

HAMPTON PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION
HAMPTON TOWN HALL, 164 ROUTE 97

REGULAR MEETING

Monday, April 15, 2024 7:00 PM
COMMUNITY MEETING ROOM
Hampton Town Hall
164 Main Street, Hampton CT

DRAFT MINUTES

1. Call to Order

Chairman Kevin Grindle called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

2. Roll Call/Seating of Alternate Members

In attendance for the meeting were Regular Members Gary DeCesare, Sue Hochstetter, and Stan Crawford. Seated for Member Ev Hyde was Alternate Peter Serafin. Also in attendance were Alternates Kathy Thompson and Town Planner John Guskowski.

3. Audience for Citizens: *Citizens may address the Commission on items not otherwise on the agenda*

David Paine of 217 North Bigelow Road in Hampton, addressed the Commission, stating that he had been making wine as a hobby for several years and is now interested in making wine commercially, between 300 and 500 cases annually. He indicated that in order to apply for a State & ATF permit, he first needs to get local Town approval. John Guskowski asked about the scale of operation and Mr. Paine stated that the operation would be run solely by himself and his immediate family. He would propose a small tasting room on-site, but the primary business would be with a small distributor.

Chairman Grindle discussed the Home Occupation tiers in Section 6.16 of the Hampton Zoning Regulations, and stated that this was most likely a Tier 1 or Tier 2, depending on the likely public interface in the tasting room, customer parking, etc. The difference would be in the intensity of the operation. He recommended conferring with ZEO Jay Gigliotti about the application processes and differences in engagement, and suggested returning with a Site Plan if that was the appropriate path. Sue Hochstetter asked about the delivery for product, and Mr. Paine stated that the grapes would be brought in about twice a year by himself. She also asked about hazardous byproducts, to which Mr. Paine stated that the bi-products of wine making are natural, non-hazardous and possibly compostable. Chairman Grindle recommend Mr. Paine prepare for that sort of discussion, at a future meeting.

4. Approval of Minutes: March 18, 2024

Motion to approve minutes of March 18, 2024 by Gary DeCesare, seconded by Peter Serafin.

Motion carried unanimously. Stan Crawford noted that the firewood operation mentioned in the Enforcement portion of the prior meeting's minutes has not been discussed by the full Wetlands Agency yet. There were no proposed changes to the minutes.

5. New Business

There was no new business.

6. Old Business

a. Commission Workshop – 2026 Plan of Conservation & Development

John Guszowski presented a look back at the Commission's public engagement survey that was distributed back in 2015 prior to the previous Plan of Conservation & Development. He reviewed the areas of questioning and the format of the questions. Stan Crawford asked about providing some context for a new survey that discusses the accomplishments of the prior decade's Plan. Gary DeCesare stated that a slightly longer survey would be reasonable and include a broader range of topics. Sue Hochstetter stated that broader areas for open-ended response would be good. Chairman Grindle stated that grouping questions by topic area might allow people to engage in areas of more interest. Gary DeCesare discussed participation levels and manners of distributing the survey information. Peter Serafin discussed participation and the importance of confidentiality. Stan Crawford asked about the potential addition of an Economic Development Commission to address pending difficulties with the Town's fiscal situation. Chairman Grindle stated that while PZC is the primary author of the Plan, there are questions that should be addressing a variety of topics. The Commission generally agreed on avoiding leading questions and hoped to get a truer sense of public opinion.

John Guszowski also reviewed a current survey undertaken by the Town of Andover in updating their Plan of C&D, which asked questions in slightly different ways, including some forced rankings and questions about sustainability and resilience that haven't been part of older surveys. Chairman Grindle proposed that the Commission take a look at some of the questions in both surveys for a discussion next month. Stan Crawford stated that green energy should be a bigger focus and discussed the potential of tax breaks or other incentives. The Commission discussed "green" technology, and discussed different approaches to including education or questions of regionalism in the Plan of Conservation & Development. They discussed the difference between making political statements about the future of educational or regional structure but reflecting community goals. Gary DeCesare discussed adding 'self-reflective' questions regarding the Planning and Zoning Commission and Land-Use office's responsiveness and the customer service experience of local government. Peter Serafin asked about doing outreach or survey of business owners and the town's business environment. The Commissioners will all look for a summary of the former POCD's questionnaire responses.

7. Staff Report & Enforcement Issues

The Commission reviewed ZEO Jay Gigliotti's report, which included a wide variety of questions and permitting issues, without significant comment. Chairman Grindle stated that he and ZEO Gigliotti met with the operator of the firewood business at 124 Windham Road and discussed with them, coming into compliance with the Regulations. He also noted the potential for a Special Permit for a higher-intensity home occupation use, or a possible text amendment for the use.

8. Correspondence

There was no additional correspondence, but John Guszowski noted that the State Conservation & Development Priorities Plan was in draft form and the OPM was seeking input from the public.

9. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn by Gary DeCesare, seconded by Stan Crawford. Motion carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 8:21 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
John Guszowski, Town Planner

