

PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION
February 9 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes

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

Commission Members Present: Peggy Sayers, Alan Gannuscio, Tamie Quagliaroli, Ricardo Rachele, Michael Christianson, Roger Susaya (Alternate)

Commission Member Absent: Julia Terra (Alternate), David Weigert (Alternate)

Town Staff In Attendance: Justin LaFountain (Town Planner), Mr. Steele (Town Engineer)

I. Call to Order

Chairwoman Sayers called the meeting to order at 6:05 pm.

II. Roll Call

III. Approval of Minutes

a. January 12 2026 Regular Meeting

It was MOVED (Rachele) and SECONDED (Christianson) and PASSED (4-1) to APPROVE the January 12 2026 Special Meeting minutes. Mr. Gannuscio abstained.

IV. Receive New Application(s)

None

V. Public Hearings

a. 80 Ella Grasso Turnpike – Special Use Permit with Site Plan Review for reconstruction of existing fuel service station and convenience store

Chairwoman Sayers asked for the legal advertisement to be read.

Mr. Gannuscio brought up the Collins Aerospace site plan modification application and there was a brief discussion to add it to the agenda.

Mr. Christianson began a brief discussion around the sharing of new business items and how to ensure commissioners are aware of when applications would be discussed.

The recording secretary clarified the site plan modification application was emailed to the commission on January 15 2026 when it was received, this was after the regular meeting, held on January 12 2026.

Mr. Christianson expressed the need to work through, as a team when applications will be discussed as a new business item.

It was MOVED (Sayers) and SECONDED (Gannuscio) and PASSED (5-0) to ADD 21 Hamilton Road Site Plan Modification for Collins Aerospace Hamilton Road Entrance Improvements to the agenda.

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

Attorney Smith, 27 South Main Street Windsor Locks addressed the on behalf of United Petroleum LLC, owner of 80 Ella Grasso Turnpike. Also present was Mark Smith of CMG Engineering.

Attorney Smith shared the facility has operated as a fueling station and convenience store for more than 40 years and occupies a small site on the West side of the turnpike. He described the surrounding properties, noting wetlands and vacant land to the West and North. He explained the applicant is proposing a complete rehabilitation of the site, including removal of the existing building, canopy, and the construction of a new building. He noted that the proposal would significantly improve the appearance and functionality of the site while bringing it closer into conformance.

Mr. Smith explained that the current station has an outdated island configuration creating circulation issues, limited accessibility, and no parking adjacent to the building. He noted that all above ground structures would be removed as part of the project, with the exception of the existing ground sign and newer perimeter lighting. He stated that utilities and underground fuel tanks would remain, as the tanks are modern, code compliant, and have about 12 years of remaining service life. He then described the proposed layout, which includes a new canopy set farther back from the roadway, 4 modern pump islands providing 8 fueling positions, and improved circulation that allows vehicles to enter and exit fueling positions without blocking one another.

Continuing on he explained that a new approximately 2,900 square foot convenience store would be constructed toward the rear of the site, along with a drive through lane providing sufficient vehicle stacking. He noted that the design allows for increased landscaped areas of about 1700 square feet compared to existing conditions, including new landscape islands, shrubs, canopy trees, and additional green space along the frontage and within the site, subject to coordination with staff and State right of way limitations.

Drainage improvements were also reviewed. Mr. Smith explained that the site currently drains to several dry wells without pretreatment and that the proposed plan would introduce deep sump hooded catch basins and additional underground drainage features to provide pretreatment and improved infiltration while maintaining overall drainage function. He noted that an erosion and sedimentation control plan and a long term stormwater operation and maintenance plan are included with the application in accordance with current State requirements. He also noted that the plan includes EV charging spaces that may also function as regular parking spaces, and that a fully accessible parking space is proposed adjacent to the building.

Attorney Smith shared the applicant has reviewed comments from the Town Engineer and Town Planner and has no objection to addressing them. He noted they would be happy to answer questions.

The parking layout was briefly discussed for Chairwoman Sayers noting that some customers would fuel their vehicles and then enter the store, which was shared is typical for this type of facility.

