

1 **MINUTES OF THE TOWN OF CHESHIRE TOWN BEAUTIFICATION COMMITTEE**
2 **REGULAR MEETING HELD ON OCTOBER 1ST, 2025 AT 8:30 A.M.,**
3 **84 SOUTH MAIN STREET, CHESHIRE, CT 06410 – ROOM 207/209**
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5
6 Present:

7 William Bonaminio, Jessica Fischer, Patricia Archibald, Maria Colacrai, Susan Dillman, Cindy Braga, Joanna
8 Giddings, Elizabeth Morin, Jessica Feustel.
9

10 Staff/Guests:

11 Andrew Martelli, Assistant Town Manager.
12

13 Absent:

14 Elizabeth Morin, Don Walsh, Town Council Liaison.
15

16 **1) CALL TO ORDER**

17 Andrew Martelli called the meeting to order at 8:30 A.M.
18

19 **2) ROLL CALL & DETERMINATION OF QUORUM**

20 Andrew Martelli called the roll and a quorum was determined. Elizabeth Morin was absent.
21

22 At this time, Jessica Fischer moved to review the sign permit before other businesses. Cindy Braga seconded
23 the motion. The committee voted all in favor, and the motion passed unanimously.
24

25 **3) SIGN PERMIT REVIEW / SITE PLAN REVIEW**

26 **A. Birdcode – Stone Bridge Crossing**

27 Gerian Williams of Hartford Sign & Design, LLC presented the plans for Birdcode eatery to be located at
28 Stone Bridge Crossing. The applicant presented the signage package which has been reviewed and approved
29 by the site developer and Cheshire's Town Planner. All building signs will be reverse halo lit with black
30 lettering and a red logo. A non-illuminated blade sign will be installed and a series of ground mounted non-
31 illuminated drive-thru signs in addition to the building signs. All signage locations were discussed and
32 indicated in the application.
33

34 Susan Dillman moved that the committee accepted the sign design as presented, and Patricia Archibald
35 seconded the motion. The committee voted all in favor, and the motion passed unanimously.
36

37 **4) APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

38 **The Committee reviewed the meeting minutes from the September 3rd Meeting, and a redlined version**
39 **of the minutes is attached and hereby made part of the record.**
40

41 A motion was made by Jessica Feustel and seconded by Maria Colacrai to approve the meeting minutes as
42 revised. The committee voted all in favor, and the motion passed unanimously.
43

44 **5) BUSINESS**

45 **A. Bartlem Park Landscaping**

46 A slide show was reviewed by the Committee of pictures and text compiled by Joanna Giddings of the two-
47 drainage basis located at the Route 10 frontage of Bartlem Park. The pictures were taken in late August and
48 provided to Andrew Martelli on September 1st. The submission showed the area overgrown with mugwort
49 and other non and native wetland appropriate species. Joanna discussed the various pictures and indicated
50 that there did appear to be some purposeful planting, but the invasive mugwort had taken over. Since the
51 September meeting, and the taking of the pictures, the area has been mowed by DPW but a similar area to the
52 north of the driveway had not. Andrew Martelli stated that he would send the presentation to Weston &

Sampson, the design engineer, to inquire why the area was left in such a manner by the contractor. Joanna pointed to other trees that looked like they were struggling in the area. Andrew Martelli responded that certain trees would be reviewed by the landscape architect and replaced by the contractor. The Committee discussed potential options for the mugwort removal and the long-term establishment of plantings within the basin to coincide with the storm water management. Michael Glidden stated that he would review the plans for the park, and it could be reviewed at the next meeting.

B. Town Hall Landscaping

Patricia Archibald and Jessica Fischer provided an update on the Town Hall Landscaping. They had accompanied Town of Cheshire Public Works to Cheshire Nursery and provided guidance on planting locations previously determined by the TBC. Six shrubs were planted in the bed to the right of the Town Hall rear entrance that include 3 Leucothoe and 3 American Holly. A Red Bud tree has been planted behind the blue memorial bench at the rear entrance and a Sweet Gum tree in the grass area near the sidewalk and Town Manager's parking space. The Red Bud tree will be dedicated in remembrance of former Town Manager, Ed. O'Neill.

