

**BRISTOL ZONING COMMISSION
MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF MONDAY SEPTEMBER 15, 2025**

By: Chairman White

Time: 6:00 P.M.

Place: City Hall
111 North Main St.
Council Chambers
First Floor

ROLL CALL:

MEMBERS	NAME	PRESENT	ABSENT
REGULAR MEMBERS:	David White (Chairman)	X	
	Thomas Marra (Vice Chairman)		X
	Richard Harlow	X	
	Richard Goodwin (Secretary)	X	
	John LaFreniere	X	
ALTERNATE MEMBERS:	Michael DeRoehn	X	
	Sara Mangiafico	X	
	Peter Caruso	X	
STAFF:	Robert M. Flanagan, AICP, City Planner	X	

1. Call to Order

Per the order of Chairman White, the meeting was called to order at 6:00 P.M.

Chairman White reminded the Commission the next Regular Meeting of the Zoning Commission is Monday, October 20, 2025.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Approval of Minutes

a. Regular Meeting - August 11, 2025

Chairman White designated himself, regular Commissioners Harlow and LaFreniere with alternate Commissioner Caruso to vote on the August 11, 2025, regular minutes.

MOTION: Move to approve the minutes of the April 11, 2025, regular meeting.

By: Harlow

Seconded: LaFreniere.

For: Harlow, Caruso, LaFreniere and White.

Against: None.

Abstained: None.

b. Special Meeting - August 21, 2025

Chairman White designated himself, regular Commissioners Goodwin, Harlow and LaFreniere with alternate Commissioner Mangiafico to vote on the August 21, 2025, special minutes.

MOTION: Move to approve the minutes of the August 21, 2025, special meeting.

By: Harlow

Seconded: Goodwin.

For: Harlow, Mangiafico, Goodwin, LaFreniere and White.

Against: None.

Abstained: None.

4. Receipt of New Applications

- a. Application 2545 - Special Permit for the Adaptive Re-Use of an existing non-residential building to allow for the conversion of a mixed-use building to a residential dwelling unit (first floor) at 116 Central Street; Assessor's Map 41, Lot 63; BG (General Business) zone; Steve F. Lavoie and Diane J. Lavoie-Pelletier, Trustees of the Norman Donata Lavoie Irrevocable Trust, applicant.

Chairman White designated himself, regular Commissioners Goodwin, Harlow and LaFreniere with alternate Commissioner DeRoehn to vote on Application #2545.

Attorney James Ziogas, 104 Bellevue Avenue, representing the applicant, requested the application be scheduled for a public hearing at the next scheduled meeting. Attorney Ziogas' view was a Site Plan was unnecessary because a copy of the existing Site Plan was provided. Staff said there was an existing conditions survey was provided for the property.

MOTION: Move to schedule Application 2545 - Special Permit for the Adaptive Re-Use of an existing non-residential building to allow for the conversion of a mixed-use building to a residential dwelling unit (first floor) at 116 Central Street; Assessor's Map 41, Lot 63; BG (General Business) zone; Steve F. Lavoie and Diane J. Lavoie-Pelletier, Trustees of the Norman Donata Lavoie Irrevocable Trust, applicant, for a public hearing for the October 20, 2025, regular meeting of the Commission.

By: Goodwin

Seconded: Harlow.

For: DeRoehn, Harlow, Goodwin, LaFreniere and White.

Against: None.

Abstained: None.

- b. Application #2546 — Modification of Special Permit #1413 from (1) Automotive repair and service facility and (2) The display or sale of operable used automobiles to (1) Motor Vehicle Repair or Service Facility and (2) Motor Vehicle Sales and (3) To modify the number of vehicles displayed for sale at 237 East Main Street; Assessor's Map 41, Lot 20; BG (General Business) zone; CJ Auto Mall, applicant.

Chairman White designated himself, regular Commissioners Goodwin, Harlow and LaFreniere with alternate Commissioner DeRoehn to vote on Application #2546.

