

**THE GLASTONBURY TOWN PLAN AND ZONING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF TUESDAY, MARCH 3, 2026**

The Glastonbury Town Plan and Zoning Commission, with Shelley Caltagirone, Director of Community Development, held a Regular Meeting at 7:00 P.M in the Council Chambers of Town Hall at 2155 Main Street with an option for Zoom video conferencing. The video was broadcast in real time and via a live video stream.

ROLL CALL

Commission Members Present

Ms. Laura Cahill, Secretary, *Acting Chairman*

Mr. Philip Markuszka, *Acting Secretary*

Mr. Andy Zlotnick {participated via Zoom video conferencing}

Ms. Sharon Jagel, Vice Chairman {participated via Zoom video conferencing}

Ms. Pamela Lucas, Alternate, *seated*

Mr. Dennis Desmarais, Alternate {participated via Zoom video conferencing}

Ms. Kadji Anderson, Alternate, *seated*

Commission Members Absent

Mr. Robert J. Zanlungo, Chairman

Mr. Emilio Flores

Ms. Cahill called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

Appointment of Temporary Chair:

Nomination by: Commissioner Markuszka

Seconded by: Commissioner Lucas

For Ms. Cahill as Temporary Chair.

Result: Motion passed {5-0-1}, with Ms. Cahill abstaining.

Appointment of Temporary Secretary:

Nomination by: Commissioner Lucas

Seconded by: Commissioner Jagel

For Mr. Markuszka as Temporary Secretary.

Result: Motion passed {5-0-1}, with Mr. Markuszka abstaining.

Acting Chair Cahill welcomed Ms. Anderson as the new Republican alternate to the Commission, then appointed Ms. Lucas and Ms. Anderson as full voting members for the evening.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Informal session for the purpose of hearing from citizens on Regular Meeting agenda or non-agenda items *None*

PUBLIC HEARING

- 1. Continued Application of Main St Group, LLC for site plan approval for a CSG 8-30g Affordable Housing Development – construction of five, 3-4 story apartment buildings with 266 units & site amenities– 95 & 131 Griswold Street & 2938 Main Street – Planned Travel Zone**

Acting Chair Cahill noted that the public hearing would remain open through March 17, 2026.

Attorney Peter Alter of Alter, Pearson & Hope LLC represented the applicant. He requested that commissioners submit any additional questions to Town staff following this meeting, in advance of the Town Plan & Zoning's (TPZ) March 17 meeting, to allow time for a thorough response.

Mr. Alter presented a traffic comparison, stating that the proposed project would generate approximately 1,208 daily trips, or about 25% of the 4,840 trips approved for the previously proposed Shoppes at Avalon retail development.

He reviewed the proposed primary access from Griswold Street and the site's history with the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Agency. Northern access through the Valvoline parcel (Parcel D) was rejected due to significant wetland impacts (1,305 square feet of fill) and the absence of available mitigation area on property controlled by the applicant. The current plan reduces wetland impact to 830 square feet through building and driveway reconfiguration.

Ms. Cahill asked whether Parcel D was included in the prior Shoppes at Avalon approvals. Mr. Alter responded that the parcel is not owned by the current developer. Ms. Caltagirone clarified that although the current developer does not own Parcel D, the previous developer, Mr. John Sakon, held a lease and easement on it, and that Parcel D included in the 2012–2013 approved development. Mr. Alter reaffirmed that Parcel D is not part of the current application.

Regarding alternative access points, Mr. Alter explained that the vacant Manager's Gas Station site [2952 Main St.] was ruled out as a potential access route to Main Street due to the owner's \$2.5 million asking price, significantly higher than the Town's assessed value of \$600,000.

Mr. Alter stated that the Five Guys site [2944 Main St.] is proposed as an "in-only" entrance for emergency vehicles and residents, and would include a new pedestrian sidewalk and guardrail for safety. He presented turning-radius data showing that fire apparatus and standard box trucks could safely navigate the easement.

He further said that access through the Brewster Condominiums was determined to be infeasible due to an 8-foot grade change, the presence of wetlands, and the potential disruption to the residents, which could result in litigation from the residential association.

