

Giants Neck Beach Association Special Zoning Commission Meeting  
April 18, 2024

Present: Marilyn Christopher, Acting Chair  
Mario Harris  
Jim Paul  
Richard Corona, Alternate

Also Present: Gerry van Noordennen, Board of Governors liaison  
Jim Ventres, Zoning Enforcement Officer

1. **Call to Order.** Acting Chair Marilyn Christopher called the Giants Neck Beach Association Zoning Commission Special Meeting of April 18, 2024 to order at 6:45 p.m.
2. **Attendance.** A quorum was established.
3. **Approval of February 15, 2024 Minutes.** Ms. Christopher asked for corrections, additions or deletions to the February 15, 2024 Giants Neck Beach Association Zoning Commission Meeting Minutes.

**MOTION (1): Mr. Harris moved to approve the Giants Neck Beach Association Zoning Commission Meeting Minutes of February 15, 2024, as presented. Seconded by Mr. Paul. (4-0) Unanimous.**

4. **Bills.** There were no bills presented.
5. **Site Plan Review** -There was no new application.
6. **Review of Draft – Proposed Regulation Changes.** Mr. Ventres distributed first draft of proposed Regulation Changes suggested by Ms. Christopher, Mr. van Noordennen and Mr. Ventres. The Giants Neck Beach Association Zoning Commission will need to sign off on the final draft and the homeowners will have a chance to give input at a Public Hearing on it.

Mr. Ventres referred the Commission to page 3, Section II Jurisdiction giving this Commission the right to amend the Zoning Regulations.

The Commission reviewed page 6. Mr. Ventres informed the Commission it was important to define words for clarification.

Mr. Ventres referred the Commission to page 8. It was felt the building height should be changed to twenty-eight feet when measured from the lowest natural or existing ground surface.

The Commission reviewed page 9 regarding ramps, boardwalk and patios which should not exceed eight inches in overall height from the existing ground at any point unless used for wheelchair access and is not attached permanently to the ground and or attached to something having a permanent location.

The Child Day Care Center/Services section of page 9 is a state statute and needs to remain as is.

Page 10 referred to a deck and Mr. Ventres suggested it be 8 inches or greater in height above the existing ground grade at any point of the construction to be considered a deck.

On Page 12, regarding a flag pole, Mr. Ventres asked the Commission to consider the appropriate height.

On page 14 there was no suggested change.

On page 15 Mr. Ventres referred the Commission to lot coverage which he felt should include open decks in building area coverage.

On page 19 Street Right-of-Way, Mr. Corona suggested adding owned by the Town of East Lyme, Giants Neck Improvement Club, Inc. or Giants Neck Beach Association.

On page 20 the section on Terrace/Patio, it was suggested that raised patios are to be at least eight feet from the side line and 6' from the property line. Mr. Paul suggested the length of a trailer be limited to 16'. Mr. van Noordennen stated the roads are too narrow.

On page 21 the section on a Windmill, Mr. Ventres asked the Commission to consider what height a windmill to generate power should be limited to. Mr. Harris suggested the height of the house.

On page 23 Mr. Ventres will look at the official map of Giants Neck Beach at the Town Hall to determine the territorial limits of the Giants Neck Beach Association. It was suggested that a shed should be limited to 400 square feet if there is lot coverage.

On page 25 the section on a Greenhouse, Mr. Corona suggested a height of twelve feet. Mr. Ventres asked that the Commission consider a height of sixteen feet of storage feet. The storage space should not include a sink or stove. Mr. Corona asked if a resident is allowed to have a utility sink in their garage? Mr. Ventres did not feel you could have a sink. Mr. Ventres suggested 160' for a pool cabana. He added kiddie pools do not need to meet setback requirements.

On page 26 the section on Exterior Accessory Equipment, it was suggested that nothing should be in front, it may have 6' in the side yard and screening. Mr. Harris suggested that an air conditioning condenser not be allowed in front of the house.

On page 27 the section on Solar Energy Collection Panels Mr. Ventres asked the Commission who would determine what is unsightly or obtrusive? His recommended change is all solar panels require a zoning permit and must be attached to the roof of a primary dwelling or accessory structure and shall follow the general contour lines of the building roofline.

On page 28 the section on measuring, Mr. Ventres asked the Commission to consider that it come out to the drip edge line rather than the wall.

On page 29 Mr. Ventres referred the Commission to item 5. An entrance step or entrance platform must be open, not covered. In item 6, Mr. van Noordennen stated it referred to the

roof of an open deck. Mr. Corona suggested a front door landing. In item 8, Mr. Ventres asked if rather than this Commission, it be approved by the Zoning Enforcement Officer.

On page 30, Mr. Ventres referred the Commission to item 2, Construction Activities. Mr. Harris suggested construction activities on Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., Saturday from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. and no construction activities on Sunday. He also added there be no construction activities on Memorial Day, July 4 and Labor Day.