Attorney Timothy Furey, 43 Bellevue Ave., representing the applicant, reported this request was to modify a Special Permit that has been a controversial property. Attorney Furey said an existing site survey was prepared for the property.

By: Goodwin

Seconded: Harlow.

For: DeRoehn, Harlow, Goodwin, LaFreniere and White.

Against: None.

Abstained: None.

The application is scheduled for public hearing.

- c. Application AZR 25-07 - Review, discussion and possible adoption of recommendations associated with the comprehensive rewrite of the Bristol Zoning Regulations:

Chairman White designated himself, regular Commissioners Goodwin, Harlow and LaFreniere with alternate Commissioner DeRoehn to vote on Application #AZR-25-07.

1. Recommendation #27 – Cannabis Cultivation
2. Recommendation #37 – A Zone Bulk Requirements
3. Recommendation #38 – Amend Mixed Use/Street Wall Requirements: (BD) Zone
4. Recommendation #39 – Update Sign Regulations
5. Recommendation #40 – Expand Outdoor Lighting Requirements
6. Recommendation #41 – Overhill Access Management Regulations
7. Recommendation #42 – Update Landscaping Standards
8. Recommendation #43 – Update Fence Requirements
9. Recommendation #44 – Amend Definition of Average Finished Grade
10. Recommendation #45 – Add Animal Grooming as a Permitted Use
11. Recommendation #46 – Add Data Centers as a Permitted Use
12. Recommendation #47 – Amend Requirements for Posting of Properties
13. Recommendation #48 – Minor Text and Formatting Amendments

Initiated by: Bristol Zoning Commission.

Robert Flanagan, City Planner, explained these recommendations were from the Zoning Rewrite Initiative that the Commission has been working on with Francisco Gomes. Mr. Gomes was online this evening. The City Planner noted there was Zoom meeting today with Attorney Peter Olson, Mr. Gomes and himself.

Staff said there were a few revised recommendations that would be discussed at the public hearing. Staff said the Zoning Map also needed an amendment because of the Access Management Corridor amendments. The City Planner noted the Zoning Map would be placed on the October 20, 2025, agenda to be accepted and scheduled for a public hearing at the November 2025, meeting.

MOTION: Move to schedule Application AZR 25-07 - Review, discussion and possible adoption of recommendations associated with the comprehensive rewrite of the Bristol Zoning Regulations for a public hearing for the October 20, 2025, regular meeting.

By: Goodwin

Seconded: Harlow.

For: DeRoehn, Harlow, Goodwin, LaFreniere and White.

Against: None.

Abstained: None.

The application is scheduled for public hearing.

5. Public Hearings

- a. Application #2539 - Special Permit for a Commercial Kennel at 135 Cross Street; Assessor's Map 3, Lot 15; I (General Industrial) zone; Jon Rondeau, applicant.

Chairman White designated himself, regular Commissioners Goodwin, Harlow and LaFreniere with alternate Commissioner DeRoehn to vote on Application #2539.

Jon Rondeau, 55 Siegas Rd., Burlington, representing the applicant, explained the request was to open a training facility for dogs. Mr. Rondeau described the training would be for service dogs and dog agility work. The applicant verified the facility would also have a kennel. Mr. Rondeau indicated there was a large empty space to the rear of the building and an indoor dog run.

Pamela O'Day, 275 Waterville Rd., Avon, the applicant's dog trainer, reviewed her experience as a dog trainer for obedience and agility that has helped her students' dogs in professional competitions. Ms. O'Day verified she has 85 students. The dog trainer's view was this was not about competition but a relationship with a dog that changes lives.

Commissioner inquiries: The applicant explained the inland wetlands area was not part of the application but inside the building there was space for the dogs. Mr. Rondeau inquired if this area was sufficient, if the City may potentially approve the plan. The applicant verified there was City owned lot behind the building that may be leased, if the plan is approved. Mr. Rondeau stated there may be from 25 to 45 dogs at one time.

