



The Planning Commission

Town of New Fairfield
New Fairfield, Connecticut 06812

Special Meeting Minutes

July 15, 2024 @ 7:30 pm
Community Room @ 33 Route 37
New Fairfield Conference Room
New Fairfield CT

- Commissioners:** Ms. Cynthia Ross-Zweig, Chair
Mr. Cory Neumann, Vice Chair/Secretary (absent)
Mr. Ernie Lehman
Mr. Keith Landa (absent)
- Alternates:** Ms. Christina McCartney
Mr. Michael Oliva
Mr. Dylan White
- Guests:** Evan White, New Fairfield Zoning Enforcement Officer, First Selectmen Melissa Lindsey, and four members of the public

Call to Order: 7:34 pm

Pledge of Allegiance

Ernie Lehman elevated Christina McCartney, Michael Oliva, and Dylan White to voting members. Seconded by Cynthia Ross-Zweig. **All in Favor, Motion passed.**

Approve Minutes

Christina McCartney made a motion to approve the June 24, 2024 Regular Meeting minutes as presented. Ernie Lehman seconded the motion. **All in Favor. Motion passed.**

Correspondence/ Announcements

Budget - none

New Business

none

Old Business

Discussion on the POCD (began at page 52)

Glenn Chalder stated that the next steps, if the POCD is finished tonight, would be the revised POCD along with a public meeting. Protecting Natural Resources (page 52-55) – Glenn Chalder stated he is working with the Zoning Department on updating the Zoning Regulations as is referred to on page 55. Cynthia Ross-Zweig questioned if the town has a septic manager. Glenn Chalder stated that septic pumping/ticketing is kept track of by Danbury. However, the risk for the future is that Danbury may be changing their process and there would no longer be septic ticketing. Cynthia Ross-Zweig suggested that a reminder to pump your septic pumping could go out at tax time to help save on postage. Glenn Chalder suggested adding an action step that if Danbury stops septic ticketing, then the Town of New Fairfield take over the maintenance, ticketing, and enforcement of the ordinance. Maintain/Enhance Assets &

