

Town of Plymouth

80 Main Street

Terryville, Connecticut 06786

Planning & Zoning Commission

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Planning & Zoning Commission Minutes

Regular Meeting

June 25, 2026

i. Call to Meeting to Order: Chairman George Castle called the scheduled June 25, 2026, Planning and Zoning Commission Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Community Room at Plymouth Town Hall, 80 Main Street, Terryville, Connecticut.

ii. Notification of Fire Exits:

Chairman George Castle noted the fire exits.

iii. Pledge of Allegiance:

Chairman George Castle led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

iv. Attendance: Present were: Chairman George Castle, Commissioner James Klariski, Commissioner Michael Gutowski, Commissioner Sue Murawski, Commissioner Gary Gallagher, and Commissioner Alternate Connie Kapralos. Also in attendance: Margus Laan, Planning & Economic Development Director; and Linda Schnaars, Acting Recording Secretary.

In the audience – Councilman Joe Green and Councilman liaison Ron Tiscia

PUBLIC HEARING:

1. Special Permit / Site Plan Proposal for the construction of 5 Dwelling Unit Multi-Family Building, with associated site improvements, at 30 South Street / Assessor Parcel Number 043-061-031-1 per Section 6.D. Garden Apartments or Condominiums of the Zoning Regulations; applicant / property owner: Greenline Home Builders LLC; engineer: Alfred Benesch & Company.

Will Walter, Professional Civil Engineer with Alfred Benesch & Company, presented on behalf of the applicant, Greenline Home Builders LLC. The proposal is for a single five-unit townhouse building on South Street on what is currently a meadow and wooded parcel. Each unit is approximately 1,800 square feet.

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Mr. Walter described the site layout, which features a 24-foot-wide private drive leading to a cul-de-sac specifically designed to accommodate fire truck and dumpster vehicle turning movements. The Fire Marshal has indicated no concerns. Parking will consist of one garage space and one driveway space per unit, plus three additional spaces including a handicap space, totaling 13 spaces and satisfying the 2.5-space-per-unit requirement, which is understood to include visitor parking. Pedestrian sidewalks are provided at both the front and rear of the units to ensure two means of egress.

Regarding stormwater management, Mr. Walter noted that the project went through an extensive revision process in response to neighbor concerns. The final design eliminates above-ground detention basins in favor of an underground infiltration system beneath the cul-de-sac, with a single rain garden at its center for pre-treatment. The system has been reviewed and approved by the town's third-party review engineer, WMC Engineers, for both erosion control and stormwater management. Outstanding utility-related comments from WMC were responded to on June 8th, and Mr. Walter anticipated any remaining items to be minor and acceptable as conditions of approval.

Landscaping includes extensive native plantings required by the wetlands permit, along with deciduous and ornamental trees near the South Street entrance and along the northern boundary. Slopes will be seeded with a meadow mix rather than grass to reduce mowing requirements. Lighting will consist of building-mounted and two 14-foot pole-mounted LED, full-cutoff, dark-sky-compliant fixtures with no trespass across property lines. Public water and sewer connections from South Street will be utilized; no well or septic system is required. The project received its Inland Wetlands permit on April 1st of this year, with the driveway crossing adjacent to a wetland area and the required mitigation resulting in a net increase in wetland acreage on-site.

The applicant requested conditional approval, with any remaining WMC engineer comments to be addressed as conditions.

Commission Questions: Commissioner Gallagher asked about the distance between the rear of the building and properties on Hillside Avenue. Mr. Walter indicated the building is setback approximately 100 feet from the rear property line. Margus Laan confirmed he would obtain final sign-off documentation from WMC prior to the next meeting. A question was raised about the parking requirement accounting for visitors, which Mr. Walter confirmed is built into the 2.5-space-per-unit standard.

