

**PLAN UPDATE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

*Minutes*

*Room 104, Shelton City Hall*

*Shelton, CT*

*Monday, May 16, 2005*

**I. Call to Order**

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

**Members Present:**

Frank Osak, Chairman  
Fred Musante  
Tom Harbinson  
Jim Tate  
Anthony Pogoda

**Also in attendance:**

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

**II. Pledge of Allegiance**

All in attendance pledged allegiance to the flag.

**III. Minutes for Approval**

Anthony Pogoda MOVED to approve the minutes from the April 11, 2005 meeting. SECONDED by Jim Tate. All were in favor, MOTION PASSED.

**IV. Protect Important Resources Report: Planimetrics**

Eric Barz stated that the reason we are looking at protecting resources is that they are easily identified and once they are compromised you can't get them back. It is better to identify them and come up with strategies to protect before you start addressing development strategies.

The next report to come out will probably be titled Guiding Appropriate Development. It will look at three main elements. The first element will be protecting and enhancing community structure. This is a skeletal framework of the City. You have the villages, downtown, Huntington Center, White Hills, the River, Route 8, and the Shelton research and industrial parks. We will then look at economic development strategies and residential development strategies. Some have been touched on already but we will elaborate in more detail. The whole idea is to dovetail those strategies into what we are doing here. In July we

will have the economic buildout. It will look at commercial and residential development in the future and what the economic impacts of that would be. The next report would go back to the three main themes, which would be addressing community needs; such as transportation, public utilities, community facilities and services, and meeting housing needs for people of different social and economic backgrounds. Then we will go on hiatus, which will give us an opportunity for an additional meeting where we may be able to pull together any outstanding questions you have from all the information presented thus far. This is going to be around September timeframe. After that time I will prepare a draft plan from all the input received from the reports. Once the draft plan is done there will be about 3 meetings. At the point where you feel the draft reflects what this committee feels should be in there, we will produce another draft to be sent on to Planning & Zoning where they will have an opportunity to go through it until they are satisfied. Then it would go on for adoption.

Rick Schultz stated that he has been giving the P&Z Commission members copies of everything that has been provided thus far. Tony Pogoda has been reminding them to please read the booklets. Rick gives a staff report every month and he emphasizes it. They are going to be discussing amendments to the PDD regulations. These are substantial regulation amendments. He needs to tell the Chairman of P&Z when their Commission should start discussing this, such as in a workshop. Eric said that they would be getting their draft in mid to late fall.

Tony Pogoda said that he does remind the Commission that they need to start reviewing the reports. He also said we extended the timeframe on this plan and may present a problem with elections coming up. There is a probability that some or all Commission member may not be re-elected. If you have a new member who is trying to get up to speed with the Commission, this will sit on the back burner.

Eric Barz said that he is amenable to whatever needs to be done to meet with P&Z to bring them up to speed.

Fred Musante suggested giving P&Z just the highlights of the reports that have been distributed. Eric noted that in each section in highlighted boxes are strategies of each topic. If they were to just review the strategies will give them a good idea of the direction of each topic.

Eric said that at the point where we go to a public meeting to summarize this for the public he would create a 2-4-page document for everyone so that they would be able to understand the main things we are trying to accomplish.

Eric began his overview of the Protect Important Resources. Throughout the booklet there are highlighted boxes that contain vision statements or action statements that came out of various workshops.

The strategy of this booklet is to protect important resources that maintain a healthy environment and contribute to community character and quality of life. The first major strategy that was identified number one at both the kickoff workshop and the conservation workshop was: Preserve More Meaningful Open Space. In this section it listed the reasons for the preservation of open space. The open space plan that was created in 1993 did a great job identifying the

greenway corridors and many of the provisions have been implemented. The issues that remain are the quantity and quality of the open space that we are getting. Even though much of the goals have been reached the people still say they want more open space. In order to maintain the ratio of protected open space to developed land is to step up the efforts. One way to do that would be to increase the open space set-aside to 15%.

Tom Harbinson pointed out that the open space plan refers to the goals as dedicated open space.

There are several measures that could be done to improve the quality of open space. One idea is to adopt an "equivalency factor". When a developer is subdividing a piece of land and donating the open space. That open space should be a representative slice of that land. It shouldn't be allowed to develop all the dry, flat land, leaving the wetlands, flood plain or steep slopes as open space, even if it exceeds the 10%. There was discussion regarding the stormwater detention/retention pond systems in the open space areas.

