



DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

MEMORANDUM

TO: Planning and Zoning Commission

FROM: Mark Wujtewicz, Planner

DATE: July 22, 2025

TITLE: Staff Report: Project LEARN
Proposed Pickleball Courts
51 Daniels Avenue
Site Plan
Application PL-25-9

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The project as proposed is to construct two pickleball courts and associated parking on property retained by the Town of Waterford as the result of a sale of a portion of the overall parcel located at 51 Daniels Avenue to Project LEARN. The Commission approved a CT General Statute (CGS) 8-24 application (PL-23-8) which resulted in the sale of a portion of 51 Daniels Avenue to Project LEARN. The property to be retained by the Town of Waterford, which is the subject of this application contains approximately 4 acres. An existing cellular tower is located on the property and is not impacted by this proposal. The site improvements for the project include the construction of two pickleball courts within a fenced enclosure, eight parking spaces including an accessible space and an ADA compliant sidewalk. Access to the parking spaces will be directly from the interior driveway that will service the adjacent Project LEARN school facility.

The application has been reviewed and approved by the Waterford Conservation Commission through the issuance of Inland Wetland Permit #C-25-06. A copy of the Conservation Commission Action has been submitted into the record.

The proposed improvements to the Town property qualify as a Connecticut General Statute 8-24 improvement. The action by the Commission can include a finding that the project is consistent with the Town of Waterford's 2012 Plan of Conservation and Development.

BACKGROUND

Pertinent Regulations

CGS 8-3(g)

CGS 8-24

Section 5 – Low Density Residential (R-40)

Section 5.1.3 – Public or private parks and playgrounds, subject to the approval of a site plan under the provisions of Section 22 of these regulations

Section 22 – Site Plans

This application was received by the Commission on May 13, 2025.

The required action date for this application is July 17, 2025.

An extension for Commission action on the application to July 22, 2025 was granted by the applicant on July 14, 2025.

DISCUSSION

In order for the Commission to approve a site plan it must find that the plan is consistent with the Town of Waterford Zoning Regulations. The Commission must act on the plan initially submitted for review and can find that the site plan is either compliant with the Zoning Regulations or it may approve the plan with modifications that are required to be implemented on the plan prior to filing on the land records.

Activity associated with the construction of the pickleball courts and parking will impact approximately 1,500 square feet of the Inland Wetland upland review area for the grading associated with the project. As a result, an application for Inland Wetland Permit #C-25-07 was submitted to the Waterford Conservation Commission and approved with conditions. In accordance with CGS §8-3(g) a report of the Conservation Commission action was submitted into the record.

The applicant submitted a Stormwater Management Report into the record. Due to the proximity of the Pickleball project to the proposed adjacent LEARN Early Childhood School Project, the existing conditions referenced in the report assume the construction of the school facility and stormwater drainage system in place. The report concludes that the design and associated grading effectively manages the stormwater runoff for the project.

The project as proposed also qualifies as a municipal improvement in accordance with Sec 8-24 of the Connecticut General Statutes (CGS 8-24). The improvements that qualify for a CGS 8-24 approval must be found consistent with the Town of Waterford 2012 Plan of Conservation and Development (Plan). The establishment of the pickleball courts contributes to enhancing the overall quality of life in Waterford. This is a stated goal in the Enhancement of the Quality of Life section within the Plan (Pg 38). This project also increases the opportunities for active recreational use within the Town which contributes to the overall character of Waterford and to the enjoyment and quality of life for its residents (Pg. 39).

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Based on the information provided, staff recommends the Planning and Zoning Commission find that:

Findings:

1. The application is for a use subject to a Site Plan approval, pursuant to Section 5.1.4 of the Waterford Zoning Regulations.
2. The application meets the criteria for site plan approval, pursuant to Section 22 of the Waterford Zoning Regulations.
3. The Waterford Conservation Commission issued Inland Wetland Permit# C-25-07 for regulated inland wetland activities.
4. The Waterford Conservation Commission issued a report of its action on application #C-25-07 in accordance with CGS 8.3(g).
5. The creation of the pickleball courts as proposed qualifies as a municipal improvement in accordance with Connecticut General Statute 8-24.
6. The improvements proposed are consistent with the 2012 Plan of Conservation and Development in that it increases the opportunity for active recreational use and enhances the quality of life for the Town by contributing to the overall character of Waterford. (Pgs. 38 & 39 of the Plan)

and that the Commission approve the proposal with the following condition:

1. All conditions of approval for Inland Wetland Permit #C-25-06 shall be incorporated into this decision as if fully set forth herein.

