Present for the online web conference was Chair Brenneman, Commissioners Carrier, Grabulis, Pogson, St. James and Alternate Commissioners Halstead and J. Vibert. The Interim Town Planner and Clerk were also present. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

Secretary St. James read the legal notice into the record.

Alternate Commissioner Halstead was appointed to vote on behalf of Commissioner Schwartz.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** (led by Chair)

**NEW BUSINESS**

276 Main Street, LLC – 276 Main Street

Abbie Delales, 276 Main Street, LLC, would like to install four building signs for tenants. All sign panels will have a black background with white lettering for consistency. The building has previously had building signs for the tenant spaces. No lighting is proposed. The Commission asked for confirmation that the request meets the requirements of the sign zoning regulations. The Interim Town Planner confirmed the dimensional requirements are met.

Upon a motion made and seconded (St. James/Grabulis) it was unanimously

VOTED: To approve the 276 Main Street, LLC sign application for 276 Main Street as presented and on file in the Planning Office.

Thomas Douglas – 114 West District Road

Mr. Douglas presented his Eagle Scout Project to construct a bird blind at West District School. The wood structure is approximately 10 feet wide by five feet deep and seven feet high anchored to concrete pillars. Mr. Douglas said the bird blind will be used for field and wildlife education. The Commissioners offered complimentary remarks and asked some clarifying questions.

Upon a motion made and seconded (St. James/Halstead) it was unanimously

VOTED: To approve Thomas Douglas’ Eagle Scout project to construct a bird blind at West District School, 114 West District Road, as presented and on file in the Planning Office.

Xiang Li – 28 Robin Road

Accept application for special permit to raise hens at 28 Robin Road, R20 zone and schedule public hearing (recommend hearing date of November 9, 2020).

Upon a motion made and seconded (St. James/Carrier) it was unanimously
VOTED: To accept the Xiang Li application for special permit to raise hens at 28 Robin Road, R20 zone and schedule public hearing for November 9, 2020.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

Farmington Commons LLC – 790 Farmington Avenue

Application for change of zone from BR to FC/FV for property located at 790 Farmington Avenue. Attorney Christian Hoheb represented the applicant and stated for the record that the notice requirements have been met. Attorney Hoheb noted for the record that the zone change request is consistent with the POCD. The owner, David Occhialini, has submitted a separate application to convert Building 1 and 4 from office space to residential units. Each of the two buildings will have six one-bedroom units. Mr. Occhialini has the support of the association and the proposed use is consistent with the proposed zone change to Farmington Center/Farmington Village and will fill a need for rental inventory for young professionals. Mr. Occhialini stated Building 1 and 4 are currently vacant so no existing businesses need to be moved. The Commission asked for confirmation the association supports the zone change and proposed use. Jack Kemper, President of the Association, confirmed for the record they had several meetings and are in support of the proposal.

Jay Bombara, 13 Mountain Road, spoke in support of this project.

Portia Corbett, 21 Mountain Spring Road, spoke in support of this project.

The public hearing closed at 7:35 p.m.

Upon a motion made and seconded (St. James/Pogson) it was unanimously VOTED: To approve the Farmington Commons LLC application for change of zone from BR to FC/FV for property located at 790 Farmington Avenue as presented and on file in the Planning Office.

RPG Farmington Commons LLC – 790 Farmington Avenue

Application for special permit for residential use at 790 Farmington Avenue, FC/FV zone. Attorney Christian Hoheb presented the special permit application for residential use for Buildings 1 and 4. He stated for the record all notice requirements have been met. The buildings are vacant and converting the spaces to residential rental units is a less intensive use of the two office buildings. Alan Bongionvanni stated the existing site is 2.25 acres and no site improvements are proposed. The parking requirement for the site will be reduced by sixteen spaces due to the proposed change in use. There was some discussion about the B Buffer yard; at this time there exists more than 50 feet of existing woods along the rear property line. Mark Marzi, Don Hammerberg Associates, presented the architectural elevations. The exteriors of buildings 1 and 4 will remain the same with the exception of the addition of windows to meet egress requirements. All exterior materials will match existing. The Commission asked for clarification on the rear buffer adjacent to a residence. Attorney Hoheb suggested Town Staff meet with the applicant to review. The Commission asked for timing of the conversion to residences. Mr. Occhialini responded they will need to modify the association by-laws but hopes to be done with the project by the summer of 2021. When asked if the units will be for purchase or rental, Mr. Occhialini responded they will be strictly rentals.
Jay Bombara, 13 Mountain Road, spoke in support of the application and asked for clarification on the rear buffer yard.

Jack Kemper, President of the Farmington Commons Association, commented the association has no issue with the existing buffer; the existing buffer yard seems reasonable.

