

Wallingford Planning & Zoning Commission
Regular Meeting
Monday, August 11, 2025
7:00 p.m.
Robert F. Parisi Council Chambers – Town Hall
Town Hall – 45 South Main Street
MINUTES

Chairman Seichter called the meeting to order at approximately 7:00 p.m.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all.

Roll Call: Present: James Seichter, Chair; J.P. Venoit, Vice Chair; Stephen Allinson, Secretary; James Fitzsimmons, Regular Member; Jeffrey Kohan, Regular Member; Joseph Sanders, Alternate; David Parent, Alternate; and Kevin Pagini, Town Planner.

Consideration of Minutes – July 14, 2025, Regular Meeting

Commissioner Venoit: Motion to approve the Minutes of Monday, July 14, 2025, Meeting of the Wallingford Planning and Zoning Commission as submitted.

Commissioner Fitsimmons: Second

Vote: Unanimous to approve, Commissioner Kohan abstained.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

**1. Special Permit/Midwood Management Corp./1000, 1020, 1030, 1044, 1080 Barnes Road
(Continued from 7/14/2025) #401-25**

Commissioner Allinson noted the additional correspondence including memo from the Department of Engineering to Planning & Zoning Commission dated July 14, 2025; letter from OCC Group Inc. to Wallingford Planning & Zoning Commission dated July 14, 2025; letter from OCC Group Inc. to Wallingford Planning & Zoning Commission dated July 29, 2025; document entitled Inventory of Existing Stormwater Facilities for 1000, 1020, 1030, 1044, and 1080 Barnes Road, Wallingford, noted Amended dated July 29, 2025; letter from James Bubaris, Bubaris Traffic Associates to David Carson, OCC Design Consortium dated July 29, 2025; letter from Ed Hohmann to Wallingford Planning & Zoning Commission dated August 5, 2025; letter from Joan Munger to Wallingford Planning & Zoning Commission dated August 5, 2025; email from Alison Kapushinski Town Engineer, to Kevin Pagini Town Planner, dated August 7, 2025; email from Joe Heeran to Planning & Zoning Commission dated August 7, 2025 and revised Site Plans received August 7, 2025.

Presenters included: Atty. James Barrito, Halloran & Sage, 265 Church Street, New Haven, represented the owners of the property; George Cotter, PE, and David Carson, OCC Group for design; Jim Bubaris, Bubaris Traffic Associates, East Hampton; and Sam Sargeant, Lazarus & Sargeant, Architects.

Atty. Barrito reported that they have submitted revised plans in response to the Engineer's comments, copies of the amended Stormwater Inventory, as well as the response to the traffic comments.

Mr. Bubaris responded to questions from the last meeting on the traffic report. The counts done on Northrop Road were done in mid-September of 2024. They also used a prior study that was done in mid-September 2022. So, school buses were included. He clarified that the DOT told them to use that study as background data. In response to a question from last month, he reported that they have recalculated so that 5% of the traffic will go north, which generates 7 additional vehicles during peak hours. The levels of service at the nearby intersections are not affected. Regarding the levels of service presented for some prior projects for Research Parkway, he noted that the volumes they used were from 2020 or earlier. Mr. Bubaris stated that the analysis used a different set of data to come up with service levels of D & E. Their analysis shows levels B & C. He presented the DOT data for Rt. 68 between the two I-91 ramps for the last few years. Since COVID, fewer people commute to work, so there are fewer cars in these intersections. He noted that the ITE for traffic generation for a 415,000 sq. ft. warehouse is estimated to generate 710 trips daily, with 75 during peak hours. Using the same data source for an office development in that space, the daily count would be 4,750 vehicles with 545 to 585 trips during peak hours.

Chairman Seichter asked what projects were included in the data that the DOT provided. Some of the earlier proposals included road improvements. Mr. Bubaris replied that the data is for all approved projects at full potential in the DOT database.

Mr. Pagini noted that the peer reviewer of the traffic study signed off on the methodology.

Atty. Barrito stated that regarding sidewalks, the Town Engineer was satisfied with their plans. Sidewalks are not required throughout the site. They are not needed for this type of use. Instead, they provided a wider area of planting.

Mr. Carson addressed the question of sidewalks. He reported that they met with the Town Engineer and Town Planner and clarified the building entrances, handicapped spaces, sidewalks, and loading docks. The building entrances are marked on the site plan. There are two main entrances for each building, with additional entrances in the center. There are no sidewalks along the sides, allowing for 10 ft. of robust shrubbery. Parking is for employees only. There is no impact on the storm drainage system with or without sidewalks.

