

UNAPPROVED

**Town of Westbrook  
Plan of Conservation and Development (PoCD)  
Steering Committee**

Monday, April 19, 2010  
7:00 P.M.

Multi-Media Room, Mulvey Municipal Center, Westbrook

**MINUTES**

Present:           Eve Barakos                               Sylvia Guinan  
                      Lee Bridgewater                    Tony Marino  
                      John Britt                               Tom ODell  
                      Frank Burke                            Marilyn Ozols  
                      Tom Elliott                             Damian Ranelli

Also Present:     Jason Vincent, Planimetrics  
                      Meg Parulis, Town Planner

---

Mr. Jason Vincent of Planimetrics provided a brief outline of the Plan's status up to this point. This meeting will encompass the revisions to Booklet 5d, a review and discussion of Booklet 5e, Booklet 5f, and Booklet 6a, which summarizes the results of the March 15, 2010 public workshop. The next meeting scheduled for May 2010 will be to work on development issues, for completion by the June 2010 meeting. A draft outline of the Plan will be provided for the August meeting. The goal is to review the draft Plan of Conservation Development in the fall and schedule a public meeting before the end of December 2010. Mr. Vincent explained that there has been a lot of work involved on the intensive housing project, being done in increments, based on the fiscal process.

**Review of Revised Maps – Booklet 5d**

The Committee received only the two revised maps from Booklet 5d, but Mr. Vincent reported that he will be amending the bulleted items on page 1 of the booklet by adding the appropriate verbs. This revision will add consistency and a more even flow of the wording. With regard to revisions to the maps, "*Land Areas Scored Based on Statutory and Local Criteria*", the open space layer was removed. It was questioned why other potential areas on the map were not removed as discussed at a previous meeting, such as the properties shown in the vicinity of Magna Lane and Kingfisher Lane. These colored areas and the town-owned land shown on the map should be removed as they are not likely considerations for development of Incentive Housing. The other revised map with the same title is an enlargement of the southerly portion of the town showing the same potential sites. Both of these maps will be amended with removal of the parcels as formerly noted.

Mr. Vincent cited three main areas that he deduced to be a higher potential for incentive housing, based on statutory and local criteria:

1. The area around the Armory and Town Center;
2. The area around Hill Farm, including Ambleside, the mobile home development (not currently deed-restricted); and the area on Flat Rock Place.
3. The parcel formerly known as Auto Turnpike Wreckers. Ms. Parulis noted

another possible area which would involve extending the site on Pond Meadow Road that is located next to The Lee Company.

Ms. Ozols discussed extending the boundaries of area 3 to include The Hunt Club. Ms. Parulis suggested extending the boundary of area 2 north to include the property that abuts the cemetery and the Bassett property. The committee also discussed second floor apartments over commercial uses. This type of mixed use brings people back to the town center. Ms. Parulis noted that once areas are identified as potential development for incentive housing, they wouldn't be re-zoned as an Incentive Housing Zone until a project was being proposed. The IHZ would be created as a floating zone.

### **Booklet 5e - ~~Draft Potential IHZ Sites~~ - Demonstration of Conceptual Areas for IHZ Sites**

The next discussion began with Booklet #5e, with a recommendation to revise the title of the booklet from "Draft Potential IHZ Sites" to "*Demonstration of Conceptual Areas for IHZ Sites*". Mr. Vincent pointed out four sites as noted on page 1 that were identified as areas to be further researched for potential IHZ sites:

- ♦ A 24 ½ -acre site on Old Clinton Road,
- ♦ Several properties in the Town Center (south of Route 1),
- ♦ Old Forge-several properties north of Route 1, and
- ♦ Several vacant properties on Flat Rock Place.

Page 1 - Mr. Vincent outlined the four approaches to different housing concepts under "Development Concepts", to which the subject title will be changed to "*Development Scenario's*". Following a lengthy discussion of the four scenarios and density requirements, the Committee concurred to reconfigure and rename the four different land development scenarios:

1. 'Single Family' to remain the same.
2. 'Duplex/Town House' to be separated and label the second housing type 'Duplex'.
3. The third approach to housing labeled as 'Multi-Family' will be changed to 'Town House', and
4. 'Mixed Use' to be changed to 'Multi-Family/Mixed-Use'.

On Page 2 of Booklet 5e, the map entitled "Potential Site 1", will be renamed, "Scenario 1 - Single Family". On the bottom left margin of page 2, environmental constraints are referenced for this site. Questions were raised as to what was considered an environmental constraint? Mr. Vincent will provide more refined information on the environmental constraints in the sidebar.

Page 3 of Booklet 5e is a continuation of Scenario 1, and includes two scenario maps and details of the number of potential units and zoning details. The details provided in the right margin were discussed and noted that there should be an explanation of the information provided in the tables in the sidebar, and how it relates to the map. The column noted as 'Units Proposed' will be reworded as 'Potential Units'. In general, the Committee agreed that the densities required by the state for and Incentive Housing Zone were not feasible in Westbrook due to a lack of sewers. The sidebar will be revised to relate to this meeting's conversation. It was agreed to remove the second scenario map (99 units) on that page.