Encourage Conservation Residential Developments. We already have a regulation in place. Instead of making a special permit to do conservation development, make the conventional development a special permit. Make the process for doing the conservation residential development simpler. Eric gave an example of how that could be accomplished by developing the density factors. The committee members discussed the perception of the CRD's.

The City needs to continue to fund the purchase of open space and continue to allow off-site dedication of open space.

We need to continue to connect the open spaces to a greenway system. The City has made great strides toward it. We need to integrate coastal resources into the greenway strategy.

Page 8 of the book goes into preserving the agricultural resources to maintain a diverse and balanced community, and protect community character. One strategy is to preserve the existing farmland. Of the 1500 total acres of active agricultural land, only 138 acres has been protected through the purchase of development rights or other means. It was noted that Shelton does have some programs already in place.

There are various ways to accomplish this through State grants, purchasing development rights, allow agricultural use of preserved open space, and/or adopting a "right to farm" policy. Jim Tate commented that the wording "right to farm" gets lost in interpretation. What backs that up is what we call buffers. It is critical that if a development comes in that is adjacent to farmland we have to insure that there are expanded buffers. The members had a lengthy discussion regarding purchasing available land and that they should define the responsibility for agriculture preservation clearly placed. Also, there should be something defined for property purchased that has an agricultural component to them, for instance leasing it out for farming. There is also the need for having a management component in the acquisition of the farmland.

The next section refers to the preservation and protection of important natural resources. Part of the protection should include protection of the water quality. Trap Falls Reservoir is the most significant source of drinking water serving the

greater Bridgeport area. Shelton should consider expanding the required Aquifer Protection Ordinance to prescribe uses according to their potential risk to all of the varying water resource protection areas or creating a separate watershed protection overlay district. The table on page 14 ranks land uses from lowest to highest risk for polluting water resources and makes recommendations for their use in the water resource protection areas. Eric talked about the underground storage tanks for fuel oil being a threat to groundwater resources. They discussed the problems of leaking tanks and the recommendations regarding registering and monitoring of all UST's.

The report has a map noting where the water resources are, where the potable areas, the not potable, aquifer protection areas and any unclassified water areas. They asked Eric to get more defined information of where and what the potable areas are.

There is the recommendation to improve the stormwater management. This deals with the volume and velocity of stormwater flowing off a developed site causing erosion as well as collecting and concentrating non-point source pollutants. There are new guidelines for all cities/towns to adhere to, called the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Phase II. Rick noted that we have the policy in place and we just have to adopt the ordinance. Protect Sensitive Soil Resources. Shelton does have a regulation in place to protect the sensitive soils. A suggestion would be to add flood plains in the definition of buildable land areas.

Preserve Wildlife and Habitats. The DEP has a database that identifies areas that may be a habitat for endangered species or species of concern. A strategy would be to have the developer go to the database to investigate if this is one of the areas of concern. There is also a need to prohibit the use of invasive species as landscaping for a site plan and subdivisions. Native species should only be allowed.

Preserve Historic Resources. Shelton does not do a very good job in this area. We have lost many properties through the years. There is an honorary historic district in Huntington Center. Planimetrics has noted 10 strategies for Shelton to consider. One of the strategies is to seek Certified Local Government Status to become eligible for state and federal grants and loans for historic preservation programs and restoration projects. The report also noted several historic district myths.

The last category in this report is Preserve Scenic Resources. Scenic resources generally fall into two main categories: vistas that afford distant scenic views and scenic areas that are scenic in themselves, but may also be viewed from afar. One suggestion is to have the Conservation Commission/Open Space Committee have a workshop where the residents can identify those areas that are scenically significant to the community. There are a few strategies that Shelton can consider.

#### **IV. Next Meeting**

The members will have a meeting for the members to discuss the first two books from Planimetrics. The meeting will be held on Monday, May 23. Rick Schultz would chair the meeting and each member would take a topic to discuss. The members discussed bringing Planning & Zoning in to get some preliminary discussion going.

## **V. Adjournment**

Tony Pogoda MOVED to adjourn. SECONDED by Tom Harbinson. All were in favor, MEETING ADJOURNED at 6:30 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Marianne Chaya  
Clerk, Plan Update Advisory Committee  
2 tapes are on file in the City/Town Clerk's office