

WORKSHOP MEETING Tuesday, FEBRUARY 17th, 2009
EAST LYME PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES

PRESENT: Lisa Picarazzi, Chairman, Francine Schwartz, Secretary, Chris Sandford, Paul Dagle, Mike Bowers, George McPherson, Alternate

ALSO PRESENT: Cynthia Angelillo & Joe Bivona - Peter Miniutti Associates from UConn Research & Design Collaborative
Jane Dauphinais, Director, SE CT Housing Alliance
Gary Goeschel, Planning Director

ABSENT: Tom Perron, Sandy Mulholland, Alternate, Drew Kenny, Alternate

Chairman Picarazzi called this Workshop Meeting of the Planning Commission to order at 7:03 PM. She noted that she had seated George McPherson, Alternate at the table this evening.

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge was observed.

I. Peter Miniutti, Director of Community Research & Design Collaborative and Associate Professor of the University of Connecticut, overview, display, and presentation of recent mapping and discussion of implications.

Mr. Goeschel provided everyone with an update on how the working relationship came about with Peter Miniutti and his group from UConn regarding the ten-year update of the POCD. He suggested that they complete their update for the end of 2009 as they are working with old census figures. The census will be done in 2010 with updated figures and data coming out thereafter. They could then update the areas that might need further updating in 2012 when they have the new census data. He noted that the updating process need not be done just every ten years and that they could do smaller updates as necessary. He then introduced Cynthia Angelillo and Joe Bivona.

Cynthia Angelillo said that she and Joe Bivona are working with Peter Miniutti on this project and apologized that Mr. Miniutti was called away at the last minute and could not be present this evening to make this presentation. She said that she has been working on compiling an inventory from the national database of geographic features that are unique and noteworthy and that Joe has been working on the mapping of the districts.

Mr. Sandford asked if the topography found is consistent with what they have found in other studies.

Ms. Angelillo said yes and noted a Mansfield study that they had previously done.

Mr. Goeschel noted that he spoke with Mr. Kargl from Water & Sewer regarding the Level A mapping data and indicated that they could also use that. He asked Ms. Angelillo about the 490 (farm) properties and if they appear on the inventory.

Ms. Angelillo said that they do not at this time however she would meet with him and see that they are incorporated.

Mr. Sandford asked where the historic sites information came from – time wise.

Mr. Goeschel said that it is information that we provided them with and it is from the 1700's through 1866.

Mr. Bivona said that he drove around the Town and photographed it to try to find districts and what the contributing characteristics would be for breaking up the land use within the Town. He came up with eight (8) different districts and said that they are at this time, highly objective and open to comments and that he is looking for the public input on them.

Mr. Bowers asked what the benefit was of the areas.

Mr. Bivona said it is to see how they fit together.

Ms. Angelillo noted as a for instance that Black Point is very densely built out and that by having it in a

district of its own that you could specify different regulations for it versus the other districts. Mr. Bivona said that they also put together a matrix of the areas and photos of the architecture and streetscapes for the Niantic and Flanders areas of the Town.

Mr. Goeschel said that he hopes that each of them will help, along with the Commissioners to facilitate the areas of discussion at the public working sessions that they have scheduled for Monday February 23, 2009 at Nett Hall and for Monday, March 2, 2009 at the High School. He said that they would use it as a workshop and have people set up in tables as a work group.

II. Jane Dauphinais of the Southeastern Connecticut Housing Alliance, overview and presentation of Affordable Housing needs assessment and plan development.

Jane Dauphinais, Director of the Southeastern CT Housing Alliance passed out a draft of the 'East Lyme Affordable Housing Plan' that she has been working on. (Copy attached at end of minutes) She noted that Affordable Housing is part of the POCD and that she has been working on the definitions, needs, assessment as strategies to provide an updated section for the updated POCD.

Ms. Dauphinais proceeded to present her draft to the Commissioners noting that East Lyme is currently at 5.23% of the 10% AH as set forth by the State. This equates to around 400 units short of reaching the 10%. The Commissioners noted that it is a 'moving target' of sorts since non-affordable units are also being added which fluctuates the rate.

Ms. Dauphinais noted that the East Lyme median age has increased and is older than both the State and county median age. It is an older Town and wants its older people to be able to afford to stay in Town. Long time residents could not afford to buy their own homes if they had to again. \$152,000 - \$215,000 is rated as being 'affordably priced' homes. A median priced home is \$325,000. There is a need in East Lyme for rental housing. The people in East Lyme, when asked, see a need for Affordable Housing rentals, affordable senior housing and mixed use/village atmosphere in the main centers of the Town. She also debunked some of the common myths about affordable housing such as rental apartments not paying their fair share (landlords pay the taxes which they include in the rents), excess school age children and per pupil costs (The Rutgers study shows few children and per pupil costs actually do not rise by the 'per pupil' rate unless the class size is exceeded and a new teacher or class has to be added), and affordable housing being ugly and cheap (by law, affordable housing units have to be indistinguishable from market rate units in the same development).

The Commissioners thanked Ms. Dauphinais for her interesting report.

Ms. Dauphinais said that she expected to have it completed sometime in March and could update them at that time on the final report.

ADJOURNMENT

****MOTION (1)**

Mr. Sandford moved to adjourn this Workshop Meeting of the East Lyme Planning Commission at 9:22 PM.

Mr. Bowers seconded the motion.

VOTE: 6 – 0 – 0. Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Zmitruk,
Recording Secretary