

UNAPPROVED

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

Monday June 28, 2010
7:00 P.M.

Multi-Media Room, Mulvey Municipal Center, Westbrook

MINUTES

Present: Sylvia Guinan Tom Odell
 William Neale Damian Ranelli
 Marilyn Ozols

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

Minutes from 5/17/10

The PoCD Committee members approved the Minutes from the May 17, 2010 PoCD meeting.

Mr. Jason Vincent of Planimetrics provided the Residential Densities Map, with changes that resulted from the previous meeting. The map encompasses all of the low, medium and high density zoning districts, including the NCD (Neighborhood Commercial Zone), which also permits residential uses. The map outlines potential Incentive Housing Zones (IHZ), with some rearranging of the IHZ boundaries to maintain connection between the IHZ zones. The Committee reviewed the boundary lines and agreed on some additional revisions to the IHZ boundaries, specifically in the areas near Interstate 95 and the Town Center. Mr. Vincent explained that although there are extended mapped areas of the Incentive Housing Zones, not every lot will be eligible. A proposal for IHZ housing will have to meet the criteria for suitability. It was also noted that Incentive Housing is not prohibited in other areas of town if the required standards are met.

Draft PoCD Survey

A draft survey/questionnaire was prepared for the Committee's input prior to publishing the survey on the town website and in The Westbrook Event's publication. During this review and discussion of the draft survey, the Committee offered the following comments:

- To edit the sentence, "How long have you lived in Westbrook"? - by adding "*If a resident, how long have you lived in Westbrook?*" " and, add "*If a business owner, how long have you been in Westbrook?*"
- Delete the sentence, "~~Where do you live in Westbrook? a) North of I-95 b) South of I-95~~"
- Under "Why do you feel Westbrook is a desirable place to live"? delete (~~check all that apply~~) and use the rating scale of 1 to 5.
- In the next category of how Westbrook is doing, other possible items to be added to the list: • *sewer avoidance issue* and • *energy conservation*. Meg Parulis will work on refining the list of items.

Draft PoCD Survey (Cont'd)

- Regarding the importance of “Revitalizing the Town Center...”, the Committee suggested that this matter be more defined with specifics. The Committee continued discussion on this subject, suggesting a question such as: “*Would you pay more to shop in local specialized stores?*”
- With respect to the topic of employing “stricter design controls in the Town Center”, it was recommended that this be reworded with more everyday language.
- To the subject of capitalizing on the Marina industry, the Committee recommended adding other items; i.e., *•beaches, •natural resources.*
- Regarding the question of how Westbrook should encourage affordable housing, more detail is needed to explain affordable housing, how it's needed and for whom.
- The question on acquiring open space should be elaborated to include the functions of open space, such as protecting water quality in rivers, streams, wetlands, and Long Island Sound.
- Looking at the item regarding bicycle friendly community, it was noted to add *pedestrian friendly* and pose the question with more specifics such as bike paths, cross walks, etc.
- Concerning the number of driveways on Route 1 and the use of shared parking, questions were raised whether to better explain with additional information or delete the item.
- The Committee offered several comments to the item on capital improvements. Suggestions: *• use the rating scale of 1 to 5; • group similar items together; • relocate (c. & d.), the bridge items to be under 'maintaining existing facilities'; • better describe 'expansion of fire station', • add a dog park to the list; • add categories to 'open space', i.e., access to and use of parking, pedestrian and bike trails, off-road paths, water protection, equestrian trails, and possible other items.*

Ms. Parulis will finalize the survey, including the offered comments and other conceivable items of interest such as energy conservation, sewer avoidance policy, and possible consideration of development policies regarding sea level rise areas.

Review of Infrastructure Issues – Booklet 6c

Page One - Mr. Vincent cited the six main infrastructure issues in booklet 6c: Sewer Avoidance, Community Facilities, Stormwater Management, Energy Conservation, Transportation, and Other (public water, emergency services and green facilities). Page Two highlights the town's issues with privately-owned septic systems. The sidebar on the left of the page provides the time-frame of the Sewer Avoidance Plan and how it became adopted. The Committee recommended that the word, ~~fail~~ or ~~failure~~, be replaced with the more befitting word, malfunction, and define malfunction to clarify the differences between failure and malfunction. The third sentence in the first paragraph should be changed to begin with “*Improperly maintained or installed*’ septic systems..... polluted. ” The photo portraying the failed septic system will be replaced with a graphic that shows how the nitrogen discharges into the ground if the system is not functioning properly. Mr. Vincent briefly explained the roles of the DPH– Department of Public Health's, who's responsibility is safety to humans, and the DEP– Department of Environmental Protection's duty, which is to make sure a septic is designed at a higher standard to protect the environment. The end of page two lists three strategies that Westbrook has pursued for sewer avoidance. The first strategy in the list should be separated from “Stop the Train”, making it number two of the

Review of Infrastructure Issues – Booklet 6c (Cont'd)

of the listed strategies. Mr. Ranelli discussed the need for the town to revisit the issue of sewer avoidance to ascertain if there is more sophisticated technology and perhaps other alternatives to the Sewer Avoidance Plan. It was noted that the sewer avoidance plan has only been in effect for a few years after determining that the plan was the most cost-effective option for the town.

Page Three continues with maintenance of existing septic systems, further citing the adoption of a regulation in 2006 requires septic owners to pump out their system at least once every five years and provide documentation. The town's On-site Sewage Disposal Systems Ordinance raised the standards on how new and improved septic systems are built. The Ordinance is just Phase 1 of the Sewer Avoidance Plan. The Committee suggested adding a sidebar to better define the requirements for upgrading a system and changing the design flow--the standards of the Ordinance are higher than the State Health Code requirements.

