

SPECIAL MEETING
MINUTES
PLANNING COMMISSION
JUNE 29, 2016 – 6:30 P.M.
TOWN HALL ANNEX – COMMUNITY ROOM 1

Acting Chairman Pritchard called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

I. ROLL CALL

Regular members present: Pritchard, Fitzgerald, Kane, Steinfeld, Zod
Alternate members present:
Absent: Sherrard, Munn, Tarbox
Staff present: Reiner, Jones, Glemboski, Silsby

Acting Chairman Pritchard appointed Fitzgerald to sit for Sherrard, Zod to sit for Munn, and Steinfeld to sit as Acting Secretary.

II. PUBLIC HEARING

1. 2016 Draft Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD)

Mike Zuba, Director of Planning and Carly Myers, Planner I of Milone and MacBroom in Cheshire, CT, gave a presentation on the 2016 Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD). Zuba explained that many changes have been incorporated into this updated policy document, which included input from many sources. Tonight's presentation addresses key recommendations and impacts on development. The goal is to move Groton forward into the future. Key highlights included Conservation, Development, Infrastructure, and Future Land Use Plan.

Staff thanked the Commission for their hard work and dedication on updating the POCD during the past 4 years. She noted that the Town Council has endorsed the plan, the Southeastern Connecticut Council of Governments has found the POCD consistent with the Regional plan, and that the Office of Long Island Sound Programs has found it to be consistent with the Coastal Management Act. She stated that at last night's special Planning Commission meeting, the Planning Commission reviewed all previously submitted comments in detail and determined which were appropriate to include in the POCD and which ones might be more suitable for other planning documents. Staff reviewed the comments received since last night's meeting. Editorial comments were received from Jeff Pritchard, comments regarding the economic and environmental importance of the Water Resource Protection District were received from Jim Furlong, and a certified copy of the Town Council's endorsement resolution was received from the Town Clerk. A summary of the comments were available to the public.

Acting Chairman Pritchard stated that a sign-up sheet is located on a table at the back of the room for those people who would like to speak tonight. He asked those people to state their name and address for the record.

Ed Martin, Shellfish Commission Chairman, voiced his concerns about shellfish beds in Groton, specifically about the impact of impervious surfaces.

Susan Sutherland, 32 Neptune Drive, spoke as a resident, not as Chairperson of the Zoning Commission. She thanked Staff and the Planning Commission for their efforts in updating the POCD. She expressed concerns about a lack of greenway plan, as noted in previous comments submitted to Town Staff. She believes that designated greenways are a benefit that promotes a healthier life style.

MOTION: To close the Public Hearing at 7:04 p.m.

Motion made by Pritchard, seconded by Steinfeld, so voted unanimously

The Planning Commission took a break at 7:04 p.m. and reconvened at 7:14 p.m.

III. NEW BUSINESS

1. 2016 Draft Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD)

The Planning Commission reviewed the additional comments brought up tonight. Comments made earlier about a greenway map will be added to the document, as well as comments from Mr. Furlong about economic impact on the reservoir. Information from the Shellfish Commission Chairman about shellfish areas and impervious surface will be added as a technical item. A draft motion was distributed.

MOTION: To adopt the Draft 2016 Plan of Conservation and Development subject to the following modifications:

1. Chapter 1, Introduction, shall include a description of climate change and sea level rise and their anticipated impacts to Groton
2. The recommendation regarding the development of open space management plans for existing open space shall also include developing an inventory and monitoring plan for town-held conservation easements.
3. A new recommendation shall be included in the Continue to Fund and Improve Open Space section that reads "Develop criteria with which to evaluate proposed open space parcels and develop a map of desirable open space land"
4. A Proposed Greenways map that shows connections north to Ledyard and east/west across Groton shall be included in Chapter 2, Conservation.
5. All technical changes as identified by the Planning Commission are addressed. These changes include corrected and updated information, and editorial and grammatical changes.

In adopting this Plan, the Commission finds that the 2016 Plan of Conservation and Development is consistent with the provisions of Connecticut General Statutes 8-23 and is in conformance with the Regional Plan of Conservation and Development 2007 and the State Conservation and Development Policies Plan 2013-2018.

The Commission also finds that the Plan is consistent with the municipal coastal programs requirements of Connecticut General Statutes 221-101 to 22a-104, has been made with reasonable consideration for restoration and protection of the ecosystems and habitat of Long Island Sound and has been designed to reduce hypoxia, pathogens, toxic contaminants and floatable debris in Long Island Sound.

The Commission hereby sets an effective date of October 1, 2016 for the Plan.

Motion made by Pritchard to adopt the POCD, seconded by Kane, so voted unanimously

IV. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn at 7:24 p.m. was made by Pritchard, seconded by Zod, so voted unanimously.

Margil Steinfeld, Acting Secretary
Planning Commission

Prepared by Robin Silsby
Office Assistant II