

APPROVED MINUTES
Brookfield Planning Commission
Thursday, May 2, 2013 - 7:30 p.m.
Meeting Room #133 - Town Hall, 100 Pocono Road

1. **Convene Meeting:** Chairman Van Hise convened the meeting at 7:33 p.m. and established a quorum of members: Chairman J. Van Hise; Vice Chairman A. Kerley; Secretary D. Frankel; Regular Member P. Conlon, and Alternates L. Taylor* and N. Tolmoff. Also present: First Selectman W. Davidson; Town Director of Public Works, Ralph Tedesco; and Katherine Daniel, Community Development Director and Recording Secretary, J. Llewellyn.

*L. Taylor was appointed a voting member.

2. **Review Minutes of Previous Meetings:**
4/18/2013: A motion was made by A. Kerley to accept the Minutes of April 18, 2013, as submitted. Motion seconded by P. Conlon and carried unanimously.

3. **Old Business:** There was none at this meeting.

4. **New Business:**

a. **Proposed Zone Change Application #201300338: 20 Elbow Hill Road – R-40 zone to IRC 80/40 zone**

• Memo from the Zoning Commission to the Planning Commission dated 4/25/13
The Commission discussed the proposed Zone Change with Commissioner Kerley saying it “makes sense” adding this to the Town’s commercial corridor. N. Tolmoff added that it looks like “it just fits.”

A motion was made by A. Kerley that a note be sent to the Zoning Commission stating that the Planning Commission looks favorably on the proposed zone change (Application #201300338), has reviewed the application and the Zoning Commission’s remarks, and supports the recommended change. D. Frankel seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

5. **Minutes of Other Boards and Commissions:**

- Inland Wetlands Commission: 4/8/13: Still reviewing High Meadow, Newbury Crossing and Ledgewood Sewer; Still reviewing 101 Obtuse Hill Road stipulations;
- Inland Wetlands 4/22/13: Still trying to approve stipulation #10 on 101 Obtuse Hill Road; Still continuing Public Hearing on sewer project;
- Zoning Commission: 4/25/13: Approved Chic-Fil-A at the former Burger King site; in design review of Brookfield Village including a lot of public comment (Public Hearing continued); Costco slope issue under discussion re: bond release; new ice cream vending cart (seasonal): 355 Federal Road; proposed exterior patio (approx 340 sq. ft.) between John’s Best Pizza and Froyo World.

A motion was made by P. Conlon to amend the agenda to go to item 7: Informal Discussion. Motion seconded by L. Taylor and carried unanimously.

7. **Informal Discussion:**

a. Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD):

Chairman Van Hise noted that this Commission is in the process of updating the Plan of Conservation and Development (the Plan), per the requirements of State Statutes. The last update was done in 2002. Some discussions have taken place in the past with other Commissions, he noted, but due to budget problems, the State has extended the update deadline which has now been set for 2014.

Sections 4: Conserve Natural Resources, and Section 5 of the existing plan: Preserve Open Space, will be discussed at this meeting.

K. Daniel provided a PowerPoint presentation which summarized key points of Chapters 4 and 5. She also offered some recommendations and comments on the existing plan and ideas for improvement. These include, but are not limited to, the fact that in Chapter 4, some of the town's resources are named but there is no inventory for said resources; and while the chapter encourages protection and preservation of natural resources, specific strategies are lacking. Ms. Daniel suggested a "less prescriptive approach," and creating an inventory of the town's natural resources, including the existing maps. She also suggested surveying stakeholders for conservation topics, encouraging them to take a more participative approach, and highlight the natural resources the town needs to focus on for the decade. She proposed having the Town host a mini charette.

The current Plan of Conservation and Development's Chapter 5 offers some specifics about preserving Open Space; calls for establishment of a Greenbelt system with trails; encourages preservation of more open space with the emphasis on quality over quantity; and for the implementation of an open space plan. Ms. Daniel suggests evaluation of the trails shown in the Plan, and decide which parcels would make meaningful additional to the current connectivity of the existing open space. Implementing this, she noted, would pose some challenges.

The new topics on Conservation since the Plan's last update in 2002 have been the Still River Greenway, extension of Arthur Harris Linear Park to the Four Corners area, desirable trails identified in Ironworks District (aka Four Corners), a Wetland park in the Ironworks District and the use of town property for *other than* open space, the latter being a possible controversial issue

Commissioner Kerley said that the Commission was interested in finding out what percent of Brookfield is Open Space, and K. Daniel agreed to provide that number. Mr. Kerley was interested in how our percentage compares to that of other towns.

He also mentioned to the First Selectman his suggestion of a Town Ordinance to prevent dumping/littering/defacing/polluting. As an avid hiker and user of the trails and open space, he noted that right now there is nothing in place to prevent these destructive practices. First Selectman Davidson asked Mr. Kerley to send him a reminder e-mail, adding that he is "surprised" that Brookfield doesn't have that kind of ordinance.