Proposed Motion

To approve the Site Plan including the finding of consistency with the 2012 Plan of Conservation and Development pursuant to Connecticut General Statute 8-24 for the proposed pickleball courts application #PL-25-9 located at 51 Daniels Avenue, with condition 1 and to adopt the findings 1 thru 6 of the staff report dated July 22, 2025.

ENHANCE

Quality of Life

GOAL

Promote events and activities which enhance the overall quality of life in Waterford.

Residents of Waterford are very satisfied with the quality of life in the community. Impressively, more than 97 percent of respondents in the telephone survey reported that the quality of life in Waterford is good or very good.

Although everyone has their own definition of quality of life, the following table identifies some elements of a community that may contribute to people's perception of their overall quality of life:

Category	Resource	Description
Enhancing	Basic Needs	Physical safety, economic security, sense of community
	Local Events	Unique events (parades, fairs, and concerts) where residents join in a common activity
	Volunteerism/Philanthropy	Voluntary donations of time and money help make Waterford a special place
	Shared Visions/Goals	Establishing and attaining shared visions and goals
	Open Communication	Communication about community issues and priorities is an important part of maintaining community spirit
	Community Ambience	Overall appearance (including preserved natural resources and open spaces) enhances people's sense of quality of life.
	Positive Recognition	Positive recognition by others of local activities and events helps build community spirit and pride
Detracting	Negative Communication	A lack of communication or negative communication can undermine community spirit and pride
	Negative Recognition	Negative recognition of a community by others can undermine community spirit and pride

Waterford should continue to encourage activities that contribute to community spirit and pride. These activities will also contribute to the overall quality of life of Waterford residents. We must do more to promote events and activities which enhance the overall quality of life in the community.

A. Promote Special Events / Activities

Waterford residents have indicated that they enjoy and appreciate special events and activities that occur in the Town (Waterford Week, outdoor music, etc.) and would like to have more. They have indicated that these events help make Waterford special to them. We should continue to provide for and promote special events and activities.

Social and recreational events and activities contribute to the overall quality of life in a community. This includes educational programs (arts, crafts, dance, games, etc.) and recreational programs (instructional, competitive, etc.). We should continue to provide for and promote these types of social and recreational events and activities.

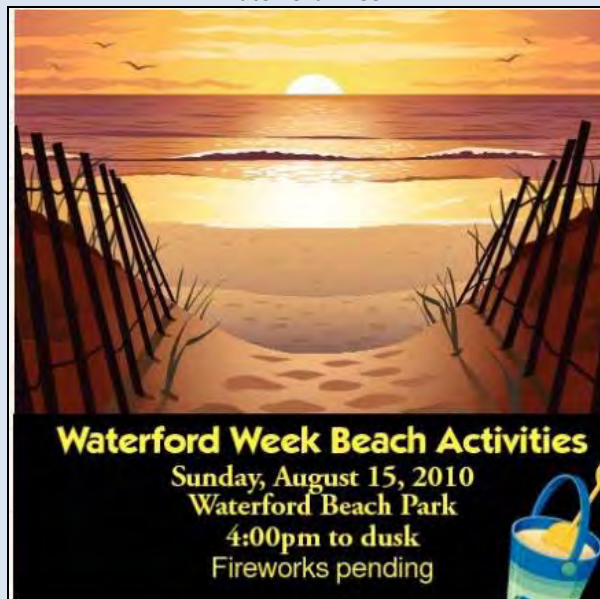
B. Implement Other Programs To Enhance Quality of Life

Although elements that contribute to quality of life can be diverse, we should strive to identify and implement additional things that will contribute to the overall quality of life and community spirit in Waterford. This may include, among other things, maintaining Town newsletters, encouraging volunteerism, and other programs.

In addition, we should seek ways to enhance overall community spirit and the pride and sense of community that exists in Waterford.

See the "Implementation Element" of the Waterford Plan of Preservation, Conservation and Development for information on tasks and actions currently programmed for implementation of these Quality of Life strategies.

Waterford Week



Fireworks

