

**MINUTES FOR A PUBLIC HEARING ON THE  
PLAN OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT  
HELD BY THE PLANNING AND ZONING BOARD  
ON TUESDAY, AUGUST 21, 2012; AT 6:00 P.M. AT THE  
CITY HALL AUDITORIUM, 110 RIVER STREET**

**Members Present:** Jeanne Cervin, Ben Gettinger, John Grant, Edward Mead, (Vice Chair); Dan Rindos, Michael Casey, Mark Bender, Chairman.

**Staff:** David Sulkis, City Planner; Emmeline Harrigan; Phyllis Leggett, Board Clerk

Chairman Mark Bender called to order at 7:30 p.m. the Public Hearing of August 21, 2012 to hear from the public on the Draft of the Plan of Conservation and Development. He explained the public hearing procedure to the audience. He asked for the public's comments.

**Richard Platt, 132 Platt Lane.** Upon his review of the present plan compared to the 2002 POCD, he noticed that a lot of the recommendations that had been made at that time have been accomplished, i.e., South of the Green Historic District; the adoption of a demolition delay ordinance, etc. Noted something he likes is ten years ago there were a number of items that were "pie in the sky" feel good things, which Mr. Sulkis had said could not be done. This time around there does not appear to be those types of items.

He noted corrections on page 71. Historic Preservation. Refers to the Mill River National District of Historic Places. It is the River Park National Register Historic District, not Mill River. At the middle of the page the Board of Aldermen adopted a Demolition Delay Ordinance in 2010. It was actually adopted in 2002 and has been amended a couple of times, most recently in 2010. It also says to adopt a Historic Resources Inventory List and that was done in 2006, updating a previous list that was done in the 1970s. He asked if there could be a mechanism set so that additions and updating to that list. The State requires that the actual formal list be done by a professional architectural historian. He knows of 4 or 5 properties in town that should be on this list, perhaps more. Such a mechanism would help even if it was the City's own informal list. This list was made up over ten years ago on a data base that must be in the Planning and Zoning office.

Also requested an overlay or mechanism for protecting historic properties. The Milford Preservation Trust is extremely important.

He noted that when he downloaded this plan page 71 came up as page 50. It is marked page 71 and there must be some missing pages. Sometimes there are skips of 2-3 pages. Asked if pages would be added later on.

**Ms. Harrigan:** Stated there were two different downloads that could be done and one of them included large 11 x 17 maps. Knowing that people at home might not be able to print those 11 x 17 maps, there will be gaps in the pagination because of that.

**Mr. Platt:** Thought that might be such a situation. He recalled that ten years ago Prospect Street was made part of the MCDD and he thinks the people on the street were not fully aware that 1) It was made part of the MCDD and 2) What the implications were. He asked that such a situation be avoided this time around. The perception was that was "sneaked in".

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**Mr. Bender:** Asked that Mr. Platt take a break to give time to another speaker.

**Lily Flannigan, 38 Prospect Street.** Noted she missed her chance to speak about the POCD ten years ago. Page 33, the zoning map open space talks about an overlay. Thinks it is a good idea. Asked if the same thing could be done for the historic homes or historic districts in Milford, i.e. Gulf Street, South of the Green, etc.

Page 50 mentions control of the geese. Hopes that happens. Repeated that River Park is the correct name of the district.

Noted she was surprised and impressed with the document. She complimented the City Planner and Assistant City Planner. She noted she has not said that too often. She likes the document and compliments the creators on the construction, the verbiage and content of the document.

**Jerry Loiselle, Heritage Sound.** Does not have internet access to the document and has not been able to review it in its entirety. He knows there is one particular piece of land may be touched upon. It is a 19 acre parcel that is directly between what used to be Myrtle Beach and is now part of Walnut Beach and Heritage Sound Condominiums, which is a home to 175 families. The 19 acres of land was set aside in the 1970s as a condition of the Heritage Sound development being located there. It is managed to survive to this time without any major disruption. The goal of this property is to protect the inland families at Heritage Sound and some neighboring properties from flooding. It has served that purpose masterfully over the years. The flood risk has been reassessed by FEMA and increased. There are a number of people who have urged the City to classify that land as Open Space in perpetuity. It is passive open space. It had been zoned residential but was never developed. It is vulnerable property. He is speaking on behalf of the people in that neighborhood to urge that it be incorporated into the Plan as open space in perpetuity.