On page 31, item 5, Handicapped Access, Mr. Ventres suggested a temporary permit for a handicap access ramp to a residential structure until it is no longer needed. Mr. van Noordennen referred to Existing Undisturbed Grade and did not feel someone could change the grade and create a storm water problem. Item 6, Home Occupation Service or Profession, Mr. Ventres suggested that he receive a statement.

On page 33, 10. Signage, Mr. van Noordennen suggested limiting the size of lawn signs. Mr. Ventres suggested that they be no more than 2X3.

On page 35, Livestock/Farm Animals Prohibited, Mr. Ventres suggested adding beehives because housing in Giants Neck Beach is close to neighbors and a neighbor may be allergic to bees. Sanitation, Mr. Ventres suggested that Port-o-lets are permitted on a temporary basis. Regarding Storage or parking of large vehicles, Mr. Ventres recommended that commercial vehicles are permitted on a temporary basis.

On page 36 1-5 Mr. Ventres reported East Lyme has exceptions for non-conforming buildings. He added if a non-conforming lot is demolished; it can be rebuilt.

On page 37, b. Mr. Ventres stated if a ranch is built too close to the side yard, a second story can be added. There is no exception. The applicant would have to go to ZBA. Mr. Corona stated you could make it more non-conforming. Ms. Christopher added non-conforming has been allowed. She stated if structurally it was not sound, it would be a problem. Mr. Ventres referred the Commission to b. 5 and stated the siding needs to be fire-proof. Mr. Paul added this would address a safety issue. Mr. Ventres stated the building code would address it.

Page 38, 8, b. Mr. Ventres suggested the stairways and landings shall not extend into a side or rear setback area less than five feet from the property line, nor into a front setback area less than five feet from the property line. The exception is 6X6 feet for a wheelchair.

Page 42, Amendments, Validity and Effective Dated were reviewed.

Page 47, Accessory Equipment and Permanent Outdoor Installations were reviewed.

Mr. Lafond was unable to be present, but sent his comments to the Commission on his suggested revisions to the Zoning Regulations as follows:

Regarding Child Day Care Requirements, he referred the Commission to Mr. van Noordennen who may have information on it.

On falling back to East Lyme Zoning, he asked don't we have to meet East Lyme Zoning Regulations?

As to the changes in building height, he asked why are we reducing the maximum height from 28' to 27'? He added many modern homes have higher ceilings as in the past and with two floors, the attic size becomes a concern. He suggested 29'.

He referred to the definition of a deck, he wrote the covering comment is not a definition but rather establishing a rule, which the Commission should consider whether we really want that to be the case. Similarly, the definition of an awning that is temporary, contains a prohibition not to extend into the setback, which establishes a rule. He felt that should be considered by the Commission as well.

He added the definition of a dog run states it is a fenced off area. New technology allows this to be done electrically with no physical barrier.

He wrote the word wall is added to the definition of a fence. He stated it is unworkable with the rules that fences be no higher than 42 inches from the ground, be split rail and an open type, with 50% usually open and limited to 42 inches. He personally feels that such walls are part of the beauty of much of Connecticut properties and add real value to a community or township. If limited to 42 inches they can be a win for all.

He wrote the whole issue of setbacks on corner lots should be thought through. They are required to have 20 feet setbacks on both street sides and the rear setback. He suggests giving them a break on the remaining side to be allowed at a 6' setback.

He added the allowance for greenhouses at 250 square feet vs. sheds, playhouses, etc. at 120 square feet seems strange to him. He suggests allowing any accessory to be 180 square feet. Otherwise, one could develop a greenhouse type structure and use it for multiple purposes. A larger shed would help in storing kayaks, etc. as well.

He questioned why poured concrete was excluded in the catwalk, boardwalk definition.

He referred to page 24 of the draft regulations, regarding the issue of boats. He added there are a few boats in the Association that exceed 26' and are on the property off season. He suggested allowing 28 or 30 feet.

He referred to page 33 of the draft regulations, and questioned the whole area of 11 separate lot coverage percents being allowed is extreme. He suggested having four categories: 5,000 square feet, 5600 square feet, 6200 square feet and over 6800 square feet.

He referred to page 38 of the draft regulations, item 10 on landings and stairs, there are several requirements included. He added over 10 years on the Zoning Commission he had never seen an issue raised over landings. He does think a roof is quite appropriate over front and side door landings/stairs, given weather conditions.

## **7. Adjournment.**

**MOTION (2): Mr. Paul moved to adjourn the Giants Neck Beach Association Zoning Commission Special Meeting of April 18, 2024 at 9:15 p.m. Seconded by Mr. Harris. (4-0) Unanimous.**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Frances Gheri, Recording Secretary**