

PORTLAND PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
Thursday, April 17, 2025 at 7:00 PM
Buck Foreman Room
Public access through Zoom link A at www.portlandct.org

Regular Meeting Minutes

1. Call Meeting to Order

Robert Ellsworth called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. Introduction of Members and Seating of Alternates

Present: Bob Ellsworth, Robert Taylor, Victoria Tchetchet, Chantal Foster, Joe Spada

Absent: Jennifer Tellone

Joe Spada is seated for Jennifer Tellone

Staff: Dan Bourret, Town Planner
Henry Colangelo, ZEO
Dawn Guite, Recording Secretary

3. Accept Agenda

MOTION: Victoria Tchetchet MOVED, seconded by Robert Taylor to ACCEPT the agenda as PRESENTED. **VOTE UNANIMOUS. MOTION CARRIED.**

4. Meeting Procedures

Tonight's meeting follows normal procedure.

Regular Meeting

5. • PZC Application #24-17: 521 Glastonbury Turnpike. Proposed special permit modification to expand existing recreational soccer venue from 2 fields to 4 with associated improvements. Application of Michael Favor III and property of Oakwood Sports Outdoor LLC. Map 76 Lot 13, Zone RI.

MOTION: Chantal Foster MOVED, seconded by Robert Taylor to OPEN the Public Hearing for #24-17. **VOTE UNANIMOUS. MOTION CARRIED.**

Will Walter, PE, Alfred Benesch & Company, Glastonbury, CT, represented the Applicant seeking a proposed special permit modification to expand existing recreational soccer venue from 2 fields to 4 with associated improvements. He introduced Michael Favor, III, the Applicant.

Michael Favor, III, the Applicant, said National Sports Group acquired Oakwood Sports Outdoor LLC during the second quarter of 2024. The club has flourished requiring need for expansion. Operations will be under the current footprint. The only difference is there will be 4 fields instead of 2. It will create a great opportunity for kids to be trained on a very economy level with a higher training platform. It will continue the Oakwood legacy started over 20 years ago. Only sports activities are planned for the site. No other events are proposed at this time.

Will Walter said comments have been addressed from the Fire Marshall, The Building Official, and Engineering with 90 – 95 percent responses completed. He is confident outstanding comments do not show cause for concern and the plan will be tweaked to satisfaction. Therefore, they are requesting a conditional approval.

The project includes two additional full-size synthetic turf fields at the south side of the property. The parking lot on the north side, currently aggregate stone, will become asphalt paved. There are currently 137 parking spots. There will be overflow parking to accommodate tournaments in a grass area to the north and to the south. There will be approximately 200 paved parking spaces at project completion. There will be a new sidewalk that traverses from the new fields and new parking lot on the western side of the existing fields. Areas are wide enough to accommodate emergency vehicles from one side to the other including turning radius. Because topography slopes high on the east and low on the west, netting will be installed for soccer balls and protection. For the fields there is an inch and a half of synthetic turf. Below the turf there are eight to ten inches of dynamic stone. It is well graded so the field will compact and is pervious enough that water will infiltrate through. There is a collector pipe system all around the field, about a two or three foot trench, with a 10-inch perforated HTP pipe. Water will make its way during larger storms to the exterior trench drain and then piped right into the network going down to the DOT system.

Water quality has been addressed in coordination with both the health department and with Nathan Jacobson, third party engineer. There are storm water management facilities on both the north and south side to capture, treat, detain, regulate and release storm water before it goes off the site per town and state regulations. At the north side is above ground storm water management areas where there is infiltration completely outside the aquifer protection area. Because the site is in tight space, there is an underground system beneath the pavement which is a completely closed system. As water goes in it's going to go through swirl chambers approved by DEEP and into a large underground tank. It is completely impervious so nothing is infiltrating into the ground. It then discharges through pipes and hard connects to the DOT system on Rt. 17. It is in compliance with APA regulations. Peak flow will not exceed per stated in the 2024 DEEP water quality manual. Volume of water is examined to store the water. As water comes in there are orifices and weirs that regulate the flow and allow it to be released at a rate that is less out of that structure than what is coming in from that structure. There are hydrodynamic separators designed so when water comes in it swirls around the outside of the chamber and throws off sediment. There will be fences around detention basins. A back truck vacuums the sediment every year or two. It will require approval by the State of Connecticut. System will continue to be tweaked to the satisfaction of Nathan Jacobson and then be forwarded to the State for review. Earthwork, cutting into the north and south hillside, will take nothing offsite.