Public Comment – Against:

Richard Bugnacki, 31 Northside Avenue, raised two concerns: first, who would be responsible for inspecting and maintaining the stormwater management system annually; and second, what enforcement mechanism would compel a future homeowners association to perform required maintenance if they lacked funds to do so.

Victor Mitchell, 39 Hillside Avenue, addressed the Commission at length. He noted that two independent engineering firms — King Mark's Environmental Review Team (1985) and In-Benefits Consulting Engineers (2025) — had both identified the same natural surface and subsurface waterway running through his and his neighbor's properties to the north. He expressed concern that the most recent plans submitted by Greenline Home Builders do not show this waterway, and that the overflow pipe at the 720–750-foot elevation is oriented toward his backyard. He recommended the commission consider permeable driveways to reduce runoff volume. He also raised concerns about the absence of a clear, enforceable stormwater maintenance plan with an identified responsible party, particularly after the property is sold. He noted that all homes on Hillside Avenue rely on private wells, not municipal water, and requested the commission ensure adequate protection for the health and safety of those residents.

Mr. Mitchell also raised a question of order, noting that Inland Wetlands had previously been sued by the contractor for denying approval, and that it had been stated publicly at a subsequent meeting that approval of the revised plan would result in the lawsuit being dropped. He confirmed with Margus Laan that the lawsuit has since been resolved.

John Perry, 28 South Street, asked whether any materials such as loam, gravel, or stone would be mined and sold from the site prior to construction, and expressed concern about potential erosion from the 30-foot grade change at the rear of the property.

Cynthia Rabinowitz, speaking as the conservation reviewer who had also reviewed the plans at Margus Laan's request during the wetlands proceedings, raised three items: (1) whether permeable pavement had been considered for roads and parking areas, consistent with NPDES recommendations; (2) a minor note that compost is not an ideal erosion control topping material as it can float during heavy rain, suggesting a different mulch be used instead; and (3) a continuing concern about whether the drainage pipes behind the building are adequately sized to prevent water from collecting against the foundations, citing similar configurations she had observed elsewhere.

Applicant Response: Mr. Walter addressed each public comment in turn. He explained that the TR-55 methodology is used to model stormwater flows under all design storms from the 2-year to the 100-year event, and that the proposed design reduces peak flows below existing conditions for all modeled storms. He noted that smaller, more frequent storms — which the neighbors observe most often — would be captured and infiltrated even more effectively than the design storms. He confirmed that the dumpster area drains into the stormwater management system, and that the water quality volume (first flush) is treated as required by the DEP. He confirmed that the separation distance between the stormwater infiltration system and the nearest potential far exceeds the 25-foot minimum required by the Connecticut Department of Public Health. He confirmed no materials would be mined or sold. Regarding pervious pavement, he explained it is not required to meet DEP stormwater standards, is very expensive, and requires annual vacuuming maintenance that a small HOA could not reasonably sustain, leading to failure within five to six years. He agreed without objection to remove the compost note and substitute mulch

in the erosion control specifications. He walked through the grading plan showing the slope, retaining wall, flat area with three perforated dry wells behind the building, and the finished floor elevation, explaining there is no possibility of water infiltrating the building. Regarding wetlands, he confirmed that while approximately 1,400 square feet of wetlands are disturbed, approximately 2,500 square feet of new wetlands are being created, resulting in a net increase.

HOA and Maintenance Questions: Commissioner Gallagher asked who would maintain the stormwater system before all units are sold. Gennadi Kholod, identified as one of the two partners of Greenline Home Builders LLC along with partner Galina, explained that the developer acts as the homeowner's association until units are sold, and that HOA governance transfers to homeowners once a majority threshold is reached. Director Long confirmed he would require a formal HOA maintenance plan as a condition of any approval.

Chairman Castle recommended a site walk of the property and proposed continuance of the hearing. The Commission voted to schedule a site walk for Wednesday, July 1, 2026 at 5:30 PM. The public was advised they may attend but that discussion among participants would not occur during the walk.

