

MINUTES

PLANNING & ZONING PLAN OF CONSERVATION & DESIGN SUBCOMMITTEE, WEDNESDAY, 1 MARCH 2023, 7:00 P.M.

A. **Call to Order** was at 7:03 pm.

B. **Attendees:** J. Castignoli, J. Kader, J. Mortimer, J. Quish / **CONSULTANT:** A. TECZA / **STAFF:** D. Sulkis, S. LaFond

Chairman Quish opened the meeting. He said meeting goal was to continue discussing the results of a survey FHI ran prior to the last meeting. He asked Mr. Tecza to continue his review.

C. **Topic for discussion:**

- 1) **Draft of the POCD to be presented for review and discussion.** Mr. Quish asked Mr. Tecza to present. Mr. Tecza stated would like to give time to dig into the document before soliciting comments and input. He said they have slimmed down the POCD from over 100 pages down to about 75 pages by cleaning up formatting and organizing. He said all the elements are still present. Welcome message, short introduction to each section. Most sections have sub-themes as well. Recommendations have been stripped out of the content and are now consolidated at the end of each section or chapter. They organized goals and strategies. Goals should remain unchanged; strategies are more flexible. Much of the content remains the same with updates as needed. All the maps have been updated. Our old POCD had maps on 11x17 pages which made them difficult for some to view or print. All maps are now 8.5 x 11. More consistent color in maps. One area with a substantial update is the housing section. Demographic and development data up to 2020 have been added. Age cohort diagram shows change in Milford over the past 10 years; significant drops in under 49 age group and large increase in over 50 age group. This has changed household types; we have fewer 4-7 person households, which makes sense looking at the rise in the older population. As the household size reduces over time, the number of housing units being built is going up. Population number is not changing but as the need for smaller housing increases, we need more of them. Diversity with 2-4 family homes and apartments. Multifamily bedrooms have a nice mix of studio through 3-bedroom units. Big drop in the number of single family home permits, and rise in multi-family permits, since 2000. Median housing value dropped in 2010 after the financial crisis; we seem to have mostly recovered. Mr. Tecza recommends a much deeper dive into multi family zoning and regulations. Bedroom and unit size restrictions are no longer permitted by the state in multifamily construction. Our zones treat all multifamily construction the same, regardless of the number of units. He said this will become problematic over time. Historic district remains largely the same. Commercial Corridor District should have more distinction as to what the vision and recommendations are for each of these areas. Each corridor gets its own treatment. In the new POCD, the land use information has been brought in. Each area has sub areas broken out which will make it easier to understand. Transportation and circulation had more updates. Brought in more data regarding safety. Three maps showing crashes from 2017-2021, which indicate hotspots. One area of special concern is Old Gate Lane and I-95. Chairman Quish asked if this data includes highway crashes as well as city street crashes and Mr. Tecza confirmed there is some of that data included. The area is a big transition zone. Another area is just south of the mall on Route 1 and 95. Also, Route 1 and New Haven Avenue has had 2 fatalities and some serious injury crashes. Something to pay attention to. Third map shows bicycle and pedestrian crashes. Milford center has several incidents. If we revisit the serious crash map, there have been no fatalities in that center area. Devon center has much tighter urban fabric and more pedestrian and bicycle crashes. Chairman Quish offered a correction to the map that route 162 is actually Route 1. Last POCD talked about complete street planning, but it was enhanced in this one. Remainder of POCD is consistent with the previous version. Mr. Tecza finds a need for us to modernize our zoning ordinances; currently lots of text and few tables or diagrams. We can make them much easier for the public to understand. A lot of legalese to parse. We also should do an audit to make sure our ordinance agrees with state regulations. Mr. Tecza asked for comments or questions. Mortimer moved to approve minutes; Kader seconded. Meeting adjourned at 7:53pm.

- 2) **Committee member suggestions/comments**

Chairman Quish commented on Mr. Tecza's efficiency. He said there was redundancy and thinks the instinct to trim the document was a good one. Mr. Quish will save and add to his notes and asked if we should share questions and comments for Adam via Dropbox or is there a better method.

Mr. Tecza said each committee member can feel free to mark up the PDF and send the marked-up copy to David Sulkis who can share it with Adam. Any top-level points of conversation can be put into an email. Referencing page and section number is acceptable but prefers the comments to be attached to the PDF document. Chairman Quish said going forward the subcommittee needs time to review and get comments and edits back to Mr. Tecza. He feels two passes are necessary. Once that occurs, we can create a draft to allow public comment. Mr. Tecza said our offering one consolidated group of comments sounds good; committee agrees. Chairman Quish asked if a meeting next week is possible for the committee,

then another meeting in 2 weeks including Mr. Tecza. Mr. Mortimer and Mr. Kader felt the committee needs more time to review, and a second committee only meeting, before meeting with Mr. Tecza again. Chairman Quish suggested Mr. Tecza attend the last 15 minutes of each meeting. Mr. Tecza said a set of comments submitted to him in 2 weeks would work as well. He will need a week to make those changes and can rejoin the committee in 3 weeks with his review of comments and ideas as well as a draft. Wednesday, March 15th was selected as the next committee meeting date.

Mr. Sulkis said everyone will read the plan and come up with suggestions, corrections, etc. to be discussed at the next meeting and they will be consolidated as needed. Committee comments can be sent to David by Friday March 10th for pre-meeting preparation. Chairman Quish asked Mr. Sulkis to send a reminder to the subcommittee March 8th of the March 10th deadline. Mr. Sulkis said we will take the information from that meeting and present to Mr. Tecza; he will process that information and have a revised POCD document to back to us. Tuesday March 28th was scheduled for the meeting with Mr. Tecza. It was reiterated that Mr. Tecza prefers the comments directly on the PDF. Mr. Kader complimented Mr. Tecza's editing of the document thus far. He would like to see the committee keep the document concise. Mr. Sulkis said he does not believe the document needs great expansion. He said we have checked the boxes for a technically complete document. Mr. Tecza hopes the document will encourage ideas and questions for areas of further investigation, but the length and format will likely remain similar to the current version. Chairman Quish said we can look at vision and strategy and he likes that. He feels it is clear and helps the public and future board members.

Final questions: Mr. Kader liked the demographics on housing, which explains how housing is increasing but population is remaining stagnant or reducing. Mr. Tecza said we should think about how that demographic will use the services and benefits of the City. Mr. Kader shared that an article in the NY Times said Milford was a top place that millennials are moving to.

D. Approval of Minutes: Motion to approve minutes from 2/1/23 made by Mr. Mortimer; Mr. Kader second. Approved unanimously.

F. Adjournment was at 7:53pm.