

Plan of Conservation and Development
January 26, 2006

PLAN OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP
January 26, 2006
Town Hall Council Chambers, 75 Main Street, Second Floor

Chairman Zaya Oshana, called the meeting to order at 7:17 pm with the following members in attendance:

John Carmody, Michael DelSanto, Patrick Saucier, Noreen Laurinaitis, John DeMello

Alternates: Robert Borkowski

Absent: Francis Kenefick
Richard Hart
James Sinclair
Brian Zaccagnino

Others: Mary Hughes, Town Planner
Val Ferro from TPA
Pat Heslin from TPA

Absent: Francis Kenefick, Commissioner
Richard Hart, Alternate Commissioner
James Sinclair, Alternate Commissioner
Brian Zaccagnino, Alternate Commissioner

A quorum was determined.

Request from the YMCA for a 90-day temporary waiver of site plan compliance to complete remaining work in conjunction with the previous site plan approval for the daycare facility, property located at 30 High Street, SPR 1358.

THE CHAIR: We will seat Commissioner Borkowski for Commissioner Kenefick.

MS. HUGHES: Okay, gentlemen and lady, the Southington YMCA, the daycare facility, they meant to get both of their temporary waivers approved for the Y and the daycare and they forgot to ask us for the waiver on the daycare.

They're kind of in a situation that if they don't get it by the 29th of January, the State of Connecticut is going to shut them down.

So, it's just for -- we already have it bonded and in place.

MR. DELSANTO: I'll make that motion.

MR. BORKOWSKI: Second.

(Motion passed unanimously on a voice vote.)

THE CHAIR: Motion passes 6 to nothing.

MS. HUGHES: Okay. I'm sure the Y will be most appreciative.

DISCUSSION REGARDING THE PLAN OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Planned Development District Regulation

THE CHAIR: We have a series of things to discuss tonight. The first item is the Planned Development District Regulation.

MS. HUGHES: I e-mailed you all a copy. I got it late.

(Discussion of Town e-mail accounts)

(Undertone comments/conversation)

What we did, as we've been discussing creating an overlay district and with the assistance of TPA, the Commission and Robinson & Cole, they have prepared a draft overlay, which incorporates the process and procedure in which you apply for it, which was that two-step process we talked about. And, then the guidelines. That's where we arrived at late this afternoon.

MS. FERRO: What I'd like to do is go through the salient points of this. We saw a few drafts and Mary was sending them to us and we were looking at them. We wanted to make sure that there was enough conditions. Remember: This isn't just about Ideal Forge. This is about infill redevelopment.

So, we need to be looking at the big picture and not just this site.

We had our ideas. We certainly, I think when the Attorney for Ideal Forge looked at our design standards, he said, this is what you want? This is what we get you.

They welcomed them because they're all here. If you say this is what you want, it's our job to get them to you. No guesswork. It's a good thing. Then we're not doing that Developer/Commission dance.

MS. LAURINAITIS: Were these regulations based off these guidelines? Or are we discussing both tonight?

MS. FERRO: Which guidelines?

MS. LAURINAITIS: The infill design guidelines.

MS. FERRO: Those are incorporated in this. Go to 11-19.4. This is what we told you we'd like to do last time in that we want to put this stuff right in the regulation. We're using the word "guideline" loosely because guess what? The guidelines are actually in the regulations. Get it?

There is really no wiggle room. That's the way it is. It's in the regulation, if you want to use this (Beaton Corbin, Ideal) ---

MS. LAURINAITIS: It's not necessarily going to be like the downtown area, it could be any section?

MS. FERRO: Yes. And, that is the very first thing we want to talk about because Mary had some ideas of where we want to limit this. We don't want it near the Orchards, we want it in areas where you want to encourage redevelopment.

MS. LAURINAITIS: There are some buildings out in Milldale where there are old factory buildings where it might work, but yah, you're right in that I don't want it by Rogers'.

MS. FERRO: So one of the things we were thinking of is you --- even if this Plan of Development isn't done --- you can quickly modify your existing Plan of Development with a map that has the areas that you want. Okay? That's one way to do that.

Then if you've got a map in your Plan of Conservation and Development that shows the areas that you want --- Designated Redevelopment Infill Areas or Districts -- or whatever you want to call it and then someone comes in, they can go through this two step process. In order to do it, they have to be consistent with that map, fall in one of those zones.

This is a very good guide. It encourages people because it tells them what they want, but it also tells them that there are a lot of things in here and we might let you do a little bit more density, maybe a little less parking, maybe this or that, but it can only be in these areas. All the guesswork is gone.

MS. HUGHES: We had talked about overlay versus an actual physical change in the zoning map and we just felt that this was much more flexible in terms of what we need from Milldale, Plantsville, the Center of Southington than to start designating areas on a map.

MR. DELSANTO: Do we have to identify these areas now? What happens if say a few years from now, another area presents that would fall under this?

MS. HUGHES: You can always amend your map.

MR. DELSANTO: Oh, you can?

MS. FERRO: Absolutely.

MR. DELSANTO: Okay.

MS. FERRO: There's always flexibility there. But you can decide that. We would like to see you do more planning than zoning. So, as we move forward, once we adopt this Plan of Development, it would be nice if a couple of times a year, you just hole up somewhere and you talk about planning and strategy.

That will keep you in front of what is happening.

So, what we did, we hacked and hacked, we must have had 500 pages looking for things that would work. We also used your existing PUD because there is some familiarity there and there is a mechanism that works. We didn't want to put something entirely new on the table that you are struggling with -- let alone the developer's got to figure it out --

where you guys have to figure out a workable mechanism.

It was a long process. We finally got it pulled together. We were trying to anticipate some things you didn't want happening.

The frosting was we added the design guidelines and incorporated them in.

What we don't have and what we need is, we don't have the geographic stuff and then we want to take the signage, lighting and landscaping and then this, I'm telling you, this is a beautiful thing. Then you have really an incredible regulation that again, encourages the developer, allow the flexibility, but absolutely sets the standards.

THE CHAIR: I know that John and Pat had met and they talked with Fran. I wondered if we wanted to go through some of that now so that everyone gets an opportunity to look at what they've come up with.

MS. LAURINAITIS: Are those design standards that the subgroup is working on, are those going to be separate or incorporated into this or will this reference those?

MS. FERRO: Look at 11-19.3.2.7 and .8 and .9. Noreen, we're going to do just like we did with the design guidelines. We're going to take signage, landscaping and lighting and it's going to go right in here. For now.

Some day, when you start talking about zoning regulations, if you want to take those out of here and actually adopt them for other zones, put them in your zoning regs, then you'll rewrite this slightly and refer to them in your zoning regs. Right now you don't have that and why this is pretty forward thinking for your folks. This gets you in a far place before you even think about it.

MR. SAUCIER: Mary, did John give you back anything from Sunday, since Sunday?

MS. HUGHES: Um, yes, I heard from both Pat and from John. I went over the --- I'm sorry, I went over the regulations with John and bing, bang, boom in the order that --- I like New Canaan's landscaping standards because they were simple. Simple is good. People understand simple.

I like their outdoor lighting because it was simple, too. Tolland's is wonderful, but it's a little bit too complex to incorporate into this.

We all like Glastonbury's sign regulations. But there are certain things that we needed. One thing we needed to figure out is the maximum height of a pole.

There are certain things in the sign regulations and I don't think they need to be quite this elaborate.

We need to address signs, which identify the complex. We need to identify signs, which offer the property for sale or lease. And, the size of a detached sign. Fifty-five square feet, I know isn't huge, but it seems a little bit large to me. I mean, for instance I gave Pat and John is, the standard in Cheshire is 32 square feet. The problem becomes everybody wants to become territorial on the sign. They want their 2 x 4. That's when the size just becomes pollution.

MS. FERRO: There are a couple of exceptions that are starting to test many commissions. Notably right now is the emerging co-existence of a gas station and a Dunkin Donuts. Some Towns are struggling with --- they did the Mobil thing --- and then all of a sudden Dunkin Donuts wants their sign. (Explained)

It's an emerging thing. You have to think about not just signs, but also what is happening to merchandise. Just when you figure it out, it changes again. Particularly with gas stations, if you notice. (Explained)

MS. LAURINAITIS: Val, is there anything in there that covers the new type of signs that are like electronic? It goes from one figure to another? I've only seen that very recently and mostly in a billboard-type situation. But I've seen it for a store or two here.

