

Minutes of the East Lyme Zoning Commission August 7, 2025, Regular Meeting

Date and Time: 8/7/2025 7:30PM to 7:59PM

Present: Members: Chairman, Anne Thurlow, Secretary, Nancy Kalal, Norman Peck, Debbie Jett-Harris, Michael Foley, Denise Markovitz. Alternates: Sarah Susco, Cathy Yuhas. Staff: William Mulholland. Ex-Officio: Roseanne Hardy. Recording Secretary: Janet Sutherland

Absent: Alternate: Jim Liska.

Location: East Lyme Town Hall Upper Conf Room 108 Pennsylvania Avenue

1. Call to Order and Pledge

Ms. Thurlow called the August 7, 2025, Regular Meeting of the East Lyme Zoning Commission to order at 7:30PM and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Attendance

Thurlow called the roll and noted Liska was absent.

3. Public Hearing - None

4. Regular Meeting

a. CGS 8-30g The Affordable Housing Land Use Appeals Procedure

First Selectman Daniel Cunningham informed the commission of his decision to have Waller, Smith & Palmer move forward with a moratorium on appeals for affordable housing applications. Cunningham waited on Governor Ned Lamont's decision on HB 5002 [An Act Concerning Housing and the Needs of Homeless Persons] before initiating the appeals process, then decided to proceed.

Thurlow asked how long the process would be. Cunningham did not have details yet, would be meeting with the Town Attorney on Monday. The commission thanked the First Selectman for his decision.

b. Definitions of Short-Term Rentals

Thurlow stated the importance of defining short-term rentals (STR) before the larger discussion begins. Thurlow then distributed a list of suggested rental definitions [Attachment A] including: short-term rental, academic rental and long-term rental. After a fourteen-month study, the Short-Term Rental Subcommittee all agreed there needs to be definitions in the Zoning Regulations. Thurlow noted the STR definition distributed reflected the State's definition.

Commissioners discussed the length of academic vs long-term rentals, and beach rentals. Foley suggested those definitions were superfluous, and recommended striking academic and long-term rental options and only defining STRs. Jett-Harris asked whether the Zoning Regulations ever had a definition for academic rentals. Mulholland replied no, rentals had not been defined, and agreed with Foley's suggestion to only define STRs. Peck also recommended the Commission just focus on STRs and not force themselves to overregulate. Markovitz wondered who would regulate this.

Thurlow suggested the Commission focus on an STR definition.

RECEIVED FOR RECORD
EAST LYME, CT
2025 AUG 13 P 2:04
Cathy Yuhas
TOWN CLERK

MOTION 1-DECISION

Ms. Jett-Harris moved to have a Public Hearing to have a definition of short-term rentals as a proposed text amendment to the Zoning Regulations

Ms. Kalal seconded the motion.

Motion passed 6-0-0.

Mulholland noted the busy September schedule and the 35-day referral period, added it would take about 40 days to have the Public Hearing.

5. Disposition of Minutes

- a. Approval of Minutes of July 10, 2025, Regular Meeting.

MOTION 2-DECISION

Ms. Jett-Harris moved to accept the minutes as presented.

Ms. Kalal seconded the motion.

Motion passed 4-0-2. Foley and Markovitz abstained.

6. Old Business - None

7. Subcommittee Reports - None

8. New Business - Any business on the floor, if any, by the majority vote of the Commission

- a. Kalal noted she had read the Regulations and noted a discrepancy regarding keeping chickens. [pg 198 of the Zoning Regulations amended through July 19, 2024]. One cannot raise chickens under one acre. Mulholland suggested Kalal come and discuss chicken regulations during office hours.
- b. Jett-Harris noted the limited legal representation with only one full-time attorney. Jett-Harris noticed Zoning was the most legal commission in town, and suggested town counsel come to meetings every three months and give advice. Thurlow stated it would be nice to call the attorney directly, added she would have to discuss with the First Selectman. Peck stated a set schedule would not be wise, counsel should be brought in as needed.

9. Public Delegations - Time set aside for the public to address the Commission on Land Use items not on the agenda.

Lisa McGowan, 33 Spinnaker Dr - wanted to review short-term rentals, Thurlow noted this was on the agenda and could not be discussed. McGowan then thanked the Commission for all their work on North Bride Brook Road, and noted traffic issues.

10. Zoning Official - no report

11. Comments from Ex-Officio - no report

12. Zoning Board Liaison to Planning Commission

- a. August 12, 2025- Foley
- b. September 9, 2025- Jett-Harris

13. Comments from Chairman

14. Adjournment

MOTION 3-DECISION

Ms. Markovitz moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:59PM.

Ms. Jett-Harris seconded the motion.

Motion passed 6-0-0.

Attachment "A"

SHORT TERM RENTAL

The rental of a furnished residence or like accommodation for 30 consecutive calendar days or less, and this does not include traditional lodging. A residence may include all or a portion of a home, apartment, condominium, or similar dwelling.

ACADEMIC RENTAL

The rental of a property for a fixed period, which generally coincides with the academic year, usually fall through spring (8-9 months). The residence may include all or a portion of a home, apartment, condominium, or similar dwelling.

LONG TERM RENTAL

The rental of a property, furnished or unfurnished, to a tenant for a period of 12 consecutive calendar months or longer. This may include a home, apartment, condominium, or similar dwelling.