

Plan of Conservation and Development Steering Committee
Public Workshop
Meeting Minutes of September 14, 2009

FILED IN EAST LYME TOWN
CLERK'S OFFICE

Present: Bob Bulmer, Chairman
Gary Goeschel, Planning Director
Norm Peck
Mark Christensen
Bill Mulholland, Zoning Enforcement Officer

Sept 18 20 09 at 2:30 AM
PM
Esther B. Williams
EAST LYME TOWN CLERK

Also Present: Peter Miniutti
Joe Bivona
Cynthia Angelillo
Barbara Johnston
Charles Ambulos

Call to Order. Chairman Bulmer called the Plan of Conservation and Development Steering Committee Public Workshop Meeting of September 14, 2009 to order at 7:00 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance. The Pledge of Allegiance was observed.

MOTION: Mr. Goeschel moved to add Public Delegations to this evening's Agenda at this time. Seconded by Bill Mulholland. (4-0) Unanimous.

Mr. Bulmer asked for discussion from the public on any matter not on the agenda this evening. There was no discussion at this time.

Peter Miniutti, Director of the Community Research & Design Collaborative and Associate Professor of the University of Connecticut: Overview, display, and presentation of final mapping, Land of Unique Value Study development, and discussion of implications. Chairman Bulmer acknowledged the very hard work of Cynthia Angelillo and Joe Bivona on behalf of UCONN.

Mr. Miniutti presented the following recommendations for future community character of East Lyme:

1. Preserve the rural character and celebrate farming land use at the north end of Flanders.
2. Utilize Smart Growth at Flanders east four corners and conservation subdivisions.

3. Agricultural lands should be revitalized and conservation subdivisions at Flanders west.

4. Continue the protection of Oswegatchie Hills in Niantic east.

5. At Niantic north there are key areas for multi-modal transportation. Celebrate Groton Pond.

6. Create a stronger identity with a mixed use node at Niantic west.

7. Unify waterfront with business district in central Niantic.

8. Maintain the existing character at Niantic south.

The following recommendations were made for future development:

1. Promote mixed use, multi-modal development in the historic villages of Niantic and Flanders.

2. Transition from strip development to mixed uses in Flanders.

3. Strengthen Main Street by celebrating proximity to the Sound. Expand and improve visual access to the coast.

4. Lands with limited development potential due to natural and cultural constraints.

5. Consider development of two new mixed use developments.

6. Lands with sewer service. Focus higher density within sewer district.

7. Promote home-based businesses along state roads.

8. Lands in northern Flanders should be zoned for agriculture.

9. Create an agricultural hub for the sale of Connecticut grown products.

10. Conservation subdivisions to be mandatory for future residential subdivisions.

The following recommendations were made for transportation improvements:

1. Promote multi-modal forms of transportation. Create safe sidewalk and bike lane systems.

2. Promote multi-modal forms of transportation. Enhance coastal access to boat transportation.

3. Promote multi-modal forms of transportation. Lobby for a rail stop at the south end of Pennsylvania Avenue.

4. Promote multi-modal forms of transportation. Provide fixed stops.

5. Expand parking opportunities by adhering to standards for "Smart Growth."

6. Enhance critical gateways into the town.

7. Coordinate road standards for local residential roads with conservation subdivision initiative.

8. Create "Complete Streets".

9. Incorporate sustainable non-point drainage solutions where applicable.

10. Institute "context sensitive" design approach.

The following were recommendations for future open space:

1. Unique Values with development limitation.

2. Potential open space in important preservation parcels.

3. Conservation opportunities with partial developments of certain parcels.

4. Conservation opportunities.

5. Continue protection of Oswegatchie Hills.

6. Protect Latimer Brook watershed.

7. Protect high points.

8. Maintain existing undeveloped lands in higher density areas.

9. Maintain open space corridors between water bodies.

Mr. Bulmer asked Mr. Miniutti if he recommends tailoring zoning regulations. He replied he did.

Mr. Peck asked if these recommendations were from the Steering Committee or from public input at the workshop? Mr. Miniutti stated they were consistent with the

1999 Plan of Conservation and Development. The majority of recommendations were from the Steering Committee or from public workshops.

Mr. Bulmer informed Mr. Miniutti that AMTRAK will be moving its track and building a groin out to sea, as well as a fishing pier. Ms. Johnston added part of the wood Boardwalk will be removed and replaced with concrete. Mr. Goeschel stated we have received DEP and Army Corps approval to move the Boardwalk and widen the channel by 100'.

Mr. Miniutti informed those present the key difference between Art Carlson and Cynthia Angelillo's Open Space Plan is Mr. Carlson would like to purchase land with development rights of 50% of the land that could be developed. Ms. Angelillo identified cultural and natural resources of the highest value and feels it should not be developed.

Mr. Bulmer asked if there is one piece of land you recommend for total open space? Ms. Angelillo felt any parcel determined to be of the highest value should not be developed.

Ms. Johnston suggested swapping wetlands for another area in Town. Mr. Miniutti felt this could be accomplished.

Mr. Christiansen asked if a house could be built in agricultural zones. Mr. Bulmer felt this would have to be incorporated in the Plan of Conservation and Development and zoning regulations.

Mr. Goeschel asked if the 50% Open Space Plan applies to commercial zones? Mr. Miniutti stated commercial is treated separately.

Mr. Miniutti asked what is the minimum lot size for a subdivision? Mr. Goeschel replied three. Mr. Mulholland added this is being worked on.

Ms. Angelillo stated Flanders along 161 is thriving with high visibility to the highway. There is not much mixed use and limited pedestrian access. Creating connections to moving without a car in the areas of the High School and Senior Center would improve it. The wetland system and the road system at 161 are parallel with wetland systems. To create unity she suggests tree plantings, way findings, landmarks and bio systems. Streetlights could be powered with solar panels. She suggested a terraced wetland system by Stop and Shop.

She stated parking requirements are currently excessive. Ms. Johnston stated East Lyme is a seasonal community and in the summer more parking is needed. Ms. Angelillo replied studies have been done and show parking lots are designed for the maximum parking on Christmas Day. The Town could study how much parking is needed in Flanders. Mr. Bulmer stated the parking lot at Stop and Shop has already been approved. Mr. Mulholland felt there is always room for discussion.

Mr. Bivona stated in Niantic Village there is a perceived lack of parking. He showed a preliminary design adding 224 parking spaces. He suggests shared parking. Mr. Bivona suggested parking efficiencies, parcels for more development with some open space.

Mr. Peck stated the Niantic Bay does not have docks, because it's exposed. He would discourage floating docks. He would like to see four more groins. Mr. Goeschel felt this would be an opportunity to have a breakwater.

Mr. Peck stated west of the railroad tracks on Main Street a pedestrian walkway is planned.

The Public Workshop adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Frances Gheri, Recording Secretary