C. Maintenance of Commercial Properties / Business Letter

Andrew Martelli gave an update to the Committee on the status of the Blight Ordinance. The Blight Ordinance is being reviewed by the Ordinance Review Committee of the Town Council. The group decided it was best to await the outcome of any changes to the ordinance and would be reviewing properties over the next few months and discuss the sending of the letter at the next meeting.

D. Watering Contract Discussion

Andrew Martelli discussed the current contract with Abilities without Boundaries (AWB). AWB is currently watering the planters at Town Hall and along West Main Street. The scope of work has increased, and the cost of the work has also increased. The long hot summer has made it apparent that it might make sense to explore other watering opportunities. Town staff will be drafting a potential RFP to retain a part-time contract worker who could water and provide weekly maintenance to the various plantings the TBC completes annually. The topic will be further discussed at the November meeting.

6) STAFF REPORT

Andrew Martelli presented a slideshow of pictures taken by Jessica Fischer of the Pollinator Pathway plantings at the entrance to Mixville Park. The images showed a group of volunteers planting the area in the grass median with a series of native perennial species. Joanna Giddings pointed out that the group had planted annuals in the spring while awaiting cooler weather for the larger planting of the area as depicted. The area has been fully planted and mulched. The group was pleased with the outcome of the project.

Patricia Archibald asked if DPW could remove the plantings around the Yellow House sign as the Garden Club was no longer maintaining the area.

Patricia Archibald requested a water key be made available for the spigot at the east side of Town Hall to assist with the watering of the newly planted items at Town Hall.

7) ADJOURNMENT

Susan Dillman moved to **adjourn the meeting at 10:05am**, and Joanna Giddings seconded the motion. All those in attendance voted in favor.



Attest: Andrew Martelli, Assistant Town Manager

**MINUTES OF THE TOWN OF CHESHIRE TOWN BEAUTIFICATION COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING HELD ON SEPTEMBER 3rd 6TH, 2025 AT 8:30 A.M.,
84 SOUTH MAIN STREET, CHESHIRE, CT 06410 – ROOM 207/209**

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Present:

William Bonaminio, Jessica Fischer, Patricia Archibald, Maria Colacrai, Cindy Braga, Joanna Giddings, Elizabeth Morin, Jessica Feustel, Don Walsh, Town Council Liaison.

Staff/Guests:

Shain Strother, Minutes Clerk, Andrew Martelli, Assistant Town Manager, Dan Bombero, Director of Public Works, Mark Cunningham, Highway and Public Grounds Superintendent, Michael Glidden, Town Planner.

Absent:

Susan Dillman

1) CALL TO ORDER

Andrew Martelli called the meeting to order at 8:30 A.M.

2) ROLL CALL & DETERMINATION OF QUORUM

Andrew Martelli, assistant town manager, called the roll. There was a quorum. Susan Dillman was absent.

At this time, Jessica Fischer moved to review the sign permits before other business. Patricia Archibald seconded the motion. The committee voted all in favor, and the motion passed unanimously.

3) SIGN PERMIT REVIEW / SITE PLAN REVIEW

A. Harvey & Lewis Opticians – Stone Bridge Crossing

The committee discussed the sign design plan for the site with the applicant: Mark from Signlite. Mark spoke about the sign, stating it was mounted on the building, it was a blade sign, and that it was a set of black letters with halo lighting around the letters. Joanna Giddings moved that the committee accept the sign design as presented, and Cindy Braga seconded the motion. The committee voted all in favor, and the motion passed unanimously.

B. Bank of America - 185 Highland Avenue

The committee discussed the sign design plan for the site with Jeremy Waycott, the applicant. He said that the sign was a small reduction in size, would be put into the same place, and would be lit at night. Maria Colacrai moved that the committee accept the sign design as presented, and Cindy Braga seconded the motion. The committee voted all in favor, and the motion passed unanimously.

C. Hartford Healthcare GoHealth Urgent Care – Stone Bridge Crossing

The committee discussed the sign design plan for the site with the applicant. The applicant went over a front and back sign, both with aluminum backgrounds and reverse channel lettering in white. Maria Colacrai moved that the committee accept the sign design as presented, and Patricia Archibald seconded the motion. The committee voted all in favor, and the motion passed unanimously.