Chairwoman Sayers asked the commission for questions.

Mr. LaFountain briefly discussed his report. He noted the proposal reduces impervious coverage from 87.7 % to 82.5 % and the proposal does not extend pavement any closer to the property lines than existing conditions. He stated that the freestanding sign will remain, proposed building signage complies with regulations, and the landscaping plan significantly improves the site. He referenced the requirement for landscaped medians at the ends of parking aisles and noted this would be addressed with the applicant.

He explained that while 4 street trees would normally be required based on frontage, site constraints make that impractical, so an additional tree elsewhere on the site was requested to meet the intent of the regulations. He clarified that EV charging spaces should remain available for general parking so they can count toward required parking totals. Regarding lighting, he shared that while canopy lighting may exceed parking lot limits, all lighting outside the canopy should be reduced to comply with the 25 foot candle standard. He concluded that the project represents a drastic improvement to the existing site.

Mr. Steele addressed the commission to briefly review his report. He shared the proposal represents an improvement to the site and he is satisfied with the general design and the drainage calculations that were submitted. He noted the need to include a licensed land surveyor's stamp on the site plans. He shared in relation to the sewer lateral, which should be a 6 inch diameter rather than 4 inches. He noted that the plans indicate the existing lateral will be reused, but its size and condition are uncertain and will need to be confirmed through test pits. He briefly reviewed items 1-6 of his report, including submission of final plans and mylars, erosion control bond, and the completion of test pits to verify drainage design assumptions. He also noted that soil conditions must be confirmed, acknowledging that based on past experience the soils in the area are likely sandy and suitable, but that verification is still required prior to construction.

There was a brief discussion around the ownership of the lot directly behind the gas station property. Attorney Smith explained that the parcel is owned a parking company and noted that the applicant had previously explored the possibility of acquiring a portion of that land, but the owner was unwilling to pursue a sale because the property is encumbered by financing tied to multiple locations, making any partial release overly complex. He stated that this explains why the area remains unused and confirmed that no change in ownership has occurred.

Chairwoman Sayers asked the commission for questions.

Mr. Rachele had questions around if seating would be available inside the store, the parking calculations, acreage calculations, elevations, and snow storage. Attorney Smith and Mr. Smith addressed these inquiries. The intention for the proposed convenience store is short visits such as customers stopping briefly for coffee or fuel, with no indoor or outdoor seating proposed. The parking was briefly reviewed, and it was clarified that the plan provides a total of 12 parking spaces, including 1 accessible space. Regarding the elevation labeling Attorney Smith acknowledged the discrepancy and agreed to have correct the elevations on the final plans. The discussion concluded with confirmation that these clarifications and corrections would be addressed prior to final approval.

Chairwoman Sayers asked the commission for questions. None were made.

Chairwoman Sayers opened the hearing to members of the public. No comments were made.

Mr. Rachele began a brief discussion around trucks using the site. Mr. Smith shared it will be typically a 1 ton dump or box truck and the site is not for tractor trailers. The radius shown was for a tanker for refilling fuel.

There was a brief discussion around the fuel pumps. Mr. Smith shared they have high speed, 10 gal/minute vs 30 gal/minute.

Chairwoman Sayers asked for questions, comments, concerns.

It was confirmed for Ms. Quagliaroli the applicant would like to start construction in the Spring and the goal was to complete permitting in the Winter as the proposal requires a complete shut down.

Mr. Smith confirmed for Chairwoman Sayers the same tanks would be used, they are double walled fiberglass, with online monitoring and have about 12 years left on their life.

Chairwoman Sayers asked for questions, comments, concerns.

It was MOVED (Rachele) and SECONDED (Christianson) and PASSED (5-0) to CLOSE the public hearing for 80 Ella Grasso Turnpike – Special Use Permit with Site Plan Review for reconstruction of existing fuel service station and convenience store.

Mr. Christianson noted the conditions would be those identified in the reports from Mr. LaFountain and Mr. Steele, along with the requirement to show snow storage areas and correct the building elevations on the plans.