MS. FERRO: That's like the old days of the sandwich board that used to have the arrows. Some Towns outlawed those or said they could be temporary, what have you.

But internally illuminated signs, electronic visual, there's ways to spell that out.

MS. LAURINAITIS: I just saw it recently.

MS. FERRO: The biggest discussion, if we could find the discussion that happened, you know the very large Baptist Church in Bloomfield. It's humungous. You go right at the corner and they've got that digital unit. It's constant. It's not exactly the thing that a driver at an intersection that large should be looking at. But that's what I do. It's there. Those are the kinds of things you have to think about. I believe with the emergence of that technology -- for a while it was cost prohibitive -- but in the last decade that technology has become available almost on the shelf.

THE CHAIR: I'd like to hear from John and Pat what it is about Glastonbury that you guys liked. It's an interesting city to drive thru and they've done a very good job in their signs. It doesn't look like billboards, it doesn't look like a lot of the standard gas station or other kinds of signs. What did you like about them.

MR. CARMODY: Well, go ahead, Pat. I'll let you go first.

MR. SAUCIER: You're going to let me go first, as I'm digging through my material.

(Pause)

MR. CARMODY: Well, I'll say this at the outset, Glastonbury, the Town, the result of --- if you've been in Glastonbury, I guess the by-product of the regulations is, to me, exactly what I'd be looking for. But it's a product and somebody's going to have to back me up if I get this verbiage wrong here a little bit.

Their sign regulations are very clear, pretty simple to follow, and cover a lot of ground.

MS. HUGHES: When I went through them all, I read everything once and then I read everything again, and that was, they were very clear.

MR. CARMODY: Yah.

MS. HUGHES: The clearer you make your regulation, the easier it is for it to be enacted and then enforced.

THE CHAIR: That's been a problem that we've had here. We've been so ---

MR. CARMODY: They're crystal clear. There's no real ambiguity. So, you get a consistent message and the by-product is: WOW! Okay! You can see where they were going because it's very clear what the regulation wanted. Do you know what I mean?

THE CHAIR: Consistency is right through it. It doesn't look like cookie-cutter types of things, but it looks like the Town is trying to be consistent in the way they've laid their place out.

MR. CARMODY: I think, as a layman, that's what I would say.

MS. HUGHES: When I was reading them from my standpoint, a lot of the other ones had calculations with .6 percent numbers in them and it just becomes difficult to calculate the sign.

MR. CARMODY: Both Pat and I felt we liked Glastonbury. We still have to do what Mary said, but ---

MR. SAUCIER: The size, the max size. Right.

MR. CARMODY: The max size, we thought, theirs was 55 square feet. We figured, I don't know --

MS. HUGHES: Thirty-two, forty, for a maximum.

MR. SAUCIER: We came up with 40.

MR. CARMODY: And, then we also wanted to add something to it, right Mary?

MS. HUGHES: Yes, Simsbury had a nice provision.

MR. CARMODY: Simsbury had a nice little provision.

MR. SAUCIER: Yes.

MS. HUGHES: For landscaping.

MR. CARMODY: I'll read it to you guys. It's kind of like combo signs and landscaping, but I think it would go under your sign regulations.

Freestanding signs shall be adequately landscaped at ground level for a minimum horizontal distance of 4 feet from the base and a minimum vertical distance of 12 inches from ground level. Plant material shall consist primarily of low growing evergreen shrubs, however low growing deciduous shrubs, annuals, and/or perennial flowering plants and/or ground covers may be used in the planting bed.

What do you think? Let's pull that in. And, it's simple.

MR. SAUCIER: The other thing we also wanted on that is talking about lighting the sign. Interior versus exterior.

In our lighting regulations, they will say down. We say fully shielded, zero cutoff, down. But as far as how we want to illuminate, whether external or internal.

MR. CARMODY: I was going to defer to you guys a little bit. I'd like if, you know ---

MR. SAUCIER: I like external.

MR. CARMODY: I like external or backlit. I don't know if that is something that's practical in today's day and age, or not.

MS. FERRO: Well, it can be.

MR. CARMODY: Does everyone know --- Noreen, I don't know, and Pat, do you guys know what we mean when we say: backlit?

MR. SAUCIER: Well, the OMEGA sign is a backlit sign. Lights coming out.

MR. DELSANTO: It's not like neon.

MR. CARMODY: It's not what we would call a neon kind of --

MS. LAURINAITIS: Right. But it's lit from within.

MR. SAUCIER: It's lit from behind. The Dunkin Donuts sign is lit from within. A John Boyle sign out here is lit from outside even though it's going up and OMEGA and backlit.

Those are three examples I can pick out in Town.

MR. CARMODY: I'd love to see us go with backlit or external.

MR. SAUCIER: Yes.

MR. CARMODY: Instead of internal. Does that same feasible to you guys?

MS. FERRO: Yes. Although you always want to make a provision or make --- I hate to do waivers -- there are a couple of instances where ---

MS. HUGHES: Where you are going to want to have that flexibility ---

MR. CARMODY: Flexibility to allow it?

MS. FERRO: I can think of a few developments that I've done that actually looked better.

THE CHAIR: What types?

MS. FERRO: Institutional. Schools. Where again, with the right foot-candle that the ground lighting was incorporated into the planting bed so you couldn't see it, but because of distance and some other provisions, we had to have the light hitting that. So, again, I would expect if you had that situation, they would appear before you and explain the conditions and why they can't achieve it.

Some types of material like brick and other things don't really illuminate that well.

MR. SAUCIER: What would your idea be about internally lit signs, like the commercial signs or like the Dunkin Donut sign, which has fluorescent bulbs inside and a translucent exterior?

MS. FERRO: Well, I don't mind them as long as they are a certain size. And, it's just like anything else. Let's take a sign that is maybe half the size of this table. If it's up on a building, with an adequate buffer so it doesn't look like it is glaring at you, that's one thing.

But if it's on a road, you're coming in and it's lit, its

sort of there. The same thing with the size. If you have something like this, your sign band of a store, okay. Because somehow the refracting and the absorption of that refraction on the building is one thing.

If you plant a sign this big and it becomes a pedestal sign and you drive by it, it's like whoa!

It's not just size and type of lighting. It's the placement.

MR. CARMODY: But you avoid all of that with backlit lights.

MS. FERRO: Correct.

MR. CARMODY: But then my next question is, okay, I don't want to pigeonhole Southington. Do we do that?

THE CHAIR: What do you mean?

MR. CARMODY: Meaning, you know, there are some, I don't know, I'm not real sure, commercial stores that maybe Lou's trying to bring into Town and they have to have ---

MS. HUGHES: Let me tell you something and Val can back me up. And, Pat can back me up.

MR. CARMODY: I don't know. It's not my business. I don't know.

MS. HUGHES: You will never win with a developer and signage. I worked in Stonington, detached signs were 18 square feet. It would be perfect if they were 24.

I worked in Plainville. Their detached signs were 24 square feet. It would be perfect if they were 32.

I worked in Cheshire. They were 32. Perfect at 40.

I mean, you will never, ever have enough, your sign regulations will never satisfy, never satisfy a developer.

MR. SAUCIER: The Marriott over on West Street, their sign on the street is an externally lit sign.

MS. HUGHES: That was a stipulation of approval and they didn't put it in initially. We had to take enforcement

action.

MR. SAUCIER: But yet, the Dunkin Donuts goes up next door and they put up their internally lit sign.

MR. DELSANTO: That was a brouhaha. I remember when that thing got done.

MR. SAUCIER: When they go to ZBA, they want a variance, they start hammering at you.

MS. HUGHES: ZBA does not grant a lot of --- now, and Pat can testify, we have horrible sign regulations, but we have very generous commercial sign regulations. I mean 150 square feet is big.

MS. FERRO: Yah! Yah!

MS. HUGHES: It's very big. Now, I still want the Stephen World of Wheels sign. If I could get that one.

(Laughter)

MR. CARMODY: So, if we said backlit with some little trapdoor to give us, you know ---

MS. FERRO: Well, you've got to think through that.