The applicant noted he would return back to the City if the plan were approved to ask if the inland wetlands area may be used to walk dogs without impacting the area. Mr. Rondeau verified he owned the lot next to the subject lot this evening. Staff specified that the comments Mr. Rondeau received needed to be completed, in writing, so that Staff may make comment responses for the plan.

The Commission agreed to continue the application until the comments were submitted in writing to the Land Use Office because comments were just received today because Mr. Rondeau had technical issues with e-mail.

Commissioner Goodwin disclosed his wife was president of an animal rescue so he would have questions of that nature. Mr. Rondeau commented he did not want to complicate the application to get a positive or negative consensus on the application.

Staff said there appears to be a positive reaction for the application but that the Commission has not made a final decision and still retains the right to not approve. The City Planner indicated the activity would take place mostly inside the building but the dogs will need to be outside to relieve themselves.

The following person spoke in favor of the application: Thomas Hick, 991 Jerome Avenue. Mr. Hick was in favor of the application because he was a friend of Mr. Rondeau's. Mr. Hick noted the applicant has been trying to get this application approved for a few months.

Commission inquiries: The applicant said this was his first facility of this type. Ms. O'Day said she works at other facilities. The trainer verified there would be additional trainers.

No one spoke against the application.

MOTION: Move to continue the public hearing on Application #2539 to the October 20, 2025, regular meeting of the Zoning Commission.

By: Goodwin

Seconded: Harlow.

For: DeRoehn, Harlow, Goodwin, LaFreniere and White.

Against: None.

Abstained: None.

The application is continued.

Application # 2540 - Special Permit for the Adaptive Re-Use of an existing non-residential building for a) business or professional offices, including medical and dental offices; b) personal service establishments at 291 Queen Street; Assessor's Map 30A, Lot 2-6; R-15 (Single-Family Residential) zone; Focus Spaces, LLC, applicant.

Chairman White designated himself, regular Commissioners Goodwin, Harlow and LaFreniere with alternate Commissioner DeRoehn to vote on Application #2540.

Attorney Franklin Pilicy, 235 Main Street, Watertown, representing the applicant, reviewed the comments received from Staff. Attorney Pilicy noted the building was constructed in 1960 with an addition but there would be no changes to the existing building.

The attorney specified the existing conditions survey and comments would be ready for the next meeting. Attorney Pilicy said regarding the Assistant City Planner's comments were not prepared yet because he was unable to meet with his client until today but comments would be ready for next month's meeting.

Norman Laliberte, Jr. of Focus Spaces, LLC, 40 Callender Rd., Watertown, representing the applicant, did not realize he was supposed to respond with written comments after comments were received, but he had a short presentation. Mr. Laliberte explained his goals to renovate vacant buildings to be renovated. The applicant said the trees were cleared from the lot because it was difficult to park and the trees were starting to go onto the building.

Mr. Laliberte said there were Bristol Burlington Health District permits, but not Zoning permits for the tenants. The applicant appreciated the Zoning Regulations being changed to allow for the service tenants.

Mr. Laliberte reviewed the existing tenants in the building noting some of the tenants need Zoning permits. The applicant said the tenants work by appointment only in the secure building with 22 rooms. Mr. Laliberte pointed out the facility had to be less impactful because it was in a residential area.

Staff pointed out some of the tenants did not apply for the required permits from the City. Staff would work with Attorney Pilicy to create a document that specifies the number of units and the type of tenants in the building.

Commission inquiries: Mr. Laliberte indicated the trash bins on the property would be replaced with dumpsters. The applicant said there were 32 parking spaces and one ADA parking space.

No one else spoke in favor of the application.

No one spoke against the application.

MOTION: Move to continue the public hearing on Application #2540 to the October 20, 2025 regular meeting of the Zoning Commission.

By: Goodwin

Seconded: NAME.

For: DeRoehn, Harlow, Goodwin, LaFreniere and White.

