

Wallingford Planning & Zoning Commission
Regular Meeting
Monday, March 9, 2026
6:30 p.m.
Robert F. Parisi Council Chambers – Town Hall
Town Hall – 45 South Main Street
MINUTES

Chairman Fitzsimmons called the meeting to order at approximately 6:30 p.m.
Chairman Fitzsimmons called for a Motion to move to Executive Session.

Commissioner Kohan: Motion to move to Executive Session pursuant to CGS Sections 1-225(f) and 1-200(6)(B) to discuss the pending litigations at 6:34 pm.

**Commissioner Leonardo: Second
Vote: Unanimous to approve.**

Commissioner Kohan: Motion to return from Executive Session at 7:10 pm.

**Commissioner Leonardo: Second
Vote: Unanimous to approve.**

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all.

Roll Call: Present: James Fitzsimmons, Chair; Jeffrey Kohan, Vice Chair; David Leonardo, Secretary; Casey Camire, Regular Member; J.P. Venoit, Regular Member; James Seichter, Regular Member; Joseph Sanders, Alternate; Cheryl DeGenova, Alternate; and Kevin Pagini, Town Planner.

Commissioner Camire will be voting in place of Commissioner Venoit.

Consideration of Minutes – February 9, 2026, Regular Meeting

Commissioner Kohan: Motion to approve the Minutes of Monday, February 9, 2026, Meeting of the Wallingford Planning and Zoning Commission as submitted.

**Commissioner Leonardo: Second
Vote: Unanimous to approve, with Commissioner Seichter abstaining**

Chairman Fitzsimmons noted that the following agenda items will not be heard tonight.

- 3. PUBLIC HEARING – Text Amendment request for Quinnipiac Valley Growth Partners to add a cannabis retailer as an allowed use in the RF-40 (Route 5) Zoning District. Text Amendment will alter Sections §1.4, §6.34, and §4.16.B. #502-26 Continued to April meeting**

5. **PUBLIC HEARING – Special Permit – Multi-Family Housing/McInvale/1183 & 1185 Old Colony Rd. #402-26** Continued to April meeting

PUBLIC HEARINGS

2. Special Permit – Adaptive Re-use to Multi-Family/Malchiodi/386 Williams Rd #401-26

Commissioner Leonardo read the legal notice and noted the correspondence. #401-26 – Special Permit request for Mark Malchiodi for an adaptive re-use to a multi-family application to construct 9 dwelling units at 386 Williams Rd. – RU-40 (Residential) District. Correspondence included: letter dated February 19, 2026 from Kevin Pagini, Town Planner, to Mark Malchiodi; email dated February 20, 2026 from Bob Wiedenmann to Kevin Pagini, Town Planner; email dated March 3, 2026 from Michael Hughes, Health Department to Kevin Pagini, Town Planner including 44 pages of violation history; memorandum dated March 4, 2026 from Janis Small, Corporation Counsel to Kevin Pagini, Town Planner; Interoffice Memorandum dated March 4, 2026 from Thomas Flannery, Senior Engineer, Water & Sewer Division to Kevin Pagini, Town Planner.

Chairman Fitzsimmons noted that the public hearing is opening tonight, but no action is planned tonight.

Bob Wiedenmann, Sunwood Development, 284 North Main Street, represented the owners. The property is the original homestead for the family farm. This application is for an adaptive re-use for the house and the barn under regulation 6.16. He gave an overview of the proposal with more details to be provided at the next meeting. There are currently three buildings on the property. One is a residential building, served by a well and septic system, which will remain. One is a barn, currently being used as contractor storage, that has an apartment that has never been occupied. It is in poor condition. Lastly, there is a machinery shed which is non-conforming as it is too close to the property line. This will be removed. They propose nine apartments, with three in the house and six in the barn, served by two driveways. All the apartments will be one-bedroom except for the first floor of the house, which will be a two-bedroom. The footprints of the two buildings will not change. They will replace windows, add siding, install new doors, and do landscaping. If this application is successful, they may come back for changes in the footprints. A new septic system will be installed for the barn. They expect to have approval from the Department of Public Health for the next meeting. They will drill a new well for the barn. Parking will be expanded to 20 spaces with two handicapped spaces in total. The dumpster will be on a pad and screened. They will add landscaping around the barn and trees along the front of the property, as well as a landscape buffer behind the barn. The neighborhood is generally single-family houses with a couple of multi-family properties. The road has good sight lines. The development is appropriate because it will improve the overall condition of the property, it will no longer be a construction yard, and it will provide much-needed housing. He showed the existing conditions and renderings of the barn. The house won't change from the outside.