Mr. Alter addressed concerns from Superintendent Dr. Bookman and Naubuc Elementary School Principal Michael Litke regarding student safety. He noted that the developer has agreed to the following:

1. Relocate the crosswalk to be closer to the school entrance expected to be used by students.
2. Fund a crossing guard in perpetuity, with the individual selected and managed by the Board of Education.
3. Install flashing beacon lights similar to those at The Tannery.
4. Modify the school exit to enforce "right-turn only" onto Griswold Street to prevent non-permitted left turns.
5. To assist with implementation of concurrent pedestrian phasing at Bantle Road and House Street if the Town Engineer and Commission support the change in signalization.

Matt Baldino, P.E. at Solli Engineering, said that creating a 5-legged intersection at the Route 2 ramp to accommodate a full-access site driveway would worsen traffic, reducing the level of service from "B" to "C." He reviewed trip data, reporting a peak hour generation of 103 trips for the current project, significantly lower than the more than 500 trips projected for peak Saturdays for the previously approved retail project. He stated that construction is estimated to take one to two years. Based on the signal warrant analysis, he concluded that a traffic signal would not be an appropriate solution Griswold Street, as it would increase delays.

Ms. Cahill asked who determines the final decision on a traffic warrant: whether it is a condition of approval that the TPZ can impose depending on the approved entrance/exit as a reasonable mitigation, or if it is decided solely based on traffic warrant criteria. Town Attorney Ken Slater stated that he would defer and provide a response at the TPZ's next meeting.

Ms. Cahill opened the floor for public comment.

John Sakon of 28 Fenwick Drive in Farmington stated that he has owned the adjacent properties for 20 years and has been a real estate developer for over 40 years. He criticized the presentation for omitting key details, noting that plans referenced were inconsistent with actual proposals, particularly regarding the size of the Shoppes of Avalon project. He asserted that certain wetlands have been deregulated and recorded on the land records, meaning the Wetlands Commission cannot reassert authority over them, and he raised concerns about wetlands being marked on adjacent properties without permission.

Mr. Sakon further stated that Main Street Group/Stop & Shop purchased a mortgage on his property without his consent, which he claims may be illegal due to an anti-assignment clause; a motion to strike related to this is pending before the Second Circuit Court of Appeals. He emphasized that there are no wetlands issues affecting access via Main Street, which he described as the optimal entrance, and criticized the current plans for traffic and building layout, noting discrepancies in square footage and site design. He also referenced prior approvals for Five Guys and stated that an alternative plan, previously approved by Five Guys, should be considered instead of the current proposals.

Ms. Cahill noted the property's extensive litigation and asked Town Attorney Slater to provide guidance on whether the previous wetlands permit expired and on questions raised by Mr. Saxon regarding legal ownership. Mr. Slater agreed to do so at the TPZ's next meeting on March 17, 2026.

Leslie Mroz of 121 Heywood Drive expressed significant safety concerns regarding the proximity of the Griswold Street access road to Naubuc Elementary School. She said that the traffic impact study observations raised red flags regarding student safety, and she confirmed that she helped organize a petition with approximately 500 signatures (combined physical and online) in opposition to the current access plan.

Zbigniew Mroz of 121 Heywood Drive argued that connecting the new development access road to Griswold Street is fundamentally "wrong." He raised concerns about the danger of left-hand turns into the development during peak rush hour, noting the increased safety hazards for the surrounding neighborhood.

Rob Dakers of 15 Trifiro Circle represented the Glastonbury Friends of Housing, which supports the proposal as a positive step for affordable housing. He commented that the design is attractive and argued that the project would generate significantly less traffic than the previously approved, but never built, retail development at the same site. He expressed hope that safety measures could be successfully implemented.

Peggy Ahearn Schroeder of 151 Barrington Way spoke via Zoom, emphasizing that the primary concern must be the safety of children, pedestrians, and residents. She questioned the effectiveness of a crossing guard and flashing lights, stating that the area is already unsafe and that the developer's proposed mitigations are insufficient. She urged the Commission to deny the application.

Thomas Condon of 306 Griswold Street called for the safety of the students at Naubuc Elementary School and expressed concern regarding the turning radius of fire trucks in the area.

