

Public Hearing
Cheshire Planning and Zoning Commission
Monday, July 27, 2026 – Town Hall – Council Chambers – 7:00 PM

I. **Call to Order**

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

II. **Roll Call**

Matt Bowman called the roll

Present: John Kardaras, Chairman; Earl Kurtz, Vice Chairman; Matt Bowman, Secretary; Chris Affie, Tom Selmont, Jeff Natale, Casey Downes, Jim McKenney

Alternates: John Hilzinger, Anita Blake, Paul Calaluce

Absent: Sean Strollo

Staff member present: Lina Cortez-Frazer, Assistant Town Planner; Jeffrey Donofrio, Town Attorney

III. **Determination of Quorum**

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

IV. **Pledge of Allegiance**

V. **Business**

1. **Petition for a Zone Change on behalf of Donald J. Ciamp, Sr. and Lucille D. Ciampi, Applicant; M.A. Ceccorulli, Esq., Agent. Applicant is requesting to change from the R-20 Zoning District to the R-20A Zoning District pursuant to the Cheshire Zoning Regulations for the property located at 35 Rita Ave. (Assessor's Map 14, Lot 31).**

Michael Ceccorulli, Esq., 231 Farmington Ave., Farmington, CT, addressed the commission. M. Ceccorulli explains that his clients own the abutting property which is zoned R-20A and they are looking to do a lot line revision. He further explains that from a property outside of town has increased the velocity and volume of water at low lying areas of Rita Ave. He states that the owners of 35 Rita and the abutting property have previously installed on site drainage over the years to mitigate the runoff that has impacted the street and properties. The lot line revision is so that the abutting property to 35 Rita Ave. can have better control over the existing site drainage for future maintenance and improvements. M. Ceccorulli explains that they are looking for the rezone because there would be a lot coverage exceedance if they did the lot line revision without the rezone. During discussions with planning staff it was determined at that time that a rezone would be favorable to a ZBA variance. He states that there are commercially zoned properties within a few hundred feet of the subject property and therefore consistent with the existing pattern of development. M. Ceccorulli also explains that this rezone would lessen the legal nonconformity on the property as well.

J. McKenney asks what kind of uses are allowed in the R-20A zone. M. Ceccorulli explains that R-20A is traditionally used a transitional zone and states that type of uses that are allowed.

M. Bowman brings up that it was always a commercial use and that he doesn't see this change as having any negative impact.

J. Kardaras closed the public hearing.

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2. **Application for a Special Permit on behalf of Kelly’s Farm LLC, Applicant;**
Applicant is requesting a Special Permit pursuant to Section 3.4.D.5 of the
Zoning Regulations for an indoor event facility located at 466 Academy Rd.
(Assessor’s Map 58, Lot 45 & 47) Zone R-40.

M. Bowman recused himself.

Christopher Rousseau, Esq., of Pullman & Comley, addressed the commission. C. Rousseau explains that the applicant had previously amended the zoning regulations to allow for and indoor event venue held on working farms.

William Cunningham, owner of the subject property, addressed the commission. W. Cunningham thanks the community for the support. He explains that after careful deliberation that the retail shop that is currently on the property will have to be replaced at the same footprint seen on the site plan.

Ryan McEvoy, Professional Engineer, of SLR Consulting, addressed the commission. R. McEvoy shows an aerial photo of the site and explains the existing conditions. He states that they will be adding more formal parking to be used for both events and the farm use. R. McEvoy explains that for the parking ratio they are using 1 space per 3 people which exceeds the standard. He states that they will be bringing in public water and will have a hydrant on site with fire sprinklers in the venue. R. McEvoy explains that they will be realigning the driveway somewhat to maximize the sightlines and they have provided a traffic study.

J. McKenney asks why they are only providing 106 parking spots when the venue will allow for 275 people. W. Cunningham explains that if it was a seated event, they would not be able to fit 275 people and only would be able to if it was a standing event only.

A. Blake asks if there will be more than one event happening at a time. W. Cunningham states that most likely it’ll just be a singular event taking place at a time.

L. Cortez-Frazer states that the parking meets and exceeds the regulations.

J. Kardaras asks if they will have to remove any trees for the parking. R. McEvoy states that they will have to remove a few trees and W. Cunningham states that they will be planting more trees on other areas of the property.

C. Affie brings up that when they approved the text amendment it had stated that 60% of the land had to be open space and asks how the progress on that is going. C. Rousseau explains that they are far long in the process with the land trust and the town and that that could be considered a condition of approval.

T. Selmont mentions that they had received a letter from the public looking for assurance of the septic. R. McEvoy explains that they reviewed with the local health department and they exceed what is needed.

Public Comments

Carolyn Williams, of 92 Talmadge Rd., addressed the commission. C. Williams asks if the parking lot will be illuminated and if so how. She also asks if there will be any music being played outside. W. Cunningham states that they have not finalized all of the landscaping and lighting yet but says that the lighting will be soft and won’t impose on neighboring residences.