**Larry Yergeau, 45 Loomis Street.** He is the President of Turnpike Lodge, Inc., the owner of the property at 1052 Boston Post Road, Exit 39A off I-95. He supports the recommendations of the Yale Urban Workshop team as they relate to the Cherry Street portion of the project. The Cherry Street corridor from I-95 to Gulf Street provides a logical gateway to the many amenities and recreational opportunities that this Board has worked hard to keep for the residents of the City. The signs on I-95 for exit 39A direct traffic to Downtown Milford. This is the primary driver to Downtown and the Boston Post Road. This major intersection can and should be enhanced to provide a critical link to the Cherry Street corridor and downtown merchants where traffic is a necessary product of success. In addition to funneling the vehicular traffic to the corridor, it is agreed that Exit 39 can provide additional commercial, lodging, dining and residential development which would complement Yale's vision for Cherry Street and provide visitors and residents to all Milford has to offer. By providing this development opportunity the Planning and Zoning Board would enhance and expand this type of successful development that was seen from the last POCD that occurred downtown. This type of

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mixed use development would provide year-round traffic for both visitors and residents to and through Cherry Street and downtown. He is in agreement with the Yale study that multi-family housing, pedestrian oriented , in mixed use settings and is transit accessible, can be an important part of this gateway concept. The Board's willingness to consider and expand upon mixed use development would provide economic, social and lifestyle opportunities which would be phased in over a period of time and would greatly enhance Milford's ability to become a destination for travelers and provide essential services Milford residents and businesses in the future. (Mr. Yergeau distributed his statement to the Board)

**Letty Malone, 14 Eighth Avenue,** Chairman of the Mayor's Open Space Advisory Committee. The Committee has been working on contributions to the Plan of Conservation and Development, however, they are not complete at this point. She believes there is one more step necessary and that is to sit down with the Mayor and make sure that his viewpoints relate to those of the Committee. The Committee has an appointment to speak with him next week, after which time, the Committee can print up a document and send it to the Planning and Zoning Board.

Ms. Malone complimented Emmeline Harrigan on the nice job she did on the Agricultural Section of the Plan. It was very pretty and well done, but she has some additions to that, especially in the area of farmland soils. She had a map which showed how extensive farmland soils exist in Milford. She will work with Emmeline on this.

**Barbara Bell, 24 Winthrop Court.** Thanked the Board for offering the public the opportunity to speak on the POCD. She thinks the Board has done a great job in having sessions where the public can express themselves. The Plan is impressive in all the information it includes. If every resident read the Plan they would learn much about Milford that they do not know. She commended the City Planner and Assistant City Planner on the excellent job they have done in preparing this document. She noted this Plan was not the old plan reconfigured. This Plan brings Milford into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century in terms of the resources and the thoroughness of the topics being reviewed. She is paying particular attention to a new section of the Plan, "Energy Efficiency" and how the City can take a new approach to energy. Energy and land use are connected. Ms. Bell thinks the Plan of Conservation and Development can be called the Plan of Sustainability. She thinks that sustainability is a theme that runs throughout the Plan.

**Elizabeth Wright, 20 South Street.** The Plan is beautiful and concise and a nice transition from the 2002 Plan. She noted she has little things to say: Does not know what happened to the Downtown Study of ten years ago. Not seeing it except as Cherry Street being the gateway into the downtown. There are some things that never happened, such as the signage downtown, or directive signs (To harbor, parking lot, etc.). Parking has become militaristic behind some of the banks because of the commuters. If a resident wants to park and walk into a store on River Street, he is chased by the security person who watches the bank's lot. It is not pedestrian or shopper friendly. Believes this can be easily done.

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With regard to Mr. Platt's issues on page 71, who would be in charge of having people with historic properties seek to have their properties deeded for protection. It could not have happened with the Cadley property, which was a terrible loss. Who would take care of that type of activity? There are many old houses that should be preserved and protected. Who will talk to those people and educate them?

Solar ability – houses should be able to practice using solar techniques. Would like to see more on this.

Disagreed with Mr. Platt that the MCDD and Prospect Street got "snuck" in. There were meetings and hearings and public input on Prospect Street and Noble Avenue. The information was out there and the people who said they were shocked by this should not have been. There were hearings and neighborhood meetings such as this one and nothing snuck in.

Page 51 and 52 – The Sea Level Rise. The Plan mentions a Retreat Policy. Wonders if that retreat policy could be embellished. She would like to know how that would work. How do you do that in advance?