Chairman Fitzsimmons referred to the memo from Janis Small, Corporation Counsel, regarding the adaptive reuse and the history of the site. The Commission will determine if the second building is an accessory use. Mr. Wiedenmann stated that this application complies with the adaptive reuse

requirements. They don't have a single building over 5,000 sq. ft., but have multiple buildings. Chairman Fitzsimmons asked if the second building is being used as a dwelling unit today. Mr. Wiedenmann replied no.

Commissioner Seichter asked when the ranch house in front of the barn was built. There is no building permit on file, and it doesn't comply with the setbacks. Mr. Wiedenmann replied that the part of the building that looks like a house is believed to be part of the barn. When it was originally built, it was used as a tall hay barn with cows in the lower level. The front portion was reduced to one story. It is not an addition to the barn. It was likely built before zoning. Commissioner Seichter noted that one assessor's field sheet shows the barn was built in 1960.

Mark Malchiodi explained that the 'house' is part of the original barn that had a hay loft above. It is the initial part of the barn. The long bit in the back was added by his grandfather for cattle. The cows were originally under the hay loft, and then the barn expanded. Commissioner Seichter asked when farming began on the property and when the barn was built. Mr. Malchiodi estimated that it was built in the 1940s. He offered to bring photos. The brick house was built after the barn. Commissioner Seichter asked them to bring more of the history to the next meeting. Regarding adaptive re-use, Commissioner Seichter stated that they can take all the buildings into account to come up with the 5000 gross sq. ft. to meet the accessory use. The barn isn't presently an accessory use. Mr. Wiedenmann stated that the regulation refers to "any existing building, in any zoning district, may be converted to a multi-family dwelling subject to a special permit in accordance with Section 7.5 and the following conditions..." It doesn't say anything about primary or accessory use. He understood that the purpose of the regulation is to put properties to better use. The current or previous use doesn't matter. Commissioner Seichter stated that defining gross square footage is the key. That definition mentions accessory buildings. Mr. Wiedenmann referred to an email from Mr. Pagini on how the calculation is done for gross floor area. He understood that the 6400 sq. ft. of building at this site is suitable for conversion.

Commissioner Sanders asked if the structure to be reused for adaptive reuse needs to be in conformance with existing regulations. Mr. Pagini replied that the property had a second illegal apartment, and this application corrects that non-compliance. With the gross floor area definition, you can't have two primary buildings. We need to clarify that the barn is an accessory. The main violation of the property that was in dispute was the second apartment in the main house. This was resolved.

Commissioner Camire stated that the question is whether or not the barn counts as an accessory. The applicant needs to show that it meets the criteria at the next meeting. This hinges on the criteria 'customarily incidental to the principal building'. It was a barn. In the time since, it is no longer used as a barn. Mr. Wiedenmann said he would research it for the next meeting.

Commissioner Kohan stated that the barn is a building. Originally, it was an accessory use, but that is not the case now. He thinks the barn should be classified as a building.

Mr. Pagini stated that we are waiting on the septic review from the State, some Fire Marshal comments, and the proposed floor plans for the main house.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Maria Williams, 3 Malchiodi Drive, (statement read by son) stated that she has been a resident there since 1982, and her yard shares a property line with number 386. There is currently little privacy between the properties, and she saw no plans to replace the screening or landscape buffer. With more residents with cars, there will be even less privacy. Her property is already adjacent to a six-unit multi-family property. Her concerns include well water. Her well is less than 20 yards from the property line. She has little confidence that there will be no health repercussions. This will put a strain on the basic infrastructure of the neighborhood.

Diane Rustivo, 390 Williams Road, stated that her property abuts the north side of 386. They have shortened the setback line by 6.1 ft. When she bought the house, she knew it was a barn. She wouldn't have bought it if it were apartments. Eight units exceed what the district is designed for, low-density housing. She is concerned with waste and drinking water for 12 – 20 more people. The regulations for wells and septic systems say that they cannot endanger public health or surrounding properties. She asked if a traffic impact study would be done. The other multi-family properties have larger lots. She asked if this would set a precedent.