Commissioner Fitzsimmons asked how many parking spaces are provided for building 3. Mr. Carson replied around 130 or 140. Commissioner Fitzsimmons asked if they have a tenant yet. Atty. Barrito replied no. Commissioner Fitzsimmons stated that he still thinks they need sidewalks to get employees from the parking lot to the building. He supports the engineer's request to have sidewalks from the parking lot to the building. He noted that there are no sidewalks along the frontage and asked if we could request that they be added. Mr. Pagini replied Yes. Commissioner Fitzsimmons asked if there

were any sidewalks to connect to. Mr. Pagini replied no. Commissioner Fitzsimmons suggested making sidewalks from the parking lot to the buildings a condition.

Mr. Carson stated that the buildings are laid out for two tenants each with two separate parking lots each.

Commissioner Kohan noted that a lot of people walk down Old Barnes Road to the reservoir and out to Rt. 68. Sidewalks along the frontage on Old Barnes Road should be considered. Proton Therapy across the street and the nearby hotel will likely increase foot traffic. Northrop Road traffic is bad. He stated that he would like to see sidewalks on the western side of Northrop. This is a safety issue.

Mr. Cotter noted that industrial areas have not required sidewalks along the main roads or around buildings except at entrances. Even retail plazas don't require sidewalks. This building will have parking on either side of the aisleway. It is not a mass parking lot. They are trying to provide more green space.

Atty. Barrito noted that the existing developments to the north and south don't have sidewalks.

Commissioner Kohan stated that the Commission is taking a better look at how we do things. We are starting to require more sidewalks for safety reasons. There is plenty of room to add them. He asked about the height of the buildings. Mr. Carson stated that the plan is designed for a maximum of 45 ft. high buildings. It is conceivable that, based on the design of the roof trusses, it could be less. Commissioner Kohan noted that long-term storage warehouses are usually 20 – 30 ft. Mr. Carson replied that the standard for new warehouse buildings is 36 ft. of clear height. Two years ago, it was 32 ft. The old warehouses are not viable anymore. Commissioner Kohan noted that 150,000 sq. ft. is the minimum for a high cube warehouse. He asked if they would have to come back for approval if they changed the use from long-term storage. Mr. Pagini replied Yes. Commissioner Kohan asked about noise. He noted that sound travels over water. If the warehouse operates 24/7, there could be trucks during the night. How much traffic do they expect during the quiet hours? Mr. Carson replied that they don't know that the tenants will be open 24/7, but they have designed it for that. The existing woods along the water should limit the noise going across the water. He added that the loading docks are on the opposite side from the reservoir. Commissioner Kohan asked about the demolition of the house. Mr. Carson replied that there will be a demolition permit by a licensed contractor.

Mr. Pagini added that the Commission may require noise strategies based on regulations.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Ed Hohmann, 12 Marie Lane, asked if they had factored future 5 Research Parkway into the traffic. He asked what the prediction of tractor-trailer traffic will be from 5 Research Parkway. Mr. Bubaris replied that he doesn't have the number. The DOT has included whatever is pending in the numbers. He doesn't know the breakdown.

Joan Munger, 15 Valley View Drive, stated that there are sidewalks on Research Parkway. Due to the hotel and Proton Sciences on Northrop, there will be people walking and jogging. It is posted no through trucks. She asked what happens to these buildings when the building height standard goes up again. She asked if all these buildings would become unviable. There are already lots of empty buildings on Research Parkway.

Shirley Standish, 6 Tammy Hill Road, stated that this site is difficult. It is posted no through trucks, but they go through. When they turn from Rt. 68 onto Northrop, it's too late. She asked if they would widen the road at this end, too. The sight line where the buses come down is bad. Chairman Seichter stated that several years ago, a study was done for Northrop Road. The Town would have to make the improvements. He agrees that it is a challenge. The applicant is only responsible for improvements at their property. Ms. Standish clarified that there is no plan to widen the road. Chairman Seichter said that there is no proposal by the applicant, and the Town Engineer has not suggested it.

