

Planning and Zoning Commission
Special Virtual Meeting
January 24, 2024
Final Minutes

The 1747th meeting of the Town of Stonington's Planning and Zoning Commission was held virtually via Microsoft Teams on Wednesday, January 24, 2024. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Chairman Chuck Sheehan. Also present for the meeting were Commissioners Ryan Deasy, Andy Meek, Gary Belke, and Alternates Ben Philbrick, Bennett Brissette, and MaryEllen Mateleska. Francisco Gomes, Project Lead from FHI Studio, and Town Planner Clifton Iler were also present. Commissioner Lynn Conway was absent.

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. Review project schedule
2. Review status of online survey
3. Discuss recommended amendments from the Environmental Resource Protection, Sustainability, and Resilience review
4. Next Steps

Mr. Gomes reviewed the project schedule and the current status of Phase Two for the group. The Commission discussed when and how to schedule the public presentation of the first set of recommendations. Mr. Gomes said he would work with the Mr. Iler to find an appropriate time to schedule the meeting. Mr. Iler will also redistribute the online survey information to the public.

Mr. Gomes went through the draft recommendations for the Environmental Resource Protection, Sustainability, and Resiliency sections of the Zoning Regulations. The following 17 recommendations were presented and included a brief discussion with the Commission and members of the public:

1. Increase Freeboard Requirement
2. Remove Single-Family Home Exemption from CAMOD
3. Adopt a Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) regulation
4. Accommodate Required Increases in Building Elevation
5. Expand Non-Infringement Area Regulations
6. Require a setback from the Coastal Jurisdiction Line in all flood hazard areas
7. Update the Flood Hazard Overlay District regulations to ensure consistency with state and federal guidelines
8. Allow Hobby Farms
9. Update stormwater management standards and relocate technical standards from the regulations to the Town's Technical Standards document
10. Provide more flexibility in the height and location of ground-mounted Small Solar Energy Systems
11. Provide a Sustainability Incentive

12. Improve protection of trees and require planting of trees
13. [Removed]
14. Provide a reference to Stonington's Aquifer Protection Area Regulations in the Zoning Regulations and update the Aquifer Protection Area Regulations
15. Establish lot coverage limits and eliminate FAR standards
16. Establish a green roof incentive
17. Establish porous, pervious, and permeable pavement incentive

After the discussion, Mr. Gomes reiterated a list of actionable items for the project team and Town staff:

- Coordinate with Town staff to distribute and promote the online survey
- Coordinate with Town staff to schedule a virtual public meeting date in early March
- Town staff will collect comments from the Commission and public and submit to the project team
- The project team will investigate further revisions to the recommendations, including:
 - Increasing the freeboard requirement to 3-4 feet
 - Potential restrictions on mounding to meet the freeboard requirement and the use of compensatory storage
 - Potential for CAM applications for single-family dwellings to be reviewed by Town staff instead of the Commission
 - Other TDR regulations/programs to share with the Commission, and consideration of increased restriction on receiving areas
 - Mapping of potential impacts of the non-infringement areas to determine the number of affected properties
 - Potential regulations for projects located in Rhode Island's Aquifer Protection Zone
 - Keep FAR restrictions in addition to lot coverage limits
 - Appropriate percentage credits for both green roofs and permeable pavements
 - Incentivizing or requiring land conservation in the regulations

The next virtual meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 28, 2024.

Chairman Sheehan adjourned the meeting at 9:03 PM.

Respectfully Submitted By:



Lynn Conway, Secretary