Jim Bonjourno, 389 Williams Road, stated that he supports development without risk to public health and the environment. This area has a private well and septic. This will increase the use of water and waste in a watershed area with limited space for septic systems. He shared estimates of daily and weekly water use. The increased paved area will increase stormwater runoff.

Theodore Platt, 297 North Airline Road, stated that this is inappropriate for that parcel. He stated concerned about the well water. There are no sewers or sidewalks there.

Aaron Stone, 1 Malchiodi Drive, abuts this property. He stated concern with the watershed area, the reliance on well and septic systems, and the impact on those.

Mandy Dubroski, 352 Williams Road, stated concern with young children playing with more traffic and no sidewalks. Twenty extra vehicles will mean more traffic.

Commissioner Seichter spoke about the Special Permit requirements. A multi-family conversion should not adversely impact a neighborhood. The barn is six feet off the property line. It's fair to say that new development wouldn't be allowed there. Does this have a negative impact on the character of the neighborhood? Based on the most recent legislation, developers don't have to provide parking. He appreciated that Mr. Wiedenmann was providing parking. He also noted that the application is incomplete. Mr. Wiedenmann stated that he had provided a signed copy to the office.

Commissioner Kohan noted that the use of wells is a concern. This number of apartments will put a strain on the system and the aquifer. There is no public water or sanitary sewer available in this area. He hoped that the environmental survey would look at the size of the septic system. Conditions of approval will need to include ways to mitigate problems with wells or septic systems.

Chairman Fitzsimmons encouraged the applicant to provide written information well in advance of the meeting.

Hearing no further public comment, Chairman Fitzsimmons called for a motion to continue the public hearing.

Commissioner Kohan: Motion to continue the public hearing for application #401-26 Special Permit-Adaptive Re-use to Multi-Family/Malchiodi/386 Williams Road to the April meeting.

Commissioner Leonardo: second

Vote: Kohan – yes; Leonardo – yes; Camire – yes; Seichter – yes; Chairman Fitzsimmons – yes.

The application is continued.

CGS 8-24

6. Community Lake Park – National Fitness Campaign Fitness Court

Commissioner Leonardo noted the correspondence for the record, including: a letter dated March 4, 2026, to the Wallingford Planning & Zoning Commission from Vanessa Beautista, Health Department; a project narrative dated March 4, 2026, including a site map and materials about the Fitness Court.

Vanessa Beautista, Director of Health, explained that the Fitness Court would be built on the Linear Trail at Community Lake Park. It will be an outdoor fitness facility providing free access for residents. The equipment will be installed on a concrete pad. The project is funded with money from the Opioid Settlement. It is intended to promote community wellness and healthy lifestyles.

Commissioner Sanders asked about the material used for the equipment and its expected life. Ms. Beautista replied that it is metal like any other park equipment and has already been delivered. The different components will have different life spans. Each has a warranty. Commissioner Sanders stated that the project sounds great. He asked at what point the Town becomes responsible for maintenance and how we can ensure it will last well into the future. Ms. Beautista stated that Parks and Rec already has the maintenance instructions and life span.

Commissioner Seichter asked if there was any cushioning in the concrete. Ms. Beautista replied that she has learned a lot about concrete pads, but she doesn't believe so. The entire plan is designed by the company, National Fitness Campaign. Ms. Beautista stated that she will give the plan to the selected

vendor to do the installation. Commissioner Seichter asked if any other communities have these. Ms. Beautista replied that there is one in Bridgeport and one other town. Ours will have both the studio space and the equipment. Commissioner Seichter asked if anyone could use it and what programming would be available. Ms. Beautista replied that the programming will be done by Parks and Rec or by reservation. Anyone can use the equipment at any time. Commissioner Seichter stated that this is a good location and a good and positive use.

Commissioner Camire asked about the requirements of CGS 8.24. Chairman Fitzsimmons explained that this comes to use because it is the use of public land. This is administrative.

Commissioner Leonardo asked how far the fitness court will be from the lake. His concern is with the eventual runoff of decaying court material into the lake. Ms. Beautista replied that it meets the setback requirements.

