

ORANGE ZONING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 20, 2021 SPECIAL MEETING

Unapproved Minutes

The Town Plan and Zoning Commission held a Special Meeting on Wednesday, October 20, 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
Vincent Marino, Town Counsel

Chairman Parente welcomed everyone to the meeting. He introduced those at the table for the record.

Chairman Parente said that the State has recently enacted Statutes which affect zoning. Town Counsel Vin Marino is present to review and explain the new statutes to the Commission. Informational materials had been distributed to the Commission prior to this meeting. Attorney Marino noted that the purpose of this Special Meeting tonight is to become informed. It is not necessary to make any decisions now.

Attorney Marino stated that there is now a movement in Connecticut to change the way zoning is adopted. The purpose is to make zoning more uniform throughout the state. The belief is that every city and town should have their fair share of affordable housing. Discussion ensued. Attorney Marino stated that Orange must conform to the legislature as it is now law. He noted that there are opportunities for the town to “opt out” of certain changes. If the Commission “opts out” of a particular statute, they will be bound by the current local zoning regulations. Attorney Marino suggested that the Commission retain as much local control as possible.

Training courses will be required for Commissioners and the Zoning Enforcement Officer. ZEO’s must be certified, beginning in 2023. They must retain their certification. Attorney Marino stated that each member of the TPZC must complete at least four (4) hours of training per year. He noted that the Commissioners and the ZEO are obligated to understand the laws and to comply with them. Discussion ensued.

Attorney Marino discussed the changes which affect accessory apartments, fees, parking, approval expirations, and outdoor dining. A lengthy discussion ensued.

Attorney Marino explained the ability to “opt out” of certain new laws. To do so, the Commission must hold a public hearing. The Commission’s vote must be 2/3 or greater. The matter then proceeds to the Board of Selectmen for their vote, which must also be 2/3 or greater. It must then be published in a local newspaper.

Attorney Marino urged the Commission to re-examine the current regulations. He suggested the Commission engage a planning consultant. Discussion ensued. Attorney Marino stated

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Town Planning Office
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Mark J. Marino, Esq.
Town Counsel

that these laws also affect the Zoning Board of Appeals. Wetland permits run concurrently with zoning permits.

It was decided that the items the Commission wishes to “opt out” of would be placed on a future TPZC agenda.

There were no additional comments.

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

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tamara Trantales,
Administrative Assistant