The concession stand including bathrooms, currently on site, will remain as is. There will be no changes to it. There is a grease trap and a septic tank. It will be intercepted and piped down to a new septic system. The new dumpster, at the northern parking lot, is outside the APA area. It will be covered and on a concrete pad.

Ryan Dean, Professional Landscape Architect, Alfred Benesch & Company, Glastonbury, CT, said the lighting on the new fields will be completely different from what currently exists. On the existing fields are termed "old school with cans" seen at high school football games. New technology presents a diamond arrangement pointed directly at the field in a perfectly uniform manner. Lights will be at a 50 foot pole height with double heads. Lighting at the parking lot will follow the existing lot to the north on 25 foot poles. For plantings in the southeast corner there will be a heavier concentration of evergreens to provide as much screening as possible. 20 – 30 foot evergreens planted will grow up to 40 – 50 feet.

Steve Ulman, P.E., Alfred Benesch & Company, Glastonbury, CT, did a traffic study for the development. Development in the area is generally commercial with some farms. Data from the UCONN Crash Repository from January 1, 2022 through December 31, 2024 was obtained. There were eight accidents during this period of time all which occurred at the intersection of Sage Hollow Road and Gospel Lane. 85 percentile speeds along Rt. 17 southbound were measured to be 46 miles an hour and northbound were 42 miles an hour. Posted speed limit is 45 and 35. It changes right in that area. Busiest times at the soccer complex are weekday evenings between 4 – 9:00 pm. Data from the 11th edition trip generation manual is only provided for soccer fields with seven to twenty fields. He took counts for two fields which came out to be 74 trips total in and out

of the site. Total generation is 148 total trips; entering is 75 and existing is 73. Available site distances along Rt. 17 from the existing driveway and the proposed site driveway were measured. From the existing driveway you see 600 feet in both directions. From the proposed driveway it is 600 feet to the south but only 420 feet to the north. This is because of a side slope. Once construction is completed 600 feet in both directions is obtained. 600 feet exceeds the minimum required distance of 555 feet. Capacity analysis shows volumes at the level service B at the intersection of the site drive, level service B at the intersection of Glastonbury Turnpike and Sage Hollow, and all approaches at level service C or better. The proposed expansion will not impede or adversely affect the traffic network.

Will Walter said that 95 percent of comments have been addressed and that any remaining concerns will be to the satisfaction of staff.

Chair Ellsworth asked about inclusion of spectators for parking.

Will Walter said the majority of spectators will be parents so there's not going to be a lot of people coming who are not relatives. At maximum time there are 18 players on the field or 18 teams with 18 additional teams waiting to play.

Chair Ellsworth asked if there is a PA system for announcements made over speakers.

Michael Favor said the current system on site will continue to be the system used. No expansion is planned.

Joe Spada asked for police presence during tournament play because Rt. 17 is a busy area with people pulling in and going out. He asked what current policy states.

Michael Favor said there is no policy. There have been no tournaments since he has become owner. It is difficult to make a designation as to what tournament buy in would be and what traffic pattern would look like. The goal is for more growth of the soccer club. On the weekend there will be less traffic coming into the area than on a week night.

Public Comment:

Dave Murphy, 40 Carousel Drive, Portland, CT, said there is a residential neighborhood near the site. Lights from the fields are seen and there is noise. Ben Srb's property is a nice buffer. If he decides to take part of the hill down or sells property it will expose the neighborhood to more noise and more lights.

Dan Bourret said the slope on the north side is not on Ben Srb's property. There's a grading easement from his property onto the site property for the slope that is currently there. The ridge being lowered is owned by Oakwood. They will be lowering it by 10 to 20 feet and plant larger trees to act as a screen.

Dave Murphy said with 50 percent more teams there it becomes a problem with noise. Regulations should be established for so many tournaments a year. We don't want this to become a weekly thing with hooting and hollering where I can't sit in my backyard.

Jim Nessie, 41 Carousel Drive, Portland, CT, asked about the hill, lowering of it, and who owns it.

Will Walter provided an explanation and said the new field will occupy a portion of the hill. Because this area is exposed evergreens will be planted that are already 18 to 20 foot high to cover the top and will end up growing another 15 or 20 feet. Understory plantings will be installed as well.

Jim Nessie said that light can be seen from the site at night. I think it is light pollution that's going up in the air. We do hear the noise. If the hill comes down lower and the new fields are coming closer to us, are they going to be the same level as the other fields. It looks like a giant hole.

Will Walter said it will be filled from what is at the hill.

