TOWN OF BLOOMFIELD, CT
TOWN PLAN & ZONING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
THURSDAY FEBRUARY 26, 2026 – 7:00PM
ZOOM MEETING PLATFORM AND
IN- PERSON MEETING – COUNCIL CHAMBERS
APPROVED

There was a meeting for the Town of Bloomfield's Town Plan & Zoning Commission held on February 26, 2026 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 7:04pm.

2. **Roll Call**

Present were: *in-person:* Chair Byron Lester, Kevin Gough, Renae James, Eunice Medwinter (Alternate); Stephen Millette, Roger O'Brien (Alternate) *via Zoom:* Jennifer Marshall-Nealy
Absent were: Ola Aina; Dwight Bolton; Leon Peters

A quorum was established with 5 regular members, and 2 alternate members present. Chairman Lester seated Commissioners Medwinter and O'Brien as voting members.

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

1. **Approval of Minutes**
    a. **February 19, 2026**

Motion to table the approval of the February 19, 2026 meeting minutes made by Commissioner Gough; seconded by Commissioner Millette and approved unanimously by a 7-0-0 vote.

2. **Continued Public Hearings**
    a. **2 Filley Street -** Zone Map Change Application per Section to allow a zone map change from an R-30 (Single-Family Residential District) to a PLR (Planned Luxury Residential District) with related Master Plan for proposed residential development of up to three (3) duplexes, and 20 total parking spaces (10 indoor garage/10 outdoor driveway). Applicant: Dalos and Stern Property Owner: Bryan Chambers

Motion to re-open the public hearing made by Commissioner James; seconded by Commissioner Medwinter and approved unanimously by a 7-0-0 vote.

Mr. Babatunde Ogunro, applicant, was present for discussion along with Mr. Mark Reynolds, Professional Engineer. A revised master plan was prepared in response to the Commission' previous comments. The site plan now has only two buildings, totaling 5,400 sq ft which has reduced the density. A recreation area has been added. The planting plan has been revised to provide a larger buffer. A sidewalk has been added along the length of the driveway. Staff are pleased with the changes and modifications that have been made by the applicant. Mr. Colman stated that the applicant has met the requirements for the PLR overlay district.

Questions from the Public

Mr. Michael Greenburg, 115 Wintonbury Avenue asked if there would be a period for public comment. It was confirmed that the Commission is in receipt of all citizens' comments made regarding this application. He asked questions related to the proposed buffer and snow removal. Mr. Greenburg also raised questions related to the ownership structure.

Questions from the Commission

Commissioner Millette asked whether the access driveway would be considered a road, and it was confirmed that it would not be classified as such. Commissioner O'Brien asked questions related to the landscape plan. Commissioner James confirmed that the new proposed height will be under 30 feet. Commissioner Gough asked questions about the ownership structure. He asked if the recreation area will be available equally to all unit owners. Mr. Ogunru stated that there will be some type of demarcation surrounding the recreation area. He asked staff if an R-30 lot could be subdivided into two R-20 lots and confirmed that it is not allowed. Commissioner Marshall-Nealy asked if there is a fire hydrant on site. Mr. Ogunro stated that there is no fire hydrant on site; however, the Fire Marshal confirmed that the hydrant located opposite the driveway is sufficient. Commissioner Gough asked staff if a maintenance plan should be included in the Conditions of Approval. Commissioner Medwinter stated that this can be addressed during the site plan approval process.

Comments from the Public

Mr. Michael Kamens, 49 Oliver Way, spoke in opposition of the zone change. He stated that there are several issues that need to be addressed before approval. He opined that this proposal does not fit the character of the neighborhood.

Mr. Michael Greenberg, 115 Wintonbury Avenue, spoke in opposition of the zone change. He opined that this proposal does not maintain neighborhood quality. He stated that this would lower property values.

Mr. Robert Dickinson, 400 Seabury Drive, stated that the citizens' written comments should be read into the record during public hearings.

Ms. Laureano read the addendum to the staff report into the record.

Mrs. Carol Panke, 116 Wintonbury Avenue, spoke in opposition of the zone change. She is concerned about the impact this development may have on the adjacent roads. Mrs. Panke spoke at length about traffic issues affecting this neighborhood.