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Peter Grant, of 30 Judson Ct., addressed the commission. P. Grant asks if the retail store was included when calculating the parking. R. McEvoy explains that the intent is if there is a wedding taking place there won't be apple picking going on or general public access during those events.

Doug Levens of 72 Chipman Dr. addressed the commission. D. Levens states that he is in support of the project and that it will help Cheshire keep its farming heritage while keeping it financially viable. He also reads into the record emails from abutting property owners that are in support.

Jim Doheny, of 86 Chipman Dr., addressed the commission. J. Doheny states that he is in support of the project and thinks it'll be a good addition to the town.

Chris Garrity, of 160 Richmond Glen Dr., addressed the commission. C. Garrity states that he has a concern for the traffic on Academy Rd. and that having a large number of people coming and going at the same time will cause a hardship for the people that live in the area. R. McEvoy explains that they have submitted documentation regarding the impact of the event space on the traffic in the area. He also explains the level of service and that they are adequate. C. Garrity asks how the patio will be used during events and what is its capacity. He also asks about noise and if there will be music out on the patio. R. McEvoy states that there is no intent on there being any music or speakers outside.

Ann Rizzo, of 245 Richmond Glen, addressed the commission. A. Rizzo questions if moving the driveway will make it closer to the curve in the road and affect sightlines. She also brings up lighting and asks if it could be something that is not on all the time. R. McEvoy explains that in the traffic study it includes the sightlines with the proposed driveway shift and that the sightlines are way more than what is needed for an intersection like this.

Jonathan Cretella, of 10 Judson Ct., addressed the commission. J. Cretella brings up that it is hard to exit left out of the current driveway due to visibility with the curve in the road. He asks if they would consider right only out of the property. He also asks what they intend to be the hours of operation. R. McEvoy reiterates that there are adequate sightlines, so they don't want to limit to left turn only. He states that it will also have to be reviewed by DOT. W. Cunningham explains that the operation would depend on when people would want their wedding and that they regulations states that music can't be played past midnight.

Jim Bulger, of 61 Warren St., addressed the commission. J. Bulger states that he is in support of the project and does not think that lighting will cause any disturbance.

Robert Roche, of 269 Redwood Lane addressed the commission. R. Roche states that this is a thoughtfully thought out project and that he is in support.

Marc Russo, of 115 Orleton Ct., addressed the commission. M. Russo states that he is in total support of the project.

J. Kardaras closed the public hearing.

3. **Application for a Special Permit on behalf of Eric Bucci, Applicant; Stephen Giudice, Agent. Applicant is requesting a Special Permit pursuant to Section 3.4.A.3 of the Zoning Regulations for a church located at 1146 Waterbury Rd (Assessor's Map 41, Lot 94, 95, 96, & 97) Zone R-20.**

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Brian Panico, of Cole Civil + Survey addressed the commission. B. Panico explains the existing conditions and shows the entirety of all the lots that are included. He states that they will be expanding the parking to a total of 313 spots. B. Panico explains that with the existing houses curb cuts one will be eliminated, and one will be repurposed as a second entrance and exit to the site. They currently have a police officer directing traffic in and out and they will continue to do so. He also further explains stormwater management and the phases of construction. B. Panico states that there will be a 10% increase of traffic at the peak hours and there will be no level of surface change except for in and out of the church. All building material will be the same as the existing building.

J. Natale mentions that there was an article stating that they would be moving box turtles etc. B. Panico explains that they went through the wetlands commission and there is no wetland impact. They are not planning to relocate any box turtles etc. He states that there is a plan in place if they do come across them. J. Natale also brings up that there have been times that he has not seen police present and asks if they could condition that. J. Donofrio states that it is a safety issue and they could talk to the police department or ask the applicant to come up with a solution. B. Panico mentions that it will have to go to OSTA for their review.

A. Blake asks how long is each phase of construction and how long the project is expected to take. B. Panico explains that it will be a multi-year project. A. Blake also asks about how they will minimize disruptions to residents during construction. B. Panico states that it will be treated like any commercial project and will have fencing etc.

Chris Green, Executive Pastor, addressed the commission. C. Green states that they have police present at all of their services and have increased their presence over the last year.

M. Bowman mentions that when they stop traffic to let cars out, people coming around the corner aren't expecting stopped traffic. M. Bowman asks if they did a habitat survey to see if there are any species of concern in that area. B. Panico states that the soil scientist did not see any of these species when they were out there. M. Bowman brings up that they could have a sort of barrier to stop them from getting into the construction area. He also asks if this is going to become a major traffic generator.

J. McKenney asks for clarification on the construction phasing.

J. Kardaras asks if there will be another police officer on site since there is another entrance being created. C. Green states that that is the plan.

The public hearing is kept open.

VI. Adjournment

MOTION: E. Kurtz made a motion to adjourn the public hearing meeting, seconded by J. Natale.

Motion was passed by commission members present.

The public hearing meeting was adjourned at 8:39PM.

Attest: Colleen Costello