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Sent: Wednesday, April 15, 2026 3:05 PM
To: 'rhomeandhaven@comcast.net' <rhomeandhaven@comcast.net>
Subject: Planning & Zoning Process Overview

Good afternoon Christine-

Per our discussion and based on the preliminary conversation earlier this year, I have outlined the below are standard application requirements and processes for IWWA (Inland Wetland Commission), SDD (Special Development District) and SUP (Special Use Permit). These applications would need to be reviewed and approved in this order with IWW being first, SDD second and SUP last. We would typically do our best to streamline the timeframes associated with each application so that they are heard by their respective board/commission as efficiently as possible. That said, the last conversation with staff was at a high-level and theoretical, so upon further technical planning we would be happy to review a proposal plan set in advance of any submittals to ensure the guidance as outlined above and below fully encompass all that is required on the Town approvals side.

[Wetland Regulated Activity Application Process:](#)

Once an Inland Wetlands and Watercourses (IWW) application is submitted, it is be placed on an agenda of the next regular meeting of the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Agency (IWWA) for a determination of significance. The applicant does not attend this meeting, rather staff makes a brief introduction of the application and the Agency then makes a determination as to whether the proposed work could have a potentially significant impact on the wetland resource they are charged with protecting. If they determine that the project will not have a potentially significant impact on the wetland resource, the application is approved with a list of standard conditions. If determined potentially significant, the application will be set for public hearing at the next regular meeting of the IWWA. If this does take place and a hearing is required, you and/or a project representative will be required to attend and make a presentation describing the proposed work to the Agency.

The application requirements are as follows:

- Application form found here: <https://resources.finalseite.net/images/v1581355431/westhartfordctgov/z6mejll5ue2xe9qfmrqx/Inland-Wetlands-Watercourses-Application.pdf>
- Application fee of \$230.00 (additional fees of \$370.00 will be required if the project is determined potentially significant as described above)
- Plans and documents that incorporate the following requirements from Section 7 of the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses regulations for the Town of West Hartford:
 - The geographical location of the property which is the subject of by the proposed activity, including but not limited to a description of the land in sufficient detail to allow identification of the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses, a computation of the area(s) (in acres or square feet) of Wetland or Watercourse disturbance, soil types(s) and vegetation.
 - A narrative that describes the following:

- The purpose and a description of the proposed activity.
 - A description of all development activities contemplated by the Applicant at the site which is the subject of the application for the five (5) year period commencing on the date when the application is filed, if any
 - Any alternatives which would cause less or no environmental impact to Wetlands or Watercourses and why the proposal to alter wetlands set forth in the application was chosen; these alternatives shall be diagrammed on a site plan or drawing and submitted to the Agency as part of the application
- A site plan drawn by a licensed surveyor or engineer registered in the State of Connecticut showing the proposed activity, along with existing and proposed conditions in relation to Wetlands and Watercourses and identifying any further activities associated with, or reasonably related to the proposed Regulated Activity, which are made inevitable by the proposed Regulated Activity and which may have an impact on Wetlands or Watercourses.
 - The site plan should also depict all proposed erosion and sedimentation controls and other Management practices and mitigation measures which may be considered as a condition of issuing a Permit for the proposed Regulated Activity including, but not limited to, measures to: (1) prevent or minimize Pollution or other environmental damage; (2) maintain or enhance existing environmental quality; or (3) in the following order of priority: restore, enhance and create productive Wetland or Watercourse resources. Please note that all proposed E&S controls shall be consistent with the 2024 CT Guidelines for Soil Erosion and Sediment Control.
 - A stormwater management plan, consistent with the 2024 Stormwater Quality Manual, which demonstrates no increase in the rate of stormwater runoff from pre-construction to post-construction conditions for the 2, 5, 10, 25, 50 and 100-year design storms.

Special Development District Application Process

The SDD zoning district is a floating zone that is accordance with its purpose, “[P]ermit[s] and encourage[s] variety and flexibility in land development that will be in harmony with the objectives of the Comprehensive Plan for the Town's development. The Town Council (TC) is the designated zoning authority with respect to SDD applications and is permitted under the SDD process to approve, disapprove or approve with modifications a plan for the development of land, which plan may require changes in the regular standards applying to the permitted uses of land in the zoning district in which it is located, subject to the specific findings and plan submittal requirements.