MR. DELSANTO: Do you really think that someone would say no, we're not coming to Town because you won't let us put our sign up?

MR. CARMODY: No, but there might be a situation where it might make sense, like Val's saying, and I don't want to restrict us.

MS. LAURINAITIS: Well, is any one style adding so much more to the cost of the signage than another?

MS. FERRO: It can. Depending on the material.

THE CHAIR: I think what we've seen is not so much cost but edicts from corporate. Corporate are the ones telling them, if an organization comes here, we want our signs here.

We've also seen where we said, well, that's nice, but we don't want it. For example: Walgreen's. Dunkin Donuts.

I don't think it is going to prevent anybody from coming here.

MR. CARMODY: I just wanted to bring it up.

MS. FERRO: It shouldn't.

MR. CARMODY: But I'd rather seen them backlit.

MS. HUGHES: From a marketing standpoint, I think what Val's saying is you don't want to chain yourselves up.

THE CHAIR: So, how would you write a regulation saying this is what we want without putting such a huge loophole where everyone can jump through.

MS. HUGHES: It is specifically that they have to apply for a waiver and the criterion, which you will consider a waiver.

MS. FERRO: Right. And, another way around that is to say that if you want internal illumination, limit it to the size. And, say that it can't be freestanding. It can't be a freestanding pedestal. It's got to be wall mounted. If you want, you can get through those things and then if they still don't make that, then they've got to go for a waiver.

THE CHAIR: I think it is just so amazing how a nice sign adds to the character of the building and the area that it's in. I think if we've got this opportunity to do it now, let's do it.

Whoever has been through those areas in Glastonbury, you see what a difference it makes.

MS. FERRO: The computer simulations that we do, particularly when we design streetscapes --- we just finished one, East Main Street, Stamford. One of the most dramatic, dramatic changes when we showed the existing photo versus the proposed photo is when we take these signs and make them nice and they're down there in a different little color and people are just like, oh, my God!

Also, remember it opens things up and it allows room for trees. We're talking another 15 years maybe that we get to do that here, but remember you have to start thinking, it's

not just new development. It's redevelopment.

MR. BORKOWSKI: What happens when it's 10 or 15 years from now and we've got better technology and you've got the signs that are more video-like -- like an IPOD. When it's like a picture, how do you account for that? Because that is coming.

MS. FERRO: For one thing, the drawback right now is it has to be a certain size. So, if you are limiting the size, you won't be having that discussion here.

Discussion of the billboard video signs.

That will happen, and when it does, that's what your regulations are for.

THE CHAIR: So what do we need to do in order to take these ideas, these suggestions and the modifications to put this into a format.

MS. FERRO: We have them. I think if we have one little sit down with Mary, we'll come up with a draft.

THE CHAIR: Excellent.

I think we have talked about this as a Commission and we want these not only in here but we are going to want these as our regulations going forward. So, we want to get them good now.

Landscaping was one of the other ones.

MR. CARMODY: Yah. Landscaping.

MS. HUGHES: Landscaping was New Canaan and the reason why I liked New Canaan's is that it is simple. Very simple. Overall standards and then parking standards. Which are the two elements ---

MR. SAUCIER: We've got to eliminate the Wal-Mart parking lot ---

MR. CARMODY: The overall characteristic of all the regulations that we liked, just so you know, were ones that were very clear and simple to understand, so as not to get messed up and muddy. I mean, that's what I would say. And,

both Pat and I like the fact that New Canaan went into parking areas.

THE CHAIR: We've got some ugly lots in this Town.

MS. HUGHES: You have no scale. You just have mass. There's no scale whatsoever. And, then big, ugly, honking signs.

MR. SAUCIER: And, with shade trees, not just shrubbery. Not just a green painted ---

MS. FERRO: I know you're talking aesthetics, but I hope you realize --

MR. SAUCIER: Function. Islands in a parking lot.

MS. FERRO: Not just function, but environmentally, the fact that you are adding pervious surface to rather impervious development. You are offering shade. Habitat. People don't believe us but it is amazing, songbirds and things that start to come back to areas they once had occupied. There's nesting. There's all sort of things.

We all know that on a really hot day, we all fight for where that parking space is under the tree.

MR. CARMODY: New Canaan and then there was another Town and they have almost --- Berlin, Pat? They were almost identical. You kind of see where Towns pull from other Towns.

THE CHAIR: You said you had some things to add to it, a couple of changes?

MR. CARMODY: Not to New Canaan.

MR. SAUCIER: To the lighting. But maintenance, it even calls out the maintenance. Tree dies, owner has to replace it.

MR. CARMODY: Lights. This is Pat.

MR. SAUCIER: This is my thing. Well again, New Canaan. New Canaan really has some nice --- is it called the dark sky initiative? Full cut off lighting. Pollution. We liked all of New Canaan's regulations. I also liked Tolland's, but I am willing to go with New Canaan but add two sections from

Tolland. One is for the service stations. New Canaan has nothing in there for service stations, of bringing the lights up into the canopy. Okay? I'd like to have that.

The other is Tolland really calls out the non-essential lighting:

Non-essential lighting will be required to be turned off after business hours leaving only necessary lighting for site security, motion or infrared sensor lighting is encouraged.

So, at 4:00 am, a whole parking lot is lit up for a business that's been closed since ---

THE CHAIR: The landing field of the auto dealer on Queen Street.

MR. CARMODY: You know what? I was thinking about that, Pat, and I should've called you. And, I don't know if this applies. And, maybe we can identify different districts. I don't want to see business owners in say downtown Southington necessarily be forced to turn off lights even when they're not open. Do you know what I mean?

There is a lot of foot traffic.

MS. HUGHES: The easy way to differentiate that is require it in a B zone or an I-1 or an I-2 zone, so it's big. This is all CB. Downtown Plantsville is CB.

MR. CARMODY: Got you. That's fine.

THE CHAIR: I didn't look at this, but the one in Tolland is stronger than their Item 7 here?

MR.SAUCIER: Yes, they're saying just non-essential lighting. Their's was called off business hours. So essential lighting versus business hours. I think one also had an exception that if they can bring a case to public safety or safety or --- I forget which one had it --- you could ask for a waiver. I think its Tolland.

MR. DELSANTO: You also have to remember that supermarkets are open 24 hours. They're some of the biggest lots on Queen Street.

MR. SAUCIER: Oh, I understand.

MS. FERRO: You know what? If everybody on Queen Street had full cut off lighting, you'd get all the safety and all the lighting you need down there, but it wouldn't be glowing.

And, then I don't think many people would mind it all night because you're not going to see it from the hills.

MR. SAUCIER: It's in Tolland, Special Permits, Section C, where an applicant can demonstrate by means of history or vandalism or --- 405. Item C.

MS. LAURINAITIS: 3-A?

MR. SAUCIER: What's that?

MS. LAURINAITIS: 3-A?

MR. SAUCIER: No. It's Tolland's regs. Page 405 Section C, Paragraph 1 where an applicant can demonstrate by means of a history of vandalism or other objective means that an extraordinary need for security exists.

Actually, the whole section says: The PZC may grant a special permit modifying the requirements of the section.

The height is on New Canaan, and I think it was 30 feet.

THE CHAIR: You had an issue with that?

MS. HUGHES: No, I just wanted Val to double-check that.

MS. FERRO: We'll double-check that, we'll look at those.

By the way, Dark Skies has upgraded their website if you want to go there. They even have pictures of the different types of acorn lighting, some with full cutoff and some not and it actually shows the illumination and the differences. It's very, very educational.

MR. SAUCIER: All the ramps the State is doing now on the highway, the lamps are full cut off so the extension out to Route 10, the left exits there, anything new. If you go up towards Waterbury, they're taller, but all the center lights are zero cutoff.

MS. FERRO: That will be coming soon. As a matter of policy, but not regulation. CONNDOT is embracing the Dark Sky policy.
Discussion.

THE CHAIR: My only question, Item 2, it talks about residential zones and all areas adjacent to residential properties, no externally mounted direct source directed towards the property line shall be visible at the property line at ground level or above. What --- they're not talking streetlights. Are they?

MS. FERRO: They are talking about anything --- remember, it's direct lighting. If you have a store and you want to put the I-mounted lights, the motion sensors, they cannot be directed towards a residential area.

