

**2014 Plan of Conservation and Development Subcommittee
Regular Meeting Minutes
August 19, 2013**

The 2014 Plan of Conservation and Development Subcommittee of the Planning and Zoning Commission held its August 19, 2013 Regular Meeting at 7:00PM at the Stonington Police Station Meeting Room – 173 S. Broad St, Pawcatuck. Attending were members Wendy Bury, Walter Grant, Sara Lathrop, Bill Lyman and Robert Mohr. Town Planner Keith A. Brynes was also in attendance. Members Bob Birmingham and John Prue were absent.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Lathrop at 7:00PM.

Ms. Bury motioned to approve the draft minutes of the 8/5/13 meeting; seconded by Mr. Lyman. The motion was unanimously approved 5-0.

Mr. Brynes discussed the need to schedule the Subcommittee's next meeting around Labor Day. The Subcommittee discussed Wednesday 9/4 as the preferred choice for a Special Meeting. Staff will coordinate with members as to availabilities and an agenda will be posted. Location is to be determined.

Discussion of outline for Chapter 3, Coastal Resources:

Overview. Mr. Birmingham was not in attendance to discuss the overview. Ms. Bury stated that the chapter contains too much history. Mr. Lyman stated that the chapter should summarize what the coastal resources are. The last sentence in this section should read "Striking a balance between preservation and development is the challenge..."

Current Conditions. Mr. Lyman stated that this section of the outline should mention the 2004 POCD's recommendations as well as what has occurred over the past 10 years (major storms). Chapter should mention CUSH and other organizations working on coastal issues. Text should refer to map.

Vision. Mr. Lyman recommended moving much of the language in this section to the "Current Conditions" section. The "Vision" section should include more discussion of coastal public access. Reasoning behind recommendations could be enhanced. Text should not include internet link.

Recommendations. Consensus of the Subcommittee was to make the following changes to the recommendations:

- D. Change to "Continue to monitor and update..."
 - 1. List as policy. Change spelling to "affected."
 - 2. Change to "Modify regulations to restrict densities and lot coverage in 'V' zones."
 - 3. Include some specific examples of infrastructure in recommendation.

4. List as policy.
5. Change to "Modify regulations to provide additional setbacks..."
6. Change to "Require" septic systems...
7. Change to "Amend regulations to prohibit conversion of cottages..."
8. List as policy.
9. Eliminate and merge into #10.
10. List as policy. See #9 above.
11. List as policy.

Discussion of outline for Chapter 4, Agricultural Resources:

Mr. Grant summarized his chapter outline.

Current Conditions. Mr. Lyman stated that the section should include information on the status of agriculture in Stonington – acreage, types of agricultural uses in Town, local trends, etc. The Subcommittee recommended consulting with the Tax Assessor's office on properties considered "farms" for tax purposes. A map of agricultural uses has been prepared which will need refining. Chapter should include current trends such as farmers markets, the "locavore" (local food) movement and community farming. "Right to Farm" issues should be discussed.

Vision. Ms. Bury recommended either describing who the Working Land Alliance is or not mentioning them altogether. Consensus was that much of the text in this section should be in the *Current Conditions* section. Text should mention the chapter's 3 general goals established at prior meetings.

Recommendations. Consensus of the Subcommittee was to make the following changes to the recommendations:

1. Include summary of what a "Right to Farm" regulation is. List as Task.
2. Delete 2nd half of recommendation reading "...and to assess the economic, cultural and environmental benefits of the agricultural cluster." List as Task.
3. List as task.
4. List as task.
5. List as task.
6. Change "acquire" to "preserve." List as policy.
7. Change "farmers" to "residents" or "agricultural activity." List as task.
8. List as policy.
9. Incorporate language of #10. List as task.
10. Eliminate and incorporate into #9.
11. Delete recommendation. (Falls under #6.)

Discussion of outline for Chapter 5, Natural Resources:

Overview. Mr. Lyman recommended that this section should better describe the scope of the chapter. Focus on water supplies and wetlands. The 1st and 2nd paragraphs in the outline should be swapped.

Current Conditions. Text should include an overview of where the Town's drinking water comes from. Include number and percentage of households on public vs. private water. Mention underground storage tanks as a current risk.

Vision. Some of this language should be included in the "Current Conditions" section. Bullets should be rewritten in paragraph form. Discussion sea level rise should be covered in Chapter 3.

Recommendations. Consensus of the Sub-Committee was to make the following changes to the recommendations.

- C. Add the words "where appropriate" at the end of the sentence.
 - F. Change to "Continue to implement the Town's Stormwater Management goals..."
 - H. Change to "Investigate the possibility of preserving Aquarion Water Company's undeveloped land..." List as task.
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- 1. Change to "Develop and adopt buildable land regulations..."
 - 8. Eliminate from this chapter and add as a recommendation in either the Agricultural Resources or Community Facilities chapters.

Authors of the 3 chapter outlines discussed above will work on revisions over the next few meetings. Outlines for chapters 6, 7 & 8 will be reviewed at the next meeting. Mr. Lyman stated that the Subcommittee may wish to reconsider where the discussion of "Town Character" is included in the Plan.

Fran Hoffman, President of CUSH, clarified the organic compost repository at the Town's transfer station and its use on Town fields.

Discussion of Potential Heritage Mill District

Ms. Lathrop stated that the Planning and Zoning Commission has requested her input at their next meeting to discuss the Subcommittee's opinion regarding the creation of a proposed Heritage Mill District. This district was one of the recommendations of the Economic Development Commission's "M-1 Initiative" which examined ways in which the Town's Manufacturing Zone regulations could be modernized. The Heritage Mill District would be a new zone for the Town's historic mill complexes that would allow for a broader range of uses and a more streamlined permitting process. Ms. Lathrop summarized previous Subcommittee discussions regarding this issue. Consensus of the Subcommittee has been that the Planning and Zoning Commission should not wait until the 2014 is completed to address this issue.

Mr. Lyman motioned to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Ms. Bury. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 9:25PM.

Respectfully submitted,


Keith A. Brynes, Town Planner