoning Commission held a meeting on Tuesday, August 16, 2022, 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 at 7:06 p.m. He asked those seated at the table to introduce themselves for the record.

Review of the Minutes from the August 2, 2022 meeting.

A motion was made by Judy Smith and seconded by Paul Kaplan to accept and approve the Minutes from the August 2, 2022 meeting, as written. The motion carried with the vote recorded as follows: Smith, aye; Kaplan, aye; Torrenti, aye; Cornell, abstain; Parente, aye. The vote was recorded as 4-0-1 to accept and approve the motion.

There were no additional comments.

Old Business

None

New Business

None

Report of the Zoning Enforcement Officer

ZEO Demirjian stated that he does not have much to report at this time. He noted that there will be a text amendment regarding the cannabis moratorium at the next meeting.

There were no additional comments.

PUBLIC HEARING 7:00 p.m. – (1)

Commissioner Kaplan read the legal notice into the record.

SITE PLAN APPLICATION - Submitted by Stellato Realty, LLC. For property known as 403 Derby Avenue. To add 31 additional parking spaces, assorted tables for outdoor seating, and widening the entrance lane for easier access to the property. A LIGHTING SUPPLEMENT has also been submitted in conjunction with this application.

Joe Porto, Esq., Parrett, Porto, Parese & Colwell, Hamden, CT is representing Stellato, LLC, Stappa Vineyard. Attorney Porto presented a brief background of the winery, located in a residential neighborhood.

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ORANGE ZONING COMMISSION  
RECORDING SECRETARY  
ROBIN GENGARO

Attorney Porto presented a Power Point presentation. He explained that they are proposing an improved driveway and improved access to Rte. 34, as well as other improvements. Attorney Porto stated that the applicant wants to construct a pergola where they can produce wine in inclement weather. He noted that it would be a work area and not open to the public.

Attorney Porto explained the proposed parking and lighting. He stated that there would be 21 outdoor tables. He discussed the proposed lighting and parking. He stated that parking would be organized by Stappa employees. Attorney Porto noted that they are providing more parking than is required. Discussion ensued.

Alan Shepard, P.E., NOK, 415 Howe Avenue, Shelton, CT, gave a brief background of the property. He stated that the vineyard is located on 10 acres of property. The entrance would be widened. Chairman Parente asked Mr. Shepard how the vineyard would be buffered from residents. Mr. Shepard stated that there is a buffer of trees along the property line and wooded area to the rear of the property. A brief discussion ensued. Mr. Shepard stated that the Fire Marshal instructed them to include a fire lane. Chairman Parente inquired if this is the sole ingress and egress to the property. Mr. Shepard replied affirmatively.

Commissioner Cornell asked about the drainage on the property. Mr. Shepard stated that a drainage system has not been proposed. Commissioner Cornell asked if the Town Engineer approved the plan without drainage. Mr. Shepard replied affirmatively. He added that the driveway and parking area would be comprised of gravel. Discussion ensued.

Commissioner Kaplan asked how many patrons would be permitted in the facility at one time. ZEO Demirjian stated that, minus office space, there is room for 100 patrons. Discussion ensued. It was noted that if all outdoor tables were occupied, there could be up to a total of 75 people seated outdoors. Commissioner Cornell stated that when this use was initially approved, it was presented as being a low intensity use. A lengthy discussion ensued.

Attorney Porto stated that this application complies with all regulations. Commissioner Cornell noted that the existing regulation states that events would be located entirely within the tasting room showroom. Discussion ensued. Alexa Charles, an owner, stated that all decorating and live music would be inside. Commissioner Smith asked for their definition of a special event. Ms. Charles explained that they may instruct classes. Commissioner Smith inquired if they would hold bridal showers and similar activities there. Ms. Charles stated that they would consider a bridal shower an event. A brief discussion ensued. Commissioner Kaplan asked if any events would be held outside. Ms. Charles stated that they would have "glammed up" picnics outside. Commissioner Cornell questioned if illumination would be on later than 8:30 p.m. Ms. Charles stated that the facility closes at 7:00 p.m. All lights would be turned out by 8:30 p.m., and the gates would be locked.

Chairman Parente asked ZEO Demirjian if all pertinent signoffs have been obtained. ZEO Demirjian replied affirmatively.

Attorney Porto stated that Stappa Vineyard is cognizant of being a good neighbor. He stated that there would not be any food or drink preparation outside. Music will not be played outside. The outdoor seating tables would be separated from the residential area.

Chairman Parente questioned if there would be any vehicular traffic near the 21 tables. Mr. Shepard stated that there would not be any vehicular traffic near the tables.

Chairman Parente noted that the zoning department has received 19 letters regarding this proposal. ZEO Demirjian noted that they were all in support. He read their names and addresses into the record. It was noted that one letter was from an adjacent property owner, who is also in support of this proposal.

Chairman Parente asked for questions or comments from the public in attendance. There were none.

Chairman Parente wants a notation on the map stating what the parking standard is. Discussion ensued regarding the square footage of the outdoor seating. Commissioner Cornell stated that the seating is randomly placed; it is not on a square patio. Therefore, it is difficult to calculate the square footage of the seating area. A lengthy discussion ensued.

Chairman Parente questioned how the commission would know there is enough parking since the parking requirement is not shown on the site plan. Mr. Shepard explained that wineries, like Christmas tree sales, have flexibility of the area. Commissioner Smith stated that the commission wants the square footage on the record. Chairman Parente concurred. He is trying to demonstrate that they comply with the parking regulations. Discussion ensued.

Chairman Parente stated that he would keep the public hearing open so that this problem could be resolved. Attorney Porto agreed. Discussion ensued. Commissioner Kaplan stated that the regulation is tied into occupancy. Discussion continued.

Attorney Porto stated that they are not aware of anyone in opposition to this project. He further stated that the occupancy regulation is problematic. After a brief discussion, Attorney Porto stated that they would return for the next meeting. ZEO Demirjian stated that he would research the as-of-right outdoor seating statute.

This public hearing will be continued at the next TPZC meeting on September 6, 2022. 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: Smith, aye; Kaplan, aye; Torrenti, aye; Cornell, aye; Parente, aye. The vote was recorded as 5-0 to accept and approve the motion.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:26 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tamara Trantales,  
Administrative Assistant