

**PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
DECEMBER 5, 2020, 10:30 A.M.
HELD VIRTUALLY VIA INTERNET AND PHONE**

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Present: Ken Edgar, Chairman; Don Saltzman, Vice Chairman; Jane Connolly, Sally Korsh, Harry Falber, Britta Lerner, Richard Wolf

Also Present: Tracy Kulikowski, Land Use Director; members of the public

Digitally Recorded [held virtually due to the COVID-19 State of Emergency]

PUBLIC HEARING TO ACCEPT PUBLIC COMMENT ON THE PETITION TO AMEND THE ACCESSORY APARTMENT REGULATIONS, SPECIFICALLY SECTIONS 345.4 AND 610 OF THE ZONING REGULATIONS TO INCREASE THE MAXIMUM SIZE OF ACCESSORY APARTMENTS TO 900 SQUARE FEET IN HABITABLE FLOOR AREA AND TO INCLUDE A DEFINITION OF HABITABLE SPACE [PETITION BY JOSEPH AND LOIS RYAN, 13 BERNHARD DRIVE] [20-03]

10:30 a.m. Chairman Edgar called the meeting to order to open the public hearing and accept public comment on this petition. Chairman Edgar briefly summarized the current regulations and the proposed amendment.

Lois Ryan, petitioner, came forward and presented the proposal. Ms. Ryan spoke about the purpose of the petition, including the potential possibility of providing flexibility, choice and control to homeowners and to renters, especially seniors. Ms. Ryan commented on the fiscal aspect and potential economic impact of the proposal.

The following members of the public spoke:

Margaret Wirtenberg, Wilson Road; commented that she has kept herself abreast with legislative events concerning zoning challenges and thinks that this proposal could be positive for the Town.

Gus Christensen, 65 Norfield Road; stated that he believes that the next generation of home buyers in towns like Weston is in favor of this kind of change to the zoning regulations and would want to see a greater diversity of housing options and a greater diversity in the types of residents that are thereby allowed to afford to live in towns like Weston.

Steve Ezzes, Chairman of Weston Board of Finance; asked Ms. Kulikowski, Land Use Director, the process of tracking legal Accessory Apartments, and the volume and occupancy rate of Apartments. Ms. Kulikowski discussed the tracking process used in the Land Use Dept. Mr. Ezzes commented about possible fiscal burdens to the Town that may occur as a result of this potential amendment.

Helen de Keijzer, Salem Road; stated that she agrees that the potential diversity that could be created with this change in the regulation is a reasonable way to approach flexibility in housing options. She stated that she is in support of this potential modest expansion in the size of Accessory Apartments.

Margaret Wirtenberg, speaking in the capacity as a former member of the Planning & Zoning Commission, provided a brief history of the Accessory Apartment Regulations.

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Joseph Ryan, petitioner, 13 Bernard Drive; presented a list of Weston residents that expressed support for the potential amendment.

Arne de Keijzer, Salem Road; asked whether the Commission has discussed potential issues associated with the proposal. Ms. Kulikowski indicated that in prior meetings, the Commission and the applicant have discussed possible issues including septic suitability, occupancy and bedroom limits, and the variety of Accessory Apartment Regulations found in surrounding communities.

Ms. Kulikowski read the written comments received from the Western Connecticut Council of Governments [WestCog], which state that the agency is of the opinion that the proposal is of local interest and with minimal intermunicipal impact.

Lois Ryan, petitioner, 13 Bernard Drive; provided a closing statement which focused on the proposal's potential benefits to the townspeople.

11:15 a.m. Hearing no further comments, Jane Connolly made a motion that the Commission close the public hearing and adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Chairman Edgar. All in favor, the motion carried (7-0).

Submitted by: AnnMarie Fontana, Admin. Assistant