The streetlights should not be on a property line. They are on the street. And, those lights are directed down. I've never seen a streetlight pointed in a residential area. They're all coming down. Cobra head, down.

THE CHAIR: Okay.

MR. SAUCIER: As far as parking lots, the one I always use is Mid-State Medical Center in Meriden. You drive by there, 6-91, you don't see anything.

I drove by the high school tonight and all the lights are on an angle. They're floodlights on an angle, so the neighbors across the street, their house is illuminated.

MS. FERRO: Light wash. And, the cost of those lights is tons more than if they just, you know ----

THE CHAIR: Anybody else have any comments about this? Any additions or anything that they think is good or bad? I think it's great.

I know we want to put it in this overlay district, but why would we even want to hold off so much looking at these as potential regulations, anyways at this point?

MS. HUGHES: I have to follow up with Val and with Pat and hopefully I can get something for you in your next packet or maybe not, but we can move in that direction.

MS. FERRO: If you adopt something Townwide, you're going to have to think about it more and it might take a while.

MR. SAUCIER: John and I were talking about this. This is our test run. We throw it in here like Val said earlier and we test it, try to apply it and then as it works we ---

THE CHAIR: I would think that if this Board would come up with some --- Mary's going to put it into shape. We'll look at it. Hammer through it, have some discussion on it.

MS. HUGHES: I think you could improve and I don't think Val would disagree with me here or Pat, I think you can put some landscaping standards in your site plan regulations.

MS. FERRO: Yah.

MS. HUGHES: Maybe not to this degree at this point, but better standards than you have --- which is none.

MS. FERRO: You don't have any. I kept looking and looking for them.

MS. HUGHES: And, then you can do some basic lighting requirements, incorporate those into your site plan. Your site plan regulations, when you read them, two of the things you have to consider are landscaping and illumination. And, you have no standard for either. But they're one of the five criteria by which you evaluate a site plan. So, I can come up with something that we can get in there to get the ball rolling. And, then as we said, see what this looks like and see the applicability.

The sign regulations need a major, major, major, major overhaul. And, that, I need to sit down and talk to Frank. Frank is my sign guy. Probably the worse thing about signage is ineffective signage. And, as I told you, everybody is fighting to get on that sign.

You're not going to know a Dunkin Donuts because it's a white building with pink and orange lettering. You know, you're not going to know McDonald's, especially, I liked it when they painted that brick red and white. You know?

Our signs on Queen Street are too big, way too big. And, probably the ugliest plaza, if I were rating them, would have to be the Home Depot Square where the Sleepy's is. I

mean, that has got to be just visual pollution. We should win an award for it.

MR. CARMODY: So, we're winners. We've got that going for us.

THE CHAIR: For redevelopment, would these regulations cover redevelopment as new pieces, places close down and new places come in and I think the answer was yes, if we wanted it to, but why would we even want to hold off too long on --
--

MS. HUGHES: We'll get something to get into our regulations. That I can work on. Then I've got to sit down Frank. Frank knows what does and doesn't work in those sign regulations. A lot of it is how we let people calculate the signage.

MR. CARMODY: So, I think what he's asking is, the next step is not to go full boar with the lighting and landscaping --
-

MS. HUGHES: To come up with standards, yes. Absolutely to come up with standards. To get standards in there and then let's sit down, take a breath, take a look and look around and see what we like.

You need to get some baseline standards in there.

MS. FERRO: We have photographs of many of these things. Talked about the McDonalds in Simsbury.

MS. HUGHES: I think with Walgreen's, you found they finally got the message you did not like their building.

MR. CARMODY: We went out and took pictures. What do you want? This is what we want here. Here's 15 photographs of a CVS in downtown Glastonbury on Main Street. That's what we want.

That was a special circumstance.

MS. HUGHES: As Zaya pointed out, these corporations, they embrace their element. They think they can't live without it, but they do.

THE CHAIR: And, they do, exactly. Well, I think that you

guys did a great job and we all thank you, thank you very much.

Do you want to go through the rest of this and then we'll move on?

MS. FERRO: What we'll do is, we'll focus on Mary's notes and based on the Minutes tonight, we'll tweak this and I don't think that'll take a long time. I'd rather do as much as we can quicker and get it to you so you can look at the whole reg. We do want to move on this.

This incorporates guidelines and it will have those three standards.

In addition to that, we have set criteria, which include this procedure that says you have to have ten acres. We thought ten acres was workable. If you go under ten acres, you start getting things that are shoehorned in that might not work from a site standpoint.

MS. HUGHES: When I started looking at where the properties were that may or may not be effected, they were so small. For example: Plantsville, that abandoned factory. That's like four acres. That start to get what we got on the corner of West and West Center Street, just a little bit too intense for it's location.

I was comfortable with the ten acres, as well, when I started.

MS. FERRO: As we move forward, this is our test case. When the developers see something like this and they know it's a workable zone, they'll try it. We debated and that's where we left it.

We want these areas designated on the map so there is no wiggle room.

MR. CARMODY: So, we're going to decide on the map where we want them.

MS. HUGHES: I can mark up a map for our next meeting and we can all put it up there and look at it.

MS. FERRO: Yes. In fact, that's what we'll do.

(End of Tape #1, Side A)

(Beginning of Tape #1, Side B)

(Continuing) What happens is that the applicant has to demonstrate bulk requirements and compliance with things at the conceptual stage. And, that allows you to take shots at it at that stage based on these things we've laid up.

They have to show at some point some control. They've showed all the site conditions. And, then also what they want to improve. And, we're asking them for a schematic plan. We're asking them for architectural drawings. We're asking them for their timetable. We're asking them for any kind of proposed improvements, whether its utilities or whatever they're doing. We're asking for parking and circulation. We're also asking for land use. All that has to be put in the conceptual plan.

No surprises. We want them to do the preliminary traffic analysis, first phase.

MR. CARMODY: What does gross acre mean?

MS. HUGHES: A gross acre is 43,560 square feet as opposed to a builder's acre which is 40,000 square feet.

MS. FERRO: We're also asking for the engineering analysis upfront of storm water, drainage, sanitary sewers and floodplains. We want to do that in the concept phase.

And, then they will up front, show that they're going to and how they're going to comply with all the design guidelines.

MS. LAURINAITIS: What is a preliminary traffic analysis as opposed to a traffic study?

MS. FERRO: A traffic analysis, I didn't want anybody to be misled that, because I've heard Commission people say, well, where is your STC certificate. You can't get an STC certificate until you get local PZC approval. So, I didn't want anybody to be misled that they were going to go to STC because they can't.

What you do is, let's say you do the traffic analysis based on size or traffic generation or other criteria, you know,

how you trigger STC? The applicant would write a letter to CONNDOT, STC, saying that we're operating in XYZ location and these are our preliminary traffic counts and they might be waiting around for the STC to come back and tell them what they're going to need. Okay?

Well, you don't need all those details at the conceptual level. Why? Because you have the control. They can't get their STC until you give final site plan approval. See? There's always those controls built in to this.

The other thing is, they might want to, based on conversations with you, modify things. So you don't want them to go way overboard on some of the engineering until you get that first blush, that first discussion.

MS. HUGHES: Under Section 9 of our site plan regulations, they're going to have to submit a traffic report again.

MS. FERRO: Again. They can update it and at that point we'll be well into an STC process. There's all these conditions that are giving you the control.

MR. CARMODY: What does fenestration mean?

MS. HUGHES: Window treatment.

MS. FERRO: Windows.

MS. HUGHES: And, as an interesting note, defenestrating is occurred when in Czechoslovakia when they threw people out of the window.

(Brief discussion)

MS. LAURINAITIS: What section are you in?

MS. FERRO: They're in the design guidelines.

MR. DELSANTO: It's 11-19.4 (c).

MS. FERRO: The two procedures here we go into are we go into this concept plan and then there is that approval. So you approve that concept plan.

After they do that, they have to go through your entire site planning process. So, the second phase of this is you

hear them under all the regulations and all the timetables and all of that happen under your already existing site plan regulations.

So, really, it is a double layer. But it is what you've got to do.

MS. LAURINAITIS: Once we implement these Planned Development Districts, are there going to be public hearings?

MS. HUGHES: In order to adopt these, you have to go through a public hearing process.