A motion was made by Commissioner Gary Gallagher, seconded by Commissioner Sue Murawski to continue the public hearing to a future date. This motion was approved unanimously.

A motion was made by Commissioner James Klaneski, seconded by Commissioner Sue Murawski to conduct a site walk of the property on July 1, 2026 at 5:30 PM. This motion was approved unanimously.

2. Application of property owner Joseph M. Zappone for 2 Lot Subdivision of Property known as 410 South Street / identified as Assessor Parcel Number 073-061-011A on Assessor Maps & acreage part of Assessor Parcel Number 073-061-011B, in the R-40 District; engineer: Robert Green Associates, LLC.

Engineer Joe Green of Robert Green Associates, LLC presented the application. The proposal subdivides the parcel into two lots of approximately one to one-and-a-half acres each. Both lots meet all R-40 zoning requirements for frontage, area, and buildable area as documented on Sheet 2. Both lots are served by wells and septic systems approved by the Torrington Area Health District for four-bedroom standard houses. Standard erosion control measures are proposed. The property is entirely field with no proposed clearing.

Margus Laan noted that the application must remain open until the July 9th meeting to allow receipt and review of a formal hydrological report by the Public Works Director. Margus Laan confirmed that Public Works Director Joe Sopczneski had reviewed the project informally and had no concerns, but that formal documentation is required for the record. He also confirmed that Inland Wetlands reviewed the application on June 3rd and provided sign-off, as the wetland areas are located to the north and do not impact the proposed subdivision area.

No members of the public spoke for or against the application. The Commission voted to continue the hearing to July 9, 2026.

A motion was made by Commissioner Michael Gutowski, seconded by Commissioner James Klaneski to continue until July 9, 2026. This motion was approved unanimously.

3. Application of property owners Jean Zalaski & Raymond Zalaski Jr. for 2 Lot Subdivision, titled “Zalaski Meadow”, of Property known as 140 East Plymouth Road / Assessor Parcel Number 024-019-007B in the R-40 District; engineer: Robert Green Associates, LLC.

Engineer Joe Green of Robert Green Associates, LLC presented. The parcel has an existing home and the applicant proposes to subdivide off a new lot to the south. The new lot and the existing parcel both received Torrington Area Health District approval for four-bedroom houses, including a 100% code-compliant backup septic design for the existing home. Both properties will be served by wells. The property is field, and a small wetland pocket identified by the soil scientist is located to the north, several hundred feet from the proposed development area, near the dam on Marsh Road.

Margus Laan advised that a formal hydrological report is also required for this application, and that the interim zoning enforcement officer had confirmed the need for Inland Wetlands review due to wetlands falling within the 100-foot buffer review area. A wetlands meeting had been scheduled for June 17th but was canceled due to lack of quorum. Margus Laan indicated it would be rescheduled for July 1st, with a determination expected in time for the Commission to act on July 9th within applicable state statutes.

Margus Laan clarified that the access way to parcels at the rear of the existing lot is by deed on the larger existing property and will not encumber the newly subdivided lot.

A motion was made by Commissioner Gary Gallagher, seconded by Commissioner Michael Gutowski to continue until July 9, 2026. This motion was approved unanimously.

A motion was made by Commissioner Jim Klanieski, seconded by Commissioner Michael Gutowski to close the public hearing. This motion was approved unanimously.

REGULAR MEETING: MEETING MINUTES, PUBLIC COMMENT, RETURNING BUSINESS, & NEW BUSINESS:

4. Public Comment for Non-Agenda Topics: Requested time limit of 3 minutes. Note: Comments on Agenda listed items need to be made during item’s agenda slot for inclusion in item’s record.

No public comment was offered on non-agenda topics.

5. Review, deliberate and motion & vote to approve, to amend or to reject the minutes of Regular Meeting of June 11, 2026.