D. Shake Shack – Stone Bridge Crossing

The committee discussed the sign design plan for the site with the applicant, Pam Breely. The applicant discussed four signs, all of them being halo lit. She talked about a hamburger sign and three other signs, all being matte black and green and internally lit. Jessica Feustel moved that the committee accept the sign design as presented, and Joanna Giddings seconded the motion. The committee voted all in favor, and the motion passed unanimously.

52 **E. Arisco Insurance Group - 55 Elm Street/Two Town Center**

53 The committee discussed the sign design plan for the site with the applicant, Tom Arisco. He said he wants to put
54 down a wall-mounted sign on the building, an aluminum sign. Patricia Archibald moved that the committee
55 accept the sign design as presented, and Maria Colacrai seconded the motion. The committee voted all in favor,
56 and the motion passed unanimously.

57
58 **F. Avanti Grille - 122 Elm Street**

59 The committee discussed the sign design plan for the site with the applicant, Dominic Futilla. He said he wants
60 seven signs, four on Academy Road entrance, one on the south side entrance, one for the east side of the building,
61 and one in the central courtyard. The committee discussed the placement of the business with the applicant, and
62 the design of the sign. Cindy Braga moved that the committee accept the sign design as presented, and Maria
63 Colacrai seconded the motion. The committee voted all in favor, and the motion passed unanimously.

64
65 **G. Club Pilates - Stone Bridge Crossing**

66 The committee discussed the sign design plan for the site with the applicant, Jeremy from Amco Signs. He spoke
67 about the sign's design, including black reverse channel letters, reverse lit. He showed the committee the vinyl
68 signs he planned to put on his doors and windows. Jessica Feustel moved that the committee accept the sign
69 design as presented, and Cindy Braga seconded the motion. The committee voted all in favor, and the motion
70 passed unanimously.

71
72 **4) BUSINESS**

73 **A. Fall Festival**

74 The committee discussed the plans for the fall festival with Mark Cunningham and Dan Bombero, Director of
75 Public Works. ~~The TBC. They discussed plans for creating a fall display with the use of the Town's hay wagon~~
76 ~~and tractor for a picture area at the festival, talked about the holiday display for the year, and leaving the~~
77 ~~geraniums in place. They talked about food trucks, how to use the band shell, and about tractors, wagons and hay~~
78 ~~bales. They talked about creating a spot for pictures. They also talked about putting the TBC Committee sign in~~
79 ~~place at the fall display to indicate in a sign to show that the TBC they had been were behind the display. is~~
80 ~~activity. The committee also asked the deliverers of the mums to soak them down.~~

81
82 **B. Mugwort**

83 The committee ~~discussed with~~ talked to Mark Cunningham, and Dan Bombero, The Director of Public Works,
84 about ~~the presence of an infection of~~ mugwort in ~~the storm water retention basin at a drain near~~ Bartlem Park.
85 They also talked about removing some badly-pruned cherry trees in the area before the fall festival. Mark said that
86 Public Works intends to mow the ~~basin before the~~ mugwort ~~goes to seed and prior to the fall festival out before it~~
87 ~~seeds out.~~ He said they also have plans to overseed the drain with wildflower mix over a couple of years so that
88 the basin can have better growth. Mark said that the plan calls for Public Works to only mow the drain 2-3 times
89 per year, because the area was intended to be a biofilter. He said that the plan called to attach a mowerhead to a
90 skid steer to mow the drain area. The committee ~~suggested recommended~~ spraying ~~herbicide on the mugwort,~~
91 ~~down the area with pesticides,~~ and Mr. Cunningham said he'd look into it.

92
93 **C. Town Hall Landscaping**

94 ~~Dan Bombero Mark Cunningham discussed with the~~ talked to the committee about Public Work's plans
95 regarding the town hall's landscaping. He confirmed he got the list of desired tasks the committee had submitted.
96 The committee talked about a site walk in order to gather a list of more suggested changes. The committee
97 discussed the contours of the wildflower area at ~~Country Club Roads~~, and Mark said that the intent was to get
98 something to spread near the treeline, and that it would be one of the last mows of the season. ~~Dan Bombero Mr.~~
99 ~~Cunningham~~ talked about how he selected his wildflower planting mixes, talking about using UConn consultants
00 ~~for recommendations, to help.~~ The committee also talked more about how mugwort ~~removal and management~~
01 ~~elsewhere~~ was spreading everywhere in town. The committee discussed possibly going out next year and pulling
02 mugwort at the Country Club wildflower area. ~~it out.~~