MS. LAURINAITIS: No, I mean, for the applicant. We're talking about a two-step process.

MS. FERRO: That'll depend on -- your public hearing requirements will fall under final site plan.

MS. HUGHES: No. We don't require a public hearing for site plan.

MS. FERRO: No, you don't, but you can.

MS. HUGHES: The problem with that Val is with the 65 days that I have, that really starts, I create an evidentiary procedure where I don't need one. And, that really begins to tie your hands.

MS. FERRO: Okay. Okay. I've got to think about that.

MS. LAURINAITIS: So, if we create this district, then the client comes in with the application, the conceptual plan and a site plan that are both approved by this Board.

MS. FERRO: Yes.

MS. LAURINAITIS: There is no input from the public.

MS. FERRO: Based on what she just said, yes.

THE CHAIR: Val, I had a question. This whole process was generated because of obviously something that's coming to Town. But I think it's a good idea for planning purposes. It gives us an idea, an option to start planning out certain sites in Town.

What have you seen this sort of overlay district develop into in other Towns, other than a 300-unit condominium district in downtown Southington?

MS. FERRO: Most of what I'm seeing is the mixed use category where it is first floor retail and upper story residential with sometimes some other amenities built in.

THE CHAIR: Like?

MS. FERRO: It can be recreational or something like that. I'll be honest, with the market the way it is and what we've seen particularly in the Brownfield's arena, depending on the amount of clean up, there's a lot of housing involved. It gives you the flexibility to move things around.

THE CHAIR: Well, it gives the developer the money and the profit to come through.

What I've seen, at least in my travels, I've seen these sorts of things come in and it's like this gated area where you put a bunch of houses, a bunch of residential types of units, houses, condos, whatever. You put a Y in there or something like that. You put a grocery store or some other things in there and it's like a little self contained community.

I'm wondering if that is what you typically see something like this developing into.

MS. FERRO: It depends. Down south you see that. And, mainly because none of these are re-uses. They're all brand, spanking new. And, we won't make any social commentary, but people down there seem to like to live in gated things without any interaction. You know?

THE CHAIR: I think a lot of it is because their Towns haven't zoned properly so outside of your gated area are the doublewides and the broken down stuff.

MS. FERRO: And, they're flat. Darned flat. Okay?

THE CHAIR: John?

MR. CARMODY: This is under special regulations. Wouldn't that be like the special permit?

MS. HUGHES: No. Special permit is Section 9. That's a procedural thing we'll talk out. That's not a big deal. We just have to go back and forth on the best way to do it.

THE CHAIR: I would think that if you're looking at 10-acre facility and you're looking at multi-story ---

MS. HUGHES: It probably should be a special permit and a site plan. What happens is, when you create an evidentiary procedure when one is not required, you can't take anything in.

THE CHAIR: What do you mean?

MS. FERRO: You can't take any new information in.

MS. HUGHES: Once you close that hearing, you can't get anymore new information. The special permit timeframes give you the latitude. They give you the 65 days to set the hearing, 35 days to hold the hearing, 65 days to act. So, they're just built in to give you the time to do that and the time to deliberate.

MS. FERRO: So, we'll talk about that.

MR. CARMODY: Okay.

MS. FERRO: That's the crux of the procedural side.

Then we also stipulated some uses and Mary was going to go through those. What Pat and I did was sat and looked through all the uses. One of the things we could do, if you want, we can list all the uses.

THE CHAIR: That would be allowable? I think that would be important to see.

MS.FERRO: Yes, we can do that.

When in the regs, I'm reading it and I have to go flipping back ---

MS. HUGHES: That's the first thing they teach us when we write regulations don't do that. And, our regulations are, do that so much that the problem is a couple of times we unintentionally knocked out uses, like when we had to go back

and clarify in the I-1 zone, a couple of things that we knocked out because things got renumbered.

MR. DELSANTO: Make sure everything falls into line.

MS. FERRO: We'll do that. What you will be getting is the full package with this other discussion that we have to have.

And, then in addition to the design guidelines which are essentially, just about the same ones we gave you last time, we also added some design standards. Okay?

With a front yard, we said no, because we'd like to see zero setbacks. We'd like to see it behind the sidewalk and keep that street walk if we can. We want to give that stipulation.

Lot coverage. We thought, a lot of these redevelopments, we've got 98 or 99 percent lot coverage.

MS.LAURINAITIS: I thought 75 was high.

MS. HUGHES: That's consistent with the CB zone now.

VARIOUS: Yah.

MS. FERRO: Now, if this was green fields, Noreen, new territory, I would think so. But in the areas that Mary had shown us of redevelopment, you are in all these cases, probably 100 percent covered.

MS. LAURINAITIS: But like when there's an environmental resource there such as a waterway, that's a lot of impervious surface, you're creating in that one area.

THE CHAIR: You have to abide by the other regulations that go along with that. It shouldn't be an issue.

MS. LAURINAITIS: And, they'll take care of that before it gets too far.

MS. FERRO: The storm water stuff, you can ask all the questions you want, but you've got to get through DEP and they're tough.

MS. HUGHES: The first thing that you have to do is get

through Tony and he has ZIRO policy. He's required to sign off on a Phase I Stormwater Permit that gets submitted to DEP.

Then they have to go through the process with DEP that they're going to have to go through.

MS. FERRO: Which is why most developers have to start that process months and months in advance.

MS. HUGHES: They're already meeting with DEP.

MS. FERRO: The folks over here, they've been meeting with DEP probably for more than a year. It's a long, tough row to hoe.

We don't want to create something that we don't have control over. We're already looking at areas that are already maxed out. One hundred percent impervious.

If you can work through lot coverage and parking requirements, then you have landscaping requirements, other things.

We think it has to be watered and sewerred. Absolutely. That gives you a lot of control there.

Building height - 60 feet.

MR.SAUCIER: That's what, five stories?

MS.FERRO: Yah. I mean, it depends, it could be four and maybe some bulk. But there's a little bit of room there. A little bit.

We tried to think of examples of, would we want to go higher? We could think of a couple of examples.

THE CHAIR: Do we want to go lower?

MS. LAURINAITIS: That's what ---

MR. SAUCIER: Well, I would say, I mean, if you're doing sixty though, you can go four stories with some decoration on top. You're not shooting straight five stories.

MS. FERRO: What we were thinking of is, what if someone

wanted to put or hide some of the parking? They wanted to hide some of the parking maybe underneath and they still had maybe a four-story configuration, it would bump it up a little bit.

So, I don't know.

THE CHAIR: I guess it depends on where it is. I mean, four stories can be awful obtrusive in certain areas.

MS. FERRO: It can be. It can be.

MS. HUGHES: But you are going to designate the areas it can occur in.

THE CHAIR: We'll have to see where they are.

MS. FERRO: You're also asking for architectural evaluations and so, you know, if you see something once someone shows you their architectural elevations, I don't think there's anything wrong with the way you do it now when the developer come in. Just because it says you'd allow it --- you go, gee, you know, an awful flat piece of property. Or XYZ next door.

MR. CARMODY: Character. Continuity.

MS. FERRO: We'd really like to see that come down.

But I think maximum ---

(Everyone commenting at the same time.)

What I'm saying is, that once they show you those elevations, I think you'll want to make the decision of whether you think it's too high. If you think it is, they can say, well, we need 60 and we're going to keep it that way because that's your regulations. Okay?

They can say that. But just like you do now and you have, what you did with the lighting and the other thing, I think given the case, what we were struggling with is we started looking all over the different parts of Town and it's sort of iffy. We didn't really see anywhere, although we were trying to conceive it, where we wanted it higher than 60.

Then we thought, okay, well what about 50? And, then I came

up with, yah, but what if I do this, plus this? So, we struggled with that.

MS. HUGHES: Part of what they have to do under their application to establish the ROD is they have to give you the architectural drawings as part of the schematic plan. And, at that point, I think you get a feeling for the scale of it.

MR. CARMODY: Yah, design guidelines under C, street façade. Architectural elevations and fenestrations, which loosely means window treatments, shall be part of that of surrounding properties to contribute to a positive a unified appearance.

So, if we ever saw something that didn't ---

MS. FERRO: That's right.

THE CHAIR: I'm just look at what we saw as a potential for down here. I mean, four stories in the middle, I just don't think would look good, personally.

