

TOWN OF BLOOMFIELD, CT
TOWN PLAN & ZONING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
THURSDAY AUGUST 28, 2025 – 7:00PM
ZOOM MEETING PLATFORM AND
IN- PERSON MEETING – COUNCIL CHAMBERS
DRAFT

There was a meeting for the Town of Bloomfield's Town Plan & Zoning Commission held on August 28, 2025 at 7:00pm in a hybrid meeting style. The in-person location was Bloomfield Town Hall – Council Chambers, 800 Bloomfield Avenue, Bloomfield, CT and the virtual location was via Zoom.

1. Call to Order

Chair Lester called the meeting to order at 7:06pm.

2. Roll Call

Present were: *in-person*: Chair Byron Lester, Dwight Bolton, Kevin Gough, Renae James, Jennifer Marshall-Nealy, Stephen Millette, Roger O'Brien (6)

Absent were: Ola Aina, Eunice Medwinter, Leon Peters (3)

A quorum was established with 5 regular members and 1 alternate member present. Chair Lester seated Commissioner O'Brien as a voting member.

Also present were Mr. Jonathan Colman, Director of Building and Land Use; Ms. Lynda Laureano, Assistant Director of Building and Land Use; and Ms. Rebecca Jones, Recording Secretary.

3. Approval of Minutes

- a. **February 27, 2025**
- b. **March 27, 2025**
- c. **April 24, 2025**
- d. **May 22, 2025**
- e. **June 26, 2025**
- f. **July 17, 2025**

Motion to approve the February 27, 2025; March 27, 2025; April 24, 2025; May 22, 2025; June 26, 2025; and July 17, 2025 meeting minutes with corrections made by Commissioner Gough; seconded by Commissioner Millette and approved unanimously. Commissioner Bolton abstained from the May 22, 2025 meeting due to absence. Commissioner Marshall-Nealy abstained from the June 26, 2025 meeting due to absence. Commissioners Bolton and James abstained from the July 17, 2025 meeting due to absence.

4. Public Hearings

- a. **5, 7, and 9 Northwood Drive and 9 West Dudley Town Road – Special Permit and Site Plan Application per Sections 4.4.C.4.u of the Zoning Regulations to allow Outdoor Storage as an accessory use for a proposed contractor's yard business in the I-2 zoning district. Applicant: Burns Construction Company, Inc. Owner: 5 Northwood Drive, LLC**

Attorney John Casey, representing the applicant Burns Construction Company, introduced the application and outlined the procedural requirements. Tim Houle from BL Companies presented the site plan and discussed the existing conditions of the four lots in question. This proposal would consolidate four lots into a single 6.6-acre parcel for a contractor's yard. Inlands Wetlands and Watercourses Commission has granted approval for this project. The existing 18,000-square-foot building will remain unchanged, but the site will be expanded to include 36 parking spaces and additional stormwater management features. The proposal includes improvements to the driveway curbs, installation of concrete pads for material storage

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bins and refuse containers, and the addition of landscaping to provide screening and buffer zones between the facility and surrounding properties. Asphalt millings will be used for surface treatment in the construction yard.

The applicant requested a waiver for the sidewalk requirement claiming minimal public benefit. Ms. Laureano recommended imposing a maximum height limit for material storage bins and combining the lots as conditions of approval. Ms. Laureano addressed the sidewalk waiver and noted that the Town Engineer was comfortable with a waiver due to environmental challenges and technical feasibility issues. Commissioner Millette confirmed that no hazardous materials would be stored on-site. Commissioner O'Brien confirmed that stormwater maintenance would be handled through annual inspections and documentation. He also asked clarifying questions related to the tree planting plan. Commissioner Gough questioned the applicant's claim that the sidewalk has no public benefit. Mr. Houle explained that the narrow right-of-way and proximity to wetlands and stormwater management areas made it impractical to install a sidewalk. Commissioner Gough asked about the use of reclaimed asphalt millings in the contractor's yard. Commissioner Marshall-Nealy asked about requiring signage. She also opined that requiring a sidewalk now may encourage more walkability in the area. Commissioner Bolton asked clarifying questions related to tree preservation. Ms. Laureano recommended that all significant trees be marked on the final as-built plan. The commissioners considered requiring an area of refuge. The commission also discussed material storage limitations, with some commissioners advocating for restrictions on the types of materials that can be stored on site. Staff was asked to work with the applicant to develop a plan for an area of refuge if the sidewalk waiver is granted.

Motion to close the public hearing made by Commissioner Bolton; seconded by Commissioner James and approved unanimously.