Joe Heeran, High Hill Road, stated that the same issues were talked about for Research Parkway before. He asked who did the study, as he has issues with the studies. Chairman Seichter replied that a professional traffic engineer did the study, and they shared how it was done. A peer reviewer reviewed the study, which was presented last month. The Town Engineer also looked at the analysis. Mr. Heeran noted that a study in 2019 for Research Parkway deemed the area unsatisfactory. How did it become satisfactory? There were to be over 1000 vehicles exiting and entering the Research Parkway facility, and now there is new traffic being added from new developments. It's going to be a disaster at Rt. 68. He stated that Northrop Road is dangerous. The intersection of Carpenter and Research Parkway is dangerous. Trucks go through despite the signs. The speed limit is not enforced. He quoted a report by the Town of Wallingford: "Northrop Road lacks the characteristics desired to provide safe mobility for not only the industrial, commercial, and agricultural land uses but for residents that utilize the roadway as well". He is concerned with the ecology and environment of North Farms Reservoir. He noted that storage in warehouses would result in the use of pesticides to keep the pests under control and harm the endangered species there.

Fred Fiore, 130 High Hill Road, thanked the Commission for the questions they are asking. People walk dogs and go on nature walks in this area. He sees deer, fox, and more that travel through the property. All that would change with this development. The animals would be trapped. Traffic will increase on High Hill. We need to analyze the risks and benefits. The benefits must outweigh the risks. Any tax benefit will end up being used to fix the roads. There are no sidewalks on High Hill Road. He asked that the Commission not let this happen.

Celine L'heureux, 10 Coventry Court, stated that she is concerned with traffic. She noted that after COVID, a lot of companies asked their people to come back to the office. The study needs to be revisited. She has seen the traffic increase since COVID. She is also concerned with noise.

Richard L'heureux, 10 Coventry Court, stated that he is a retired president of the Wallingford Land Trust. This is some of the most pristine farm land left. He noted that a/c units on the roof would be taller than

the trees around the buildings. These will be three huge boxes. His house overlooks Rt. 68. He is already disturbed by truck noise at night. He noted that distribution centers run 24/7.

Bruce Cwirka, 1043 Northrop Road, stated that traffic is and has been a problem. Four years ago, there was a proposal to slow traffic, and trucks now go 50 mph. He can't get out of his driveway. He is concerned with stormwater runoff and snow removal. He noted that with the current construction, no one can get through Northrop. There is no legal enforcement of the no through trucks signage. He asked what we would do if this damages the reservoir. We all have wells that will be contaminated by the runoff. How will they get all that traffic to Northrop Road? Nothing came of the proposal to slow traffic. Safety concerns are not being addressed. This will have a huge environmental impact. He added that he doesn't disagree with expansion.

Roseanne Brennan, 75 Thorpe Avenue, stated that promises were made a year or two ago when East Side Garages was built in front of her house. They planted some stuff, but that doesn't do anything for the noise. Diesel trucks run all night. She can only imagine what this will do. The traffic is already bad at the other end of Rt. 68. This will impact us.

Glenna Piring, Leigus Road, stated that with the Blue Cross building sitting empty, there are motorcycles and cars there at night. The police are there every weekend. They think this will be a warehouse, maybe not. Adding a building of this size will cause environmental issues. There are plenty of empty buildings; why can't they refurbish those?

Jack Arrigoni, 18 Martin Trail, regarding sidewalks, noted that Meriden is putting in a bike and walk trail all the way to the Wallingford line. Regarding the traffic study, it states that there is less traffic than there was in 2016. There is more traffic. He looked up the CT DOT numbers. The DOT did the ropes across the road to count axles in 2016. In 2016, there were 21,000 vehicles. In 2022, they broke out cars from trucks and motorcycles. They counted vehicles, not axles. In 2022, there were 15,000 vehicles. Mr. Bubaris stated that they always count axels. There is no difference in how they did it then and now. Mr. Arrigoni replied that now they use cameras.

Heather Hinckley, 216 High Hill Road, thanked the Commission. She stated a worry about water and the reservoir. The chemicals used to keep the parking lot clear go into the reservoir and into the well water.

Atty. Barrito closed by stating that the zoning for the area permits this type of use by special permit. They have revised their plans to address comments from the Town's staff. They presented expert testimony and reports, which made it clear that traffic won't be a problem. They made their point about the relevance of the sidewalks. The application meets the regulations. They had a comprehensive review by the Wetlands agency and made design changes to address the concerns.

Mr. Pagini suggested that the condition of approval for the sidewalks be worked out by the engineer and the applicant, and they can come back.

Commissioner Fitzsimmons asked if the Police Department provided comments. Mr. Pagini replied no, that he was unable to connect with him. Commissioner Fitzsimmons noted that the Police Chief has a duty to say something as Wallingford's legal traffic authority. Many of the comments had to do with traffic.