MS. FERRO: But if it was four stories tucked in somewhere, it might be --- and ---

THE CHAIR: As long as we have flexibility. I think that's the important part of this.

MS. FERRO: Right. Because I've seen two stories of things that were, oh, awful, because of the elevation and the architecture. And, I've seen things that were six stories that were gorgeous. So, I just think you need that flexibility.

We're limiting the residential density and Mary and I talked about this ad nauseam. At first I had it higher, came down, and I think that's a workable number.

MS. LAURINAITIS: How does this compare to some of our other multifamily units.

MS. HUGHES: Actually, it's not that far off the mark. I mean, what we started with was, your current multifamily regulations permit one unit for 3,000 square feet for age restricted. This kicks you to about one unit per 2000, plus. It really is not a huge stepping off from what you

guys have in terms of density. It's a big gulp. But in terms of density, you already have a pretty ---

MS. FERRO: Again, I think the insurance here is that that's the density, but you're also getting design standards and an acreage minimum and these other things that will help the developer and you folks deal with how the configuration will be.

There were arguments to have it higher, but when we looked at your existing stuff, Mary was looking at some other applications, you know what? We should probably stay in this range and let's not go too far out of that.

MS. LAURINAITIS: Zaya, I was just going to say, if this again is an up to amount where we would have the leeway when a conceptual plan came in ---

MS. FERRO: I'm not sure how you do that.

MS. LAURINAITIS: Because once we put it in here, they're going to be creating their development ---

MS. FERRO: Here, you can ask your Town Attorney, but I'm not sure, I mean, you can't, you can't approve a regulation and then you want some wiggle room.

THE CHAIR: Of everything I've seen so far, that's the biggest problem I have so far. I think we need to look at -- I just don't want to see six story buildings going up in a ---

MS. HUGHES: That's not their intention.

THE CHAIR: No, I know. I know.

MS. FERRO: Five or six stories is it. But you have to understand, I think it's hard for you to do particularly if you are not used to laying things out here.

THE CHAIR: It's hard to conceptualize, but I think if you run in your mind, you say, okay, I want to maximize my property so I'm going to put up a bunch of six story buildings in a particular area.

MS. HUGHES: No, no. That's not --- believe me. Believe me.

MS. FERRO: Well, it's not going to be six stories.

MS. HUGHES: That is not Meridian's style.

THE CHAIR: Oh, no. And, I guess we're looking beyond them at this point.

MS. HUGHES: Oh, absolutely, we have to. But I think that it's hard because you're probably one of the first suburban communities that's looking at doing this. You think, okay, rehab or brownfields. Oh, you're in Hartford. Oh, you're in Bridgeport. You're in Norwalk, you're in Danbury.

So, you are like one of the first suburban communities that has had to wrestle with this and get the kind of comfort level. And, it just, you know, we have a lot of dirty property.

MR. DELSANTO: It'd be nice if we could get it right and then people go off of us. Look what Southington did.

MS. HUGHES: That's what I'm saying. I think once you guys -
--

MS. FERRO: Well, I tell you, we've been talking to various Planners and when they find out what we're doing, they're like, you're doing what? I said, we're coming up with a new infill overlay. And, they just say, gees, that's a great idea.

So, you're right, Mike. It'd be nice to be in that position where they're borrowing off your regs for a change.

MR. CARMODY: Since we already won the ---

MS. FERRO: Yah, you won the Poster Child Award.

(Laughter)

(Comments)

THE CHAIR: When is Meridian coming back?

MS. HUGHES: I didn't get any dates from them, but they wanted to give us an opportunity to go through this and then I have some dates that are available and we can go over that at the end of the meeting.

THE CHAIR: I think it's important that we pull them out of this Plan of Development process. I think this is important for the Plan of Development, for the future, for the planning.

But I think it's time to pull them out of our Plan of Development. We're still on line for a March completion, I think?

MS. FERRO: Oh, yah.

THE CHAIR: And, that's coming up real fast.

MS. FERRO: I think this, as far as our role, this is all we have to do.

THE CHAIR: The rest is them and they have their hearings.

MS. FERRO: And, we get the plan and we're humming.

MS. HUGHES: My birthday is on March 29th and they're taking a trip to Rocco's if I don't have a public hearing date scheduled.

THE CHAIR: What's Rocco's?

MS. HUGHES: It's a bakery in New Haven.

(Laughter)

(Comments)

MS. FERRO: One of the things you should do though, if you have feelings, because I want to give you a comfort level at least, speaking for Pat, too, and the other people in our office that helped us conceptualize this, after reading hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of pages of these types of zones, looking at it, you know, we had various newsletters and things, you do try to have to conceptualize density and how it works in locations.

So, although I understand your concerns over maybe a height and density, you know, I think in the spirit of what you're trying to achieve and the locations you're trying to do it in, I think this regulation gives you enough detail for you enter into that initial dance with the developer to see if

the comfort level is there. That's what the conceptual plan will do.

THE CHAIR: I think an important thing for us all to see, obviously from my prospective, is the places on the map where this would happen.

MS. HUGHES: And, we can get that.

MS. FERRO: Yah. Yah.

MS. HUGHES: It's not going to happen, you know, as Noreen said, out by Roger's. This is going to happen in areas that, like the center of Milldale, the center of Plantsville. This isn't going to go on and on and on and on.

MS. FERRO: And, if, and I looked at it from also another prospective, too. I've done my fair share of brownfields and represented municipalities who are struggling to fill vacant property because I couldn't get the developer to buy in to that municipality because of zoning. Because of their performance once they went to their --- it's not banks. Banks aren't even touching it. These are people with their own money or venture money that they can do something with.

I think the density factor is a carrot that you know, you are making them do many hoops. You're making them go through many, many hoops and their little biscuit at the success of going through those hopes, is a little more density.

THE CHAIR: I just don't want their biscuit to be a bad thing for our Town in the end.

You know, you put up a lot of density in a certain area where the streets may not be able to handle it or the infrastructure is not there.

MS. FERRO: You're making that judgment on density, though. And, what I'm trying to get you guys to understand is that that decision on density is spatial. It's how it's arranged. What the traffic study says. What their storm drainage, how much open space they're offering.

What if you get a developer that comes in and says, look, I'm doing this many units. I'm actually going to deed half

of the site to the Town for a park or whatever it is, and that portion they still have might be very, very dense.

MS. HUGHES: I think one of the things that you have to realize and they realized this, the first words out of their mouth was, we've got to make, we know we need to make the traffic work. They're going to have to do and realize that they're going to have to do, extensive improvements so that the traffic from this project can be absorbed. That was day one.

MS. FERRO: And, anyone working under this zone knows that if you're going to do ten acres, with density and the other things that you're going to allow them to do, to meet the criteria that you're setting forth, they're going to have to do a fair amount of study for this.

MS. HUGHES: And, they are going to have to do a fair amount of improvements to make it work. And, they know that.

And, we may be inconvenienced by those improvements for a while as these things get constructed.

MS. LAURINAITIS: I guess my question would be: Who is going to pay for the encroachments?

MS. HUGHES: They will.

MS. FERRO: They will.

MR. CARMODY: Not us.

THE CHAIR: They have to.

MS. FERRO: They have to by law. You think you guys are paying for all of these --- no, no, no.

MS. HUGHES: The STC says hello developer. Thank you for your check.

THE CHAIR: So, the next step?

MS. HUGHES: The next step is for Valarie, Pat and me to sit down, go over a couple of things, tighten these things up and we'll get them to you.

MR. CARMODY: You are, as far as the discussion about the

illumination, add the little caveats in there.

MS. FERRO: Uh-huh. We have all those, right?

MS. HUGHES: I think so.

MS. FERRO: We'll go through those.

(Undertone comments)

THE CHAIR: All right. Good.

MR. CARMODY: Are we all set? Is that it?

THE CHAIR: On that one.

MS. HUGHES: On that.

THE CHAIR: Guiding Principles?

MS. FERRO: Guiding Principles. Everybody got copies of these.

(Put up boards)

(Pause, pause)

So, we did two things. We distilled significantly distilled all these ideas and we tried to come up with a few bullets that would sort of reflect those. Just so that when you start off on your Plan of Development, you communicate, this is almost like a mission statement, okay, with just a little bit more specificity.

