

**Plan of Conservation and Development Implementation Committee
Special Meeting Minutes
December 5, 2016**

The Plan of Conservation and Development Implementation Committee held a special meeting on Monday, December 5, 2016, at Stonington Town Hall, 152 Elm Street, Stonington.

Attending were members David Hammond, Bill Lyman, Curtis Lynch, Shaun Mastroianni, Stuart Schwartzstein, Ward Smith and Keith A. Brynes – Town Planner. Chairman Rob Simmons and members Bryan Bentz, Ben Baldwin, Michael Schefers and Barbara McKrell were absent. Also in attendance were Director of Planning, Jason Vincent and Town Engineer, Scot Deledda.

The meeting was called to order by Vice Chairman, Lyman at 6:05PM.

Minutes:

Mr. Hammond motioned to approve the minutes of the 10/3/16 meeting; seconded by Mr. Smith. The motion was unanimously approved. Mr. Hammond motioned to skip to item 7 on the agenda; seconded by Mr. Schwartzstein. The motion was unanimously approved.

Discussion of Short Term Rentals in Village Areas

Mr. Lyman asked whether addressing short term rentals should be added as a Task to the POCD. Mr. Lynch suggested that EDC be the task leader. The Planning and Zoning Commission will hold a public workshop on this issue on December 20th, 7:00pm at Mystic Middle School. After hearing from the public, the Commission can develop a course of action. The Economic Development Commission recently completed a study on the impacts of short term rentals on the local economy.

Mr. Lynch motioned to add a Task to the POCD to study short term rentals in Town with the Economic Development Commission as the Task leader; motion seconded by Mr. Schwartzstein. The motion was unanimously approved.

Mr. Lyman asked for public comment. Bob Hannon of 17 Washington St., Mystic stated that he is in support of EDC's work on this issue. He has rented an apartment as a short term rental online but has stopped after receiving a violation notice from the town. Mr. Hannon stated that short term rentals strengthen village districts and are a vital element of the economy. Attorney Kim McGee representing Mr. Hannon stated that their goal is to address and resolve the issue of short term rentals with the town and any opponents.

Discussion of Plan Implementation to Date Including Progress Report

Mr. Lyman stated that discussion should focus on high priority items. Next Steps column in the progress report could be more specific. The Comprehensive Zoning Rewrite should break down into steps such as reorganization of the regulations, smaller changes and changes that may require additional research and/or consultant assistance. In speaking to Conservation Commission members, some drafting of revisions to the Open Space Plan has occurred. That Commission should consult with the Department of Planning regarding any assistance that can be offered. New members are needed to fill vacancies. Mr. Lyman suggested that all high priority items should be listed in the progress reports even if there is no new progress to report. Mr. Lynch summarized the Planning and Zoning Commission's efforts developing a framework for the Comprehensive Zoning Rewrite, using a floating zone approach in its regulations, and developing task management strategies for its consolidated projects.

Mr. Hammond summarized the Economic Development Commission's efforts in researching local economic clusters. The Commission has been researching baselines, gaps and target communities for comparison. Mr. Lynch stated that the Planning and Zoning Commission may discuss oversight of events.

Mr. Schwartzstein summarized progress on tasks for which he is the liaison. The Town should promote mixed use redevelopment wherever possible including unconventional locations. The proposed pedestrian bridge to Westerly should be designed as a tourist attraction. Residents are interested in being part of a Bike Task Force.

Mr. Smith described the Economic Development Commission's efforts in researching the agricultural cluster. He has spoken to many local farmers and fishermen and the Shellfish Commission. Fishermen's main concern is federal regulation. Mapping of shellfish beds is approximately 50% complete.

Mr. Brynes summarized the Department of Planning's efforts including the submission of several Capital Improvement Requests which, if funded, would help implement several tasks. Forums have been held to receive input on the Comprehensive Zoning Rewrite. A public workshop was held on the Coastal Resiliency Plan. A grant was received for the construction of sidewalks on Route 1 in Pawcatuck. A Road Safety Audit with State officials was held on Route 27 to inventory pedestrian safety problems and devise solutions. Several developments are under construction or recently approved by the Planning and Zoning Commission.

Mr. Deledda summarized the Department of Public Works' efforts. Much work will have to be done to implement new requirements for the Town's "MS-4" municipal stormwater permit from the State. Implementing DPW tasks is highly dependent on funding which is not currently available.

Discussion of draft Implementation Committee Guidelines

Mr. Lyman presented his draft of Implementation Committee Guidelines. Members should work with it over the next few months and discuss any changes at a future meeting. The guidelines are intended to help members in their roles and are not intended to be bylaws or strict rules. Mr. Hammond recommended that the guidelines could include Freedom of Information Act guidance.

Discussion of next actions / Date for next meeting

The next regular meeting is scheduled for Monday, February 6, 2017, 6:00pm at Town Hall. Mr. Schwartzstein suggested items for discussion including consideration of a municipal master plan for streetlights and a discussion on landscaping elements.

Mr. Lynch motioned to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Mr. Smith. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 8:06pm.

Respectfully submitted,


Keith A. Brynes, Town Planner