

CITY OF NORWALK
SPECIAL MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION
March 6, 2019

PRESENT: Frances DiMeglio, Chair; David Davidson; Nora King; Mary Peniston; Brian Baxendale

STAFF: Steve Kleppin; Mike Wrinn

I. CALL TO ORDER

Ms. DiMeglio called the meeting to order at 10:11 a.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Mr. Kleppin called the roll.

III. DISCUSSION OF PLAN OF CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT (POCD)

Mr. Kleppin noted that he was preparing a matrix with changes. He said that staff deleted changes which were typos and grammatical but would provide substantive changes to them. They would go through the Public Review comments dated February 4, 2019.

a) Review/action on 2019 - 2029 POCD

They started with Mary Peniston's comments. She said she had prepared it for herself and as a courtesy that she shared it with the other commissioners. She also discussed her 10 Priority Concepts from the Executive Summary. Mr. Davidson thought that the suggestions were valid. There was a discussion of the word "healthy" as well as the word "health." Mr. Baxendale suggested that a bit more should be added to the Enhanced Transportation Choice and Connectivity in Chapter 10. Mr. Davidson suggested having frequent reviews to monitor the implementation of the POCD. He thought that quarterly reviews would be necessary to be done by the Planning Commission. There was a discussion about how feasible this would be and which department should be driving the monitoring. There was also a discussion about what other towns do about monitoring. Mr. Kleppin said that other towns have committees which sometimes fall to the wayside. He said that quarterly might be too much for staff but that a yearly public hearing could work. It could be before the Capital Budget process and have the Mayor weigh in on it as well. It could be in October. The departments could also make a 10 minute presentation about how they are executing it. Mr. Baxendale handed out copies of Mayor Rawlings-Blake's Vision from the city of Baltimore for their review. The Planning Commission could review it informally, semi-annually. Mr. Kleppin made suggestions on how to separate the POCD on the website, realizing that it is a large document. Ms. DiMeglio asked whether it would be searchable. Mr. Davidson thought that every department has an actionable list of what has to

be done from the POCD. Ms. King thought that the departments should be able to do it themselves.

Ms. DiMeglio asked whether the Executive Summary could not be a foldable page but it was suggested that when it was on the website, it should allow the public to print it. Ms. King thought that it should be made into a poster for City Hall and promoted. There was a discussion about the green section of the Executive Summary. It was also noted that some of the drafts were bound incorrectly. Ms. Peniston thought the green summary was too overemphasized. She thought that the other items should be emphasized. She also noted that on the back there are two lists which should be revised and confirm that there was not any items missing. Some of the headings should be revised. Ms. King thought that they should focus on the Executive Summary but that she did not have many other changes for the actual POCD. The commissioners discussed the 10 Priorities for this Ten-year Plan. Some did not like stating that they would make the city government more “customer friendly” but some did. Mr. Kleppin said he would rewrite it. Ms. Peniston noted that she added that the Board of Education should promote their achievements. It should be promoted on the City’s website as well. Mr. Kleppin noted that the Schools Facilities Master Plan could be under the next bullet point. Ms. King also said that the Board of Education is a large portion of the city’s budget and there should be accountability by the City. For the next bullet, there was a review of the verbiage. Mr. Kleppin suggested that the orange box could be “Key Implementation Strategies” or something similar.

The commissioners then reviewed the green box which was called “10 Priority Concepts and Strategies for Quality of Life, Economic Prosperity and Sustainability.” Ms. Peniston noted that she had tried to set out her changes in a way that mapped it to the chapters of the POCD. Neighborhoods were brought back into the priorities. There was a discussion about the diverse neighborhoods. Ms. King thought they should follow state mandates which she believed the city was meeting. There was then a discussion about affordable housing but that this might not be the correct choice of verbiage in this bullet point. There was a discussion about how growth would fund the objectives in the POCD. There were some people in the city that did not think that growth was appropriate. There was a discussion about whether some action items should be moved to the orange box. They were also in agreement with many of the other bullet points. There was then a discussion about wording about climate change that came from the Harbor Commission. Mr. Kleppin was reviewing the changes that he had received from them and would submit them to the commissioners. There was a discussion about the wording for “establish a housing policy” which seemed to say that there is no housing policy. They decided to add the word “comprehensive” before “housing” so that it was clear. Some of the commissioners liked the last bullet point but asked that the word “activity” be changed. Mr. Kleppin said that he would re-write it and have the commissioner review it.

There was then a discussion about how to handle the review of the matrix of comments. They also decided to not have any numbering on the priority list. At this point, they also decided to discuss future dates for this review. Mr. Kleppin suggested picking a night the following week but several commissioners could not be there. They then decided to meet at 6 p.m. on March

19. Mr. Kleppin handed them a matrix of the comments from Chapters 7-12. There was a discussion about Manresa and the Wall Street plans into the POCD.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Peniston made a Motion to Adjourn.

Mr. Baxendale seconded.

Frances DiMeglio; David Davidson; Nora King; Mary Peniston; Brian Baxendale voted in favor.

No one opposed.

No one abstained.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Diana Palmentiero