Michael Favor said he has driven Carousel Drive and spoken to neighbors to find out how the current environment impacts them and their lifestyle. Significant light from older lights is there. These lights create a glow in the air. Technology now is different. The new lights and lumens are directed downward and not outward. They are a lot more concentrated and will give off less glow. It will not magnify to make it seem like your backyard is Yankee Stadium or anything like that. Some earth does have to be moved around there and there are some mature trees that he would like to transplant. We won't know until we start. The berm will still be there. I don't anticipate whether it's tournaments or increased club size activity that decibels will be brought up to where it will be a loud roar. Activity will take place generally from mid to late November to March depending on weather conditions.

Darin Senna, 60 Cornwall Street, said no one sees or hears more than me and is concerned about the technology. Does it mean less air pollution. He asked when the lights will go off and if there is a noise ordinance in place.

Dan Bourret said ordinances are controlled by the Selectman's office and need to be followed. It varies on what zone you are in, what zone borders that zone, what type of activity takes place. Noise ordinance is online and call him with any questions.

Ryan Dean said about lighting if you turn on a mag light you have a huge spread that can be tightened down and honed in. The old lighting takes 20 minutes to fire up and is cranked until it reaches appropriate temperature. New lights are instant because they are LED. They are very precise onto the field without spillage. Light color indicates brightness. We're at 5,700 which is brighter; more of a daylight consistency. It is standard for athletics.

Dan Bourret asked about setting hours of operation. There was a discussion and agreement that hours of operation will be 7:00 a.m. – 10:00 p.m.

Mari Quintiliani, 451 Glastonbury Turnpike (inaudible), asked about the blinking light near the four corners where she lives. She has a hill offering privacy and wants to know how much it will go down.

Will Walter said the grade is not changing where she lives. She won't be able to see it from her house. All work being done will not change anything where she lives.

Dave Murphy, 40 Carousel Drive, asked about gunfire noise.

Dan Bourret said gunfire is not part of this application. The noise ordinance is strict and it falls on us to enforce it.

Ben Srb, 139 West Cotton Hill Road, owns property just south of the complex where one of his sons will be building. I want to keep an eye on what is going on. What is being proposed sounds great. The applicant pays a lot of taxes to Portland. It is a good thing that people are coming from other countries to play here. It is an asset for our town.

Peter Filanda, 154 South Road, thanked the town for support of the project. He has children in the soccer program. It builds community. Free youth soccer training brings kids up through the club. Kids are introduced to higher level soccer than they would typically get in town. Mr. Favor is looking to maximize the property by staying within aquifer parameters. It is a benefit all around.

MOTION: Chantal Foster MOVED, seconded by Robert Taylor to CLOSE the Public Hearing for #24-17. **VOTE UNANIMOUS. MOTION CARRIED.**

Break taken at 8:45 p.m.

Meeting resumed at 8:53 p.m.

RECORDED VOTE

DATE: April 17, 2025

COMMISSION: PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION

MOTION

To APPROVE Application #24-17: 521 Glastonbury Turnpike. Proposed special permit modification to expand existing recreational soccer venue from 2 fields to 4 with associated improvements. Application of Michael Favor III and property of Oakwood Sports Outdoor LLC. Map 76 Lot 13. Zone RI. Based on all plans, renderings and information submitted, testimony provided and subject to the following instructions and conditions that are integral to this approval:

1. That this approval will expire in 5 years;
2. That the certified Letter of Approval be filed on the land records within 180 days, per ZR Section 10.5.3.2.a, these requirements must be met prior to the issuance of a zoning permit;
3. That any exterior light fixtures must comply with ZR Section 8 and must be approved by the Zoning Enforcement Officer prior to installation;
4. That the applicant address any outstanding comments from Geoff Jacobson's 4/3/25 memo;
5. That the applicant meet and address comments for the Fire Marshal memo dated 3/24/25;
6. That the applicant meet any requirements from the Chatham Health District;
7. That applicant meets all applicable building code and ADA requirements;
8. That any signage requires a signage permit and must conform to ZR section 8.4;
9. That a Zoning Permit be issued prior to the start of activity associated with this approval;
10. That all planted species be from the UCONN native species list;
11. Add tracking pad to sequence of construction;
12. That hours of operation for games will be 7 am to 10 pm;
13. That a good faith effort be made to reduce the reduction in ridge height in the south east corner;
14. That adequate fencing be installed around infiltration basins.

Reasons: The proposal conforms to section 6 and 10.4 of the Zoning Regulations.

