

**MINUTES  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
POCD WORKSHOP  
MEETING #4**

**GROTON PLAN OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT (POCD) AND  
MUNICIPAL COASTAL PROGRAM UPDATES**

AUGUST 26, 2014 - 6:00 P.M.  
TOWN HALL ANNEX – 134 GROTON LONG POINT ROAD, GROTON, CT  
COMMUNITY ROOM 2

Chairman Sherrard called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.

I. ROLL CALL

Regular members present: Sherrard, Pritchard, Steinford  
Alternate members present: Tarbox, Zod (6:12)  
Absent: Fitzgerald, Kane, Munn  
Staff present: Jones, Glemboski, Silsby

II. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF AUGUST 12, 2014

MOTION: To approve the minutes of August 12, 2014, as written.

Motion made by Pritchard, seconded by Steinford, so voted unanimously in favor.

III. NEW BUSINESS

1. Review Draft POCD – Development Theme and Corresponding Action Agenda

Staff distributed an outline of the Conservation Theme based on the Planning Commission's comments and suggestions from the last meeting. Staff plans to outline each theme. Staff suggested that the Commission review the recommendations in the Development Theme Action Agenda rather than reviewing the Theme narrative as the narrative does not support the recommendations and will have to be revised. Later in the meeting, Staff would like to review several maps and have a general discussion about the implications for future development.

The Commission continued to review each bullet item in the Action Agenda and had the following comments:

*Continue to Address Housing Needs/Affordability of Housing*

All recommendations should be Short Term.

The Commission discussed adding more diverse housing types and the necessity of developing standards. Staff felt it is important to discuss how family sizes and housing needs are changing.

2<sup>nd</sup> bullet – Reword to include better descriptions and clarify with standards for more specific designs.

*Promote Sustainable Development Patterns*

1<sup>st</sup> bullet – Reword to be more specific.

2<sup>nd</sup> bullet – Reword to add “Encourage open space subdivisions and open spaces”.

Staff emphasized the need to get early input from Parks and Recreation on open space subdivisions.

Steinford noted the lack of open space in the downtown Groton area and felt that recommendations from the Strategic Economic Development Plan should be incorporated into the POCD update. Staff will add this to the next section under “Facilities”.

*Maintain the Strategic Economic Development Plan*

1<sup>st</sup> bullet – Reword to add “update and implement” after the word “Review”

*Leverage Economic Competitiveness*

Change the word “Leverage”. The word “Incentivize” was brought up as an option.

Staff noted that the Town’s Economic Development Specialist could possibly assist with this item. The Town Council may want to review this item for their policies.

*Leverage Local Economic Development Strengths*

Reword but skip for now.

*Continue Economic Development Efforts: Physical*

3<sup>rd</sup> bullet – Change the word “mix” to “mixed”.

4<sup>th</sup> bullet – Reword to add “where appropriate” after the word “revising”

5<sup>th</sup> bullet – Reword to add “commercial” after the word “strip”

6<sup>th</sup> bullet – Reword to add “Develop incentives that reinforce development patterns that contribute to meaningful community character, quality of life, and mixed use walkable neighborhoods.

7<sup>th</sup> bullet – Reword to add “plan” after the word “site” - Streamline the application process

Add a bullet – “Change lighting standards for canopies”

8<sup>th</sup> bullet – Reword to be more specific

9<sup>th</sup> bullet – Reword - Review the regulations for these special design districts to determine if the process is appropriate or if the purpose needs to change, review for its effectiveness, and include parking.

*Continue Economic Development Efforts: Structural*

1<sup>st</sup> bullet – Staff to reword for clarity

2<sup>nd</sup> bullet – Staff to reword for clarity

3<sup>rd</sup> bullet – Look into using economic development money for this item. Possibly prepare a map.

4<sup>th</sup> bullet – Reword to use existing facilities and add more text

- 5<sup>th</sup> bullet – Delete bullet.
- 6<sup>th</sup> bullet – Reword to add “to make them”.

*Continue Economic Development Efforts: Socio-Political*

- 2<sup>nd</sup> bullet – Reword to add, “to serve the transient population on the marina”.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> bullet – Staff to review and reword for clarity.
- 4<sup>th</sup> bullet – Staff to review and reword for clarity.

*Reinforce Community Structure*

- 2<sup>nd</sup> bullet – Reword to add “Old Mystic”.

*Seek a Central Focal Point for Groton*

- 1<sup>st</sup> bullet – Reword to add “update” instead of the word “revisit”. Review the zoning regulations to promote and implement an easy plan with tax incentives.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> bullet – Reword to clarify and define “Town Core”.

*Nodal Improvements*

- 1<sup>st</sup> bullet – Staff to reword for clarity
- Add a bullet to “market the mixed use zones”.

Staff reviewed the Town’s Sewer Service Area map alongside of the Residential Build Out map prepared by Milone and MacBroom. The Commission noted that under current zoning there is a potential for the greatest number of new residential dwelling units in the north area of town where municipal sewers are not available and will not be extended. They discussed whether this is the area where they want new residential development to be encouraged. The Commission agreed that they would like denser development to be encouraged in areas where sewer service is available, generally, south of I-95. They discussed ways to discourage development in unsewered areas, including rezoning the northern area of town to RU-80.

Staff reviewed the Areas Physically Sensitive to Development map alongside of the Vacant and Underdeveloped Land by Zone map. They reviewed the current location of the Town’s industrial zone, noting that some of the land has environmental constraints that may limit development. The Commission supported the recommendation to conduct a study of the industrial zones to better determine the developable areas. They also felt that the regulations should be reviewed in order to encourage industrial development that respects the environmental constraints.

Staff reviewed the Existing Land Use map, noting the land designated as agriculture. It appears that the designation occurs when a property is assessed under Public Act 490 as either forest or farm land. The Commission would like the map to depict land that is actually used for agriculture.

The Commission suggested limiting areas where large commercial developments or big box stores are allowed in order to protect sensitive natural resources and concentrate them in areas of similar use.

Staff noted that she had distributed comments from Dick Fitzgerald before the workshop started.

The next meeting will be held on September 9, 2014 at 5:30 p.m.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn at 7:42 p.m. was made by Zod, seconded by Steinford, so voted unanimously.

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Jeffrey Pritchard, Secretary  
Planning Commission

Prepared by Robin Silsby  
Office Assistant II