

PLAN UPDATE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Minutes

Room 104, Shelton City Hall

Shelton, CT

Monday, June 27, 2005

I. Call to Order

Chairman Frank Osak called the meeting to order at approximately 4:30 P.M.

Members Present:

Frank Osak, Chairman	Peter DiCarlo, Co-Chairman
Tom Harbinson	Mike Adanti
Jim Tate	Anthony Pogoda

Also in attendance:

Glen Chalder, Planimetrics
Eric Barz, Planimetrics
Rick Schultz, PZC staff
Marianne Chaya, Clerk

II. Pledge of Allegiance

All in attendance pledged allegiance to the flag.

III. Minutes for Approval

Tony Pogoda MOVED to approve the minutes from the June 20, 2005 meeting. SECONDED by Mike Adanti. All were in favor, MOTION PASSED.

IV. Discussion on Booklet 6: Planimetrics

Eric Barz stated that through the public workshops and other information that they pulled together the first page states the vision statement in book 6 titled, Guide Appropriate Development. The statement reads as follows: Guide appropriate and balanced development that maintains a healthy community and contributes to community character and quality of life. This will be accomplished by focusing on three main action themes: Protecting and enhancing community structure; guide appropriate, commercial and industrial development; and guiding more appropriate residential development patterns.

Eric Barz began discussing each of the action themes explaining the community structures, what and where it is. There is a map noting the particular areas. The next part was discussing the topic of protecting and enhancing the particular areas of Shelton. This section has the following preliminary community structure strategies and was detailed for the committee:

1. Limit general commercial activity in and around the office/industrial areas to ancillary commercial uses to support businesses and their employees.
2. Consider adjusting floor area ratios in preferred office/industrial areas to discourage general commercial development.
3. Provide bicycle and pedestrian enhancements in commercial and industrial areas to create a safe environment for cyclists and pedestrians and reduce dependency on motor vehicles.
4. Incorporate the City of Shelton-Downtown Shelton Revitalization Program into the POCD by reference.
5. Update the City of Shelton-Downtown Revitalization Program into a comprehensive plan for downtown Shelton.
6. Consider membership in the CT Main Street Program.
7. Consider Local historic district designation and/or village district designation for downtown Shelton.
8. Continue to provide development flexibility in Downtown Shelton.
9. Enhance downtown Shelton's function as the civic center of the community.
10. Consider becoming a Main Street Community.
11. Balance vehicular and pedestrian needs in downtown Shelton.
12. Continue to make pedestrian improvements to downtown Shelton such as adding street trees, street furniture, pedestrian scale lighting and burying overhead utilities.
13. Limit commercial activity in Huntington Center to its current location and neighborhood function.
14. Consider local historic district designation for the non-commercial portion of Huntington Center.
15. Consider village district designation for the commercial portion of Huntington Center.
16. Institute access management in Huntington Center.
17. Maintain and enhance bicycle/pedestrian access in Huntington Center.
18. Limit commercial activity in White Hills to its current location and neighborhood function.
19. Encourage conservation development patterns in White Hills.

Glen and Eric noted that these items are the beginnings of strategic recommendations that they are looking for feedback on each one. Then as they go forward they will couch these strategically in the best way they think they should be organized to get them implemented in the plan. As we move forward these items will become one column in a table that will identify if something is a task, with a fixed beginning and ending that has to be completed or a policy that is on-going that Boards and Commission would follow to insure that strategy is implemented. It would then be placed in a priority due to particular factors such as a financial need.

The next major section in the book is titled, Guide Appropriate Economic Development. The overall vision is to guide appropriate, economically sound

commercial and industrial development, to maintain a balanced and healthy community.

Eric detailed each of the following strategies for the committee:

1. Optimize net tax revenues by limiting general commercial uses in areas better suited to more desirable office and industrial uses.
2. Optimize economic development potential with respect to traffic generation where traffic capacity is limited.
3. Ensure adequate utility capacities.
4. Prohibit the use of PDD's in residential districts.
5. Require future SDA's to be reflected in the FLUP(future land use plan).
6. Re-examine currently undeveloped or redevelopable SDA's to determine if conventional rezoning is more appropriate.
7. Limit PDD's to projects that produce superior development that is compatible with surrounding properties and overall community character.
8. Provide clear boundaries for economic expansion, reflected in the FLUP.
9. Modify the schedule of permitted uses to require site plan approval for all non-single-family development and reorganize uses according the level of discretion needed by the PZC to ensure their appropriateness.
10. Overhaul the current commercial and industrial and industrial zoning districts to eliminate redundancies and tune them to current community economic development trends and desired land uses.
11. Implement design review for all but single-family residential development.
12. Create improved but flexible buffer requirements between incompatible land uses and environmentally sensitive areas.
13. Encourage the use of green technologies.
14. Consider property tax abatements to mitigate the added cost of renewable energy systems in commercial applications.
15. Encourage and support current farming activity.