Page 81 speaks about improving connectivity between Silver Sands and Walnut Beach. She does not understand what that means. That page also speaks about the artist district in Walnut Beach. Where is the enhancement money from ten years ago? Some of the things the Plan says are coming should have been done. The Naugatuck/Broadway area was supposed to be all done.

**Bill Poutray, 25 Willow St.**, Chairman of the Milford Conservation Commission. Commended the Staff for the job they did which is a great leap forward over the last POCD. Was concerned it might just be tweaks, but it went far beyond that. One area that was done very well was the local agriculture portion. He noted an area that is connected to agriculture, but is not included in the Plan is "aquaculture". Oystering is probably the oldest industry in Milford going all the way back to the Native Americans who were before the Europeans, but that is not mentioned in any way in this report. It has been reported recently by the Noa Lab on Rogers Avenue that there is little or no oystering going on in Milford. The Oyster Festival is celebrated in Milford and the oysters are brought in from other areas because there are none in Milford. That is partly because of pollution coming down the river. He believes that the task of resurrecting that river should be started. The duck pond is very shallow and fish cannot live in such shallow water. A healthy eco system is needed from the Sound up to the river for the fish to survive in the harbor and out into the Sound and around the offshore beds. This will probably require a regional approach but should be stated as an objective in this plan to whatever level can be done.

**Richard Platt, 132 Platt Lane.** [Responding to Ms. Wright's question] There is a State enabling statute which allows the City to set up an Historic Properties Commission, which is similar to this historic district. This is for isolated properties that are not part of a district.

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The committee that is working on setting up an historic Gulf Street District is also charged with setting up such a commission.

Mr. Platt continued from where he left off previously stating that Prospect Street was made part of the MCDD ten years ago. He urged the Board to remove Prospect Street from the MCDD. When the apartment complex was before the Board a year or two later, the residents were told, "Be thankful it is an apartment complex and not a CVS". That is what he is afraid of. Someone could still put a CVS or McDonald's on Prospect Street. So, put it back to residential or residential office and make it impossible for some type of commercial development there.

He referred to page 33 where it says Wilcox Park should be made open space and taken out of the MCDD. He urged that all of Fowler Field out of the MCDD and make all of Fowler Field open space. He believes that at the hearings that were held previously it was made clear that the people want it that way. This is also on page 40.

He hopes that something can be done about the shortcut by auto drivers that is taken from New Haven Avenue through Fowler Field and Wilcox Park to get to Gulf Street. Would like something done about that. There was a proposed band shell for Fowler Field which he feels should not be separated from the pavilion but put on one end.

Page 91 – Cherry Street between Gulf Street to the Government Center. Some erosion of the historic character of that section of the street. That is also part of the River Park National Register Historic District and should have some protection. Some of the houses have been turned into professional offices, but the character of the street has not changed much. Would like some protection put on it.

Noted an error on Page 121. There is a map where Melba Street is labeled as New Haven Avenue.

**Elizabeth Wright, 20 South Street.** The old Myrtle Beach area seems to have disappeared. This should be paid attention to as it is the history of Milford. Walnut Beach was a tiny place in comparison to Myrtle Beach. With regard to naming streets, does not think names of streets should not be changed to a developer's naming preference, i.e. Factory Lane to Spinnaker Lane.

In favor of the parking areas proposed for the Cherry Street area. How does the huge front parking lot in front of Bob's and Shop Rite get changed? How is that done with the regulations?

Likes the concept of complete streets. Would like to see Wheelers Farms Road become a complete street.

Bike lanes and Ped lanes. She helped create the bike lanes all around the City. Would like to see more done with this. After she left as president of the Milford Ped Committee, nothing more was done. It is mentioned in the new POCD and hopefully will be resurrected.

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**Chairman Bender:** Will review the minutes of the meeting to see if questions can be answered at the forthcoming public hearings.

**Ms. Cervin:** Thanked everyone who spoke for coming out. Elizabeth Wright is very informed in this area and was pivotal in the last Plan in 2002 and was on the Planning and Zoning Board at that time.

There were no further comments or questions.

**Chairman Bender:** There will be another public hearing on the Draft of the Plan of Conservation and Development next Tuesday, August 28<sup>th</sup>, at 6:00 p.m., and again on Tuesday, September 4, 2012 at 6:00 p.m.

The public hearing adjourned at 6:43 p.m.

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Phyllis Leggett, Board Clerk