Ambiance (page 56-59) – Glenn Chalder stated that this section this would be to preserve scenic quarters. Ernie Lehman asked about an area around Gillotti Road and questioned the darker blue areas. Glenn Chalder stated that he will look into it and update for the next revision. Cynthia Ross-Zweig stated that the consolidated property that is 72 acres could be used as some sort of walking trail. A request was made to have town owned buildings labeled on the map and would refer to information on page 19. Glenn Chalder suggested a category of labeled ‘other town owned land’. The board agreed with that suggestion. Cynthia Ross-Zweig stated that there should be something in this area about linking open spaces. Glenn Chalder stated that it is addressed in page 46-49 but that it can be added to this section. Glenn Chalder stated that there are a number of policies that refer to town rather than to the specific entity in town because there are a number of entities in town that are responsible for a portion of these items. The use of the verbiage ‘town’ gives flexibility and does not limit the responsibility to one commission and/or department. Ernie Lehman questioned the stated public boat launch areas and mentioned that there are only two boat launch areas owned by the town. Glenn Chalder will verify the numbers, be careful about where the term ‘public’ is used, and verify the number of registered boats and/or/trailers. The board stated that noise is not enforceable and asked that the noise portion on page 58 be removed. Glenn Chalder suggested to reword the portion related to noise and include in the plan that noise is an irritant and detracts from the ambiance of New Fairfield. Cynthia Ross-Zweig stated that the noise and garbage/waste need to specified as in the lake area as it is showing now it looks like the concern is for the whole town. The second set of five bullet points on page 58 will be reworded and include a statement in the preceding paragraph that these concerns are in lake areas. Promote Sustainability & Resilience (page 60-61) - First Selectmen Lindsey stated she is in agreement with the wording as it is on page 60-61. Ernie Lehman asked if there is a count of solar homes in New Fairfield. First Selectmen Lindsey stated that there is a count that was recently run. Cynthia Ross-Zweig inquired if there is a state requirement to have a percentage of green energy. Glenn Chalder stated that he is not aware of any local mandates. Ernie Lehman questioned the four advisory committees mentioned. Glenn Chalder stated that the recommendation is to have four committees that would help with these items and that these would be advisory committees. Cynthia Ross-Zweig asked for the reference to the four committees be changed to town and that there will not be the four committees. A discussion was held on the size of solar/wind items and the need to state the size limitations. The commission agreed that the POCD should state the size limitations be based upon zoning regulations. The commission board members asked that anywhere SRC is used that it be changed to town. Sustainability, Town Center and Bicycle Ped are the committees that should be changed to town. Cynthia Ross-Zweig stated that a specific timeframe should be added for how often an energy audit should be done. Glenn Chalder agreed with her. The commission agreed that the complete by date for the energy audit should be 2028. Manage Vehicle, Walk, Bike, Transit Transportation (page 62-65) – Glenn Chalder stated that an aspirational goal for the town is to have a sidewalk that connects the different areas around town. Cynthia Ross-Zweig asked for specifications on roadway management and upgrades per year. Glenn Chalder stated that it is hard to get to a specific number due to the varying life of roads. Cynthia Ross-Zweig stated a concern of road maintenance due to the small size of New Fairfield. Glenn Chalder stated that there is information on the useful life of pavement and that minor fixes make a difference on extending the life of pavement. Glenn Chalder stated that he will try and come up with a general figure. Ernie Lehman suggested that Friends in Service Here (FISH) be added to this section. The committee requested that “Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee” be removed from Action Step 1 on page 65. Promote Adequate Utility Infrastructure (page 66-69) – Glenn Chalder stated that this touches on sewage collection and treatment, water supply, storm drainage, electricity, and wire communications. The bottom of page 68 shows the wireless coverage areas in New Fairfield. Glenn Chalder stated that there are some areas in town that lack wireless coverage and/or have limited service. Glenn Chalder stated that the town can become a sponsor of town cell tower, this can be a revenue stream, and give the town the added benefit of widening wireless coverage. Ernie Lehman asked about page 66 where the sewage plan states “will”. It was requested that the word “will” be changed to “may”. Glenn Chalder suggested using the word “would”. Glenn Chalder will reword this paragraph. Cynthia Ross-Zweig questioned having some type of wireless facility tied to the library due to the needs of the town. The concept she envisions is public cubicles/rooms for townspeople to be able to conduct

private business. First Selectmen Lindsey stated that the town does not currently have the connect ability for this option. Glenn Chalder suggested putting a suggestion in the POCD for this in the future. All wired communication vendors will be listed and the verbiage added “including others”. Glenn Chalder will merge action steps 1 & 2 and change 3 to “seek”. Implementation (page 72) – Glenn Chalder stated that implementation is the hardest task. The goal should for the commission is to get other areas/commissions of the town to implement the changes. Implementation Actions (page 73-77) – Cynthia Ross-Zweig asked that the portions referring to a Plan Implementation Committee be removed. These items would be the responsibility of the Planning Commission. The rest of the board agreed. If a working group is needed then the Planning Commission will address it at that time. Glenn Chalder stated that to refresh the POCD a listening session with the other boards in town could be done on a periodic basis. The concept is to think of options that are listed on the top of page 76, The commission agreed with this area as written. Consistency With Other Plans & Policies (page 78-79) – These areas are required by the state and are consistent with the State and regional plans in terms of identifying for conservation and development. The current state plan has not been updated in a while but should be updated in 2025. Glenn Chalder will look for a regional map as requested by Ernie Lehman. Looking ahead (page 80) – The board agreed on a tentative schedule for a town information meeting on September 9, a debriefing at the September 23 Planning Commission meeting, then there would be a 65-day waiting period before implementation of the POCD. This is all predicated on the town budget passing with the vote on July 20, 2024.

Standing Items

Subdivision Log – Cynthia Ross-Zweig asked for a volunteer to be over subdivision log. Dylan White volunteered.

FOIA - none

Adjournment

Cynthia Ross-Zweig made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:09 pm. Dylan White seconded the motion. **All in favor. Motion Passed.**

Respectfully submitted
Dana Ulibarri, clerk

Received by email on 07/16/2024 @ 9:16 a.m.
by Chrystie M. Bontempo, Asst. Town Clerk, New Fairfield