Ms. Cahill read into the record additional public comments that were received in writing:

John Sakon of 28 Fenwick Drive in Farmington emphasized that the property has a right-of-way and utility easement through Brewster Road and argued that this is an appropriate access point for residential development rather than creating an exit across from Naubuc Elementary School. He also submitted supporting court documents and diagrams. In a second letter, Mr. Sakon said coordination with John Lyman (owner of 2952 Main Street) to combine Mr. Sakon's 35-foot right-of-way with Mr. Lyman's land to construct a public roadway from Griswold Street to Main Street in accordance with town specifications and Shoppes at Avalon plans.

William Marut of 264 Carriage Drive, as a member of the Glastonbury Friends of Housing, expressed support for the development, stating it was in compliance with regulations and would provide a necessary increase in housing stock for the town. He advocated for safety measures at the Griswold Street entrance but ultimately favored the project.

Barbara Walsh of 158 Barrington Way expressed concern regarding the increase in traffic and the potential for severe backups caused by vehicles waiting to make left turns into the development. She supported the housing development but opposed the current traffic pattern and encouraged the commission to explore alternatives.

David Liscinsky of 100 Bell Ridge Road expressed support for the Griswold/Main Street housing project as a means to address the Town's housing shortage.

Chip Beckett of 308 Tryon Street highlighted two traffic considerations, noting that the Glastonbury 2020 study identified curb cuts, not traffic volume, as a primary issue, suggesting that adding a new curb cut on Griswold Street without removing others would worsen congestion. He also explained that prior proposals (hotel/retail plan) included a shortened Griswold Street exit ramp connecting to a public road to Main Street, which he believes remains the safest access for the proposed development. Dr. Beckett also commented that the extension of Bantle Road was not approved by the state, and recommended consideration of the shortened Griswold Street ramp for superior access.

The commission recessed at 9:10 p.m., returning at 9:17 p.m.

Chris Granatini, P.E. and Vice President at Tighe & Bond, presented the technical peer review of the traffic study and reviewed Solli Engineering's responses to previous comments. While many issues had been addressed by the applicant, several items remain outstanding, including longer-than-reported queuing on Griswold Street during peak hours, which requires a revised capacity analysis. He recommended conducting a "gap study" during peak afternoon hours, recalibrating traffic models for the Griswold Street and Bantle Road intersection, reviewing signal operations at Griswold Street and Main Street, and considering traffic calming measures such as raised crosswalks along the corridor. He also stated that moving the driveway further from the Route 2 ramps would provide a safer operational solution.

Steve Braun, Director of Engineering and Highways for the Town, outlined conditions of approval, including reviewing and optimizing signal timing and using the most conservative student traffic estimate of 25 K-5 students, above the warrant analysis threshold of 20 students, for analysis. He recommended conducting a gap study and suggested implementing a "raised feature" or raised crosswalk for traffic calming.

Mr. Alter noted a difference of opinion regarding the preferred crosswalk location, stating that Dr. Bookman and Dr. Litke favor placing it closer to the school's western driveway so students would cross Griswold Street and then proceed directly across the school entrance. Mr. Alter said that his applicant is amenable to whichever location is agreed upon. He requested guidance on the final location. Mr. Braun stated that the final placement of raised crosswalks will be coordinated with the school superintendent and principal to ensure student safety.

Mr. Zlotnick asked whether, assuming regulated wetlands exist, relocating the driveway to the Valvoline site could still allow use of the wetlands near Five Guys as a mitigation area. Mr. Alter responded that the southern driveway is more efficient as an entrance only, with no exiting traffic, while the northern driveway would require a five-foot retaining wall, significant grading,

and a larger overall disturbance. He also noted that mitigation is typically done adjacent to the area of impact.

Ms. Anderson asked about the possibility of a right-turn-only exit on Main Street. Mr. Alter stated that while an exit driveway could theoretically provide access, it would likely encourage illegal left turns unless it were designed with significant controls. He explained that under the previous development proposal by Mr. Sakon, a full traffic signal on Main Street would have served as the primary access point, with the Griswold Street driveway limited to right-in/right-out movements. However, that plan could not be implemented today due to wetlands constraints. He stated that constructing a roadway to Main Street to serve the project is not considered feasible and that the lower traffic volume would not warrant a signal on Main Street.