Motion to approve the request by Burns Construction Company, Inc. for a Special Permit and Site Plan Application to allow a site development for a contractors yard with outdoor storage as an accessory use with the conditions stipulated in the staff report dated August 25, 2025 and with the additional requests that staff recommend a maximum height for material storage on the premises and that all significant trees be marked on the final plan made by Commissioner Bolton.

Discussion ensued related to the inclusion of the sidewalk waiver in the motion. It was Commissioner Bolton's intent to remain silent on the sidewalk waiver when making his motion. Commissioner O'Brien opined that the sidewalk waiver can be granted by staff after site plan approval, and this application can be acted on without including the waiver. Commissioner Lester proposed a friendly amendment to approve the application without the waiver and have the applicant work with Town staff on the sidewalk waiver. Commissioner Bolton accepted his friendly amendment.

The motion was seconded by Commissioner O'Brien and was approved unanimously by a 7-0-0 vote.

5. New Business

- a. Applicant withdrew the pending Text Amendment Application to remove existing Sections 4.7.C.4.c and 4.7.D.4.b, and amend existing language in Section 4.7.B(Notes: 1) of the Zoning Regulations. Applicant – LaSalle Road Companies LLC having a legal interest in land in Bloomfield**

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Motion to approve this withdrawal made by Commissioner James; seconded by Commissioner Marshall-Nealy and approved unanimously by a 7-0-0 vote.

- b.** Information presentation by BSC Group regarding potential affordable housing residential development at 1151 Blue Hills Avenue

Francis Vacca, of BSC Group; Pastor LeRoy Bailey, III, of First Cathedral Church; and Geoffrey Person of GrowAmerica were present for discussion. This was an informal presentation related to a proposed development plan for the First Cathedral property, which spans 40 acres and includes a mix of wetlands, parking areas, and existing buildings. The plan involves constructing five buildings; including affordable housing, a community daycare center, and an empowerment center, and auxiliary storage. These are all designed to comply with zoning regulations and conservation easements while respecting wetlands buffers. Mr. Person explained the need for affordable housing in Bloomfield and outlined the proposed phases and funding strategies for the project. This would be restricted to 60% AMI and below, which is an income of \$70,000 or lower yearly. There would be a significant decrease in impervious coverage throughout the site. The empowerment center would be used by the church to expand existing social services, including a food pantry, counseling and classrooms for education. Auxiliary parking will be provided in the church's parking lot. The second phase will include 45 units and a childcare center. Visual renderings of the campus were shared.

The proposed affordable housing development would have 101 deed-restricted units, including 5 three-bedroom units, 43 one-bedroom units, 52 two-bedroom units, and 2 studio units in the first phase, with a second phase adding 3 studios, 21 one-bedroom units, and 21 two-bedroom units. The development will be subdivided into two parcels, with the housing and daycare parcel being rezoned to DDZ-2 and the church parcel retaining tax-exempt status. The project includes 251 parking spaces, reduced from 552 in the original plan. Commissioners discussed traffic flow, ADA accessibility, and open space for residents. The commission expressed support for the project, as it aligns with their recent affordable housing regulations.

- c.** Informal presentation by C-Tech Solar regarding a potential solar farm at 141 Wintonbury Avenue (R-30 Residential District)

Kevin Costello from C-Tech Solar presented a proposal for a 1-megawatt solar farm project at 141 Wintonbury Avenue. This site was chosen for proximity to grid interconnection. The project would use ground-mounted panels with single-axis trackers. Ideally, construction would begin in 2027; with an anticipated 12 to 15 months from approval to operation. It would also require a text amendment to allow solar as a primary use in residential zones. The company plans to present the text amendment application at next month's meeting. Staff and commissioners raised questions about the project's scale, grid interconnection, and potential environmental impacts. There was discussion related to the potential impacts of approving such a text amendment. It was confirmed that this is not a case of 'spot zoning'. Commissioner Gough noted that he would not be in favor of a text amendment, and text amendments should arise organically from the zoning body.. This will be on leased land and is currently allowed as an accessory use. Commissioner Lester recommended that Mr. Costello reach out to Bloomfield's Conservation, Energy and Environment Committee to discuss this project and get their feedback.

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6. Other Business

- a. POCD Update by Staff; post TPZ Public Hearing**

Town staff have spent time reviewing the comments and recommended revisions of the draft POCD and decided that it would be a disservice to adopt the document. Town staff and consultants have decided to do a re-write of the document to incorporate significant recommendations. Funding has been secured to retain consultant services for a 5-week period. The goal is for this document to be more ‘Bloomfield-centric’. No further public hearing will be needed. After TPZ review, Town Council will have 30 days to provide advisory comments and then it can be formally adopted by this commission.

7. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn made by Commissioner Marshall-Nealy; seconded by Commissioner James and approved unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 10:03pm.