

EAST LYME ZONING COMMISSION

FILED IN EAST LYME TOWN
CLERK'S OFFICE

**Public Hearing
October 19, 2000**

Oct 27 2000 at NOON ^{AM}/_{PM}

MINUTES

Ethel B. Williams

EAST LYME TOWN CLERK

The East Lyme Zoning Commission held a Public Hearing and Regular Meeting on October 19, 2000 at the Town Hall, 108 Pennsylvania Ave., Niantic, CT. Mrs. Athena Cone chaired the meeting. Mrs. Cone called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM.

PRESENT: Secretary Athena Cone, Shawn McLaughlin, David Chamberlain, Norman Peck, Alternates Mark Nickerson, Donna Orefice, and Robert Bulmer,

Absent: Chairman William Weber, Ed Gada, William Mulholland, Zoning Officer,

Also present: Rose Ann Hardy, Ex-officio.

I. PUBLIC HEARING

Application of Patrick and Ann Quinn for a Special Permit to permit occupancy of the Aces High Recreational Park, 301 Chesterfield Road, twelve (12) months per year.

Panel: Mrs. Cone, Mrs. Orefice, Mr. Peck, Mr. McLaughlin, Mr. Chamberlain, and Mr. Nickerson

Mrs. Cone opened the Public Hearing at 7:30 PM.

Mrs. Orefice read the Legal Ad and noted it had been properly published. She also read into the record:

1. Letter from M. Ousterhout, Conservation Commission dated October 19, 2000.
2. Letter from William Mulholland, Zoning Official, dated October 19, 2000.

The applicant, Patrick Quinn, addressed the Commission. Mr. Quinn stated that he, along with his wife, Ann, and daughter, Kathy operate Aces High RV Park. He added that Allen Beavers, Executive Director of the CT Campground Owners Association was also present. Mr. Quinn stated he is requesting the option to have adult only camping from November 1 and March 31.

Mr. Quinn read the "Applicants Comments" submitted to the Commission. He indicated that the request for modification of the Special Permit to allow winter camping is the "result of evolution", i.e., demand by transient workers servicing Millstone Station, Pfizers and other projects in the area.

Mr. Quinn also reviewed the Winter Camping Rules and Regulations that Aces High will impose upon winter campers. Among these rules was the prohibition of children. Mr. Quinn stated that the rules

prevent mobile homes in the park, use of tarp or storage sheds, and use of decks. He indicated that the campers must be movable and usable for roads within 10 minutes of notice.

Mrs. Cone inquired as to the definition of "adult". Mr. Quinn stated that winter camping would be restricted to persons over the age of 18 years. He added that the Park cannot be used as a permanent mailing address. He stated that everyone gets a copy of the Rules & Regulations and sign a statement indicating that they will abide by them. These Rules & Regulations are also posted.

Mrs. Cone inquired what the usual stay would be by these transient workers. Mr. Quinn stated that the time would vary for transient workers, but usually would last 2-3 months. Sometimes there may be campers staying overnight or just a few days on their way to some other destination. He added that these individuals would be using businesses and restaurants in East Lyme.

Mr. Peck read the applicable Section 20.17 regarding mobile homes and recreational trailers of the Zoning Regulations.

"Such units occupied as a residence will not be permitted on any lot in any district except for recreational purposes and in an approved camping site. Occupancy of trailer shall be limited to 60 days per year."

He questioned how the town could monitor this.

Mr. Quinn stated that he did not think that there has been any enforcement of that regulations in any RV park. He stated that seasonal campers (6-8 –usually retired persons) stay the whole summer season, some leave their trailer and come on weekends and/or for a week(s) vacation. He added that he charges both a weekly rate and a monthly rate.

Mr. Peck inquired if Mr. Quinn had considered requesting an amendment to the regulations to loosen the 60-day time restriction. Mr. Quinn stated that the regulations were antiquated, as most campgrounds in the State of CT do not place a 60-day limit on camping. He added that the CT campground owners have volunteered to assist towns in revising their regulations pertaining to campgrounds.

Mr. Peck inquired if a 90-day limitation could be workable. Mr. Quinn stated that possibly 90-days would work in the winter, but it places severe restrictions on the RV Park in the summer months. The only campgrounds in Connecticut which have short time restrictions are the State Campgrounds.

Mrs. Cone stated, in response to Mrs. Hardy inquiry, that the application had not gone to Planning Commission for comment because it had been preapproved. She added that she had spoken with Mr. Mulholland in the afternoon regarding this.

Mrs. Cone opened the floor to anyone wishing to speak in favor of the application.

Allen Beaver, Executive Director, CT Campground Owners Association stated that there are 54 private and 12 State campgrounds in the state and the regulations governing those are in general the same except for the length of stay. The State of CT campgrounds have a 2-week limit; private campgrounds do not have that limitation. Mr. Beaver also stated that the Aces High RV Park has received an award from the National Association as the 'State of the Art' campground.

Mr. Beaver added that the CCOA Adult Only Policy is that no children from a year round campground shall be enrolled in the public schools. He stated that this policy has been tested and stood. Additionally, by state law, a campground cannot be a permanent address.

Mr. Beaver noted that the East Lyme Regulations limit a camper's stay to 60 days per year. He stated that this was extremely restrictive. Where 60-day stays exist, the camper can physically move out of the campground for 24 hours, return and reregister. This regulation has been removed from the regulations of many towns.

Mr. Chamberlain inquired as to the definition of 'tourist'. Mr. Beaver stated that a 'tourist' is 60 miles from home.

Mr. Beaver stated that currently there are in Connecticut 8,000 private camp sites and 14,000 State camp sites. Of these, 60% are Connecticut residents.

Marvin Schutt, 29 Edgewood Rd. North stated that he is familiar with the efforts of the applicants in their making Aces High a high quality RV park. He added that the applicants have, since the initial planning for the Park, attempted to comply with all East Lyme Regulations. He added that the 60-day requirement be amended to 6-months, as it is customary for campgrounds to allow seasonal camping and the 60-day limitation is too restrictive. Mr. Schutt also indicated that, as mentioned by Mr. Quinn previously, there is a time factor involved with this application.

Respectfully submitted,



Anita M. Bennett
Recording Secretary
26 October 2000