

Public Hearing
Cheshire Planning and Zoning Commission
Monday, September 8, 2025 – Town Hall – Council Chambers – 7:00 PM

I. **Call to Order**

Chairman Kurtz called the meeting to order at 7:00PM.

II. **Roll Call**

Robert Brucato called the roll

Present: Earl Kurtz, Chairman; Jeff Natale, Vice Chairman; Tom Selmont, John Kardaras, Casey Downes, Sean Strollo, Woody Dawson, Matt Bowman

Alternates: Anita Blake, John Hilzinger, Chris Affie

Absent: Robert Brucato, Secretary

Staff member present: Michael Glidden, Town Planner

III. **Determination of Quorum**

Following roll call, it was determined there were enough members present for a quorum.

IV. **Pledge of Allegiance**

V. **Business**

New Business

1. **Application for a Special Permit on behalf of Peter and Sia Skabardonis, Applicant; Applicant is requesting a Special Permit pursuant to Section 30A-4, of the Zoning Regulations for a lot containing two dwelling units located at 0 Prospect Road (Assessor's Map 48, Block 5, Lot 1) Zone R-80.**

Chris Skabardonis of 578 South Street, Middlebury, CT, addressed the commission. He states that he is representing on behalf of his parents. S. Strollo asks if the driveway on 1151 Prospect is going into the lot. M. Glidden explains that according to the survey it does not and explains why this is before the commission.

2. **Petition for a Zone Text Amendment on behalf of Hydroclonix, LLC; Specialty Growers Realty, LLC, Applicant. Applicant is requesting an amendment to Section 30, Schedule A, 75-7, Section 26, and Section 31.**

Ryan Hoyler, representing Hydroclonix LLC, addressed the commission. Brant Smith, of 35 Diana Ct., addressed the commission as well, he reads a statement addressing the previous time he was before the commission and why he is now.

R. Hoyler explains that they are seeking a text amendment to permit the cultivation and micro-cultivation of cannabis as defined by the state statute to be permitted in the industrial zones of town. He states that under the proposed regulations it would require a special permit, which would give the commission discretion. They have largely based their proposed text amendment on regulations that town staff had put together preceding the prohibition on cannabis cultivation in town. R. Hoyler explains that the way it is drafted it would only allow cultivation to be permitted in the I-1 and I-2 zones and may only be done indoors. He further explains more of the proposed regulations and reiterates that there are no sales involved just cultivation.

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37 R. Hoyler also explains that there has been a change to statutes recently which permits social equity
38 cultivation licenses to partner with existing hemp production facilities. It also permits the cultivation of
39 marijuana under the state statutes regulated by the DCP in locations outside of disproportionately
40 impacted areas.

41 M. Bowman asks for clarification on the partnership that would be needed. R. Hoyler further explains this
42 and also that the special permit would be tied to the property, so B. Smith would be the applicant for the
43 special permit. The proposed amendment would state that they would need a license from the DCP.

44 J. Natale brings up that the proposed amendment is asking to allow this use in all of the industrial
45 property in town. He asks how many properties in town this could potentially be on. R. Hoyler states that
46 they are willing to change the language they provided to narrow the number of parcels where it's possible.

47 C. Downes brings up that in the proposed text it mentions that the nearest residential property would need
48 to be at least 500 feet away. She asks how far the property on Diana Ct. is from the nearest residential
49 property. R. Hoyler states that it is approximately 1500 feet to the south. M. Glidden states that that is
50 inaccurate and that there is a residential property within 500 feet to the Diana Ct. property.

51 W. Dawson brings up safety concerns. R. Hoyler states that the DCP has very strict regulations that the
52 cultivator would have to abide by and have strict security controls. Also, since those regulations were put
53 in place there has not been a theft from a cannabis cultivator in the state. Further, he states that under the
54 proposed regulations they would have to have significant odor mitigation controls.

55 J. Kardaras asks if they plan on growing approximately the same amount of weight as they are currently
56 with the hemp production. R. Hoyler states that they would be using approximately the same space so it
57 would end up being around the same weight. J. Kardaras brings up that there are currently no regulations
58 regarding the smell for the hemp production. R. Hoyler explains that that is correct and if there was
59 cannabis production the DCP would have much stricter odor control and security measures. J. Kardaras
60 also mentions that it is legal for residents to grow up to 12 cannabis plants in their household.

61 E. Kurtz states that when it comes to indoor and outdoor grow, they are going to have to better define
62 greenhouses and be more specific.

63 M. Bowman brings up concerns of smell. R. Hoyler reiterates that this text amendment would be helpful
64 because if he converts to cannabis, he would have to provide odor control measures. Therefore, it would
65 give the commission more control than it has right now regarding odor.

66 S. Strollo brings up safety concerns regarding theft, and that the town will have to have more police up in
67 that area. R. Hoyler explains that in the packet provided there are multiple pages of DCP security
68 regulations. He also states that he understands the concern of the entire industrial zone being open to these
69 regulations and that there are numerous ways the commission can limit that, and if they wanted to put a
70 limit of the number of cultivators the could. M. Glidden explains that the town's attorney had advised not
71 to limit the number of approvals granted under this use.

72 A. Blake asks how often the DCP goes out to audit these facilities, and since there have been no thefts
73 what other violations are there. She asks if they could be provided a report to better understand what types
74 of violations are occurring. R. Hoyler states that he can provide that information to the commission.

75 B. Smith addresses the commission and states that they could include in the regulations to have a night
76 guard for security.

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J. Natale asks about containing the odor again. R. Hoyler and B. Smith explains ways to mitigate odor. J. Kardaras makes a point that all sorts of businesses produce odors.

R. Hoyler states that they believe that this application matches the goals of the Plan of Conservation and Development. The POCD speaks to expanding the industrial base in the industrial zones in the north end of town and being an agricultural community. He then shows the zoning map and where the industrial zones are. He mentions that they will work with the commission if they would like to find ways to narrow this.

In the proposed text they would also add definitions to help clarify the existing regulations. They would remove cultivators from the prohibited section and add it to the permitted uses. He further explains the other language in the proposed text change.

Fred Shamburg, of 85 Boxwood Row, Cheshire, CT, addressed the commission. He states that he is against this text amendment and that they should be able to monitor the smell.

Bob Irving, of 165 Victoria Dr., Cheshire, CT, addressed the commission. He states that he is a former police officer and agrees that this could increase the need for a police presence in that area.

Jim Sima, of 180 Birch Dr., Cheshire, CT, addressed the commission. He asks if there is a regulation in town for how far an industrial use has to be set back from an industrial use. M. Glidden explains that there is not.

C. Affie brings up that this can be a good opportunity for business to be profitable and continue agricultural use in town.

E. Kurtz asks for clarification on how the social equity contracts work. R. Hoyler explains and also states that they can provide more information on that at the next public hearing.

E. Kurtz kept the public hearing open.

VI. Adjournment

MOTION: J. Kardaras made a motion to adjourn the public hearing meeting, seconded by J. Natale. The meeting was adjourned at 8:34PM.

Motion was passed unanimously by commission members present.

Clerk: Colleen Costello