

**DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT**

MEMORANDUM

TO: Planning and Zoning Commission

FROM: Mark Wujtewicz, Planner

DATE: September 9, 2025

TITLE: Staff Report: The Williams School Athletic Complex
Tennis and Pickleball Courts w/ lights greater than 40 feet tall
122 Bloomingdale Road
Site Plan/Special Permit
Application PL-25-16

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The project as proposed is to modify an existing site plan for the construction of 6 tennis courts and 4 pickleball courts within a fenced enclosure located at the Williams School Athletic Complex at 122 Bloomingdale Road. The property consists of approximately 23 acres with existing athletic fields, a maintenance building, pavilion, team facility building that is currently under constructions and associated parking. Site improvements associated with the tennis and pickleball court construction includes grading, stormwater management, landscaping and installation of field lights that exceed 40 feet in height. The courts will be utilized by the Williams School as part of the athletic facilities on the site. While the property is located within the R-20 and R-40 Zone Districts, the proposed development for this application occurs within the R-40 Zone District.

Prior Planning and Zoning Commission approvals granted for the site included the initial site plan approval on March 12, 2001(#01-101) for the development of the property to install athletic fields, tennis courts, maintenance building and associated parking. A modified site plan approval was granted on February 10, 2014 (PL-14-2) to construct a pavilion building. A modified site plan approval was granted on April 9, 2018 to relocate the previously approved pavilion building and to construct tennis courts in the area of the pavilion building. The latest modified site approval was granted by the Planning and Zoning Commission on September 10, 2024 through application PL-24-13 for the construction of the team facility building.

BACKGROUND

Pertinent Regulations

CT General Statutes

CGS 8-3(g)

Town of Waterford Zoning Regulations

Section 5 – Low Density Residential (R-40)

Section 5.1.4 – 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

Section 23 – Special Permits with Design Review

This application was received by the Commission on August 5, 2025

The Public Hearing was advertised in The Day newspaper on August 27 and September 2, 2025.

The date of Public Hearing was September 9, 2025.

DISCUSSION

In order for the Commission to approve a Site Plan with a Special Permit it must find that the site 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.

The proposal for the construction of the tennis and pickleball courts include the installation of field lighting on poles that exceed 40 feet in height. Section 5.2.1 states, in part, that “*Radio or television antennae, flagpoles, towers, chimneys, water tanks or standpipes, any of which extend more than 40 feet above the ground...*” are permitted subject to the approval of a Special Permit. Light poles are considered towers and have been regulated as specially permitted uses due to potential impact of lighting on adjacent properties. The lighting system design package submitted into the record (Exhibit 7) indicates that there will be no light trespass onto adjacent properties. The location of the light poles have been positioned outside of the required building setback lines and have been presented by the applicant as providing lighting for the court area only. The fixtures are proposed to be LED and manually controlled.

The applicant has submitted Stormwater Drainage Calculations into the record (Exhibit 3). A stormwater infiltration trench will be installed along the western perimeter of the courts to mitigate the impacts of stormwater runoff. This proposed stormwater mitigation system is designed to meet the criteria of the Connecticut 2004 Stormwater Quality Manual.

The existing parking with 105 spaces was approved by the Planning and Zoning Commission in the initial site plan approval #01-101. That site plan identified multiple athletic fields including a dedicated soccer field, two shared soccer and field hockey fields, a baseball and a softball field and six tennis courts. There are currently three athletic fields on the property. The baseball field, softball field and tennis courts were never constructed. The tennis courts and

pickleball courts in this proposal will replace one of the existing multipurpose athletic fields. The number of tennis courts in this proposal matches the number of tennis courts originally approved while the four pickleball courts are in addition to the tennis courts. There is no proposal to modify or expand the amount of parking to accommodate the additional pickleball courts. The lack of the two baseball fields and the elimination of the existing multipurpose field would appear to accommodate the parking needed for the pickleball courts. Any further expansion of the sports facility may require additional parking and the Commission will evaluate the parking needs at the time of any future site plan applications.

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 Special Permit and Site Plan approval, pursuant to Section 5.1.4 and 5.2.1 of the Waterford Zoning Regulations.
2. The application meets the criteria for Special Permit and Site Plan approval, pursuant to Sections 22 and 23 of the Waterford Zoning Regulations, subject to modifications listed.

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

1. Lighting fixture details be placed on the site plan prior to filing the final plans on the land records.
2. Top of wall elevations and bottom of wall elevations at proposed grade of the retaining wall to be noted on the plans prior to filing on the land records.

Proposed Motion

To approve with modifications, the Special Permit and Site Plan for the Williams School Tennis and Pickleball Courts application #PL-25-16 at 122 Bloomingdale Road, with modifications 1 and 2 and to adopt the findings 1 and 2 of the staff report dated September 9, 2025.