Against: None.

Abstained: None.

The application is continued.

- b. Application #2541 - Special Permit for For-Profit School at 314 Business Park Drive; Assessor's Map 3, Lots 10 & 11 Business Park Drive; IP-1 (Industrial Park) zone; Allstate Commercial Driver Training School, applicant.
- c. Application #2542 - Site Plan for For-Profit School at 314 Business Park Drive; Assessor's Map 3, Lots 10 & 11 Business Park Drive; IP-1 (Industrial Park) zone; Allstate Commercial Driver Training School, applicant.

Chairman White explained Application #2541 and Application #2542 would be heard concurrently but voted on separately.

Chairman White designated himself, regular Commissioners Goodwin, Harlow and LaFreniere with alternate Commissioner DeRoehn to vote on Applications #2541 and #2542.

Attorney James Ziogas, 104 Bellevue Avenue, representing the applicant, overviewed that the two lots were a total of 3.23 acres located in the Southeast Bristol Business Park under contract to purchase from the City to develop. If approved, the attorney said the lots would be merged. Attorney Ziogas confirmed the design was approved by the Southeast Business Park Design Guidelines and Committee.

Attorney Ziogas stated there was a detention pond for the stormwater system. The attorney stated the applicant received approval from the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Agency of the Conservation Commission that included an extended inland wetlands area to 150 ft. Attorney Ziogas reported the applicant's goal was to have a truck driver training school.

The attorney reviewed comments. Attorney Ziogas said the storm water system would be added to the plans. The attorney requested no lighting poles be added to the rear of the site because the school activities would be during the daytime.

The attorney specified that many trees would be removed from the heavily wooded area because of the area needed for construction. Attorney Ziogas noted some trees would be maintained near the detention basin, so the question remained of the required landscaping to buffer the property.

Staff noted the Dept. of Public Works assigned the address of 314 Business Park Drive. The City Planner remarked the landscaping plan would have additional discussion with Staff and the Assistant City Planner.

Robert Palazzo, AIA, Architectural Building Services, 556 Farmington Avenue, Farmington, the applicant's architect, described the reasons compacted millings would be placed on the property versus pavement. Mr. Palazzo elaborated on the pavement not lasting as long due to the cure time versus the compacted millings. The architect's view was that the 11 trees would be consistent with the landscaping in the area and was far beyond the other buildings.

Staff mentioned the compacted millings may need a Variance and he would provide the new Zoning Regulations for compacted millings at next month's meeting.

Commission inquiries: Attorney Ziogas confirmed the trucks would park on the pavement overnight and not on the millings. The attorney stated the drainage was in the stormwater drainage report.

Attorney Ziogas confirmed there was a 7 ft. drop in elevation for the property and the abutting property for construction. The attorney added there would be 4 to 6 trucks parked overnight. Attorney Ziogas said the concrete pad would be remove from the front of the building. The attorney verified the dumpster would be screened. The attorney commented this was not a residential area.

Commissioner DeRoehn was not convinced of the compacted millings without reviewing the new Regulations.

No one else spoke in favor of the application.

The following person spoke against the application: Michael Dudko, 116 Lewis Rd., was against the application because these trees on this site were 100 years old that had protections for trees100-year-old. The resident said the State does not have jurisdiction, but it was under the local and municipalities with the Zoning Commission's in every town in CT.

Mr. Dudko detailed that towns have Ordinances to protect the trees in wooded areas on certain properties on scenic roads. The resident reviewed a map from 1934 of the lots with the already mature trees. Mr. Dudko emphasized the importance of preserving these trees. Mr. Dudko felt the environment deserved attention in Bristol. The resident wanted to bring this to the Commission's attention because Mr. Dudko was the only person that knew this information.

Commission inquiries: Attorney Ziogas ensured the Commission there would be a spill protocol for the tractor trailer trucks. The Attorney strengthened the statement with the regular inspections by the students of the trucks.

