

PLANNING & ZONING  
COMMISSION  
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TOWN HALL ANNEX  
238 Danbury Road  
Wilton, Connecticut 06897

**RESOLUTION #1113-2REG**  
**November 25, 2013**

**WHEREAS**, the Wilton Planning and Zoning Commission accepted application #13342 for consideration of amendments to Sections 29-2.B. and 29.9.E. of the Zoning Regulations of the Town of Wilton as it pertains to the definition of athletic fields and the lighting for outdoor athletic fields located on public school properties; and

**WHEREAS**, the Planning and Zoning Commission conducted a public hearing on October 28, 2013, continuing said hearing to November 12, 2013 to receive comment from the public and has fully considered all evidence submitted at said hearing;

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Wilton Planning and Zoning Commission **DENIES** application #13342 for the following reasons:

1. The proposed regulation amendment, as drafted, seeks to allow outdoor lighting fixtures on public school athletic fields; potentially to a height of 80 feet. Based on public testimony and submitted evidence, it is the consensus of the Commission that the potential for such lighting in residentially-zoned and developed areas is contrary to protecting and conserving the character, environment and social and economic stability of these areas and is also counter to efforts of encouraging orderly and beneficial development within the community in general.
2. The Commission finds the proposed regulation amendment to be inconsistent with the purpose of zoning; specifically the lack of connectivity between residential usage and athletic field lighting and the distinct manner in which each operate. As described in Section 29-1 of the Zoning Regulations, the fundamental purpose of zoning is: ".....to guide the future growth and development of the Town in accordance with a comprehensive plan designed to represent and promote the most beneficial and convenient relationships among the residential, commercial, industrial and public areas within the Town, considering the suitability of each area for such uses as indicated by

existing conditions, trends in development and changing modes of living, and having due regard for the use of land, building development and economic activity, both within and adjacent to the Town”.

3. Although the 2010 Plan of Conservation and Development refers to the need for additional playing fields such passages, as referenced in Chapter 6 of the Plan entitled “Infrastructure Strategies”, do not suggest the need for additional field lighting nor the need for erecting taller light standards. Moreover the proposed amendment appears contrary to recommendations contained within Chapter 4 of the Plan of Conservation and Development which speak to the desirability of minimizing light pollution.
4. The Commission finds that, at present, all public school athletic fields are located in residentially-zoned areas of the community. The Commission further finds that these fields are situated close to residential homes where the presence of such lighting would likely compromise the quality of life for neighboring properties and/or locations within viewing range, potentially impact property values and undermine the broader stated purpose of the Town’s Residential “R-1A” and “R-2A” districts; the regulations of which assert: “The single-family residential districts are intended to provide suitable areas for residential development appropriate to the environmental characteristics of the land and the character of the neighborhood. The districts are also intended to accommodate certain nonresidential uses which are compatible with residential uses while preserving neighborhood character and property values” (*Section 29-5.A – Wilton Zoning Regulations*).
5. The Commission believes a more comprehensive and thorough undertaking of the subject matter should be pursued before considering a zoning regulation amendment. This may involve the appointment of a study committee comprised of representation from various town commissions, recreation and sport groups, a town-commissioned consultant with appropriate expertise in the lighting field as well as public involvement. The Commission believes such an exploration designed to assess needs, current and future operational costs and location options will provide the proper direction and input so as to develop clear and comprehensive land use policies that best serve the community.

- END RESOLUTION -