

**DRAFT**  
**CITY OF NORWALK**  
**PLANNING OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT**  
**OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE**  
**May 2, 2018**

**PRESENT:** Fran DiMeglio; Brian Baxendale; Louis Schulman; Nora King; Tammy Langalis; Alexis Cherichetti; Deanna D'Amore; Margaret Suib; Nancy Rosett; Adolph Neaderland; Ted Stepanoff; Larissa Brown; Brian Griffin; David Davidson; Tod Bryant; Nathan Sumpter; Mary Peniston; Steve Ferguson

**STAFF:** Steve Kleppin

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Steven Kleppin opened the meeting at 5:39 p.m.

**II. SUMMARY OF 5/1 YOUTH OUTREACH SESSION**

Ms. Brown said there was a youth meeting on May 1, 2018. A meeting for Norwalk's Spanish population would be held on June 4. She gave a quick overview of the May 1 meeting. It was not a well attended meeting but it was diverse. Some of the statistics from the meeting were that the youth rated the quality of life in Norwalk a 3.4 out of 5 and that 28% were likely to continue to live in Norwalk. They want more to do, more internships, more affordable movies, including some on the Green. Traffic improvements and sustainability were topics they were interested in. Norwalk High students thought their school was not as good as Brien McMahon. Mr. Kleppin thought their answers were not as in depth as they could have been. Ms. Brown suggested doing another survey to receive more answers from this group.

**III. SUMMARY OF NEIGHBORHOOD MEETINGS**

Ms. Brown said that there was a good turnout for the most part but one meeting had no participants. She suggested that it might have been because of weather. She also suggested that they break into groups in the second half of the meeting and review the topics as well as what to ask about these topics.

Ms. Brown began a PowerPoint presentation describing further the district/neighborhood meetings. She noted that there were certain themes and assets that were noted over and over. She then summarized the Silvermine/Broad River area. There was a sense of community. Concerns were traffic, pedestrian safety, parking, zoning and regulations, pollution and littering and unease of the pace of development.

Mr. Neaderland noted that he attended this meeting and there were some issues not on the summary. Ms. Brown said that all the information was on spreadsheets and would be noted in the POCD. The next neighborhood was Rowayton. There was a discussion about their beaches, parks and bike paths. There was a sense of community. There were concerns about zoning, traffic and parking, safe bike routes, etc. The next neighborhood was East Norwalk which has a good turnout. She described its assets and then their concerns. Residents felt they were a coastal community with walkability. There were concerns about traffic and parking, safe bike routes, East Norwalk train station, as well as climate change. No one attended the Brookside/Flax Hill area, perhaps because they have no neighborhood association. Cranbury/West Rocks had many in attendance. They discussed the local businesses and their asset the Cranbury Park. There were concerns about traffic and parking, safe bike routes, etc. The Hospital/Spring Hill area had a low attendance. South Norwalk was the biggest meeting. Their assets were parks and open space and appreciation of restaurants and businesses. There were concerns about traffic and parking, safe bike routes, etc. Also noted they needed more job opportunities. The next neighborhood meeting was in West Norwalk which was well attended. There assets were their public trails, schools and their proximity to Route 1 Broad River. There were concerns about zoning, and future large sites. The Green and Downtown was the next neighborhood. Their assets were parks and trails and the Wall Street theater. Their concerns were blighted and vacant areas as well as a new train station. She discussed the common issues were the assets which included parks and open spaces, coastal character and entertainment. Every neighborhood had concerns about traffic and parking, pedestrian safety and bike lanes, and the development pace. There was a discussion about education and that it did not seem to be reflected in the slide presentation. There was a discussion about Norwalk Community College possibly moving to the downtown area. There was also a discussion about using smartphones interactively in these meetings. There was a suggestion about asking what the neighborhood needs. There was also a suggestion to have interviews with members of the business owners, management, etc. to find out what they would like to see in Norwalk. There was also a discussion about Merritt 7 and if they had any input in this process. There was a discussion about 4 more workshops in May and then another Spanish speaking meeting in June. There would be 2 open houses to ask questions and give opinions. There would be a public hearing for the final draft. There was a discussion about the TOD plans for East Norwalk and South Norwalk and the innovation district and how it would affect this plan. Mr. Kleppin said they have to be consistent with the POCD. Ms. DiMeglio noted that they had received a report from the Harbor Management Commission at 4 pm which they had no time to read. There was a discussion about the cities that follow their POCD vs. those that develop a POCD but do not follow it. Ms. Brown suggested that they look at what can be done in the 1st 5 years as compared to the last 5 years.

#### **IV. REVISED VISION STATEMENT**

She then directed them to a vision statement and went over the comments that were posted by members of the committee. Members wanted more specific language about

sustainability. She discussed where more specific language was on the vision statement. Some of the pictures were changed along the top of it. There was a discussion about why the vision statement was out until 2038. Ms. Brown said they should think about the city farther out than 10 years, even though the Plan of Conservation and Development (“POCD”) was only for 10 years. Ms. King thought that the mission statement was generic and it did not have enough robust words in it. Some commissioners thought it should only read 2028. Mr. Davidson said that his suggestions from the January meeting, about how the education system was being improved, were not included. There were several commissioners thought the educational system improvements should be incorporated into the vision statement. Norwalk also has the largest amount of coastline. Mr. Schulman suggested that this document would be the sales tool for the city. There was a discussion about what more to add to the vision statement. Ms. Brown said that there were some items that would be addressed specifically in the POCD. There was a discussion about what this document would be for the POCD, whether an executive summary, etc. There was a discussion about the icons and their usage. There was then a discussion about the development of the POCD. Ms. Brown suggested making specific comments through Mr. Kleppin or the online component. Ms. Suib said that the Fair Housing Department should be interviewed for the POCD. This vision statement would eventually be the beginning of the POCD and would be used to guide the Planning Commission. There was a discussion about how specific the vision statement should be. There was another statement about how the vision statement should be out through 2028, not 2038. There was a discussion about the fundamentals that should be incorporated. Mr. Davidson suggested incorporating the remarks from this meeting and then revisiting this vision statement at the end. There was a discussion of the verbiage of diversity, and transparency.

## **V. TOPIC BASED WORKSHOPS**

There was then a discussion about these workshops. Ms. Brown suggested that they divide into groups to focus on these topics. She wanted to know what they should focus on at these workshops and what questions they should ask the public. This started at 6:56 p.m.

- **Green and Blue Norwalk:**
- **Open space and parks, harbor and coastal management, climate change adaptation, resource-efficiency**
- **Complete and connected Norwalk: Multi-modal transportation and land use (focused on pedestrians and bikes, but also cars, trains and trails)**
- **Prosperous Norwalk: Retaining and attracting high quality businesses and jobs**
- **Great Design for Norwalk: Community and neighborhood character, design standards for commercial and mixed-use corridors**

**VI. PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

**VII. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting ended at 7:26 as the groups dispersed after handing in their discussions about the topic based workshops to Ms. Brown.

Respectfully submitted,

Diana Palmentiero