Comments from the Commission

Commissioner Medwinter thanked the residents in attendance and shared information related to HB 8802, an Act concerning housing growth. This bill will increase housing density throughout Connecticut. She opined that this development does fit in the PLR district. Commissioner Gough stated that Mrs. Panke's traffic concerns are more of a global issue. He reviewed the original intention for the creation of the PLR district and questioned if this is an appropriate fit.

Commissioner James thanked the applicant for revising their application to suit the Commission's previous comments. Commissioner Millette stated that he does not believe that this application fits the original intention of the PLR district and is concerned that this may set a precedent. Chairman Lester recommended that the residents in attendance visit the duplexes the applicant built on Maple Avenue, as they have been very tastefully designed.

Mr. Ogunru thanked the Commission and stated that his team is committed to positive change in Bloomfield.

Mr. Michael Greenburg, 115 Wintonbury Avenue, stated that traffic is very dangerous in the area and requested that the Bloomfield Police assist the residents in traffic calming measures.

Motion to close the public hearing made by Commissioner O'Brien; seconded by Commissioner James and approved unanimously by a 7-0-0 vote.

It was moved by Commissioner James and seconded by Commissioner Gough to approve the zoning map amendment to re-zone the property located at 12 Filley Street from the R-30 single-family Residential District to the Planned Luxury Residential District pursuant to Sections 5.4 and 9.7 of the Bloomfield Zoning Regulations subject to the findings and conditions as noted in the staff report addendum dated February 26, 2026 as prepared by Lynda Laureano with the added condition that the applicant prepare and submit an A2 survey upon their site plan application.
Commissioner Gough clarified that this should not be viewed as an "open season" for PLR requests on two-acre lots and emphasized that the Commission should review the Zoning Regulations. Commissioner Millette agreed and suggested a minimum acreage limit of the PLR district.
The motion was approved unanimously by a vote of 7-0-0.

b. 31 Tobey Road, Unit 2 – Special Permit Use Application per Section 4.3.C.4.d, to allow a Used Car Dealer and Repairer establishment in the I-1 district. Applicant: Brian D. Davis Property Owner: 31 Tobey Road LTD

Motion to re-open the public hearing made by Commissioner James; seconded by Commissioner Gough and approved unanimously by a 7-0-0 vote.

Applicant Brian Davis was present along with Andrew Kaplan and Ellen Fisher-Kaplan, property owners. Mr. Davis shared highlights from his original proposal. Mrs. Fisher-Kaplan read excerpts from a report she prepared for Town staff, which details steps taken to address the Commission's concerns regarding the overall site.

Staff met with the property owner, Steven Kaplan, his management team and the Blue Hills Fire Marshall on February 4th and again on February 17th to address concerns raised during the January 22nd public hearing. Mr. Colman stated that these meetings were productive. The property owners have requested twice-monthly meetings with Town staff to continue

collaborative communication.

Mr. Colman reviewed the Conditions of Approval. He requested that the property owners prepare a master site plan for review by the Commission within the next six months.

Questions from the Public

There were no questions from the public.

Questions from the Commission

Commissioner Marshall-Nealy asked what is considered to be a 'small-scale' auto dealer. While there is no definition in the regulations, outdoor storage will be limited to three vehicles. Commissioner Marshall-Nealy requested additional information related to hazardous waste storage.. Commissioner James confirmed with Mr. Davis that he is comfortable with storing only three vehicles outdoors. Commissioner Gough asked the property owners about the status of previously approved site plans, specifically the dance studio and ax throwing business. Mr. Kaplan stated that the dance studio is going through Building Department approvals and the ax throwing business could not agree upon leasing terms. Commissioner Medwinter asked questions related to the planting plan.

Comments from the Public

Bonnie Bercowetz, 492 Park Avenue, spoke in favor of the applicant. Mrs. Bercowetz is the chairperson of the Economic Development Commission and has been working closely with the Kaplans over the past year to develop an arts district in the TIF zone, particularly at 31 Tobey Road. There is tremendous potential for unique development, and this property is important to the future of that area of town.

