



# TOWN OF OLD LYME

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SELECTWOMAN

52 Lyme Street | Old Lyme, CT 06371

mshoemaker@oldlyme-ct.gov

## PERSONAL & CONFIDENTIAL

June 12, 2024

### VIA HAND DELIVERY

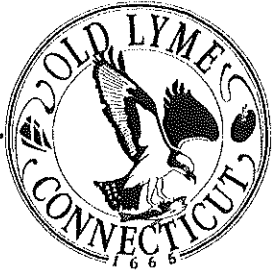
Mr. Eric Knapp  
3 Wynn Circle  
East Lyme, CT 06333

**Re: Notice of One Day Suspension Without Pay**

Dear Eric:

This is to inform you of my decision to issue disciplinary action in the form of a one (1) day suspension without pay due to your unprofessional remarks and unhelpful treatment toward Town residents and others with whom you work on behalf of the Town. More specifically:

1. On or about July 5, 2023, you communicated with Cheryl Poirier, our Economic Development Chairperson, that resident, Mark Comstock, is abrasive and tends to shoot himself in the foot with his own temper but that land uses are tied to the land, not the person, and so you cannot only allow nice people to be approved.
2. That on June 8, 2023, you told Mark Comstock that Susan Zilke is not tethered to reality.
3. That on October 11, 2023, you communicated with Tammy Tinnerello and indicated to her that during a recent public meeting you could have done with less Carolyn Miranda, and that you could always do with less Carolyn Miranda, who is a senior citizen within our Town.



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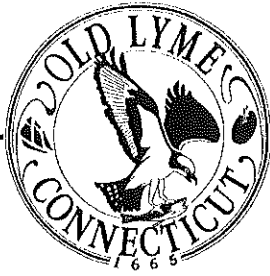
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4. That on March 13, 2023, you sent an email to Attorney Zamarka indicating that while you are sure that his client (Susan Zilke) is unhappy on a daily basis, her complaint is not your highest zoning priority or even enforcement priority so you see no reason to rush to push anything immediately.
5. That on or about May 9, 2024, when communicating with a resident about 21 Ridgewood Road in Point O' Woods Beach you indicated that it was not your job to help her with a complaint about the location of a neighbor's driveway and that she should direct her concern to Mr. Adanti, our Public Works Director instead. The resident responded to you that she felt the driveway was too close to her property and its location was incorrectly stated in the plans that were approved by you and so questioned why you wouldn't be the person who enforces that. In your response to this allegation, you defended your conduct indicating that it was "completely correct." Further, you stated that "the mantra of any Zoning Officer is that either what is on the ground must match the plans or the plans must match what is on the ground. In this case, new plans would have satisfied Part 2 of the mantra" but you did not indicate whether any "new plans" were required by you so that Part 2 of that mantra was actually satisfied. Further, it is my judgment that it is totally inappropriate for you to ask a resident to bring this kind of a concern to Mr. Adanti, our Public Works Director, instead of you, especially since you were the one who approved the plans in question.

These unprofessional and unhelpful communications you have had with others call into question your judgment and the way you deal with the citizens in your position and are unacceptable. The terms of your job description as Land Use Coordinator stipulate that "performance of your duties requires a high level of patience and resourcefulness to explain procedures to others." Your communications to citizens as set forth above demonstrate to me that you need to improve your performance when it comes to your interaction with the



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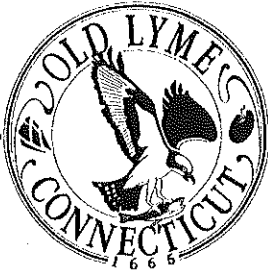
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citizens with whom you must interact and further must avoid making disparaging remarks about them in your communications to others. In addition, under the terms of the Town's Employee Handbook, the "use of rude or abusive language toward a superior, co-worker or the public" is prohibited. Based on the above conduct, you have clearly been in violation of such prohibition.

Your suspension without pay will take place on June 27, 2024, and following it you will be subject to the following oversight until such time that I am confident in your ability to comply with the Town's Rules of Conduct fully and consistently:

1. You will attend bi-weekly meetings with me to keep me apprised of all of your land use issues and communications. You will provide a written summary in advance of these meetings.
2. You will attend monthly meetings with me and the Chairperson of the Zoning Commission to ensure proper adherence to laws, policies, and regulations in all matters you are working on. You will provide a written summary in advance of these meetings.
3. You will complete training to improve your communication and customer service skills, which I will arrange for you.

You, like other Town employees, are in the service business. You must always treat citizens and others with whom you interact on behalf of the Town with patience and respect. Going forward negative remarks or mistreatment toward citizens, vendors, contractors, and others with whom you have contact within your professional capacity will not be tolerated. Further violations of the Town's Rules of Conduct will result in further progressive disciplinary action, up to and including the termination of your employment with the Town of Old Lyme.



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Sincerely,

*Martha Shoemaker*

Martha Shoemaker  
First Selectwoman

This is to confirm my receipt of the above Suspension Notice and that I have been advised that it is my right to file a written response to it, which if filed will be maintained as part of my personnel file with the Town of Old Lyme along with this Notice of Suspension.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Eric Knapp

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

cc: Personnel File