



Town of

North Stonington, CT

PLAN OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT STEERING
COMMITTEE

REGULAR MEETING

MONDAY, AUGUST 6, 2012 – 7:00 P.M.

New Town Hall
Conference Room
40 Main Street
North Stonington, CT 06359

DRAFT MINUTES

1. **CALL MEETING TO ORDER:** Senior Planning and Zoning Official, Juliet Leeming called the Regular Meeting of the North POCD Steering Committee to order on Monday August 6, 2012 at 7:10 p.m. at the New Town Hall, Conference Room.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Julie Lanier and Elaine Boissevain (P&Z), Peter Bogoian and Marilyn Mackay (EDC), Mary Ann Ricker (NSAHC), Bill Ricker and Joe Spano (CC), Nicholas Mullane and Mark Donahue (BOS), Brian Geer and Joseph Perry (EPTN), Ed Harasimowitz and Nita Kincaid (Hewitt Farm), Duncan Schweitzer (Avalonia), Madeline Jeffery (NS Land Alliance), Belinda Learned (Agriculture)

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT: Tim Pelland (NSAHC), Peter Nimirowski and Dan Spring (BOF), Bob Testa and Ed Sarchili (BOE), Mark Grigg and George Brown (IWWC) and Mac Turner (Avalonia). There were no representatives from MPTN

2. **ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA:** None

3. **DISCUSSION:**

The following topics were discussed during the meeting:

Overview of the Plan and Process:

Juliet Leeming presented each member present with a packet of information and provided an overview of the POCD process, content and visioning process. Bill Ricker suggested that each Board and Commission develop their own individual vision statements and bring them back to the group at a future meeting to help the POCD Steering Committee develop an overall Vision.

Public Involvement/Awareness about the Plan:

Nita Kincaid and others suggested that we involve the public as often as possible and as soon as possible so that they support the final document. She suggested that we hear their vision first, before the Steering Committee works on it. Marilyn suggested that we contact Amy Kennedy from

the Wheeler Library to possibly work with her on generating interest in the POCD from a greater audience. Other suggestions to increase public awareness and participation included: piggy-backing on existing public events, flyers, mailers (in tax bill and recreation Bulletin), a survey, Face Book, the free newspapers, the school website, Mark Donahue's blog, personal requests for involvement, weekly column in the newspaper, conduct small casual focus groups/forums, hold an ice cream social, and utilize survey monkey. Madeline Jeffery suggested that we make meetings more fun and less like work in order to get more people there.

The group discussed the Planning Fair and its success in 2003. The fair would likely be in the spring and will require a lot of planning. Some questioned its usefulness or purpose given the amount of planning required to make it successful.

Marilyn Mackay and Nick Mullane suggested that we involve the Civics Class at the HS. Have the students make a presentation about NS and what they feel could be improved etc. Make it a project. The presentation would draw attention from the parents. Many agreed that involving the youth is a good idea. Nick also mentioned going to the Senior Center and Bill suggested involving the Church Community. Other suggested groups to involve included the Fire Department, Historical Society, Recreation Committee, the PTO and Superintendent of Schools and the members of the Tribal Nations.

Duncan Schweitzer suggested that the press should be used to educate the people about the POCD process. Elaine Boissevain added that education was also needed about the fiscal aspects of government and planning. Duncan also mentioned the use of a version of the game Sim City to determine the consequences of certain planning choices (probability of outcome). Marilyn suggested running a type of exercise with the public to determine how things have changed in households over the year and how they will likely change in the future.

Bill Ricker agreed that the public must be educated and exposed to the Planning process. After the group floods the media and other avenues to get the word out, the committee should follow up with a survey or mailer asking for input. Representatives from the various organizations in town should be approached and encouraged to spread the word about the Plan to their members.

Peter Bogioian felt the theme "Express Yourself" would be effective, suggesting that the residents be encouraged to freely express their opinion on a variety of issues. He suggested that we schedule frequent, casual forums on a regular basis to gather input from the public. Brian Geer felt that the people needed some incentive to come to a meeting and that they must somehow be convinced that their voices will be heard and that their opinions count.

Some suggested that we use the free CPTV channel to advertise the POCD or to air any videos related to the Planning process (as was done prior to the joint Housing and Economic Development workshop).

POCD Committee Tasks:

1. A list of talking points and/or questions for the targeted public groups/stakeholders needs to be developed. The weekly blogs could pick one or two of these points and simply ask people to comment. When holding focus groups, the questions could be tailored to each group.
2. An announcement needs to be drafted within 2 weeks for publication in the Recreation Bulletin.
3. POCD Steering Committee to comment on the goals of the 2003 Plan (and/or the 2009 Plan) and return to the next meeting to discuss.

4. Identify all the groups the Committee wants input from. When are their meetings? How do they communicate with their members? Do they have a newsletter or annual mailer? Who is the contact person? What do we want to ask them?
5. Identify all the current NS annual events and big mailers (i.e. Tax Bill)
6. Add the POCD update to each Board and Commission Agenda so that certain talking points can be addressed etc.
7. Develop a very specific outline for involving the HS students (Civics Class).
8. Create a Core Committee to help Planner better identify and organize the tasks and create a solid timeline for completion. Members suggested for this group were Mark Donahue, Madeline Jeffery and Joe Spano and anyone else the Planner chooses to work with.

4. **NEW BUSINESS:** None

5. **OLD BUSINESS:** None

6. **REVIEW MINUTES:** N/A

7. **ADJOURN:** Meeting was adjourned at 9:00pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Juliet Leeming

Juliet Leeming
Senior Planning and Zoning Official