Chairman Seichter agreed that a comment from the Police Department was requested and is important to have. He asked Mr. Pagini about time limitations. Mr. Pagini replied that there is one more month. Chairman Seichter stated that the Commission would like to continue the hearing and asked the Applicant for concurrence. Atty. Barrito stated that the Police Department could be considered staff, and the hearing can be closed before getting the comments. Chairman Seichter disagreed. He apologized and stated that the comments are necessary. Atty. Barrito consented to the continuation.

Commissioner Allinson noted that the Engineer didn't weigh in on the environmental effect of sidewalks on Barnes and Northrop. He suggested asking about any effect from these.

Commissioner Parent supports the continuation and stated that he is having doubts about supporting the application.

Commissioner Kohan stated that he supports sidewalks and is concerned about the level of service on Northrop Road. The comments from the Police Chief are important. This is a country road not designed for this traffic. He agreed several years ago that a traffic engineer suggested changes to improve traffic. He believes that the sidewalks internal to the warehouses and along Northrop and Barnes Road are critical.

Hearing no further public comment, Chairman Seichter called for a motion to continue the public hearing.

Commissioner Venoit: Motion to continue the public hearing for application #401-25 Special Permit/Midwood Management Corp/1000, 1020, 1030, 1044, and 1080 Barnes Road to the September 8th Planning & Zoning meeting.

Commissioner Fitzsimmons: second

Vote: Kohan – yes; Fitzsimmons – yes; Allinson – yes; Venoit – yes; Chairman Seichter – yes.

The application is continued.

SITE PLAN APPROVALS

**2. CT General Statute 8-30g – Site Plan/Next Gen Development LLC/100 South Cherry Street
(Continued from 7/14/2025) #210-25**

Commissioner Allinson noted the additional correspondence including memorandum from Janis Small, Corporation Counsel to the members of the Planning and Zoning Commission dated July 14, 2025; memo from the Department of Engineering to Planning & Zoning Commission dated July 31, 2025; 100 South Cherry Street, Wallingford, CT Final Affordability Plan revised to July 25, 2025; email from Alison Kapushinski, Town Engineer to Kevin Pagini, Town Planner, dated August 4, 2025; email from Janis Small, Corporation Counsel to Kevin Pagini, Town Planner, dated August 5, 2025; Engineering Report/Traffic Generation from Nafis & Young Engineering, dated June 9, 2025; document entitled 100 South Cherry Street, Wallingford, CT PZC application #210-25/8-30-g Site Plan Response to Comments Dated July 31, 2025 date of receipt August 5, 2025; letter from Kevin Pagini, Town Planner to Next Gen Development, LLC, dated August 6, 2025; Inspection Report from the Wallingford Fire Department, dated August 6, 2025; 100 South Cherry Street, Wallingford, CT Final Affordability Plan noted revised date of receipt August 6, 2025; Interoffice Memorandum from Thomas Flannery, Senior Engineer, Water & Sewer Divisions to Kevin Pagini, Town Planner, dated August 6, 2025; Memo from Department of Engineering to Planning & Zoning Commission dated August 7, 2025; and revised site plans dated August 5, 2025.

Samuel Sargeant, Lazarus & Sargeant Architects, Vetan Alimi, one of the owners, Adam Hirsch, one of the owners, and Dave Nafis, P.E., Civil Engineer, Nafis & Young Engineers, Northford, presented. Mr. Sargeant stated that they have handled all but one of the conditions.

Mr. Nafis stated that most of the changes were details and small stuff required by the engineer. One driveway was shifted, and he showed where they added a do not enter sign for one-way traffic at the Ward Street entrance. In response to the Fire Marshal, they added a sidewalk in the courtyard. They added stormwater drainage detail to the plan. He noted that there will be no basements. Landscaping was added along the common boundaries with other houses, and they will supplement the existing fencing.

Mr. Sargeant responded to a question regarding having the building entrances face Ward Street. They showed the change in the plan.

Chairman Seichter asked how they would enforce the no exit at the Ward Street entrance. Mr. Nafis replied that due to the stop bar being so far back due to the train tracks and from conversations with the Town Engineer it is a safety issue. The driveway will be clearly marked.

Commissioner Parent asked if the 72 non-handicapped parking spaces would be enough parking for all residents. Mr. Alimi replied Yes. Mr. Sargeant noted that there will be a minimum of code-accessible units, so the five handicapped parking spaces will be used. Commissioner Parent asked about the snow removal plan. Mr. Nafis replied that they plan to push off small amounts, but for large storms will the owner will truck it off-site.