Made by: Victoria Tchetchet

Seconded by: Robert Taylor

IN FAVOR

Victoria Tchetchet
Chantal Foster
Joe Spada
Robert Taylor
Bob Ellsworth

IN OPPOSITION

IN ABSTENTION

Recorded By: Dawn Guite

- PZC Application #24-18: Courtney Lane. Proposed 1 lot subdivision. Application and property of T.C.B.S. Properties. Map 15 Lot 36-6. Zone RR.

MOTION: Chantal Foster MOVED, seconded by Robert Taylor to OPEN the Public Hearing for #24-18. **VOTE UNANIMOUS. MOTION CARRIED.**

Ben Srb, the Applicant is seeking a proposed 1 lot subdivision. The area is two acres and he wants to split it into two one acre lots. There are four lots directly south with the same layout and activities. All requirements from Chatham Health have been met. Location map did not have a jog in it so it was added. There is a conservation easement currently in place behind the lots on Courtney Lane. The Conservation Committee asked for an easement across the length of the lot which, with his partner, agreed to do. Ben told Engineering that he is planning to build as well. Engineering was worried that too much of the area would be disturbed at once. Conditions were written into the application. Applications for both the subdivision and Ben's lot have to be filed to satisfy the town engineer. A zoning permit is required for each lot. He has been up front with all involved.

MOTION: Chantal Foster MOVED, seconded by Robert Taylor to CLOSE the Public Hearing for #24-18. **VOTE UNANIMOUS. MOTION CARRIED.**

RECORDED VOTE

DATE: April 17, 2025

COMMISSION: PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION

MOTION

To APPROVE Application #24-18: Courtney Lane. Proposed 1 lot subdivision. Application and property of T.C.B.S. Properties. Map 15 Lot 36-3. Zone RR. As shown on site plans entitled, "Subdivision Plan", Dated 12/7/24 and revised to 4/14/25; "E&S Grading Plan", Dated 2/7/25 Revised to 4/14/25; "Lot 4 Septic System Plan"; Dated 3/17/25, Revised to 4/14/25; "Construction/E&S Septic Detail", Dated 12/7/24 Revised to 3/24/25. Prepared by Bushnell Associates LLC information provided with the application and at the public hearing, and subject to the following instructions and modifications integral to this approval:

1. That the Certified Letter of Approval be placed on the cover sheet of the plan set.
2. That all actions associated with this subdivision be completed in accordance with the approved plan before April 17, 2030 which is the date that this approval shall expire.
3. That a licensed land surveyor certify that all lot monumentation and any required conservation easement markers have been installed in accordance with the plan and Town policies.
4. That the Mylars be filed on the Land Records within 90 days of the end of the appeal period and that 3 paper copies of the complete set of plans be submitted.
5. That prior to the endorsement of the mylars, a digital file of the record subdivision be submitted to the town.
6. That as a condition of approval the applicant address all comments from Geoff Jacobson's 4/10/25.
7. That as a condition of approval all comments from the Chatham Health District memo dated 3/18/25 be addressed.
8. _____
9. _____

Reasons: That this proposal satisfies Sections 3 and 4 of the Subdivision Regulations

Made by: Victoria Tchetchet

Seconded by: Robert Taylor

IN FAVOR

Victoria Tchetchet
Chantal Foster
Robert Taylor
Joe Spada
Bob Ellsworth

IN OPPOSITION

IN ABSTENTION

Recorded By: Dawn Guite

6. New Business:
- Interior lot buffer requirement and steps exemption

A regulation meeting will be scheduled to discuss interior lot buffer requirement and steps exemption.

Victoria Tchetchet requested a dark sky compliance consultant be invited to a meeting to explain technology as long as it is free of charge.

7. Old Business:
- None

8. Staff Report:

- Correspondence

There was no correspondence.

- Land Use Update

There was no comment.

9. Public Comment: The Commission will hear brief comments at this time from anyone wishing to speak. Comments may not be made regarding any pending application.

There were no Public Comments.

10. Approval of Minutes:

4/03/2025 Regular Meeting

MOTION: Robert Taylor MOVED, seconded by Victoria Tchetchet to APPROVE the minutes of Regular Meeting on 4/03/2025 as written. **VOTE UNANIMOUS. MOTION CARRIED.**

11. Adjourn

MOTION: Chantal Foster MOVED, seconded by Robert Taylor to ADJOURN the meeting at 9:15 p.m. **VOTE UNANIMOUS. MOTION CARRIED.**

Respectfully Submitted:

Dawn Guite

Dawn Guite, Recording Secretary