

**PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION**  
**September 8, 2025 Special Meeting Minutes**

*These minutes are not official until approved at a subsequent meeting.*

Commission Members Present: Alan Gannuscio, Tamie Quagliaroli, Ricardo Rachele, Michael Christianson

Commission Member Absent: Peggy Sayers, Julia Terra (Alternate), David Weigert (Alternate), Roger Susaya (Alternate)

Town Staff In Attendance: Justin LaFountain (Town Planner)

**I. Call to Order**

Mr. Gannuscio called the meeting to order at 6:10 pm.

**II. Roll Call**

**III. Approval of Minutes**

**a. August 18 2025 Special Meeting**

After a brief discussion it was concluded this item would be addressed at the next meeting.

**IV. Receive New Application(s)**

None

**V. Public Hearings**

**a. 593 Elm Street -- Special Use Permit for off premise parking in accordance with Section 707**

The recording secretary read the legal advertisement and Mr. Rachele read the rules for conducting a public hearing.

Attorney Paul Smith addressed the commission on behalf of the applicant 593 Elm LLC, Owner of 593 Elm Street. He explained this application represents the 2nd stage of a process, which was started when the Commission amended the Zoning Regulations to allow off site parking by special use permit. He shared Section 707 provides the Commission authority to impose conditions tying parking approval to a lease term or specific use. He continued on and shared 593 Elm Street is a 2 acre triangular parcel located at the corner of Old County Road and Elm Street. He noted the site has supported several commercial uses, including a car rental agency, a produce market, and most recently a car dealership/detailing business. The parcel contains a small building and a very large parking area.

Attorney Smith reviewed maps with the Commission, noting areas previously approved for car dealership inventory parking, as well as the proposed "vehicle parking area" to accommodate utility trucks associated with Liberty Electric Line Builders, the current tenant. He noted the tenant maintains office space at 598 North Street but requires additional parking for their utility vehicles. He shared the parking areas have been in active use for approximately 6 years. He shared the property is located in the B1 zone and it was emphasized that the proposed use is consistent with zoning.

Next, he shared the lot is fully fenced and used solely for parking. He noted the applicant has maintained a natural buffer area between the parcel and the nearby condos, which has served as screening and helped maintain a positive relationship with the condo association.

Attorney Smith referenced Mr. LaFountain's report noting the 3 criteria for a special use permit had been met. He noted the applicant had no objection to the conditions recommended by Mr. LaFountain. He acknowledged that if Liberty were to leave the site, any future proposal would return to the Commission for review. He shared the applicant owns several other businesses in Town, including a car wash, and has consistently sought to maintain positive relations with the community. To conclude he offered to answer any questions from the Commission.

There was a brief discussion regarding natural screening at the back of the property. It was confirmed for Mr. Gannuscio the maintained natural area creates a positive relationship with the condos. There was also a brief discussion around the lack of screening on the Elm Street side of the property.

It was shared by Mr. LaFountain this process is trying to clear up a violation.

Mr. Rachele had a number of questions. They briefly discussed the parcel's location within the airport overlay zone and whether those requirements applied to the property. He next asked about entrances and exits on both Old County Road and Elm Street. It was shared cones had been placed at one of the Elm Street driveways to discourage cut through traffic related to congestion at the nearby Dunkin Donuts.

Attorney Smith confirmed for Mr. Rachele the storage containers on site were not part of the current application, but were under appeal for a separate violation to be resolved with the Building Department.

Mr. Rachele expressed concern that the site appeared to have shifted from a passenger car oriented facility to one used for staging commercial utility trucks to a kind of truck terminal.

Attorney Smith shared that in practice the operation was more benign than prior uses because the utility trucks are generally dispatched for extended assignments and do not generate heavy daily traffic. He continued on to point out that the Commission had previously approved a similar facility at 1 National Drive. He stressed that this site was not functioning as a truck terminal as there is no transfer of cargo or intensive loading activity, but rather long term parking for vehicles awaiting deployment. He reiterated the use is compatible with the surrounding area.

There was a brief discussion around screening began by Mr. Christianson. There was concern expressed around unmanaged weeds and the lack of beautification.

It was suggested that the applicant consider installing slats within the chain link fencing to better screen the trucks from view along Elm Street.

It was noted that the existing fence height was relatively low but limited full visibility of the trucks. Commission members acknowledged that while screening could reduce line of sight from the street, it would not entirely conceal the vehicles. It was shared the space between sidewalk and the road likely would not be wide enough for plantings.

The idea of continuing the application to the October meeting was shared as it would provide Attorney Smith and the applicant to explore solutions around screenings/plantings.

Mr. Rachele inquired on if storm drains were on site, expressing concern for stormwater runoff. Attorney Smith noted he would look into it.

Ms. Quagliaroli shared she was a hard no coming into the meeting. She felt seeing the trucks is not a pleasing welcome to Windsor Locks. She praised the positive improvements made to the building, giving the applicant credit. She noted the neat condition of the car wash as well. Attorney Smith shared the applicant bought the property with the idea to make it better.

Mr. Gannuscio and Mr. LaFountain were in agreement it made sense to hold Town Planner comments to the October meeting. Attorney Smith acknowledged seeing Mr. LaFountain's memo.

Mr. Gannuscio asked the commission for questions.

It was confirmed for Mr. Christianson there had been no reply from the Fire Marshall.

Mark Doody shared he had no objection to the use of the site for utility truck parking, provided the area was kept in good condition and did not create additional problems. He shared concerns regarding screening, pointing out that the height of the trucks far exceeded the height of the existing fencing. He noted many of the vehicles measure approximately 12 feet in height, making it unlikely that a 4 foot or 6 foot fence would be effective for full screening. He shared it is a great location for a business of this type, highlighting the proximity to the airport. He concluded the applicant and Attorney Smith were taking the proper steps to address zoning requirements through this application.

Mr. LaFountain suggested members take a closer look at the property and the fencing noting that the current fence does little to block views of the vehicles.

Mr. Rachele asked the applicant to address if the property is in the overlay zone.

Mr. Gannuscio noted there were no members of the public.

It was MOVED (Gannuscio) and SECONDED (Rachele) and PASSED (4-0) to CONTINUE the public hearing for 593 Elm Street -- Special Use Permit for off premise parking in accordance with Section 707 to Tuesday October 14 2025.

#### **VI. New Business**

None.

#### **VII. Old Business**

##### **a. Workshop -- Review of Existing Regulations – Home Occupations**

Mr. LaFountain confirmed for Mr. Rachele he would email the commission a clear copy of the proposed changes. He also confirmed the resident from Oak Street would likely attend the meeting.

#### **VIII. Public Input**

None.

#### **IX. Communications and Bills**

None.

#### **X. Adjournment**

It was MOVED (Gannuscio) and SECONDED (Rachele) and PASSED (4-0) to adjourn meeting at 6:58 pm.

*Respectfully submitted,*

*Ashley Malec, Recording Secretary  
Windsor Locks Planning & Zoning Commission*