Commissioner James Klaneski noted a correction on Page 5 - a reference to 32 train cars on-site should be corrected to read 32 cars at one time on-site, as that number does not currently exist.

A motion was made by Commissioner Michael Gutowski, seconded by Commissioner Sue Murawski to accept the minute of June 11, 2026 as amended. This motion was approved unanimously.

6. Announcement: Public Hearing tentatively scheduled for July 23, 2026 for the presentation of Proposal to Amend the Zoning Regulations of Town of Plymouth to allow Self Storage Facilities in the C-1 General Commercial District; amendment sponsor: Ryan Geddes Jr., Premier Properties LLC.; sponsoring property: Scott Properties LLC at 570 Main Street / Assessor Parcel Number 036-039-036A-1; attorney: Mark Malley, Seabourne Malley & Turner.

Ryan Geddes Jr. of Premier Properties LLC presented the proposed text amendment, which would allow self-storage facilities in the C-1 General Commercial District by special permit, subject to specific parameters including single-story construction (except for an office component), location within certain road boundaries, parking requirements, and minimum acreage. The intent is to accommodate a quality operator whose office buildings are designed to resemble barns, with storage buildings set back and screened from the road.

Margus Laan provided important context on the geographic extent of C-1 zoning throughout Plymouth and explained the rationale for the location-based limitation within the amendment. He noted that while uses within a zone should generally be consistent, the proposal is designed to concentrate this use in the portion of the C-1 corridor — roughly between Dollar General West and the industrial area near Burr Road — where large-footprint, utilitarian buildings are already established and aesthetically appropriate, rather than in village-character or shopping-center segments of C-1. He acknowledged that a more comprehensive solution would involve breaking C-1 into sub-districts with tailored regulations, but noted that would require extensive new regulations and rezonings.

Mr. Geddes noted that, based on his research of properties along Main Street meeting the proposed acreage threshold, only a small handful of parcels would qualify, including property owned by the town, the junkyard, and Doyle's. He described the location as well-suited given neighboring uses including a truck body shop, a small retail store, and a garage.

Margus Laan advised that the text must be formally drafted as a regulatory amendment, incorporating changes to the relevant sections on uses, setbacks, parking, and the existing self-storage provision, which would be reorganized to distinguish between adaptive reuse in historic

buildings and new construction in C-1. He confirmed that a 30-day public notice period is required, making July 23, 2026 the earliest permissible public hearing date.

A motion was made by Commissioner Michael Gutowski, seconded by Commissioner Sue Murawski to set the public hearing for July 23, 2026 for Ryan Geddes, Jr. Premier Properties. This motion was approved unanimously.

7. Continued from May 14, 2026: 10 Agney Avenue / Assessor Parcel Number 049-077-007; Modification to Site Plan –Change in Dwelling Units at Multi-Family Complex; Property Owner: Garden Estates LLC, Representative: Jacob Kolko; no discussion took place May 28, 2026 & June 11, 2026.

Margus Laan reported that the applicant is awaiting revised architectural drawings. He advised that the 65-day site plan review period expires on July 17th. If the applicant does not return with materials for a decision by the July 9th meeting, Margus Laan indicated he would either request a formal time extension from the applicant or ask the Commission to issue a denial without prejudice, which would allow the applicant to resubmit at any time.

REGULAR MEETING: DELIBERATION & DECISION ON PUBLIC HEARING & OTHER APPLICATIONS:

8. Special Permit / Site Plan Proposal for the construction of 5 Dwelling Unit Multi-Family Building, with associated site improvements, at 30 South Street / Assessor Parcel Number 043-061-031-1 per Section 6.D. Garden Apartments or Condominiums of the Zoning Regulations; applicant / property owner: Greenline Home Builders LLC; engineer: Alfred Benesch & Company.

Continued. See Public Hearing Item 1 above.