Amendment Process

The TC is the zoning authority with respect to SDD amendment and rezoning applications. All applications must be submitted at least seven (7) days prior to a regularly

scheduled meeting date. After being submitted, the TC shall receive the application at its next regularly scheduled meeting and set it for public hearing not less than thirty (30) or more than sixty (60) after receiving and shall immediately refer to the TPZ and DRAC. The TPZ shall consider the application within sixty (60) days after the referral. In addition, for SDD applications a formal referral is made at the time of receipt to the Design Review Advisory Committee (DRAC) which shall render formal comments prior to the public hearing. Typically, if not controversial, the public hearing will last one evening and a decision will be made by the TC the same night. If approved, the required final plan set shall be filed within 90 days or the application will become null and void. Overall, on average, I usually recommend budgeting 60-90 days for the process once the application is submitted.

A detailed breakdown of each aspect of the SDD application process is discussed below.

Application Materials

Application materials include, an application narrative letter explaining the request which also provides a statement on consistency with POCD; full civil engineered plans; full architectural plans, full landscape plans; traffic and stormwater reports and/or statements; a Neighborhood Outreach report and other supporting information (all of which are required elements of plan submittal). A complete application includes submittal of twenty (20), reduced 11x17 sized sets of all information, one full sized plan set and a digital copy of the same. It is strongly recommended to submit the entire application package electronically to staff for review prior to printing paper copies of anything.

Neighborhood Outreach

It is expected that all SDD applications include some type of meaningful outreach to all property owners within a minimum 300' of the site. This outreach could take many forms, such as letters, a meeting, door-to door efforts, engagement of the local business associations, etc. Additionally, the Planning and Zoning Division is able to assist in providing the neighbor abutters map and mailing labels if needed.

Application Fees

Total Special Development Application fees are as follows: Application Fee \$550 +\$100/1,000 s.f. of new building or changed use + \$150 Public Hearing Fee + \$60 DEEP surcharge and \$20 sign affidavit fee). Link to detailed fee breakdown below.

<https://resources.finalsite.net/images/v1581356570/westhartfordctgov/vj7mhgtthwhlstthixnm/TPZ-Fees.pdf>

Schedule

The Town Council typically meets on the second and fourth Tuesday's of each month. A link to the full 2026 TC meeting calendar listed here:

<https://www.westhartfordct.gov/government-services/town-council/town-council-meeting-dates>

Required Referrals

The TPZ and DRAC meetings will occur within the timeframe from initial TC receipt and must be completed prior to public hearing. The TPZ reviews the application for a finding of consistency with the Town's Plan of Conservation and Development. This is a public meeting and not a hearing. The applicant does not present any material to the TPZ. Staff provides an overview of the application to the Commission and answers their questions. If the TPZ makes a negative finding / referral, the resulting action triggers a supermajority approval by the TC.

The DRAC reviews the design related elements of the plan, architecture, landscaping, site layout, site lighting, signage etc. and provides its finding back to the Council in a referral letter. A formal vote and finding of consistency with the Committee's Performance Criteria would be expected at this meeting.

This process does not guarantee a successful outcome. The Council is afforded discretionary authority and depending on the specifics of an application, the viability of the site to support redevelopment, referral comments from other Commission/Committees and public comment, it is possible for an application to be denied.

Special Use Permit Application Process:

Special Use Permits (SUP) is a permit that can only be granted through a public hearing process through an application to the Town Plan and Zoning Commission. When an application is submitted, it is placed on the agenda for the next regular meeting of the TPZ. At that meeting, the application is received and set for hearing the following month. Special Use Permit applications generally take about 2.5 months to complete. Following the hearing and assuming the application is approved, there is a 15-day appeal period that runs from the date that notice of an approval is posted in the Hartford Courant; generally, the Thursday following the meeting. Once the appeal period runs its course, the project can continue. The complete 2026 TPZ/IWWA meeting calendar can be found

here: https://resources.finalsite.net/images/v1765484956/westhartfordctgov/zhuqwrvmfmu5kcnwqqt/2026_TPZ_Annual_Meeting_Calendar_Adopted.pdf

The application requirements are as follows:

Application form found

here: <https://resources.finalsite.net/images/v1622042911/westhartfordctgov/jithrubtmyd1bhpdmedq/TPZ-Application.pdf>

- Application fees, which are \$200.00 + (\$50.00/1,000 square feet of new use, or fraction thereof) + \$150.00 (public hearing fee) + \$60.00 (mandatory DEEP fee) + \$20.00 (public hearing sign affidavit fee).

- Plans and documents that incorporate the following:
 - A comprehensive narrative that describes the purpose of the project
 - A complete set of architectural and civil plans that depict the proposed changes to the property
 - A public outreach summary. While not required, some type of community outreach is strongly encouraged.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Thank you!

Best Regards,

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