Chris Maiorano of Allstate Commercial Driver Training School, 249 Pearl St., Seymour, representing the applicant, explained there was no storage of fuel on the property. Mr. Maiorano reiterated the need for compacted milling versus pavement. Commission inquiries: Mr. Maiorano said the trucks would be fueled offsite or fuel would be brought to the site.

Attorney Ziogas agreed to continue Applications #2541 and #2542 to next month's meeting to provide more information.

MOTION: Move to continue the Public Hearing on Application #2541 to the October 20, 2025, regular meeting of the Zoning Commission.

By: Goodwin

Seconded: LaFreniere.

For: DeRoehn, Harlow, Goodwin, LaFreniere and White.

Against: None.

Abstained: None.

The Application #2541 is continued.

MOTION: Move to continue the Public Hearing on Application #2542 to the October 20, 2025, Regular Meeting of the Zoning Commission.

By: Goodwin

Seconded: LaFreniere.

For: DeRoehn, Harlow, Goodwin, LaFreniere and White.

Against: None.

Abstained: None.

The Application #2542 is continued.

6. City Council and Other Referrals

a. Request from City Council: Smoke and Vape Shops

Chairman White designated himself, regular Commissioners Goodwin, Harlow and LaFreniere with alternate Commissioner DeRoehn to vote on the request from City Council – Smoke and Vape Shops.

Chairman White understood the request from Councilperson Thibeault; it was her opinion that this situation should be addressed by Zoning. However, the Chairman stressed the request would be a huge undertaking by the Zoning Commission and Staff with a deadline of 120 days.

Chairman White will send a letter to alert the City Council that the Zoning Commission was aware of the situation and but it would not be possible to address their concerns until at least next year.

Commissioner Goodwin has misgivings about this request. He would like to know and understand what advice was given to the City Council by the Corporation Counsel's Office on this matter. The City Council dealt with the cannabis issue with an ordinance which was a much bigger deal, why would they not do the same for smoke and vape shops?

When you look at the various uses that offend different people: we have smoke and vape shops, and you can be for or against them, we have liquor stores, we have bars, but where does the line get drawn.

Commissioner Goodwin was okay with the City Council creating an Ordinance keeping this use away from sensitive areas. He expressed the difficulty of limiting the number of smoke and vape shops and that was not for the Zoning Commission to do. Commissioner Goodwin's view was this should be a City Ordinance and not for the Zoning Commission.

Commissioner Harlow noted the State regulated liquor stores but not smoke and vape shops. The Commissioner pointed out case law was against limiting smoke and vape shops. Commissioner Harlow added the existing smoke and vape shops would be grandfathered in. The Commissioner concluded there are many issues with this request.

Commissioner Mangiafico hoped with all the serious health related issues, that smoke and vape shops would eventually be phased out. She summarized that the Commission may do all the work on this matter and then the use may be phased out anyway.

MOTION: To authorize Chairman White to send a letter to the City Council on behalf of the Zoning Commission, thanking the City Council for the information presented and Chairman White will communicate that the Zoning Commission has concerns with the request.

By: Goodwin

Seconded: Harlow.

For: DeRoehn, Harlow, Goodwin, LaFreniere and White.

Against: None.

Abstained: None.

A letter will be written by Chairman White to the City Council.

7. New Business

There was no new business.

8. Staff Reports

a. Zoning - August 2025

The City Planner directed the Commission to either e-mail or call the planner or Mr. Peate with any questions or concerns.

9. Adjournment

Chairman White designated himself, regular Commissioners Goodwin, Harlow and LaFreniere with alternate Commissioner Caruso to vote on the adjournment.

MOTION: Move to adjourn at 8:04 P.M.

By: Goodwin

Seconded: NAME.

For: Harlow, Caruso, Goodwin, LaFreniere and White.

Against: None.

Abstained: None.

This meeting was recorded.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy King
Recording Secretary

David White, Chairman

Richard Goodwin, Secretary