Mr. Gannuscio reviewed the special permit criteria items 1-3 in Mr. LaFountain's report. For item 1 he shared the proposed use will be in harmony, it's a long existing use and the proposed are basic modernizations. For item 2 he referenced the landscape plans provided and for item 3 he noted there has been no police comment but the site has in use for a long time. He noted the application is in accordance with the special use permit criteria.

It was MOVED (Gannuscio) and SECONDED (Rachele) and PASSED (5-0) to APPROVE 80 Ella Grasso Turnpike – Special Use Permit with Site Plan Review for reconstruction of existing fuel service station and convenience store with 15 conditions.

The conditions are outlined below:

1. Provide LS stamp on sheets C-1, C-2 and C-3 in accordance with section 1102.A
2. Increase grease and sewer lines from 4" diameter to 6" diameter per WPCA standards. Adjust Grease Trap detail accordingly.
3. Prior to start of construction, submit 2 complete sets of plans addressing conditions of approval and Mylar of Existing Conditions Plan as well as Mylar of the Layout Plan (C-1.0) and Grading Plan (C-2.0) for signature by the Commission prior to filing in the Clerk's office.
4. Prior to start of construction, submit an Erosion Control Bond estimate to the Town Engineer for review and an E&S Bond to the Town Treasure in an amount acceptable to the Town Engineer.
5. Prior to construction of the stormwater and sewer systems, provide test results confirming adequacy of the design and submit any required design changes to staff for review and approval prior to proceeding with construction.
6. Prior to Certificate of Occupancy, submit an as-built survey in accordance with section 1102.G.
7. Add location of snow storage to plans
8. The notations regarding "EV Charging Only" are to be removed from the four westernmost parking spaces.
9. The islands to the west and east of the parking row should be landscaped instead of paved. Such revision can be approved by staff.
10. At least one additional tree shall be added to the site to be in compliance with the landscaping regulations.
11. The lighting plan shall be revised to reduce bleedout from the canopy to a maximum of 25 footcandles, and to address any building-mounted lighting.
12. All building code and fire safety requirements must be met.
13. Any proposed signage for the site must conform to the Zoning Regulations and follow the Town approval processes. If a new freestanding sign is proposed, new approvals must be obtained.
14. Any additional required federal, state, or local permits must be obtained in advance of occupation.
15. Correct elevations on plans

VI. New Business

a. 21 Hamilton Road Site Plan Modification for Collins Aerospace Hamilton Road Entrance Improvements

Ronald Bomengen, a professional engineer with Fuss & O'Neill of Hartford CT addressed the commission to request a modification to a site plan that was previously approved in 2022 for improvements to the Hamilton Road entrance at the Collins Aerospace campus. He explained the application is for the main entrance to the campus and that the revised proposal relates to the same location previously approved by the commission.

Mr. Bomengen shared a presentation with the commission to review the 2022 approval as well as the proposed modifications.

He noted the 2022 approval included a roundabout at the campus entrance, a 2,000 square foot visitor post, 29 parking spaces, and separate circulation for visitors, delivery vehicles, and employees. He then described the revised proposal, noting that it would remove the roundabout, have a smaller 1,000 square foot visitor post, and a total of 14 parking spaces, including 1 accessible space.

He shared the revised plan significantly reduces impervious coverage and overall site disturbance. He explained that the intent of the project remains the same as the original approval; maintaining separation between employees, visitors, and delivery vehicles while enhancing security at the campus entrance. Under the revised plan, employee traffic continues straight through the existing security gate, while visitors are directed to the new visitor post. Delivery vehicles would park adjacent to the visitor post for processing.

Mr. Bomengen continued his presentation to discuss stormwater management, noting it would function similarly to the previously approved plan. He shared runoff from new impervious areas would flow to existing drainage infrastructure and to a detention basin. He highlighted infiltration testing had demonstrated strong infiltration rates and that additional field verification would be conducted prior to construction, as requested by Mr. Steele. He also reviewed utility connections, indicating that water, electric, and data would tie into existing campus systems, and that a small septic system and backup generator are proposed to serve the visitor post.