Commissioner Kohan noted that it seems to be far enough away from the lake. He added that this is great and will be a benefit to the trail. He stated that he would have liked to see some of the things that would have been on a Site Plan, such as plantings, distance from the lake, and the maintenance plan. He asked if the court would be shoveled in the winter. Ms. Beautista replied no. She explained that they have a detailed plan showing the trees to be taken down and the walkways that were reviewed by the Town Engineer. This is part of the bid package. Commissioner Kohan suggested a condition that there is administrative approval by the Town Planner.

Chairman Fitzsimmons directed the applicant to work with the Town Planner to get Site Plan approval through the administrative process. This is strictly an 8-24 application tonight. He asked how much money the town received from the Opioid settlement. Ms. Beautista replied that it was a total of \$300,000, which went to several programs. Leftover funds were used for this Fitness Court project. Chairman Fitzsimmons asked who is administering the settlement funds. Ms. Beautista replied that the Health Department and Youth & Social Services administer the funds. Commissioner Fitzsimmons stated that the Commission would like to see more details, but conceptually, the Commission is fine.

Hearing no further public comment, Chairman Fitzsimmons called for a motion on the application.

Commissioner Kohan: Motion to approve CGS §8-24 application from the Wallingford Health Department to allow construction of an outdoor fitness court at Community Lake Park because of the overall benefit to the Linear Trail and fitness activities provided at Community Lake Park, with the following condition of approval:

1. That a Site Plan be submitted to the Town Planner for review and administrative approval.

Commissioner Leonardo: second

Vote: Kohan – yes; Leonardo – yes; Camire – yes; Seichter– yes; Chairman Fitzsimmons – yes.

The application is approved.

BOND RELEASE

7. Community Health Network/3 Fairfield Boulevard

Mr. Pagini reported that this is an older bond, and the work has been completed.

Chairman Fitzsimmons called for a motion on the bond.

Commissioner Kohan: Motion to release the bond for Community Health Network/3 Fairfield Boulevard.

Commissioner Leonardo: Second

Vote: Unanimous

Chairman Fitzsimmons asked if we should wait for requests from applicants for Bond releases. Mr. Pagini said yes.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS AND STAFF

8. Discussion on updates/remarks

Mr. Pagini reported on the POCD process. They are gathering information, surveys, and creating a draft report for the April meeting. They have over 120 pages so far. He welcomed any input. Mr. Leonardo pointed out a grammatical error in the survey message from Parks and Rec.

Mr. Pagini reported that his office is working with the WCI and Engineering on purchasing bike racks for the downtown area. There will be 10- 12, likely on the side roads to avoid DOT issues.

He reported that we are a finalist for a ground lease program through the DOT Transit-Oriented Development Program. The Train Station site would be used for mixed-use development. He is waiting for more information. A study showed that the most cars in that lot at any one time is 12. So it is underused. He doesn't know how long the process will take.

He reported that SCROG funded the Route 5 Study, which will look at the light at BJs to Rt. 68. They will look for alternative configurations for on and off ramps. This is in preliminary stages but should be finalized by the end of the year. BL Companies is working on it.

Mr. Pagini also reported that the WCI is working with businesses downtown to beautify the facades and maybe work on parking in the back.

Regarding the boathouse, they received a grant, and he is working with the Department of Housing for a feasibility study. They requested a bid waiver to use David Baker Architects. There is a scaled-down scope of work.

Chairman Fitzsimmons and Commissioner Camire thanked Mr. Pagini for the report and for receiving it in advance of the meeting.

Commissioner Seichter stated that it is helpful to know what's going on. He noted that a study of Route 5 was talked about several years ago, but nothing happened. Mr. Pagini noted that the last study was done in 2005. Commissioner Seichter suggested a bike rack near the Johnny Lampshade building.

9. Administrative Approvals – noted as approved

- a. **8 Crestview Terrace/Limosani**
- b. **4 East Scard Road/Germe**
- c. **184 North Airline Road/Cerrone/Pagano**
- d. **135 North Plains Industrial Rd/Gilbride**
- e. **388 North Colony St/Sprouse**

10. ZBA February Decisions – no comment

11. ZBA Notice of March 2026 – no comment

Chairman Fitzsimmons reminded the Commission of the Workshop on Housing, which is the last Monday in March, as well as the combined PZC and ZBA training on April 8th.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Kohan: Motion to Adjourn the Wallingford Planning and Zoning Commission for Monday, March 9, 2026, at 8:40 pm.

Commissioner Leonardo: Second

Vote: Unanimous

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl-Ann Tubby

Recording Secretary