And, the guiding principles are basically what we distilled out of this. And, what that's going to do is sort of set the tone of where you want this Plan of Development to go. Okay?

And, also once we distilled these ideas --- what's going to happen is now we're going to reverse them. Once we do guiding principles, we took these community services, resources, protection, Town character, economic growth and livability and dropped them into four major sections.

- Physical form and function
- Compatible development and economic sustainability

- Open space and natural resources
- Decision-making and communication

What we do with those four things -- guiding principles set the tone and in these four categories we come up with actions. This is different than the perfunctory transportation, housing, whatever because they all co-exist. Actually, no co-exist. They intermingle. Inseparable.

MS. HUGHES: If you take page by page by page this, you'll go from livability and you'll start crossing things out in economic growth and crossing them out again in Town Character --- the overlap in these lists is substantial.

MS. FERRO: Right, right. But that's okay. And, that's why most Plans of Development refuse to acknowledge the interconnectedness of what happens. And, that's why most Plans of Development are so difficult to implement because they might be talking about transportation in one aspect but perhaps the transportation is really related to growth. You know, it just goes on and on.

You have to be disciplined enough to try to understand the trends and what they're saying out of these issues, but at the same time recognize, all relating, drop them into some cleaner categories and deal with them. You've got to deal with them.

Let's start with the guiding principles, okay? We think and we certainly want your feedback, we think we have hit upon basically everything you wanted to hit upon. Maybe you want to say it a different way or maybe you want to play with a few words, and that's fine, that's what we want you to do.

The first one: Achieve a Balance Among Residential Growth, Economic Development protection of our resources to maintain our quality of life. Doesn't that just about say it? That's okay because again it's like a vision thing.

Okay?

Now, an option would be: recognize the need to strike a compromising balance between growth and development and protection and preservation. Now, that is sort of the classic ying and yang. You know? There's always the growth in economic development, moving things forward, and then

the other side that wants to preserve, protect, conserve. That's more of a traditional way of saying it.

But both say it, but the first one is, Pat and I really wanted to get that quality of life thing in there because we really think that's the essence of growth, development, protection and preservation. All of that together defines the quality of life in any Town.

Something to think about.

THE CHAIR: I think from my prospective, the first one is --
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MR. SAUCIER: I agree.

THE CHAIR: I crossed out the second one. I just think the first one is clean. It's correct. It says exactly what we've talked about wanting to do.

The only other thing I would say would be maybe to maintain and continue to improve our quality of life. It's always better to continuously looked to improve. When you look at the first one, where the blank is, it's not only for the well being of the Southington residents, what we're going to do is we're going to recognize what our issues are and we're going to work on maintaining our character in Town through these principles. Developing through that character, Marion, Plantsville and Milldale. Southington.

MS. FERRO: Good point. Good point. You don't want to rest on your laurels, certainly. But improving --- there is always room for improvement.

THE CHAIR: Continuous improvement.

MR. CARMODY: I agree with that.

MS. FERRO: And, then from there, these other bullets we just thought would round out and maybe add some specifics that people might be thinking of and I think certainly communication that discussions we've. Certainly what we've heard from the public and everybody else, okay?

So, consider public health and safety, energy consumption and wise use of our resources in guiding development. We got to start thinking that we're living in a limited

environment here. And, that's the way it is.

I thought as an afterthought, do we want to add some specifics like the Quinnipiac River or other things? We can always tweak that a little bit.

Support sustainable development and too give back to our community that does not negatively impact our resources. What that tells you is that --- some Towns is like, whatever development is development is okay with them. Even if they go out of business in five years, well, we got five years of taxes, didn't we? I don't think that is what you want. I don't think you're in that position. You want something sustainable.

Besides just development, just the property taxes, you want them to be a good neighbor. You want them to be part of your community and give back.

THE CHAIR: We've been saying that for the past ---

MS. HUGHES: In Plainville, GE has that club and they used to participate in a lot of --- two or three times a year.

MS. FERRO: And, that's that.

And, then improve our built environment so that public and private properties -- notice both public and private --- put forth an attractive and inviting environment. That's a big deal for Southington. We want that. We encourage it.

By the way, as you go through these guiding principles, a very important dynamic that you should be thinking about here, these guiding principles will be setting the tone of subsequent building regulations. And, these guiding principles gives you an additional layer of defensibility when you might be challenged maybe two or three years down the pike.

THE CHAIR: If we're consistent.

MS. FERRO: When you're consistent because you're saying well, our guiding principles from the start of our Plan of Development says, bink, bink, bink, bink.

We have actions that say bink, bink, bink, bink.

And, we have regulations that say bump, bump, bump, bump.

And, you are creating that planning process. If you don't have that thought process behind you, when you start changing zoning regulations, it's not a good thing.

THE CHAIR: I think we had a lot of good things in the last Plan, but we weren't consistent with them. We didn't implement it.

MS. HUGHES: It didn't get implemented. In the Town's defense, most communities weren't really implementing their plans in the late 70's, 80's early 90's. They weren't.

All of a sudden it's like a ---

THE CHAIR: Look at the problems it created.

MS. HUGHES: Not only that, but statewide there has been a wake up. Most communities or several communities, I shouldn't say most, several communities actually appoint a committee to implement the Plan.

THE CHAIR: We're going to do that, we talked about that, right?

MR. CARMODY: Yah, we did.

MS. HUGHES: Instead of spending money on a document, taking the time and the effort to try and address problems that you have and then let it sit on the shelf until somebody files for a zone change or a text change.

The Implementation Committee I think is a critical part to the whole thing.

THE CHAIR: I agree.

MS.FERRO: Part of this real push came out of the urban corps, Hartford was doing their neighborhood revitalization. The State regulations mandated the creating of a Planning Committee and after the Planning Committee, you have your Plan adopted by the State, you had to adopt an Implementation Committee. Gees, it's about time.

That started creating this whole mechanism. It's there. You use it.

MR. CARMODY: A quick question. In those other communities where they had an Implementation Committee, who is on that?

MS. HUGHES: It depends. In Stonington it's an independent group. Citizen groups.

MS. FERRO: Anybody you want.

(Discussion of the Implementation Committee make up)

In Stamford, they identified certain neighborhood actions and from that, during the Plan of Development, there were like four or five neighborhood committees that rose up from that planning process and now these folks --- we're working with one entity on East Main Street and they're actually the committee. They're trying to get money. They're overseeing the planning.

New Haven, too. It's out there.

MR. CARMODY: Food for thought.

MS. FERRO: Encourage reuse and redevelopment of blighted, vacant or underutilized properties in order to make wise use of existing infrastructure. This is the plain way of saying smart growth.

If you use the word smart growth, no one really knows what that means. In Southington, it's we want you to re-use and revitalize things that are not so great looking and if there's already infrastructure there so you don't continue busting our core out into Roger's Orchards and those other areas. That's what that says.

Incorporate the changing needs of our population when planning and funding public programs and community facilities. That is telling you whether it's a different housing strategy, a different traffic network or a different recreational program or whatever it is, that is that all encompassing reminder that make sure you know who the heck you are. You know? You really need to know who you are and you need to keep tabs on how you're changing as a community.

MS. HUGHES: I'll give you a simple visual. Fran hit the nail on the head when he said something at our last meeting

about how people are taking these small R-12 lots that were intended to have homes that were 1200, 1400, 1500 square feet on them and putting 2200 to 2400 square feet on them.

There's one across from the golf course. It just, it just - - and but the side to that is once you start making somebody work with the lot, cover your ears, Sev --- and you have a house that is an appropriate size for the lot and the scale of the neighborhood, it helps the affordability of the home.

No one has come in with an affordable housing subdivision that's a bunch of capes that are maybe let's say 1500 to 1800 square feet. Right there. I mean, you're helping the affordability.

We're not seeing any house go up here, regardless of the lot, that's less than 2200 square feet.

MS. LAURINAITIS: Then you have to try to heat and ---

MS. FERRO: Things are going to change quickly. Just like we might not be driving cars that get 3 mpg. Houses and the fact that you've seen and I don't know if you're reading the stuff we're seeing in the development world, but all of a sudden, there's been this switch of empty nesters who want something a little smaller. A little smaller.

