

**DRAFT  
CITY OF NORWALK  
PLANNING OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT  
OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE  
July 30, 2018**

**PRESENT:** Mayor Rilling, Mike Mushak, Brian Baxendale, Louis Schulman, Deanna D’Amore, Margaret Suib, Nancy Rosett, Adolph Neaderland, Ted Stepanoff, David Davidson, Tod Bryant, Nathan Sumpter, Bruce Kimmel, John Pinto, Geoff Steadman, Tony Mobilia and Allen Kolkowitz

**STAFF:** Steve Kleppin, Mike Wrinn

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Kleppin opened the meeting explaining the purpose was to get feedback on the draft table of contents and major themes. He opened the floor to public comment.

**II. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Diane Lauricella asked about an additional meeting regarding sustainability and Green Norwalk. She asked that the plan include a section on education and how other things, such as zoning relate to these items. She also asked that the role of the Library be considered. She also requested that an emphasis on Health be incorporated into the plan. Lastly she asked that the economic development section contain information regarding clean manufacturing as well as impacts on neighbors.

**II. DISCUSSION OF DRAFT T.O.C. & STRUCTURE**

Mr. Schulman was concerned with the wordsmithing and asked that it be looked at more closely. He further asked how and why Norwalk is different than our peer communities. He further stated that the Plan is a marketing document for the City.

Ms. D’Amore recommended that “Health” be incorporated throughout the document since it is connected to all the plan elements.

Ms. Rosett stated that the goals should be more aspirational and not stated as if they have already have been accomplished.

Mr. Bryant thought the holistic approach and historic preservation elements were good but the Plan needs charts with responsibilities and recommended there be something written about wayfinding signage.

Ms. Suib stated there were several fair housing goals that the state mandates be included and that a memo was sent to Mr. Kleppin earlier.

Mr. Mobilia stated that the plan needs to protect water dependent uses as well as water sources. He was concerned that the Plan would recommend that updating the Harbor Management Plan be the responsibility of others.

Mr. Pinto stated that the Norwalk Harbor and coastline were the city's most important resources.

Mr. Steadman stated that the statute mandates the Plan be referred to Harbor Management for comment.

Mayor Rilling stated that he understood the wording regarding updating the Harbor Management Plan as a task for the Harbor Management Commission.

Mr. Kulkowitz stated that the Plan needs to also look outwards and consider Norwalk's regional role as well.

Mayor Rilling stated that it was important that the Plan's vision reflect Norwalk's importance and relationship with the region and that we must think more regionally. He cited for example the City's participation in the Fairfield 5.

Mr. Kimmel indicated that that the BoE traditionally accounts for 58-70 of the city's budget and there needs to be better integration between the City and the BoE. He recommended a separate section on education, stating that a growing City is good and that school enrollment is already surpassing expectations so we need to understand the impact of that on the City. He recommended another meeting between Dr. Adamowski and Ralph Valenzisi to discuss school growth and programming.

Ms. Suib commented that the most important draw in bringing in families is "can I afford to live here" and "how is the education for my kids".

Mr. Kulkowitz asked about including a review of the past plan to evaluate what has been accomplished.

Mayor Rilling stated there was no accountability in the current plan.

Mr. Kimmel indicated that Zoning needs to be consistent with the Plan.

Mr. Sumpter stated that he felt that a lot of the goals from the past Plan had been accomplished and that the Plan needs flexibility because change is constant and more importantly the Plan needs to be inspirational.

Mr. Kleppin stated that there would be a future land use plan that would dictate future zoning and land use decisions.

Mr. Neaderland felt that merging Redeveloping into P&Z was important. He stated that you can't have 2 divergent goals.

Mr. Baxendale stated that the Plan should have metrics and goals, how do we support the economy and education, what are our current strengths and weaknesses.

Mayor Rilling and Mr. Baxendale both indicated a SWOT analysis be included.

Mayor Rilling also stated that Norwalk has a reverse demographic population, with a higher minority school population than the overall population and how do we plan for that going forward.

Mr. Davidson stated he wanted to reaffirm what the Planning Commission stated in the email sent out to the larger group, that economic development needs to be at the front of the Plan and that we need to reconcile our education needs and land use issues and where do we want to go with the current land use structure.

Mr. Mushak stated that protecting Harbor issues was significant and that we need to think about planning from the ground-up and not from above. In addition, he stated New Haven is an example where automobile access and use dominated the city which had irreparable harm on the waterfront.

Mr. Kleppin stated that perhaps the Plan could be restructured to have a series of goals and state the impacts on each of the plan themes.

Mr. Neaderland was worried about some of the baseline data that went into the Plan, such as number of housing units and the impacts on light industrial. He also stated that the City needs an economic development staff.

Mr. Kulkowitz asked if Norwalk was ready for Info-Tech capabilities.

Mayor Rilling indicated that City's structural issues will be addressed as part of the reorganization and that they will review the role and structure of the Redevelopment Agency in the future.

Mr. Davidson stated that the Agency members are appointed by the City so there can be control in that regard.

Mayor Rilling replied that the City can rescind appointees.

The Committee had a continued discussion of the roles, benefits and need of the Redevelopment Agency.

Mr. Neaderland recommended that every major project approved have a ROI as part of the application.

## **VII. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:35 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Steve Kleppin, AICP