Commissioner Fitzsimmons asked who they would use for administering the affordable housing. Mr. Alimi replied that they will do it themselves, but are happy to work with the Town. Commissioner

Fitzsimmons stated that there is a big need and asked if they would consider working with the Wallingford Housing Authority. Mr. Alimi replied that he is happy to look into that.

Chairman Seichter asked if they would consider extending the affordability period to 50 years, as there will still be a need in 40 years. Mr. Alimi said yes.

Mr. Pagini stated that the Corporation Counsel will work with the applicant for the yearly certificate and noted that the change to 50 years needs to be reflected in the affordability plan.

Chairman Seichter stated that there is a need for affordable housing and that this is an important project. This has been an open space for quite some time. He is supportive of this application.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Hearing no further public comment, Chairman Seichter called for a motion to close the public hearing.

Commissioner Venoit: Motion to approve application #210-25 for CT General Statute 8-30g – Site Plan/Next Gen Development LLC/100 South Cherry Street for a Site Plan approval request to construct an affordable housing development under CT Statute 8-30g with 66 units, 20 of which will be affordable and associated parking on plans entitled “8-30g Site Plan – South Cherry Commons” dated April 30, 2025 and revised to August 5, 2025, subject to the following conditions:

1. Comments from the Town Planner dated June 17, 2025, and August 6, 2025.
2. Comments from Senior Engineer, Tom Flannery, Water & Sewer Divisions dated July 3, 2025, and August 6, 2025.
3. Comments from Town Engineer, Alison Kapushinski, dated July 11, 2025, July 31, 2025, and August 7, 2025.
4. Comments from the Fire Marshal, Brian Schock, dated July 2, 2025, and August 6, 2025.
5. Operation & Maintenance Plan, or Notice of said Plan, to be filed on Wallingford Land Records.
6. Excavation permit is required from the Department of Engineering for any work within the right-of-way.
7. Applicant to confirm any required permitting from Amtrak.
8. The applicant shall submit a required yearly certificate stating compliance with the affordable housing requirements to be reviewed by the Law Department and shall execute and record a restrictive covenant regarding the affordable units for a 50-year duration prior to the issuance of a building permit.
9. Erosion and sediment control bonds shall be posted for each phase as construction progresses in the amount of \$9,500.00 for each specific phase.
10. Six (6) copies of the final plans forwarded to the Planning & Zoning office.

Commissioner Fitzsimmons: Second

Vote: Kohan – yes; Fitzsimmons – yes; Allinson – yes; Venoit – yes; Chairman Seichter – yes.

The application is approved.

PUBLIC DISCUSSION

3. Sign Permit Fee

Mr. Pagini reviewed the proposal for new permits due to the change in the sign regulations. New sign requests have a more thorough review.

Commissioner Parent asked how much of the fees fund the Planning and Zoning office. Mr. Pagini replied that the money goes to the general fund, not the department. He reported that they currently collect \$5,700 per year, with 80% of that for re-facing signs. The new regulations eliminate the re-facing fees, and there is more work involved.

Commissioner Allinson clarified that the recommendation is for a fee of \$300. Mr. Pagini reported that the Zoning Enforcement Officer talked to other towns, and \$300 is reasonable.

Chairman Seichter clarified that the Commission can vote on the increase tonight. Mr. Pagini confirmed. Chairman Seichter called for a motion.

Commissioner Venoit: Motion to increase the New Sign Permit fee to \$300 because we were undercharging for new sign permits, as they take more time and analysis and thus require a larger fee.

Commissioner Fitzsimmons: second

Vote: Kohan – yes; Fitzsimmons – yes; Allinson – yes; Venoit – yes; Chairman Seichter – yes.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS AND STAFF

4. Administrative Approvals – noted as approved

- a. 5 Research Parkway/5 Research Parkway/Reduction to previous approval #217-25
Mr. Pagini noted that the entire file is available for review in the Zoning Office.
- b. 212 S. Orchard St./Falcone #218-25
- c. 17 Winding Brook Lane/Heath #219-25
- d. 10 Willard Ave./Ma #307-25
- e. 19 Fairlawn Drive/Barnes #RA-25-02
- f. 367 Williams Rd/Nadwairski #RA=25-03

5. ZBA July Decisions – no comment

6. ZBA Notice of no meeting in August, 2025 – no comment

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Venoit: Motion to Adjourn the Wallingford Planning and Zoning Commission for Monday, August 11, 2025, at 9:12 pm.

Commissioner Fitzsimmons: Second

Vote: Unanimous

Respectfully submitted,
Cheryl-Ann Tubby
Recording Secretary