The discussion turned to being specific on the future land uses and the fact that this committee is expected to identify it by the community. It was also discussed that Planning & Zoning may not want the recommendations to be "zone specific". They also discussed how to handle future zone changes. They discussed recommending that a zone change cannot be applied for until the plan has been changed. It becomes a two-step process. The zone change cannot be filed unless it is in accordance with the plan of conservation and development. Regarding the design review process is to have a voluntary group that would generate a set of guidelines that identify through various means what the character of development would be for different types of development in different locations. The developer would go to that design review committee and that committee would review the proposal with respect to the guidelines and they would report their findings to the Planning & Zoning Commission.

The third section is titled: Guide More Appropriate Residential Development. The main vision for this section is to guide more appropriate patterns of residential development to protect important resources and community character.

Eric Barz detailed this section and the summary of the preliminary residential development strategies are as follows:

1. Eliminate the use of the PDD in the residence districts.
2. Adjust PRD densities to be commensurate with the amount of dedicated open space and/or limit their use to age-restricted housing.
3. Require buffers between PRD and surrounding development.
4. Expand the R-1A district to encompass the large tracts of vacant and agricultural land within White Hills.
5. Adopt density-based zoning in the R-1 and R-1A districts.
6. Eliminate the requirement for preliminary conventional subdivision plans for PRD and CRD.
7. Permit CRD as of right with subdivision approval and require special exceptions for conventional subdivisions and PRD in the R-1 and R-1A districts.
8. Encourage downtown mixed-use and multi-family development.
9. Consider pedestrian scale mixed-use redevelopment in Huntington Center.
10. Consider multi-family transitional development in White Hills.

Eric Barz handed out his memo to the committee addressing the questions posed earlier focusing on book #4 plus a memo from Barkan & Mess to Eric regarding the traffic study and the preliminary schedule of events. Eric reported that Barkan & Mess will be working with him to get the data needed that would be incorporated in the report that will come out in August (addressing community needs). After the committee has reviewed the information on the traffic study Rick will forward it to the DOT.

The next item of discussion was the response from Planimetrics to the questions from the committee. The first item was for Planimetrics to provide a breakdown of revenue sources for the grand list for the past 10 years for comparative analysis. Jim Tate noted that the reason for this question was because of the information received that Monroe received a certain amount of money from the state as well as Shelton and there was a large difference. Eric stated that he looked into it and made a call to the State Dept. of Education and that they said they would try and find out what in the “convoluted” formula is triggering the fact that Monroe is getting more. Frank Osak mentioned that there was another reason for this question after talking with the Assessor and when we got the makeup for the current grand list and we were surprised to see that of the \$58M added, only 12% of the grand list was non-residential. Back in the 1990’s that percentage was in the high 30%. That may not be good or bad, but it may continue to drop. I wanted to see the trend. Glen Chalder stated that what will show in the physical buildout is that in the amount of land area that is left there is more potential residential buildout than business buildout – in terms of raw land area. In terms of economics, we are not quite sure yet. Your fear is that the business percent of the grand list may decline over time and is a reasonable

concern. It was noted that something we may have to deal with is to convert some of the residential land to commercial use.

Eric continued discussing his answers to the questions submitted.

The committee members expressed concerns over future development and not to lose site of the fact that having development on your terms, even if it delays it. Glen noted that as part of the plan we are going to try and identify strategies that will promote a stronger tax base over time. Tom Harbinson noted that we have a strong tax base but we are concerned that it is becoming weaker. Glen and Eric said that the future reports will be focusing on more specific strategies and gave some examples of what to expect from them in the near future.

V. Future Meetings

The committee decided to meet again on July 11 and then the next meeting with Planimetrics on July 25.

VI. Payment of Bill

Peter DiCarlo MOVED to pay the outstanding bill. SECONDED by Tom Harbinson. All were in favor, MOTION PASSED.

VII. Adjournment

Peter DiCarlo MOVED to adjourn the meeting. SECONDED by Jim Tate. All were in favor, meeting adjourned at 6:45 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Marianne Chaya
Clerk, Plan Update Advisory Committee
1 tape is on file in the City/Town Clerk's office