K. Daniel agreed to provide a pdf version of the Open Space map (draft) so Commissioners can add any area(s) they may be aware of that is not presently shown on the map.

Commission Alternate N. Tolmoff said she would like to see a bike trail, and First Selectman Davidson added that "we're working on it."

Chairman Van Hise requested copies of the PowerPoint presentation for all Commissioners.

At this point, he turned the discussion over to members of the public:

K. Wendelmeyer spoke on behalf of the Brookfield Open Space Legacy (BOSLI). She noted that this group is a private, non-profit land trust which currently owns about 173 acres in Brookfield. This group has taken steps in protecting open space in Brookfield, and she added that the members appreciate the opportunity to offer input into this plan. She noted that the 2002 Plan has “many good ideas” but they were not carried out. She suggested an Open Space Advisory Committee to create an inventory of undeveloped land in Brookfield. She felt that the existing plan is more of a list of suggestions and techniques as opposed to being an actual action plan. The Open Space Legacy does not want to see small, fragmented patches of undevelopable land, and she added that the term “open space” is too vague in the current plan.

Ms. Wendelmeyer had gone through both of these chapters and added some suggested edits, which she submitted in hard copy for the Commission’s review. She will send an on-line version to K. Daniel. She further added that the Brookfield Conservation Commission “manages” open space as opposed to planning for it.

Liz DeLambert, also of BOSLI, asked if the Conservation Commission was given the charge of implementing this portion of the Plan. Chairman Van Hise indicated that they were “part of it.”

Chairman Van Hise outlined the process of approval for the revised Plan of Conservation and Development which, he noted, will include public hearings. He also read some of the edits the Commission had come up with so far, adding that these are mainly “mark ups” on the existing document.

A. Kerley added that this Commission takes input from various commissions and committees. J. Van Hise said “we’re a long way from being done.”

Ms. DeLambert asked to be told when these two sections will be discussed again, and K. Daniel said she would let her know.

E. Labella, Director of Land Protector for Housatonic Valley Association, one of the oldest watershed conservation programs in the country, then addressed the Commission, complementing the members on the work on the existing plan. She first asked about the Aquifer Protection Zone Regulations. K. Daniel noted the Aquifer Protection District maps done in the 1980s but added that she could not find the science behind the mapping.

Ms. Labella said what they have been doing is working with towns on better stormwater management. The traditional way to capture water is very expensive and requires a lot of engineering and structures. Recent low impact development techniques that help preserve existing hydrology on site, without a lot of engineering, are approved and encouraged by the State. She suggested putting this in the Plan.

She further noted that the two recent major hurricanes have shown that the more ways applications can utilize multiple infiltration techniques, the less damaging the results of these storm events. The existing plan has great language about protecting flood plains and wetlands, she stated, adding that her agency is hoping to get funding to study measures to protect shoreline wetlands, especially during storm events.

Ms. Labella also noted that Brookfield has adopted the Candlewood Lake Watershed Protection Regulations. She suggested that the Plan encourage the Zoning Commission to use more of those regulations in tandem with Zoning regulations for the rest of the town. “What works for the Candlewood Lake Watershed would work for all of our town,” she concluded.

She complimented the idea of “wetland banking,” calling it an “excellent idea.” She also suggested that on the Town’s Open Space Map, the areas such as golf courses which are not permanently protected, be indicated as such, while those areas which are permanently protected be highlighted.

Later in the meeting, on this same topics, K. Daniel asked the Chairman if he’d like to do a workshop on the Plan. The Chairman was concerned about getting a good turnout of participants. K. Daniel thought this might foster a common vision between BOSLI and the Conservation Commission. This topic will be revisited at the next meeting.

A motion was made by A. Kerley to return to the regular agenda. Motion seconded by N. Tolmoff and carried unanimously.

6. **Correspondence:**

- a. **Letter from D. Sawicki of the Office of the State Traffic Administration to D. Hempstead dated 4/12/13 re: City of Danbury/Town of Brookfield Stew Leonard’s Expansion**
- b. **Letter from D. Sawicki of the Office of the State Traffic Administration to D. Hempstead dated 4/18/13 re: City of Danbury/Town of Brookfield Stew Leonard’s Expansion**

Stew Leonard’s is undergoing an expansion and has received approval. A. Kerley noted that Federal Road is noted as being “Route 805” on the State’s paperwork. R. Tedesco will check further into this road designation.

c. **Connecticut Federation of Planning and Zoning Agencies Quarterly newsletter Volume XVII, Issue 2.**

8. **Tabled Items:** There were none at this meeting.

9. **Adjourn:** A motion to adjourn at 8:38 p.m. was made by A. Kerley, seconded by P. Conlon and carried unanimously.

J. Van Hise, Chairman