9. Application of property owner Joseph M. Zappone for 2 Lot Subdivision of Property known as 410 South Street / identified as Assessor Parcel Number 073-061-011A on Assessor Maps & acreage part of Assessor Parcel Number 073-061-011B, in the R-40 District; engineer: Robert Green Associates, LLC.

Continued to July 9, 2026. See Public Hearing Item 2 above.

10. Application of property owners Jean Zalaski & Raymond Zalaski Jr. for 2 Lot Subdivision, titled “Zalaski Meadow”, of Property known as 140 East Plymouth Road / Assessor Parcel Number 024-019-007B in the R-40 District; engineer: Robert Green Associates, LLC.

Continued to July 9, 2026. See Public Hearing Item 3 above.

11. Agney Avenue / Assessor Parcel Number 049-077- 007; Modification to Site Plan – Change in Dwelling Units at Multi-Family Complex; Property Owner: Garden Estates LLC, Representative: Jacob Kolko; no discussion took place May 28, 2026 & June 11, 2026.

Continued. See Item 7 above.

REGULAR MEETING: MORE RETURNING BUSINESS, ANNOUNCEMENTS & COMMISSION & STAFF DISCUSSION:

12. Large Scale Solar Moratorium – 144 Days to Go!

Chairman Castle noted that 144 days remain on the moratorium and that a response from the state regarding the pending solar project is expected in August. As the Commission does not meet in August, Margus Laan will communicate any state determination to commissioners by written notice.

13. Commission Discussion, Staff Discussion & Other Items before the Commission

Sidewalk Discussion: Commissioner Klaneski asked for an update on the sidewalk initiative along Main Street. Chairman Castle reported that a meeting with state DOT indicated a study could take approximately six years due to the state-owned right-of-way from the centerline outward. He noted the need to extend the sidewalk from Harwinton Avenue northward and stated the matter is currently with the Mayor's office. Margus Laan acknowledged he had not yet spoken directly with DOT, having placed a call to the Thomaston office but being occupied with fiscal year-end budget responsibilities. Chairman Castle emphasized the urgency given pedestrian safety concerns, noting that people are crossing Route 6 at night and that the Police Commission has approved removal of no-parking signs on the north side of Holt Street as a partial remedy.

A broader discussion followed regarding parking options for Nash in the Ville, including a dirt parking lot at 352 Main Street that was approved circa 2003–2006 and has historically served that area, and the possibility of using a town-owned parking facility off North Harwinton Avenue. Margus Laan noted that the Mayor's working group — including attorney Sal Vitano, Dave Elder, and Public Works Director Joe Sopczneski are managing these discussions, and that he has been keeping them informed by email but has not been directly included in any working group meetings.

Commissioner Gallagher reiterated his longstanding concern regarding the lack of a full-time zoning enforcement officer, noting he has raised the issue at every meeting for ten years. He argued that revenues collected through blight enforcement alone would more than cover the cost

of such a position. It was noted that the position was voted down by the council and that the current part-time interim officers (Dave and Rhonda) risk exceeding 30-hour thresholds if they attend commission meetings. Chairman Castle confirmed the town does have a part-time interim building official present Tuesdays through Thursdays.

Margus Laan noted he is finalizing budget numbers and preparing materials for the July 9th and July 23rd meetings.

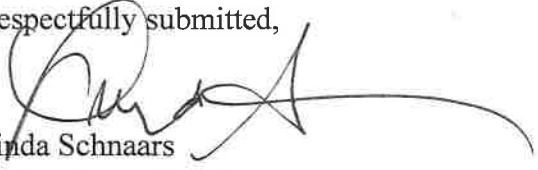
14. Other items, as may properly come before the Planning & Zoning Commission.

No additional items were raised.

Adjournment:

There being no further business of the Planning & Zoning Commissioners, a motion was made by Commissioner Jim Klaneski, seconded by Commissioner Michael Gutowski to adjourn the meeting. This motion was approved unanimously. The meeting ended at 8:46 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Linda Schnaars

Acting Recording Secretary