Luke Mauro, P.E. at Solli Engineering, added that creating a driveway connection to the Valvoline site would require additional wetlands impacts and a substantial site redesign due to building and parking layout changes made during earlier revisions approved by the Architectural and Site Design Review Committee (ASDRC). The proposed alignment would involve tight turning movements that would be difficult for emergency vehicles to navigate, unlike the straighter access proposed from the Five Guys entrance, which accommodates emergency apparatus more safely.

Mr. Markuszka inquired whether traffic projections included deliveries and non-resident trips. Mr. Baldino explained that traffic counts include all vehicles using the driveway, including deliveries such as Amazon or postal service vehicles. He said that the data collected at One Glastonbury Place similarly reflected all inbound and outbound traffic associated with the site. Mr. Markuszka asked about the potential traffic impact during construction, including the presence of heavy equipment and construction vehicles on Griswold Street and Main Street. Mr. Baldino explained that buildings are typically constructed and occupied in phases as certificates of occupancy are issued, rather than all at once. Heavy equipment is generally brought on-site early and remains there while grading, excavation, and filling are completed. Mr. Baldino reiterated that construction would likely take 1-2 years to complete and cited comparable timelines for similar projects, such as the Tannery development which took about two years to complete and the One Glastonbury Place project which reached occupancy in about 18 months.

Mr. Markuszka raised a question about the Brewster Condominiums easement. Mr. Alter explained that routing traffic through the established condominiums would be an imposition, involve litigation risks, require significant grade changes, and cross wetlands, making it infeasible, while other Griswold Street access options were also less desirable based on peer review and staff input.

Mr. Mauro added that extending a roadway connection from the Brewster Condominiums to the project site is not feasible due to elevation differences. The project site is designed at an elevation of 41 to accommodate an underground detention system, while the connection point at the Brewster Condominiums is at elevation 33. This would require a drop of approximately seven feet over about 50 feet, which he stated is not practical from an engineering standpoint.

Ms. Cahill noted that, at the Plans Review Subcommittee meeting, she had recommended the developer engage with north end Griswold Street residents, and asked whether this had occurred. Mr. Alter responded that no formal neighborhood meeting had taken place, explaining that the dozen homes on Griswold Street did not constitute a neighborhood large enough to meaningfully alter public opinion, and that negative reactions were expected for a development of this size.

Ms. Cahill asked whether the developer would consider deeding 10% of units as affordable in perpetuity rather than for 40 years. Mr. Alter said that he had discussed this with the property owner, Mr. Carpionato, who would be willing to consider it. Ms. Cahill noted disagreement on projections regarding student enrollment impacts, but Mr. Alter clarified that a CGS Section 8-30g application cannot be denied based solely on student numbers, and that public health and safety, including student crossings, would be addressed.

Ms. Cahill asked why using the Brewster easement, despite wetlands constraints, would be considered more intrusive than the proposed Naubuc Avenue/Griswold Street access across from the elementary school, noting that prior development proposals for the parcel had not suggested access at that location.

Mr. Alter responded that using the Brewster Condominiums easement would impose a significant burden on the development by directing project traffic through the property and would likely face opposition from residents, potentially resulting in litigation. He also cited engineering constraints, including an approximately eight-foot grade change and the need to cross wetlands. Based on his experience with the Inland Wetlands Agency, he indicated that obtaining a permit for such work would be unlikely since other access options exist with less wetlands impact.

Ms. Cahill said that while Mr. Alter stated that the site has only 12 neighbors on Griswold Street, a petition of 500 signatures had been submitted in opposition to the application. Mr. Alter responded that traffic and pedestrian safety concerns had been reviewed by two experts, and no safety problems were identified; regardless of whether 1, 22, or 25 students are affected, planned mitigation including a crossing guard and flashing lights would manage risks.

Ms. Cahill also inquired about the forested area along Route 2 that provides a buffer, asking whether it could be purchased for additional project access. Mr. Alter clarified that the area is a State right-of-way, and Mr. Mauro added that direct access or egress to a State right-of-way is not permitted, making this option infeasible.

Ms. Cahill recognized that traffic counts for the proposed development are significantly lower than for the previously approved 97,000 square foot development, and asked how conditions might evolve over 10 years. Mr. Baldino responded that historic growth along the corridor is approximately 1% annually, a conservative estimate, while Mr. Mauro emphasized that traffic measures must remain flexible and adaptive over time.

