



# PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

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**PLAN OF CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT (POCD)  
STEERING COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES 4:30 P.M. – 6:30 P.M.  
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 24, 2018  
CANOE BROOK SENIOR CENTER  
11 Cherry Hill Rd., Branford CT.**

Staff Present: H. Smith- Town Planner, R. Stoecker Assistant Town Planner

Plan of Conservation & Development Steering Committee Members Present:  
C. Lezon, , P. Carloni, B. Horne, G. Renz, J. Lust, J. Chadwick, M. Palluzzi, T. Elton, B.  
Ricozzi, V. Hanchuruck.

Steering Committee Member(s) Absent: P. Basserman

Glenn Chalder – (Planimetrics, 70 Country Road, Simsbury, CT) Town Consultant for the Plan of Conservation & Development noted that the was the main speaker.

1. Call to Order – The meeting was called to order at 4:40 P.M . Chairman P. Carloni asked everyone to speak into the microphones as the meeting was being taped for airing with BCTV. Steering Committee members and staff introduced themselves to those in attendance. Chairman Carloni noted that the Development Listening Session would need to end at 6:15 P.M. due to a scheduling conflict with a group scheduled to start their meeting at 6:30 P.M.
2. Minutes of January 24, 2018 – The minutes were reviewed. G. Renz made a motion to accept the minutes as presented. Bill Horne seconded the motion which passed unanimously.
3. Listening Session To Hear From Invited Participants - Glenn reviewed the input presented from development related commissions/contacts via e-mail or summary comments. Glenn sought spokespersons in attendance from the various invited development related contacts to summarize reports or introduce comments on Development issues.

**Town Center Revitalization Review Board** – Norbert Church, Chairman spoke concerning how the TCRRB has been engaged in many important new projects in the Village District including Atlantic Wharf, Community House renovation, Tidal Basin Hotel and the Blackstone

Library. Norbert Church highlighted key factors that the TCRRB is focusing on with the POCD update including the following elements:

- Making the Town Center more walkable and pedestrian friendly. This would include making sidewalks circumnavigate the Branford Green with sidewalks installed along the north side of South Main Street.
- Support for the Main Street Roundabout Project and inclusion of sidewalks and streetscape improvements towards Kirkham Street and the Fourth Ward.
- Support for creating a Bicycle Transportation network throughout the Town of Branford.

**Chamber of Commerce** - No spokesperson present.

**Dockmaster** – No spokesman present. A listing of duties and responsibilities of the Harbormaster was attached to the mailing package sent to the POCD Steering Committee.

**East Shore Health District (ESHD)** – Director Mike Pascuicilla highlighted some of the key issues he would like to convey to the POCD Steering Committee including the following:

- **Septic Systems**: Branford is involved with a subsidized pump out program for residents who have subsurface septic systems. Main concern is to continue to be vigilant, especially in Stony Creek area to monitor waste issues and the overall impact on Long Island Sound. Recent testing of the Long Island Sound have revealed improved and good water quality levels.
- **Sidewalks**: Many people are attracted to the great public parks and beaches in the Town of Branford. The ESHD supports the implementation of an interconnected sidewalk system with possible work out stations and messaging opportunities along the system.
- **Electric vehicles and charging stations**: Garner support and project development of more electric charging stations and increased of electric vehicles.
- **Climate Change**: Branford is ahead of many other municipalities in terms of addressing Climate Change and sea level rise through participation in coastal resiliency planning. The critical element will be finding ways to fund identified projects.
- Continued support for the pump out boat to eliminate sewage from entering Long Island Sound.

**Economic Development Commission** – Terry Elton, Special Projects Director with the Town of Branford. Terry identified specific strategies identified in the Development Briefing Booklet including the following Booklets and particular:

- **Booklet 4B (Strategies)**– Support for strategies to expand the Town Center events that draw people to the Town Green and visitors to patronize the shops , restaurants and other services located in the Town Center. Continued support for a wayfinding system, transit shuttle and development of key identified neighborhood nodes.
- **Booklet 4C (Strategies)** – Support Tax Increment Financing (TIF) initiatives directed to key areas in the Town of Branford. Support for targeted science and bioscience clusters near transportation interchanges, and promotion of tourism in the town in conjunction with Transit Oriented Development (TOD) strategies.