103
104 **5) APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Regular Meeting August 6th, 2025**

105 The committee discussed corrections they wished to see to last meeting's minutes. On line 28, the committee
106 wanted to see the "~~recent~~" next to "trees planted" struck and replaced with "poorly pruned". On line 50, the
107 committee wanted to see Cheshire Nursery replaced with Maple Oak, reflecting who the committee was talking to
108 about the watering program. On line 51, the committee wished to see Hammond St. replaced with Chipman Dr.
109 On line ~~62~~⁵², the committee wanted the statement to reflect that the landscaping was being done AT town hall,
110 not NEAR town hall. On line 63, the committee wanted the minutes to show that they met with Chris Beebe and
111 looked at potential changes at town hall with Dan, and then those changes were referred to Chris Beebe who
112 would give the committee a landscaping plan. On Line 66 – the committee wanted the minutes to reflect that they
113 wanted mowed curved contours around the wildflower bed, and their request had nothing to do with the sidewalk.
114

115 Jessica Fischer moved to accept the minutes with these corrections, and Patricia Archibald seconded the motion.
116 The committee voted all in favor, and the motion passed unanimously.
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118 **6) BUSINESS**

119 **D. Street Tree Project Update**

120 The committee discussed the street trees which had been planted, saying that all of the ones except those on
121 Chipman Dr. looked good. The tree which was at a severe angle was straightened, and should eventually recover.
122

123 **E. Senior Center Project Update**

124 The committee discussed the landscaping around the senior center. Watering twice a week on the south side
125 ~~continues had been completed~~, and the plants looked good. Andrew Martelli said that the sign at the senior center
126 will be replaced as soon as he got a mockup. He said that a former user was donating money for the sign and
127 remaining funding would go toward senior center programming. The committee discussed landscaping around the
128 the cleaning around the back entrance, and about continuing with a patio area with drainage that needs railings.
129 Mr. Martelli mentioned that Dan Bombaro had walked the property to get ideas. Mr. Martelli said they would put
130 in more handicap spots in the parking lot.
131

132 **F. Maintenance of Commercial Properties/Business Letter**

133 The committee discussed formulating a letter ~~to regarding~~ businesses in town ~~about the and their~~ maintenance of
134 their properties. The committee discussed who should go on the list, noting that businesses should be recognized
135 for beautiful properties, as well as reminding other business owners about the importance of maintenance
136 warned if they have ugly or neglected properties. They discussed blight ordinances and their enforcement. They
137 discussed ordinance enforcement review committees and historic district committees which held sway over
138 properties that the committee discussed.
139

140 **G. Mugwort in Bartlem Park**

141 Andrew Martelli apologized for his error in not adding the received presentation by Joanna Giddings of the
142 mugwort at Bartlem Park to the agenda packet. The Committee decided to have a review of the presentation and
143 discussion regarding the mugwort at the October TBC meeting. The committee discussed a public comment sent
144 to the committee regarding an eyesore in Bartlem Park: invasive mugwort. The committee discussed spraying the
145 mugwort with pesticides, and discussed a survey they had done to make recommendations. The first
146 recommendation is to remove all mugwort in the area and replace it with self-sustaining drought-tolerant
147 rainwater plants. The committee discussed the money being unavailable, stating that a better plan was needed for
148 next time. They discussed cutting down four crabapple trees. They discussed the danger that mugwort poses,
149 stating that next month the mugwort would seed everywhere and spread uncontrollably. The committee stated
150 their desire to overseed the mugwort with native wildflowers to keep it at bay. The committee discussed the need
151 to prioritize mugwort this fall, spraying and cutting it back once it dies, then repeating the process continually.
152 The committee also briefly discussed the Japanese knotweed plants near the highway.
153

154 7) **ADJOURNMENT**
155 Jessica Feustel moved to adjourn the meeting, and Patricia Archibald seconded the motion. All in favor, and the
156 motion passed unanimously.
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158 Meeting adjourned at 10:00 A.M.
159

160 Attest: 
161 Shain Strother, Minutes Clerk