We don't want 4800, maybe 2700. All of a sudden things are going down. So, this bullet is --- just be mindful of that. Whether its age restricted housing. How much do we need? Things like that. Understand the demographics and you keep track of your demographics every few years.

Have the discussion with the BOE and everybody else so you know what the feel is. Eliminate the unknowns. That's always a good rule of thumb. Get as much data as you can.

So, with those guiding principles, what Pat and I would like to do for you is build achievable actions that surround these four bullets. As we've started trying to separate all of these things, four days later, we had these four bullets. It was a give and a take. I think we still might have some tweaks to do. We want you to think about this.

If you've got some ideas, get them to Mary.

THE CHAIR: When you say translating into these action items --- these are the headings for the action items?

MS. FERRO: Right.

MS. HUGHES: I'll give you a for instance. We are all concerned we don't want West Street from its interchange with I-84 down to the Bristol line to turn into Queen Street.

Then you need to, the Town, has to identify who would be the responsible party, needs to fund a West Street Corridor Study. They need to do that. Part of the things, we need to have a Capital Improvement Plan that's not just on the books, but is funded.

MS. FERRO: And, updated every year.

MS. HUGHES: That's not within your control. That's the Town Council, but you may not be able to get them to do it, but you can identify the Town Council needs to adopt and fund an Annual Capital Improvement Plan.

I've been here for four years and there has been no improvement to this building made. I mean, none.

Every other community I've worked in prepared a Capital Improvement Plan and funds the Capital Improvement Plan. And, it's done on a five-year basis, reviewed annually. There are some projects that kicked out and kicked out and kicked out. Lights at the ball field or something like that. But there is a certain amount ---

MR. BORKOWSKI: We saw how that went on Election Day?

MS. HUGHES: What, a Capital Improvement Plan?

MS. FERRO: You know what, you're dealing with, voters these days want to see something laid out.

(End of Tape #1, Side B)

(Beginning of Tape #2, Side A)

The debt service, what you're doing, the planning for the

future, responding to populations, all those things.

MS. HUGHES: We prepare a Capital Improvement Plan, in part, because there's an entitlement grant from the State OPM, LOCIP. And, you can't get your entitlement money unless you have the plan.

That's Town Council. You don't have control of it, but you identify it as something that should be done and the Town Council should be doing it.

MS. FERRO: This is the distinction you want to make, for the most part, the actions that are going to be included in this Plan, have a relationship to land use. Okay?

But a CIP is an incredibly far-reaching program. And, it has to do with the funding of things that affect resource protection and town character and community services and even economic growth. I mean, it really reaches deep into all those things.

MS. HUGHES: Here is another one. You're talking about quality of parks, good parks, blah, blah, blah. We bought the drive in. Get a plan together for it.

MS. LAURINAITIS: Well, we have a Parks Committee, don't we? Commission?

MS. HUGHES: But that is another action. I mean, it's not necessarily within your control but the Park and Rec Board should --- I mean, we've got a drive in. We bought the drive in. We told the voters ---

MS. FERRO: It affects Town character. It affects land use. It's those types of things that you would hope that if they were going to embark on a Drive In Theater Re-Use Plan, at least one person from this group would be an adjunct member to that and eventually that would appear in front of this Board.

MR. CARMODY: So, we should shine a light on those kinds of things.

MS. HUGHES: Um-hum.

MS. FERRO: Some of those, yes.

MS. HUGHES: The fact that we've discussed that we need to improve our industrial zoning standards, that's our responsibility. That's why we have that staff of regulations that we can take a look at.

But we would want to get Lou's input on that because he's the person that is getting the calls. He knows what people are looking for to do here.

MS. FERRO: So, what we want to do, and we want to do this quickly because when we get that done, you almost have, you have your draft plan. You really do.

So, we've got to start thinking about these actions. We've been thinking about them, but we wanted to make sure that you were okay with what we did in the distillation process.

THE CHAIR: I think it's amazing how you could read all these things --- and all this stuff is stuff that we've talked about for years and you can narrow it down to a couple of little bullet points and it covers everything.

MS. HUGHES: We've already been talking about translating into actions. We already have ideas.

MS. FERRO: We've got ideas. We don't want to get into it so nitty gritty that each one of these, but each one of these again, we've lumped these into areas where we think there might be five or six actions of something.

And, also by the way, I know by Statute that this has to be a ten-year plan. Our feeling is and our philosophy is, that we're really writing these actions for the three to five year period.

You know what? God Bless you if you run out of things to do. If you get them all done in two years, like Tolland did, you can do another whole slew of them and amend your Plan.

How do you know? Gas prices. Population. All those things change. We're going to give you these action items that will keep your little heart content for three to five years.

THE CHAIR: I'm assuming these action items are going to be broad enough --- they're not going to be pinpoint specific.

They're going to be broad categories to give a guideline for what we expect to see.

MS. HUGHES: Some will be specific and some will be painted with a little bit bigger brush, depending on --- I mean, there are specific actions you can take to achieve a principle. But then there are policies. There will be a mixture of both of them.

MS. FERRO: What we're thinking of and we're not sure how this will flush out, yet, but we're thinking of coming up with some actions but they'll be broad enough that they'll then lead to an implementation list that actually has your items. We're not sure, yet.

Let us plod through this. We'll work with this pallet that everyone has given us to try to continue to distill these to these sound bites, if you will.

But, you have to be prepared, and I know sometimes it's hard to switch, but this Plan is going to come together quite quickly.

THE CHAIR: What do you foresee?

MS. FERRO: We'd like you to think about this language, if there's some tweaks, another way of approaching it. If there is just share those with you.

But also if there are specific actions for something you want us to consider, you folks live here and you're going to be implementing the Plan. Get it to us.

THE CHAIR: You said you have some preliminary things put together, some ideas?

MS. FERRO: We have some ideas.

MS. HUGHES: We've been talking about some stuff, like this stuff that I just threw out to you.

MS. FERRO: We hope to do that very much like we did this time. In the next few weeks, we're going to get all of this put down. It's a difficult process, but when we're done with this -- we're ready. We've been trying to read and understand and review the Minutes and the outreach input.

We're taking all that in and try to reflect. We're certainly ready, but we want you to be ready.

This Plan will certainly come together in February. You'll be ready and your draft will be ready when we said you'd be ready.

MS. LAURINAITIS: Can I ask the status on the budget --- the consultants contract? Are we running over hours?

MS. HUGHES: No. Val and I do a budget check every couple of months. We have enough to finish this thing off and get it printed.

MS. FERRO: Yes. I was getting a little worried there for a while, but we're back on track.

THE CHAIR: When you do you want our initial feedback to go into your brainstorming session for you to come up with your feedback so we could respond.

MS. FERRO: If you could get it to us by next Wednesday.

(Discussion of dates)

(Pause, pause)

(Comments/conversation)

MS. HUGHES: I penciled in February 2nd for follow up and that's awful quick. Or are you comfortable with that?

I'm looking at two things. We want to flush out the regs. And, we want to identify possible areas and then we want to fortify the guiding principles and get them in order.

We'll go February 2nd. And, I have February 16th, which is also a Thursday penciled in.

I have February 23rd and March 1st.

I've got us in Council Chambers.

MS. FERRO: Next Thursday night you want us here?

MS. HUGHES: I guess if they have any questions?

MR. DELSANTO: I am gone from the 2nd to the 12th.

(Undertone comments)

MS. HUGHES: Why don't we do this. On the 2nd we can talk about what we can do on the other dates, but I'm not going to erase any dates that we have.

I can get dates for March, but let's keep February 2nd, 16th and 23rd open and go, go, go, go.

We'll meet on the 2nd and tighten up these regs. Identify the areas and then --

MS. LAURINAITIS: Which regs? The Planned Development or what?

MS. HUGHES: The planned development.

MS. FERRO: Yes, the ROD.

(Discussion of dates and times)

MS. LAURINAITIS: What are you looking for by Wednesday?

MS. FERRO: By Wednesday, we want some feedback on action items or anything else you want to have us consider for the Plan of Conservation and Development Study.

MR. DELSANTO: Motion to adjourn.

MR. CARMODY: Second.

(Motion passed unanimously on a voice vote.)

(Whereupon, the meeting was adjourned at 9:05 o'clock, p.m.)