Ms. Cahill asked whether the recommendations in the initial October 18, 2024 report still stand. Mr. Baldino confirmed that the supplemental traffic analysis addresses questions regarding the

Griswold Street intersection. The updated report reflects current school traffic and shows that a five-way signal would degrade operations on the eastbound approach, though still within acceptable levels. He noted concerns about driver perception and wrong-way maneuvers, and added that the five-way access is no longer the preferred option, as the newer easement provides safer connections and results in less impact on Griswold Street.

Ms. Cahill requested clarification on the impact of the development on Griswold Street with 500 students. Mr. Alter explained that only a few students from the new development would walk to Naubuc Elementary School, as the remainder use buses or parent drop-off, and that the current driveway and access location were determined after obtaining the necessary easement, which was not available when the original 2024 report was prepared.

Ms. Cahill expressed concern about the intersection volume-to-capacity ratio and asked how it would be addressed. Mr. Baldino said that this issue was also raised in Tighe & Bond's comments and indicated that the commission would receive further analysis and comment at the next meeting.

Ms. Cahill expressed concern that fully addressing all outstanding issues could make it difficult to reach a decision. She asked that the developer interact with the Board of Education (BOE) beyond Dr. Bookman, who she requested return before the TPZ to clarify his prior comments, which she felt were not fully reflected in staff memoranda. Mr. Haynes said that details were still being finalized and that Dr. Bookman could provide comments but could not be compelled to attend the TPZ meeting.

Ms. Cahill referenced remarks made by Dr. Bookman at the BOE workshop following his meeting with the applicant. At that workshop, he described Griswold Street as "quite a disaster" and "not safe," which she noted contrasts with Mr. Alter's characterization of their meeting shortly before the BOE meeting.

Ms. Cahill also cited concerns from BOE Chairman Doug Foyle, Naubuc Principal Michael Litke, the Acting Fire Marshal, and Police Chief Marshall Porter, emphasizing that child and staff safety must be carefully considered. She stressed balancing safety with operational constraints, wetlands, and access points, and urged careful evaluation of the Griswold Street access in relation to emergency response, traffic, and neighborhood impact.

Ms. Cahill asked Mr. Alter to clarify his comments on student safety, noting that faculty and staff are also affected. Mr. Alter explained that expert concerns generally reflect existing conditions, and the relevant question is whether the proposed development would adversely impact those conditions.

Town Attorney Slater stated that while Mr. Alter is correct that existing road conditions alone are generally not a basis to deny development, the Commission must consider new safety impacts created by the proposal. The housing development near Naubuc School could increase pedestrian traffic, particularly students walking to school, and that ensuring safe access for children and staff is a legitimate concern. He emphasized that issues raised by the Fire Marshal, Acting Fire

Marshal, and Police Chief should be addressed, and that the TPZ must weigh potential public health and safety impacts arising from the development.

Ms. Cahill stated that the public hearing will continue at the TPZ's March 17, 2026 Regular Meeting.

REGULAR MEETING

1. Acceptance of the Minutes of the February 17, 2026 Regular Meeting

Motion by: Commissioner Lucas

Seconded by: Commissioner Markuszka

Result: Minutes passed unanimously {6-0-0}.

2. CONSENT CALENDAR

a. Scheduling of Public Hearings for the Regular Meeting of March 17, 2025:

- i. Application of North American Builders, LLC for a 4-lot subdivision & Section 6.8 Rear Lot Special Permit for 3 rear lots – construction of 4 single family homes – 575 Neipsic Road – Rural Residence Zone

Motion by: Mr. Markuszka

Seconded by: Ms. Lucas

Result: Motion to approve consent calendar passed unanimously {6-0-0}.

3. Appointment of a Regional Planning Commission member to replace vacancy by former Commissioner Corey Turner

Ms. Caltagirone stated that TPZ Alternate Pam Lucas has volunteered to join CRCOG, and she confirmed with CRCOG that an alternate member can be seated.

Motion by: Ms. Cahill

Seconded by: Mr. Markuszka

To appoint Pam Lucas to the Regional Planning Commission.

Result: Motion passed {5-0-1}, with Ms. Lucas abstaining.

4. Chairman's Report *None*

5. Report from Community Development Staff *None*

Acting Chair Cahill adjourned the meeting at 10:57 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lilly Torosyan
Lilly Torosyan
Recording Clerk

