



**CITY OF HARTFORD
Planning & Zoning Commission
260 Constitution Plaza – Hartford, CT**

DRAFT MINUTES

August 10, 2021

The Planning & Zoning Commission held a Hybrid Regular Meeting at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, August 10, 2021.

Attendance

Present (In-Person): Chair Josye Utick, Commissioners Aaron Gill and Jonathan Harding, and

Present (Virtually): Commissioners Gary Bazzano, David McKinley, and Kelvin Thomas, and Alternate Commissioner Juliana Garcia-Uribe.

Absent: Commissioners and Alternate Commissioners Andres Jimenez-Franck and Guy Neumann

Staff Present: Aimee Chambers, Paul Ashworth and Paige Berschet.

Regular Meeting of the Planning & Zoning Commission

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Josye Utick called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm. Chair Josye Utick seated Alternate Commissioner Juliana Garcia-Uribe for the meeting.

II. APPLICATIONS RECEIVED

*Indicates the official Date of Receipt for an application and start of the Public Hearing Timeline

a. **300 Maxim Rd** – Special Permit for Dynamic Display Billboard. Owner: Materials Innovation and Recycling Authority; Applicant: OUTFRONT Media c/o Brian Roeser. Open Hearing Deadline: October 14, 2021.

III. PUBLIC HEARINGS

a. **WITHDRAWN - 719 Wethersfield Ave** – Special Permit for Drinking Place. Owner: Marena Mario; Applicant: William Veja. Open Hearing Deadline: September 30, 2021.

b. **WITHDRAWN - 60 Weston St** - Special Permit for General Assembly Use. Owner: Commerce Park Limited Partnership; Applicant: Riverfront Family Church c/o Ellen Cannon. Open Hearing Deadline: September 30, 2021.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

44 a. **SB 1201 Discussion**

45 Director Aimee Chambers presented staff's Cannabis Legalization Presentation and
46 asked for feedback on areas of consideration for a Text Amendment.

47
48 Commissioner Kelvin Thomas stated that the Commission needs to determine where
49 they can establish, the application process and limitations.

50
51 Commissioner David McKinley stated that he hasn't heard about City Council opting
52 out, so it is their responsibility to adjust the regulations. Director Aimee Chambers
53 stated once they have draft language they can address concerns, including from City
54 Council. She noted that if permits are established by the state before the regulations are
55 updated, further requirements by zoning regulations cannot apply to existing permits.

56
57 Chair Josye Utick mentioned that per the Land Use Wrap Up Presentation, the state will
58 permit 11 types of cannabis permits. Mr. Paul Ashworth stated that the population cap
59 was for cultivator and retail permits.

60
61 Director Aimee Chambers mentioned they may want to include some design-based
62 regulations, like a transparency requirement. Chair Joyse Utick asked if they want to
63 encourage decreased visibility into businesses with efforts to try and make things more
64 just and equitable.

65
66 Commissioner Kelvin Thomas noted that they should make sure to adopt signage
67 regulations specific to cannabis uses. Mr. Paul Ashworth stated that per state law,
68 businesses cannot display cannabis or cannabis related products in their signage, and
69 products cannot be visible from the street. He shared that the City's Zoning Regulations
70 require retail businesses to have 75% transparency.

71
72 Commissioner Aaron Gill stated more transparency increases safety, but they will need
73 to include a requirement in line with state law. Commissioner Jonathan Harding stated
74 businesses could have a certain layout to allow for transparency, and not allow for a
75 view of products.

76
77 Director Aimee Chambers proposed they could limit cannabis uses to building types that
78 have less transparency. Commissioner Aaron Gill stated that with many vacant
79 storefronts, new cannabis retail businesses could be a good driver of foot traffic in
80 neighborhoods, and that cultivation uses could be great in former warehouses.

81
82 Mr. Paul Ashworth stated the only distance requirements from the state were advertising
83 could not be visible from the street, and no advertising allowed within 500 feet of certain
84 uses. Commissioner Aaron Gill stated that many areas could work for a cannabis
85 business and with a higher density than other cities, they could probably focus less on
86 distance requirements. Commissioner David McKinley stated that a dispersion
87 requirement from residential uses could limit the entire city.

88
89 Commissioner David McKinley asked about the process for drafting new regulations.
90 Director Aimee Chambers stated in the past the Chair drafted the regulations, brought
91 them to them Commission, and held conversations with stakeholders to refine draft
92 language and establish timeline goals. The Commissioners decided to establish a
93 subcommittee to work on the draft language. The subcommittee volunteers included
94 Chair Joyse Utick, Commissioner Jonathan Harding, and Commissioner David
95 McKinley.

96
97 Chair Joyse Utick asked about limitations to hours of operation. Commissioner Aaron
98 Gill stated 8am to 8pm or 9pm could make sense. Commissioner Jonathan Harding
99 stated it would be difficult without knowing what other surrounding towns would allow.

100
101 Director Aimee Chambers shared staff could bring information to the NRZ meetings
102 about the draft regulations and any timeline updates. Chair Joyse Utick stated that any
103 additional input should be sent to her or Director Aimee Chambers.

104
105 **V. DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

106 a. **Plan Review Numbers for July**

107 Director Aimee Chambers reviewed the Plan Review numbers for July which included
108 175 Planning & Zoning applications.

109 b. **South Branch Trail Public Meeting** – August 18th @ 6pm

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111 **VI. CHAIR'S REPORT**

112 No report.

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114 **VII. Approval of Minutes**

115 a. July 27, 2021 – APPROVED

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117 **VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

118 Commissioner Jonathan Harding made a **MOTION** to adjourn the meeting, **SECONDED**
119 by Commissioner Kelvin Thomas and the meeting was adjourned at 7:46 p.m.

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121 **Respectfully Submitted by:**
122 **Paige Berschet, Administrative Assistant**