The public hearing closed at 8:03 p.m.

Upon a motion made and seconded (St. James/Pogson) it was unanimously

VOTED: To approve the RPG Farmington Commons LLC application for special permit for residential use at 790 Farmington Avenue, FC/FV zone as presented and on file with the Planning Office for Units 1, 4A & 4B, with the condition that there be a 35-foot rear yard B buffer yard and that the existing plantings satisfy this requirement.

JDA Farmington LLC – 784 Farmington Avenue

Application for special permit and site plan approval to relocate existing building and construct new bank branch at 784 Farmington Avenue, FC/FV zone. Attorney Robert Reeve, Scully, Nicksa & Reeve, represented the applicant and stated for the record all notice requirements have been met. Chase Bank would like to construct a new building facing Farmington Avenue. A portion of the existing building will be preserved and relocated on site. The history of the building to be preserved is documented in the file and was presented. The Architectural Design Review Committee (“ADRC”) comments were submitted for the record. Also, the Economic Development Commission has submitted a letter of support. In response to recommendations from the ADRC, the applicant submitted modified plans. Attorney Reeve explained a 5/6 vote is required for a new building less than two full stories. Tom Daly, Milone & MacBroom, reviewed the details of the site plan; site improvements proposed in addition to the new building, relocated building and remote ATM. Mr. Daly confirmed they will resolve all engineering comments in the final plans. Hernan Graziano, Architect, TPG Architecture, stated they met with the ADRC many times informally and then earlier this month after the formal application was submitted. The Committee has eight recommendations to the façade. He provided a detail description of building materials and modifications made to the plan in response to most of the recommendations. The Commissioners asked for clarification on why not two full stories, the proposed use of the preserved/relocated building, site lighting and construction timing. Mr. Daly provided clarification on the construction timing and site lighting. The preserved building will be used as a personal office for the applicant. Regarding the two-story building question, the original rendering was a two-story colonial style building mimicking the Elm Tree Inn building but the ADRC felt that was not appropriate for this location and recommended the modifications that result in the building presented here. The applicant hopes to begin the project before winter. There was a brief discussion about roof top units; they will be hidden by the parapet.

Tim Eagles, Chair of the ADRC, read the ADRC letter dated October 16, 2020 into the record and explained the review process the applicant embarked on with the ADRC.

Bill Wadsworth, Chair of the Economic Development Commission, read the EDC letter dated October 15, 2020 into the record.

Jay Bombara, 13 Mountain Road, read his letter of support into the record.
Portia Corbett, 21 Mountain Spring Road, read her letter of support dated October 23, 2020 into the record.

Chris Cloud, 25 Mountain Spring Road, submitted a letter in support of the proposal dated October 20, 2020 to the Planning Office for the record.

Stephen Bryne, 790 Farmington Avenue, submitted a letter dated October 23, 2020 in support of the application to the Planning Office for the record.

Bill Wienke, 51 Mountain Spring Road, submitted a letter dated October 23, 2020 in support of the application to the Planning Office for the record.

The Commissioners asked for the hours of operation. Attorney Reeve responded 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday and 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday. There were some general comments and reiteration to be mindful about impact to Route 4 traffic during construction. Attorney Reeve asked the Commission not to impose recommendation no. 2 from the ADRC and to not require the applicant to go back to the Committee.

The public hearing closed at 9:47 p.m.

Upon a motion made and seconded (Pogson/St. James) it was unanimously VOTED: To approve the JDA Farmington LLC application for special permit and site plan approval to relocate existing building and construct new bank branch at 784 Farmington Avenue, FC/FV zone as presented and on file in the Planning Office with the condition that all engineering comments in memorandum dated October 21, 2020 be addressed by the applicant, that the building architecture be approved as presented at the meeting and that no further review with ADRC is required.

INFORMAL DISCUSSION

Metro Realty Group, Ltd. – 8231 & 9249 Farmington Avenue

Attorney Christian Hoheb introduced the Metro Realty Group presentation team who then provided a detailed informal presentation regarding their proposal for the subject property. The presentation included the history of the general area and a potential proposal for a high-end, four-story, 150-unit residential development in the Special Innovation Zone. The presentation team asked for feedback from the Commission. The Commission recommended providing graphics to demonstrate the visibility of the four-story building from various vantage points when they submit a formal application.

PLANNER’S REPORT

Interim Town Planner Rutherford asked the Commission to watch for an email the next morning regarding an upcoming application submission; who will want full size plan sets in addition to electronic copies.
MINUTES

Meeting Minutes

10-14-20

Upon a motion made and seconded (St. James/Pogson) it was unanimously
VOTED: To approve the October 14, 2020 Town Plan & Zoning Commission meeting minutes.

The meeting adjourned at 10:49 p.m.

SJM