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THOMAS P. ZAMPANO

TOWN OF NORTH BRANFORD

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SPECIAL MEETING
MINUTES
BLUEPRINT COMMITTEE
OF NORTH BRANFORD, CONNECTICUT
Thursday, October 23, 2025 **Atwater Memorial Library**
7:00 p.m.

Vice Chairman Armin called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

1. Salute to the Flag

2. Roll Call

Present: Chairman Zampano, Vice Chairman Armin, Member Bruce Abelson, Member Jennifer Ash, Member Matt Fleming, and Member Melinda Fonda.

Not Present: Deputy Mayor Jeff Macmillen, Member Robert Nowak, Member Barry Ponder, DPW Fran Merola, Member Robert Nowak Member Bonnie Symansky. Member Steve Torino; Town Manager Downes.

Also Present: Ken Ash, Public Works; David Palumbo, Town Center Committee/ PPBC Chrysanne Vogt, Resident.

3. Approval of Minutes

a. September 25, 2025

Motion: To approve the meeting minutes of September 25, 2025.

Moved: Member Abelson

Second: Member Ash

Discussion: None

With all in favor, the motion is passed.

Abstain: Member Fonda

4. Old Business: Discussion & Action

a. Update on North Branford Town Properties

Member Abelson reported that the properties at 672 Totoket, Sea Hill Rd, and 127 Old Post Rd have been sold and will be put into an Economic Development fund.

b. Review and discuss on Parks and Recreation Fields

Ken Ash from Public Works reported that Totoket field has irrigation that is 40 yrs old. Wall Field/ softball/ football field is irrigated off of Farm River.

For Wall Field- the lighting was paid for by the State, also movement of the concession stand. Totoket Field the lighting was installed in the early 80s. Over time there have been some upgrades and old fixtures; The lighting is not cost effective as it is under UI and not Wallingford electric.

There was discussion on whether maybe there could be research done with the state to see if there is grant money available to be used for irrigation.

Sports have expressed an interest in okaying later in the day or at night. The only fields in that area that have lights are the baseball/softball fields.

There was a time in the past when little league was able to use the HS fields. Part of the issue is that they can't put proper lighting on the football field due to the baseball. It was discussed the need to evaluate the lighting needs for each field. The lacrosse field would potentially need lights, but they can't be due to it being in a residential area. Also, on the back soccer field at Northford Park has the same issue due to residents abutting.

Mr. Ash stated that it costs about \$5,000-\$6,000 to keep irrigation going in that field.

Member Fonda asked, with pickleball being so popular; are the businesses in the area seeing an uptick in business/ foot traffic. That could be something that EDC could look into.

Mr. Ash also stated that there is a huge cost to keeping all grass fields online as they need to have time to rest. But with all of the sports playing most of the year there is no time for the grass to rest and recuperate.

Chairman Zampano suggested we list it out with how many fields per sport baseball/ soccer/ lacrosse/ softball/ football/ field hockey and figure out what we need.

Mr. Ash responded that alot of the leagues reserve fields but they aren't being used. The figures are not realistic.

Member Fleming asked Mr. Ash how much paint is used per year for painting the lines on the fields. Mr. Ash responded that he would get the exact price for labor +materials but amount wise they get a tractor trailer load of paint and have already used $\frac{3}{4}$ of it this season. Public Works purchase pallets of paint and there is a worker specifically painting the lines on the fields for 8 hours a day every day.

The Committee discussed that the main Concerns to evaluate: the overlap scheduling of sports teams; the amount of downtime the fields get; how much is needed. The needs for irrigation and lighting.

5. New Business: Discussion & Action**a. Update on the Center Committee****b. Report on the Committee's Progress**

David Palumbo from Town Center Committee commented his agreement that the fields should be evaluated first before the Town Center Concept moves forward.

There is a lot of land that can be developed that the town owns. There was a concept drawing created by Rusty Malik from QA+M and it was presented to the Town Center Committee. It was not at the level concept they were envisioning but it was not brought forward to the Blueprint Committee for review.

The Town Center Committee has not met in months as there is currently nothing to discuss unless they are able to move forward to get the sewer/ water feasibility study. The cost of this would be around \$75,000. To his understanding the selling of some of the town properties that money was supposed to towards having this study done. But it had fallen off the radar. Chairman Zampano asked if the community could get a concept drawing without elevations. Mr. Palumbo stated that when the concept drawing was presented to the Town Center Committee, it didn't match what their vision is for the town center. It is asked to put a sports complex into the town center concept drawing. It was realized in discussions that the request for a RFP to be created for the Town Center Committee that was discussed in November 2024 was not forwarded on to the Town Council for approval.

Motion: To endorse a request for an RFP be developed on behalf of the Town Center Subcommittee be presented to the Town Council for approval that was first presented in November 2024.

Moved: Member Ash

Second: Member Fonda

Discussion: None

With all in favor, the motion is passed.

It was requested to have some of the Town Center Committee members join the next Blueprint meeting on Nov 20 at Edward Smith Library.

6. Citizens Statement

Chrysanne Vogt questioned the draft rendering pamphlet from the town center committee with photos of ideas that were presented in late 2024. Mr. Palumbo responded that it was a draft rendering drawing that was created by Rusty Malik from QA+M and was meant only as a basic concept. There was nothing officially approved by the Town Center Committee.

7. Adjournment

Motion: To adjourn at 8:34p.m.

Moved: Member Fleming

Second: Member Fonda

With all in favor, the motion is passed.

Committee stands adjourned at 8:34 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by: Kathleen Daly, Board Clerk

October 24, 2025