It was noted that erosion and sedimentation controls would comply with current Connecticut guidelines and that landscaping and lighting would largely match what was approved in 2022, including the previously approved lighting height needed for security purposes. He concluded by noting that the revised design was driven by the desire to reduce cost, impervious coverage, and construction impacts while still meeting the project's operational and security goals, and he offered to answer questions from the commission.

Mr. Bomengen confirmed for Ms. Quagliaroli the roundabout was removed to lower the impervious coverage, reduce cost and the applicant is looking to begin construction this year. Chairwoman Sayers asked the commission for questions.

Mr. LaFountain addressed the commission noting the revised layout is more appropriate. He noted that the reduction in impervious coverage is a positive change and that the smaller building size results in adequate parking for the use. He concluded that he had no additional comments, noting that Mr. Steele had provided a report with comments for consideration.

Mr. Steele addressed the commission to review his report dated January 6. He noted the earlier plans had shown 32 foot lighting poles, which exceeded the 24 foot maximum permitted by regulation, but that the plans have since been revised to show 24 foot poles. He stated that while 24 feet is still above the standard 14 foot height and typically requires a special permit, the revised proposal is consistent with what was previously approved, and he raised the question of whether an additional special permit and public hearing would be required or whether the prior approval could be relied upon. He next commented on the proposed septic system, noting that

such systems are uncommon for this type of site and that confirmation from the health department is typically required. He indicated that a suitability letter or similar confirmation from the North Central District Health Department may be necessary to verify that soil conditions are appropriate for the system.

Mr. Bomengen confirmed the site is served by MDC infrastructure rather than the local sewer system and noted that discussions with the health department have begun and are ongoing.

Mr. Steele continued on noting items 1 and 2 from his report were up to the commission before moving on to item 3. He explained that the earlier design used guide rails to restrict vehicle movements, whereas the revised plan allows vehicles to circulate more freely within the paved area. Mr. Bomengen confirmed pavement striping and markings for direction would be used as Collins is looking to rehab in phases.

Mr. Steele noted the need for a licensed land surveyor's stamp on the site plans and the inclusion of key stormwater maintenance requirements directly on the plans. He discussed the proposed stormwater basin, questioning maintenance.

Mr. Bomengen confirmed that the basin bottom is intended to be stone due to concerns about vegetation survival. Collins expressed some concern around their lawn tractors getting stuck. He explained he would get clarification from Nick.

Mr. Steele concluded by listing standard conditions, including submission of final plans and mylars, posting of required bonds, completion of soil testing, confirmation of stormwater details, and submission of an as built survey prior to occupancy and use of the facility.

Chairwoman Sayers asked for questions, comments, concerns.

Ms. Quagliaroli began a brief discussion around the edging as it may be intended to prevent topsoil from migrating into the stone basin, though it would be verified and clarified.

Mr. Rachele praised the slide presentation and there was a brief discussion around the industrial zone of the property. It was concluded GIS was showing a discrepancy and Mr. LaFountain would look into further with the assessor.

Mr. Gannuscio noted the modifications were basic and presented well.

It was MOVED (Rachele) and SECONDED (Gannuscio) and PASSED (5-0) to APPROVE the 21 Hamilton Road Site Plan Modification for Collins Aerospace Hamilton Road Entrance Improvements with 10 conditions from Mr. Steele's report.

The conditions are outlined below:

1. The 24' high light poles require a special permit approval per section 705.F.4.b.vi.
2. Health Department approval is required for the on-site septic system. The applicant should provide confirmation that the Health Department agrees the on-site soils are suitable for a septic system.
3. The previous plan included guide rails on both sides of the vehicle path north of the security gate to contain traffic. The current plan relies on the pavement markings to contain traffic. A directional sign is proposed within the existing pavement area with no protection from vehicles. It appears pavement could be removed to further contain and direct traffic and protect the signage and reduce coverage. Converting some of the proposed pavement hatching areas to landscaping would also bring the site into closer conformance with the parking lot interior landscaping requirements. The commission has some discretion in regard to layout and landscaping and may wish to discuss this with the applicant.
4. Section 1102A requires an LS stamp on the site plan to confirm the existing boundaries and topography shown conform to the submitted survey.