Page Four provides a table describing the different elements involved with Wastewater Management Solutions. Suggested changes to the sidebar comments: Under **Centralized Solutions**, delete ~~that discharges treated effluent to a receiving stream.~~ In the second paragraph under **Decentralized Solutions**, add wording to include additional examples of where decentralized solutions can be used.

Page Five is a map of the "Utilities Plan" that shows the highlighted water service lines located within 1500 feet of a subdivision, indicated in blue. Wastewater Management Study Areas are highlighted in red. Questions were raised whether the Town would like to see expansion of the water service, and this may also avoid precluding other areas for possible water service. Mr. Vincent noted that page 26 of this booklet addresses the possibility of other areas connecting to water. Also discussed was extending the potential connection lines to loop through The Lee Company and Clinton Nurseries. The 1500-foot water buffer line shown on the map will be doubled in size. An additional paragraph is needed on this page to include language that would also address areas of further research which may be optional for water service. The Committee concurred to re-label the map with the heading, "Water and Wastewater Plan", to better clarify the use of the map.

Page Six speaks of the need for a Wastewater Facilities Plan for the town. The table of Septic Management Models offers options for Westbrook. The wording under 'Operating Permit' should be checked for more consistent language from the State of CT. Mr. Vincent led a discussion explaining grinder pumps, and the possibility of combining approaches in the Septic Models' table that could be appropriate for Westbrook. The bottom of page six points out three preliminary strategies for addressing wastewater management. The discussion continued with additional explanation of how the Sewer Avoidance Plan came into effect. Though there was concern of the potential development if sewers were installed, the major reason for the Sewer Avoidance Plan was that it was the most cost-effective solution.

Page Seven, "Address Community Facility Needs", highlights the services that contribute to the community such as education, public works, recreation, etc. It was noted that the Library is fully funded on its own. A table shows Westbrook's Community Facilities, their purpose and further identifies needs for the community's existing facilities. In the middle column, '2 fire departments' should be changed to '2 fire stations'. The column labeled 'Identified Needs' would be more appropriate as labeled, "Needs/Wants".

Review of Infrastructure Issues – Booklet 6c (Cont'd)

Page Eight continues with balancing the needs and wants of community facility improvements and provides a table of potential facility locations. Additional rating stars should be added to the Emergency Services, under the column, 'Other Factors'. The third paragraph regarding the location of facilities should further address areas of inland flooding. In 2007, a Capital Replacement Plan study was conducted of the schools and other municipal facilities. Additionally, a report was completed that involved the students, who conducted a maintenance study for existing buildings. Page Nine is a Community Facilities map showing the locations of the existing town community facilities (education, general government, parks and recreation, and public safety)--and, possible other areas for new facilities. The colored areas are potentially suitable for a facility, but should be carefully evaluated. A review of this plan by the Committee resulted in some recommended changes. Under General Government, combine the public library and senior center and show it as a one circle location. Add the Public Works garage and the Riggio building to the map. Under Parks and Recreation, the Ball fields should be individually listed and mapped out. And, correct the location of the Town Dock.

Page Ten addresses maintenance of community facilities and some areas that can be enhanced by additional management of the facilities, which would also help in the scheduling of community facilities. It was cited that the maintenance of the schools comes out of the same municipal budget. A table shows the existing Use of Recreational Facilities. The left sidebar on this page is repeated on Page Twelve.

Page Eleven discusses the facilities used by Parks and Recreation, and their dependence on the Board of Education facilities for program space. Additionally, coordinating meeting schedules is more energy efficient and this should be noted in a sidebar comment. A discussion ensued regarding the development of a community center, which is in preliminary stages; therefore, the heading of the paragraph should be reworded to replace "~~Consider~~ Developing a Community Center" with "Is Developing a Proposal for a Community Center". Under this heading, the words ~~through the use of a steel building~~ should be removed to leave open the opportunity for other design standards. The sentence, "~~A potential site exists~~ near the Town" should be restated to read, "One site being considered is " Under the heading, **Continue to Assess** (correct sp) **Assess General Office Space Needs**, and where *office space* is used, include the words, *meeting space*.

Page Twelve continues with additional ways to share community services and maintenance of educational facilities. It was noted that the paragraph regarding relocation of the Highway Garage will likely be outdated by the time this Plan is in print. Mr. Vincent will amend this section accordingly. The highlighted text box of Preliminary Strategies at the bottom of the page should include a strategy for exploring regional services.

At this time, the Committee agreed to end the discussion of this infrastructure booklet, and to continue pages thirteen through twenty-seven at the next PoCD meeting. Mr. Vincent encouraged the Committee to think about orientation of The Plan, anticipating that the next meeting will also include a discussion about a Draft of The Plan. He distributed several finished Plans from other towns for the Committee to look at for ideas of how they would like to see Westbrook's Plan of C&D.

Finalize Housing Strategies - Booklet 5f – Jason Vincent recommended that the Committee members email Meg Parulis with any comments on Booklet 5f.

Town Center Vision Statement – Mr. Vincent distributed a sheet showing samples of two options for presenting a vision statement of the Town Center. Option 1- Traditional Approach with a more formal written description of the vision. Option 2 – Word Cloud Approach, which is a whimsical approach that highlights the important words and goals in different variations.

Adjournment - The meeting adjourned at 9:25 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy J. Rudek,
Recording Secretary