

Plan of Conservation and Development Implementation Committee
Regular Meeting Minutes
October 17, 2022

The Plan of Conservation and Development Implementation Committee held a Meeting on Monday, October 17, 2022, 5:00PM at Stonington Town Hall, 152 Elm St., Stonington, CT.

Attending were Chairman / First Selectman, Danielle Chesebrough and members, Virginia Abernathy, Susan Hibbard, Donald Kluberanz, Erika Lebling, Ben Philbrick, Lyndsey Pyrke-Fairchild, John Truscinski, and Keith Brynes, Town Planner. Members Lynn Young and Barbara McKrell – Director of Public Works were absent.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Chesebrough at 5:00PM.

Approval of Draft Minutes

Ms. Hibbard motioned to approved the draft 4/18/22 minutes; seconded by Mr. Philbrick. The motion was unanimously approved.

Discussion of First Selectman's Implementation Priorities

Ms. Chesebrough stated that the first meeting of the new Flood Prevention, Climate Resilience and Erosion Control Board is scheduled for tomorrow. Their initial focus will likely be promotion of stormwater related projects. The Town is exploring partnering with Mystic Seaport to apply for climate resilience grants. A group of Masons Island residents has received funding to work with a consultant on resilience solutions including a possible living shoreline for an eroding section of land near Chippechaug Trail. The Town's sustainability / floodplain manager position has yet to be advertised and the new Assistant Engineer position will soon be advertised for a 3rd time. The Town is applying to maintain its Bronze status with Sustainable CT. The Town was selected for funding to initiate a pilot curbside composting program which will be the first in the State.

The Police Commission has agreed to support recommendation of bike lane signs on Rt. 1 between the Mystic Train Station and Greenhaven Rd. CTDOT would have to approve these signs. This area is part of the planned Eastern Shoreline Path, proposed in the 2019 Southeast Bike and Pedestrian Plan as a continuous bike-friendly route from the Connecticut River to the RI state line. The Southeast CT Council of Governments is exploring funding for the regionwide project. The Rt. 1 sidewalk project is progressing with final DOT approval expected soon. Additional easements from property owners have been granted. Construction may begin in the spring of 2023. Over the next 2 years DPW will construct approximately 50 handicapped accessible sidewalk ramps in Pawcatuck through a Connecticut Community Connectivity Grant. Laura Graham summarized progress on plans to install bike-friendly grates on the Bascule Bridge.

Mr. Brynes summarized the status of the ongoing Comprehensive Zoning Regulation Rewrite. The Planning and Zoning Commission is in the beginning stages of reviewing the current regulations. The project is expected to take 18 months. The first phase will focus more on reformatting, usability and minor changes, while the second phase will focus on more significant changes. Public input will be a

part of both phases. Ms. Chesebrough stated that the Board of Selectmen are aiming for a Town Meeting in February to create an Affordable Housing Committee and possibly a Short Term Rental Ordinance. A 3rd community conversation on Short Term Rentals is planned soon with no specific date scheduled. The Planning and Zoning Commission will decide at their next meeting whether to opt out of the Accessory Dwelling Unit regulations in CT General Statute 21-29. Opting out would keep local control over the regulation of these units. Opting out also requires a vote from the Board of Selectmen. Mr. Brynes stated that the Planning and Zoning Commission approved a heavily modified version of the Affordable Housing Plan in May; creation of the Affordable Housing Commission is one of the it's main recommendations. Mr. Philbrick stated that the POCD Implementation Committee might have a role in promoting more civil discourse at local meetings.


Ms. Chesebrough summarized various conservation initiatives including the recent preservation of 232 acres on Al Harvey Rd. The Town is exploring the possible purchase of the "Circus Lot" off Noyes Ave. in Pawcatuck and its development into a public riverfront park. Grant money has been received for development of a concept plan by a landscape architect.

A grant of 1.9 million dollars has been awarded for the construction of a water loop in Pawcatuck. The project would link 2 dead-end waterlines in the Greenhaven Rd. area providing enhanced water pressure and system redundancy. Initial funding has been awarded for \$900,000 in repairs to the Town Dock's north pier. The WPCA's Mystic I&I study is ongoing and the moratorium on new connections has ended.

The Committee discussed the need to begin updating the 2015 Plan of Conservation prior to 2025. Per State law, towns must adopt a POCD every 10 years. The Town has requested Capital Improvement Program funding to help with this effort. Funds would be used to hire a consultant to lead the process which may overlap with the Zoning Regulation Rewrite. The POCD is ultimately the Planning and Zoning Commission's document and it would be up to that commission whether to oversee the project or leave it to another group, such as the POCD Implementation Committee.

Ms. Hibbard motioned to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Ms. Chesebrough. The motion was unanimously approved. The meeting was adjourned at 6:17PM.

Respectfully submitted,

 pp Clifton J. Iler, AICP, Town Planner 9/20/23
Keith A. Brynes, Town Planner