5. Include the stormwater maintenance notes from the Stormwater Report on the site grading and drainage plan. Revise the maintenance notes to indicate cleaning frequency for sumps shall maintain at least 50% capacity at all times. Also include provisions for unclogging the detention basins if they do not drain within 48 hours and include maintenance requirements for the basin.
6. Provide a detail cross section of the new stormwater basin. Consider a vegetated surface rather than stone.
7. Submit 2 paper copies and a PDF copy of the final plans incorporating all conditions of approval, along with a mylar of sheets V101-102, CS-101-102, CG-101-102, and CU-101-102 to the commission for signature prior to start of construction.
8. Engineer shall submit an E&S bond estimate to the Town Engineer and shall submit an E&S bond to the Town Treasurer in an amount acceptable to the Town Engineer, prior to start of construction.
9. Engineer shall confirm the soil type and depth to seasonal high-water table in the area of the new stormwater basin prior to start of construction of the stormwater basin.
10. Prior to operation of the improvements and occupancy of the building, submit an as-built survey to the Town Engineer in accordance section 1102.G.

VII. Old Business

a. HB 8002 – Discussion

Mr. LaFountain shared that clarification is still needed from the State regarding certain discrepancies related to parking requirements for apartment buildings with 60 units or fewer. He explained that there is conflicting information on whether parking can be required for developments under that threshold. He noted that the State legislature is back in session and is expected to address these inconsistencies. He recommended waiting for definitive State guidance before making any changes or decisions.

VIII. Public Input

Chairwoman Sayers noted that comments could address any matter related to planning or zoning.

Joe Calsetta of 121 Orchard Hill Drive addressed the commission regarding ongoing microphone feedback issues in the meeting room. He explained John Savino asked he work on them and he shared the sound system is outdated. He noted past attempts to address the problem were limited by budget constraints. He noted that while the microphones themselves are of reasonable quality, they contain the wrong type of condenser, allowing sound from all directions and contributing to feedback. He described steps he has already taken to mitigate the issue. He demonstrated how turning off unused microphones can help control the problem and stated that he plans to continue working on the system, including adjustments to the amplifier.

IX. Communications and Bills

Mr. LaFountain shared with the commission that two items had been received. The 1st was previously distributed by email, relating to CFPGA information and upcoming events. Members were reminded that there is a limited budget available for attendance at such events.

Next, the receipt of a new application submitted February 9 2026. It was for a modification to a previously approved site plan involving the property identified as 501 North Street and 321 Ella Grasso Turnpike. Mr. LaFountain explained that the site had previously received approval for a warehouse building, but the applicant is now proposing a significantly smaller building intended for the inspection and staging of tractor trailers.

The commission discussed some confusion regarding the property's address, as references were made to both 501 North Street and 321 Ella Grasso Turnpike, with questions raised about parcel boundaries, prior approvals, and discrepancies between GIS records and assessor information. It

was agreed that to ensure proper notice and coverage, the public hearing should be scheduled using both addresses as listed in the application. Mr. LaFountain would work to further clarify the addressing and parcel information prior to the hearing.

It was MOVED (Sayers) and SECONDED (Rachele) and PASSED (5-0) to SCHEDULE the public hearing for a new site plan application and special permit for lighting approval for 321 Ella Grasso Turnpike / 501 North Street for the March 9 2026 regular meeting.

Mr. Christianson began a brief discussion around the application emails sent to the commission as the files are large and sometimes need to be broken down into multiple emails risking confusion. Mr. LaFountain suggested that applicants could create a drop box link to provide application documents. It was concluded Mr. LaFountain would relay this to the Building department.

Mr. LaFountain confirmed for Ms. Quagliaroli site plans have a 5 year expiration and the previous approval for 321 Ella Grasso Turnpike / 501 North Street was for the large building. There was a brief discussion around the 18 month temporary outdoor storage. Mr. LaFountain shared he would research.

X. Adjournment

It was MOVED (Rachele) and SECONDED (Gannuscio) and PASSED (5-0) to adjourn meeting at 7:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

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