

MINUTES OF THE CHESHIRE PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION PLAN OF DEVELOPMENT MEETING, HELD ON WEDNESDAY, JUNE 4, 2014 AT 7:30 P.M. IN ROOM 207-209 TOWN HALL, 84 SOUTH MAIN STREET, CHESHIRE CT 06410

Present

Earl J. Kurtz, PZC Chairman; John Kardaras, Lou Todisco, Gil Linder,

Absent: Lelah Campo, S. Woody Dawson, Edward Gaudio, Vincent Lentini, Sean Strollo  
And Alternates Jon Fischer, Leslie Marinaro, Diane Visconti

Staff: William Voelker, Town Planner

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:32 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

The roll was called.

III. DETERMINATION OF QUORUM

Following roll call it was determined that a quorum of the Commission was not present to conduct business.

IV. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The group Pledged Allegiance to the Flag.

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – May 5, 2014 (no action)

VI. DISCUSSION AND REVIEW

Due to lack of a quorum, Chairman Kurtz and Commissioners held a non-meeting session on the posted agenda items. No action/motions/decisions were made.

1. Review of Survey Progress

Mr. Linder submitted a draft copy of a “Cheshire Community Survey”. He advised that he researched surveys from many towns, took questions from these surveys, refined them for Cheshire and the survey is ready for Commissioners to review, edit, and approve at a future PZC meeting. In particular, Mr. Linder cited the Norwalk CT survey as the format he used for the Cheshire draft survey. It was noted by Mr. Linder that questions on a survey must be balanced, and it should take someone 10 minutes to complete the survey.

With regard to how the survey would be available to the public, Mr. Voelker explained that it would be posted on the Town’s web site (with appropriate software), and copies available in Town Hall, the Library and Senior Center. To return a hard copy of the survey, there could be boxes in Town facilities for the public to drop off a completed survey. He commented on the importance of advertising the survey in local newspapers and media, and having a PZC video for cable access tv/government channel featuring Commissioners.

It was suggested by Mr. Todisco that copies of the survey be available to the public at the Fall Festival (in September) at the Democratic and Republican Town Committee tables. Those present concurred with this suggestion due to the large public turnout at this annual event.

Those present reviewed, discussed and made modifications to the survey.

**Community Identity** - #2 – add “no change”

**Residential Development**

#4 – multi-family/duplex.

Regarding “affordable houses”, Mr. Todisco suggested the definition of affordable houses be included in this section of the survey. He also suggested the following question be added: *“Should Cheshire encourage lower priced single family housing so teachers, police officers, firefighters and young adults can afford to live in Town?”*

**Government Facilities and Services** - Mr. Voelker recommended this section be changed to read “Public Facilities and Services”...and those present agreed.

#5 – the listing of commercial development was reviewed and the following changes made:

Retail Stores

Restaurants

Offices

Manufacturing Facilities

Entertainment/Cultural Facilities

No development at all.

#8 – Mr. Voelker commented on two issues related to “limit commercial development to areas where it is current allowed”...one is whether commercial development should encroach on residential areas, and the town not taking commercial areas and encroaching on residential areas.

Question #8 needs to be worked on, and it is possible #8 and #9 could be eliminated.

#9 – delete word “light” as it is not used in the zoning regulations.

There was a brief discussion on population census, school enrollment and median age of residents as it relates to planning. In some communities there is an issue about upgrading school facilities as school enrollment is anticipated to decline in the coming years. In Connecticut there is little new school construction taking place. The Board of Education (BOE) considers these issues and questions regarding Cheshire’s school system. The issue of “neighborhood schools” was discussed as it relates to the social structure and social fabric of a community, wherein people/families interact and friendships are formed.

Mr. Voelker noted that the new full day kindergarten program in Cheshire will have an impact on the overall operations of the school district.

It was stated by Mr. Kardaras that with an aging population the next generation of students will be more diverse.

## 2. Discussion and Review of Industrial Policy Issues.

Mr. Voelker referred to his memo of June 4, 2014 regarding Industrial Policy Discussion Points, and he read excerpts from the memo into the record. Mr. Voelker requested Commissioners review the facts stated about the industrial districts.

About 15% of the Town is industrial districts (i.e. Creamery Road north, out East Johnson Avenue, Meriden Road, some areas of West Main Street).

Mr. Voelker pointed out the “aquifer protection” areas on the shaded areas of the map, and noted these areas are not an impediment to industrial development. In this zone, industrial businesses such as dry cleaning plant, motor vehicle/petrol chemical plant would not be allowed. The Planning Department works closely with RWA with regard to aquifer protection zones and issues.

Mr. Kardaras questioned the future use of properties which are zoned industrial, and does not believe there will be heavy industry in the zone. Given the size of Cheshire (square miles and population) he questioned “what is the right amount of industrial area for the Town”, noting that goals should be set and followed through.

Dimensional Requirements Information Sheet – Mr. Voelker reviewed this information with the Commissioners. He noted that the minimum lot requirement in an I-1 zone is 40,000 sq.ft. and in an I-2 zone it is 120,000 sq. ft. and sometimes there could be I-1 and I-2 zone lots directly across the street from each other. There is a disparity with these two zones that should be considered, along with questions about whether Cheshire needs both zones.

For the economic development/business development sections of the Plan, Mr. Voelker informed the Commissioners that at the June 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting the guests will be Jerry Sitko, Economic Development Coordinator, and David Pelletier, Chairman, Economic Development Commission.

Regarding zoning publications for Commissioners to read and review, Mr. Voelker will provide a listing of publications.

Commissioners will receive an updated and revised copy of the “draft survey” for input before the final survey is compiled. Commissioners are asked for their input on the survey to Mr. Linder or Mr. Voelker. Chairman Kurtz will update the Commission on the completion of the survey at the June 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting, and approval of the final community survey will be voted on at the July 14<sup>th</sup> meeting.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Kurtz closed the meeting at 8:50 p.m.

Attest:

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Marilyn W. Milton, Clerk