

Planning and Zoning Commission
Special Meeting
December 20th, 2023
Final Minutes

The 1745th meeting of the Town of Stonington's Planning and Zoning Commission was held virtually via Microsoft Teams on Wednesday, December 20, 2023. The meeting was called to order at 7:00PM by Chairman Chuck Sheehan. Also present for the meeting were Commissioners Lynn Conway, Andy Meek, Gary Belke, and Alternates Ben Philbrick and Bennett Brissette. Francisco Gomes, Project Lead from FHI Studio, was also present. Commissioner Ryan Deasy and Town Planner Clifton Iler were not present.

Chairman Sheehan opened the meeting at 7:00 PM and ceded the floor to Mr. Gomes.

Mr. Gomes conducted a presentation covering the following agenda:

1. Update on Regulations that are now in effect.
2. Review project schedule.
3. Review findings from November workshop.
4. Discuss initial findings from Environmental Resource Protection, Sustainability, and Resilience review.
5. Next Steps.

Mr. Gomes shared feedback received from the Zoning Enforcement Officer on *Family and Group Child Care* regulations and *Height Exceptions for Roof Structures and Architectural Features*. The Commission agreed to incorporate the regulation amendments in the next amendment cycle.

Mr. Gomes provided a review of the November workshop, the in-person survey conducted at the meeting, and general insights captured by the consulting team. A list of proposed regulation amendments was shared for the Commission's consideration. The following recommendations were made:

- No recommended changes to flood hazard overlay district boundaries. Make recommendation that flood modeling using most recent data including soon to be released UConn 1' contour data be conducted as part of next coastal resilience plan update to reassess extents of flood hazard overlay district boundaries.
- Continue to explore increases BFE from 1 foot to 2 feet, but this should not be the only measure taken.
- No changes to the lookback period. Correction to the information presented at meeting: the lookback period was changed to 5 years in 2013 but was reverted to 1 year in 2018 and is 1 year in the recently adopted regulations. No action needed at this time.
- Continue to explore TDR for coastal properties seaward of LIMWA line. Evaluate how many properties will be impacted. Establish receiving areas and ensure no adverse impacts to those areas. Limit extent of sending area so as not to overwhelm receiving areas with potential development. These recommendations will likely require several months to develop and will not be concluded at the end of this work cycle. Coordinate with EDC for commercial areas. Restrict use of TDR to coastal areas.
- Remove single-family coastal review exception from CAMOD.
- Assess/map how many properties would be impacted by extending coastal setback requirement to inland AE and A Zones before recommending amendment.

- Review FHOD regulations and update as needed to comply with CTDEEP model floodplain management regulations for coastal communities.
- Continue to explore hobby farm as a permitted accessory use, but develop controls, identify a minimum lot size requirement, research State and USDA agricultural guidance. Ensure adequate safeguards to protect surface and groundwater quality.
- Take no action on TOD regs.
- Follow recommendations of 2019 Fuss & O'Neill memo to place specific stormwater and soil and erosion control standards in the Technical Standards document. Maintain zoning controls and enforceability by ZEO.
- Apply stormwater and LID regs in GDD and AHD to all districts.
- Allow green roofs to count towards open space requirement and provide lot coverage discount. Don't provide a 1 for 1 credit, consider a 50% credit.
- Review 2023 CT Stormwater Quality Manual for potential revisions to stormwater sections of Zoning Regulations.
- Make bike/ped amendments as recommended. Define bicycle parking facilities.
- Allow 20' height limit for solar over parking. Allow increase in lot coverage if located over parking. Identify other potential exceptions to support solar use.
- Develop a sustainability scoring matrix that can be linked to incentives including reduction of/alternatives to fossil fuel heating. Research and consider reduced permit requirements, reduced bonding requirement, and reduced permit fees for high scoring projects. Do not provide incentives for more height, bulk, or coverage.
- Revise parking requirements in the Site Design phase of work. No action now.
- Expand tree protection regulations and planting requirements as recommended.
- Identify additional opportunities for site conservation and preservation.
- Explore establishment of non-infringement areas in additional zoning districts. Consider a 50' distance, but also model a 100' distance. First evaluate/map potential impact before advancing recommendation.
- Provide recommended APA regulations to supplement existing GPOD regulations. Incorporate CTDEEP Model APA regulations.
- No action on ridgeline protection regulations, no qualifying ridgelines in Stonington.
- Adopt impervious coverage standards. Research appropriate limits from other communities and adjust per district to align with current land use in those areas.

The Commission discussed upcoming meeting dates. The next virtual meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, January 24, 2024.

Chairman Sheehan adjourned the meeting at 9:15 PM.

Respectfully Submitted By:


Lynn Conway, Secretary