Comments from the Commission

Commissioner Gough stated that he likes the idea of an overall master plan but questioned if it is appropriate to tie it to a special permit application. He made a distinction as to the applicability of Condition No. 1. He is supportive of the overall vision for the area. Commissioner James recommended staff continue to work with the property owners so that property conditions don't hinder rental applications in the future. Commissioner O'Brien recommended adding an additional condition as previously stated by Mr. Colman regarding the overall site plan. Mrs. Fisher-Kaplan stated that there are no open zoning violations for that property right now. Commissioner Marshall-Nealy thanked Mrs. Bercowetz for her dedication to improving this area of town. Chairman Lester opined that the bi-weekly meetings are good for continuing collaboration between the property owners and staff.

Motion to close the public hearing made by Commissioner James; seconded by Commissioner O'Brien and approved unanimously by a 7-0-0 vote.

It was moved by Commissioner O'Brien and seconded by Commissioner Gough to approve the Special Permit application for 31 Tobey Road, Unit 2, per Section 4.3.C.4.d, to allow a Used car Dealer and Repairer establishment in the I-1 District with the following changes to the Conditions of Approval:

-Change 'may' to 'will' in Condition No. 1
-Additional Condition No. 16 to be added as follows: 'Property owner shall submit a site plan for the entire site within six months from the date of this approval to the Town Plan and Zoning Commission'.

The motion was approved unanimously by a 7-0-0 vote.

New Public Hearings

a. **450 Woodland Avenue** – Special Permit Use Application per Section 4.4.C.4.p – Manufacturing, to allow the production of customized wooden crates used to ship customers products. Applicant: Woodland Associates, LLC Owner, Connecticut Foodshare, Inc.

Mr. Joseph Novak, proposed tenant, was present for discussion. The Town Zoning regulations require a special permit application for any change of permitted use within the Industrial Zone. The use complies with the uses permitted in the I-2 District. Staff recommended approval of this application.

All Crate, Inc. will be conducting light fabrication of wooden crates, which will be used for shipping customers' products. It is anticipated that there will be four full-time employees and the hours of operation will be 7:30am to 4:00pm. On occasion, employees may work on Saturdays.

Commissioner O'Brien recommended dispensing with any further action and having the Commission make a motion on the application.

Motion to close the public hearing made by Commissioner O'Brien; seconded by Commissioner Marshall-Nealy and approved unanimously by a 7-0-0 vote.

It was moved by Commissioner James and seconded by Commissioner Gough to approve the Special Permit Use Application per Section 4.4.C.4.p to allow manufacturing use within a building located at 450 Woodland Avenue subject to the conditions as noted in the Staff Report addendum dated February 26, 2026. The motion was approved unanimously by a 7-0-0 vote.

New Business

a. **410 Woodland Avenue –** Request to amend number four (4) of the Special Permit Use Conditions, approved on November 19, 2020, to allow a modification to the hours of operation for an existing craft café. Applicant: Anthony J. Tine c/o DB Distilling, LLC

Mr. Joseph Tine, applicant, was present for discussion. He is seeking to amend the hours of operation at Waypoint Spirits. He received initial special permit approval in 2020, which set the hours of operation as Monday through Friday from 5:00pm to 9:00pm, Saturdays from 12:00pm to 9:00pm and Sundays 1:00pm to 6:00pm.

Currently, this distillery is the second largest in the state and he would like to expand the hours of operation on Wednesdays and Thursdays from 3:00pm to 9:00pm and Fridays and Saturdays from 12:00pm to 11:00pm.

Commissioner Gough asked Mr. Tine if he is currently operating under the expanded hours of operation already. He asked Town staff how hours of operation are enforced once the applicant receives approval.

Motion to amend Number 4 of the Special Permit Use Conditions, approved on November 19, 2020 to allow a modification to the hours of operation for an existing craft café based on staff recommendations made by Commissioner O'Brien; seconded by Commissioner James and approved unanimously by a 7-0-0 vote.

Old Business

a. **Proposed Text Amendments discussion**

Mr. Colman explained that this is being used as a placeholder for ongoing discussions related to the proposed text amendments. Commissioner Gough asked if the proposed solar regulations are available online.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn made by Commissioner Marshall-Nealy; seconded by Commissioner James and was approved unanimously by a 7-0-0 vote. The meeting was adjourned at 9:36pm.