**Stony Creek Architectural Review Board (SCARB)**. Chairman Greg Ames submitted a written summary reportdocument that was included in the meeting packet to the POCD

Steering Committee. Greg Ames focused on the following key points from his written response:

- The creation of the Stony Creek Village District and Architectural Review Board is a direct result of adoption of the 2008 POCD.
- The SCARB with their supplemental guidelines have been a constructive process. The informal reviews of the legacy theater are progressing and may develop into a model for commercial and institutional reviews.
- Greg Ames noted other improvements in Stony Creek including the museum, and restrooms at the Bayside Park. Further improvements are needed at the boat ramp, parking and better organization and space for car top launching paddle boards and kayaks. Other issues pertaining to development and quality of life in Stony Creek and the Town of Branford include support for connected bikeways and open space areas.
- Housing issues include affordability issues, and support of accessory apartments, recognize the potential of continued large scale renovations of residential homes appearing out of character with Stony Creek District.
- Parking and speeding issues continue to exist and need to be addressed stressing different modes of transportation (bicycling and other Transit Oriented Development) strategies include.
- Support possible creation of Stony Creek railroad station and remain cognizant of plans to be by the Department of Transportation and Federal Rail Administration concerning adding tracks to the existing rail lines.

#### 4. **Steering Committee discussion of Briefing Booklets**

Glenn Chalder reviewed the Development Booklets with the Steering Committee including #5A – Community Structure #5B – Branford Center, #5C- Economic Development, #5D – Residential Development. Discussion was focused on the following key issues:

- Community Structure issues were discussed. The intent was to help guide and manage community structure through specific strategies. Development nodes were identified.
- Enhance the Branford Center. Investigate the revisiting the Center District boundaries and zoning regulations which are subject to Town Center Board review use. A Steering Committee discussion ensued concerning strategies to promote a more diverse and vibrant Main Street with a clarified mixed use strategy and possible reshaping and changes to zoning district bulk requirements and density. Use a more holistic approach, address parking issues, transit shuttles and coordination with Transit Oriented Development (TOD) strategies were discussed.
- Discussion of Economic Development strategies including leveraging assets to improve economic nodal areas for mixed use development. Promotion of existing businesses and continued assistance with growth and expansion. Seek to increase targeted industry, bioscience and tourism sectors of the economy. The I-95 interchanges at exit 53 and exit 56 were discussed including limitations at Exit 53 without a full exchange and Exit 56 area having existing area for future development.
- Discussion of Residential Development revolved around the key issues including Branford becoming a “mature community” with needs to attract young families, house an increasing aging senior population and address housing affordability. Further analysis needed to locate areas ideally suited to house senior and affordable housing development that care lose to public transit and needed services .

#### 5. Open Discussion (including public)

Gary Offbright, 1 Oak Street – A new resident of Branford. Past experience in other areas has given him an idea to suggest to undergo a possible feasibility study to investigate restricting passenger vehicle in Town Center and encourage the use of transit people movers.

David Minicozzi, Branford Green Committee – D. Minicozzi reiterated his desire to explain the Green Committee role in maintaining the health of the tree's on the Green. D. Minicozzi explained the issue with the mature CT. Notable Trees and root systems and efforts to expand sidewalks around the south side of the Town Green.

Peter Hentschell – Read personal comments from a prepared summary report which was distributed to the Steering Committee members. The following issues were highlighted:

- Establishment of an Environmental Sustainability Commission to concentrate on issues pertaining to rising tides and climate change/sea level rise issues.
- Possible installation of a sewer system in Stony Creek associated with an overlay to help limit unwanted future development
- Other headings listed in the written comments include the following - Structure of the Final POCD, Challenges of Sea Level Rise, Response to Sea Level Rise, Response to Climate Change- Environmental Sustainability, Considerations for Incentive Programs, Considerations for Incentives to encourage Sustainable Commercial Development, Stony Creek – Septic System Management, Branford's Developable Land resources are Becoming Limited, The Exit 56 – Last Major Area of Town with Good Developable Land and Good Access, The Exit 53 Hub – Resolution to the Interchange, Streetscape and Trees, and Stony Creek – Current to encourage Open Space.

Janet Reisman – Read from a prepared summary report which she will submit for entry into the POCD website. Some issues discussed include the following:

- Concerned over the liberal use of variances and the use of too many PDD's in inappropriate locations.
- Concerned over the wide array of uses in the IG-2 zoning district in the east end of town. Many of the uses are not harmonious.
- Implore the Planning and Zoning Commission to take the revised POCD more seriously.

Kate Galampos , Spoke concerning the Economic Development Booklet and sought comparison with other regional towns on the percentage of commercial & industrial tax base., Maintain pedestrian focus on the connection between the waterfront development and Town Center.

Consultant Glen Chalder asked if the public survey should be kept open. The Steering Committee recommended the survey be kept open to capture more respondents.

The Infrastructure Briefing Booklets will be mailed out next week for the February 7, 2018. The Steering Committee Meeting/ Listening Session is set to be held on **Wednesday, February 7 at the Canoe Brook Senior Center from 4:30-6:30 P.M.**

At the next meeting the Steering Committee, consultant and staff will make decision on holding another Listening Session on February 22, 2018.

The Steering Committee Meetings continue to be taped and televised on BCTV.

Meeting adjourned at 6:10 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Assistant Planner, Rich Stoecker