**Booklet 5e** (Cont'd)

Page 4, which is titled 'Potential Site 2', will be changed to "Scenario 2". This map outlines the area of interest in the Town Center. Mr. Vincent noted that the site of the Armory is likely to be the only area suitable for duplex housing. The site details in the left sidebar column will be replaced. Page 5 provides a map of possible duplex units. The photos of 'duplex' houses on this page were discussed, with a suggestion that they are more in character with a townhouse type unit and should be relocated to Page 6, which will be retitled as "Scenario 3", an area of potential townhouse development. Ms. Ozols pointed out that the newer duplex house (on Old Clinton Road) at the end of Wesley Avenue, which was constructed to look like a single-family house, may be a more appropriate design for Scenario 2 (Town Center). Page 7 continues with another map of the Old Forge area showing a layout of potential townhouse development. Mr. Elliott noted that the photos on page 5 are similar to the existing Ambleside development.

Page 8, labeled as 'Potential Site 4', to be changed to "Scenario 4". This area of possible interest is outlined in red on the map. It is the area of Flat Rock Place, between Route 95 and the railroad tracks. This map as continued on Page 9 shows a layout of possible multi-family/mixed use development.

Page 10 is the map of Zoning Districts.

**Booklet 5f – Potential Housing Strategies** (Note: This booklet was distributed with the shaded block as Booklet 5 and should be Booklet 5f)

Mr. Vincent explained that this booklet is an overview of other housing strategies beyond incentive housing that can be approached passively or actively to address housing issues. The booklet contains four strategies and their related tasks, which are the four bulleted items on page 1. Ms. Ozols offered that the lists should contain as many options as possible, and not to eliminate any items at this time. She questioned whether there is another part of this that identifies concerns. Ms. Parulis noted that Booklet 5f is preliminary for Mr. Vincent to receive feedback from Committee members. Mr. Vincent cited the strategies needed: 1) organization, 2) staff, and 3) tools. He further stated that the existing housing for grants are possible other scenarios for financial incentives. Mr. Marino noted that Westbrook has only one site under the Housing Authority, adding that infrastructure is needed to manage financial incentives. The financial tools may be out of Westbrook's reach right now. Mr. Britt opined that page 3 is out of order, suggesting that the section, "Advisory, Advocacy and Coordination Activities" be the first section listed.

A discussion of each of the four classes led to following reordering of the strategies and rearrangement of their listed tasks:

**Advisory, Advocacy and Coordination Activities**

1. Educate community leaders, property owners.....
2. Identify organizations that might help.....
3. Advise the Zoning Commission on the types.....

Ms. Parulis added that it is important to promote regional advocacy, and part of this analysis is to find the right tool for Westbrook if there's a chance for smaller towns to qualify. Ms. Ozols agreed that the exercise is needed to show that it doesn't work for a small town.

**Regulation Revisions**

Under number 1. - highlight the items listed in this section by using ·bullets. Replace 'adaptive re-

**Municipal Incentives** – re-order listed items as:

use' with

1. Provide Town-owned land and/or buildings for ..... *and promote working with regional agencies.*
2. Obtain grants to acquire land and/or ...
3. Establish a housing trust fund .....

Financial Incentives to Home-owners, Renters and/or Landlords

Under number 2 - remove ~~as tax abatement~~

### **Booklet 6a – March 15, 2010 Workshop Results**

Mr. Vincent summarized the comments made by the public at the March 15<sup>th</sup> workshop. Based on the attendees' comments, many of which centered on a unified theme, realistically, The Plan needs to define that Westbrook does not have one unified look. The three main items that resulted from the meeting included: 1) the importance of the Town Center, 2) transportation issues, and 3) redevelopment.

The booklet contains two tables of observations, based on the grades of importance, such as visions, priorities and strategies, and the items that Westbrook is doing a good job with, as opposed to not doing such a good job. Pages 4 and 5 list the comments offered during the group discussion.

Community character is not easily defined in Westbrook, noting four areas that identify their own character: • Town Center, • Shoreline, • Marina District, • Rural area. Mr. Elliott cited that all of those categories fall into the definition of small-town character. Mr. Britt acknowledged that the real issue is the commonality of the Town Center, and more focus should be towards the center. Additional discussion on this topic noted that the town center is locked by roads, and it may be time to expand the Town Center. Mr. Ranelli also noted that a program to expand may add to the viability of the Town Center. It was noted that Trolley Road only has 5-6 houses, and the pond at the rear was formerly used as an ice-skating rink. South Main Street is walkable to the center. The salt marsh also connects the center. Ms. Parulis added that having a visionary plan makes it easier to share with developers and residents. Also discussed was a former "Westbrook Town Center Enhancement Project" done in March 2000. Mr. Vincent noted the need to establish a cultural awareness, a unique style that tells people about Westbrook. Mr. Burke commented on the lack of enforcement of the regulations, noting that coming into town from Clinton, that there are rundown properties and broken-down cars. Mr. Vincent reiterated that creating a vision and tools for development will result in areas meeting that vision as they get redeveloped.

**Approval of Minutes:** The committee was asked if they had any comments or suggestions to the Minutes of 2/22/10 and 3/15/10. No comments were offered.

**Adjournment** - The meeting adjourned at 9:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy J. Rudek,  
Recording Secretary