

SOUTHINGTON PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION  
INFORMATIONAL MEETING  
APRIL 26, 2007  
Town Hall Council Chambers  
75 Main Street, Southington, CT

MINUTES

Chairman Zaya Oshana, Jr., called the Southington Planning & Zoning Commission Informational Meeting to order at 7:05 pm with the following members in attendance:

John DeMello\*, Michael DelSanto, James Sinclair and Patrick Saucier

(\*Arrived where noted)

Others: Mary Savage, Town Planner and Mark Sciota,  
Town Attorney

Absent: Francis Kenefick, Commissioner  
John Carmody, Commissioner  
Brian Zaccagnino, Alternate Commissioner  
Richard Hart, Alternate Commissioner  
Robert Borkowski, Alternate Commissioner  
Lisa Conroy, Alternate  
John Weichsel, Town Manager  
Anthony Tranquillo, Town Engineer

A quorum was determined.

**Zaya Oshana, Chairman, presiding:**

THE CHAIR: Tonight we will be holding a special public input session on the zoning regulations for the Southington Planning & Zoning Commission.

I just got a call as I was walking in the door, Mr. DeMello is on his way here. He got help up a little bit at work and he should be here in about ten minutes.

Mr. Carmody is stuck this evening. He was called to a -- actually he had a prearranged business meeting that he tried to reschedule and unfortunately he was unable to do so. So, he called me and he is going to be reviewing the Minutes of the meeting and will be able to follow up on what we're doing this evening.

Mr. Kenefick is out of state this evening, so he will also be doing the same thing.

What we're going to be doing this evening is the Commission as you are all aware, over the last several months has been going forward and has been taking a look at our zoning regulations. The staff has been working hard on this process also with us.

Our objective is to as we have completed the master plan, go forward and look at the zoning regulations to make sure that the regulations fit in what we have done with the master plan for development of the Town of Southington.

We've done a lot of work on the regulations and we've had a lot of good process going forward --- good progress, excuse me, going forward with this program that we've been doing.

As we had mentioned early on this process, we wanted to take public input into the regulation changes and that is what we are going to be doing tonight. This public input process is different than a public hearing. In a public hearing, many of you who have been to the meetings or other Commission meetings or Board meetings here in the Town of Southington understand how a public hearing works. This is not a public hearing. This is not going to be a back and forth session.

This is your opportunity to come forward to the microphone, get on the record, and bring to us the areas of concerns, the areas that you would like to make us aware of that you see that you would like addressed, one way or another, in terms of the regulations.

What we'd like you to do tonight is come forward with the areas. We are having Ms. Savage, the Town Planner, has a timer with her. We're going to put a time limit of five minutes per person to come forward, to give us your opinions, your views and the areas that you'd like to see looked at in terms of the regulations.

The meeting tonight is going to run from 7:00 to 9:00. And, what we'll do is again, come up to the microphone. Just give us your name and address, so we know who you are, and give us the areas that you'd like us to look at and we'll go from there.

So, what you can do is just come up, one at a time, come on up to the microphone and please give us your ideas, your suggestions, Let's keep it positive. Let's keep it constructive.

MS. SICA: Well, they're all looking at me, I guess I can go first. Nobody wants to go first, so I guess that's easy for me.

Bonnie Sica, 73 Huckleberry Lane. First, I want to thank everyone here tonight for setting the public meeting. I think this is very important and it'll allow the public a chance to really express and I want to thank the PZC for working so hard on the regulations and um, we're here. I was very happy to see some of the resource based zoning type ideas in there and it seems like there is some great ideas.

I just wanted to, as you go through this process, remind you of a couple of things. I have a real concern over the amount of condos that are being put into Southington. I've brought that up previously. You know the condo market in the past has been soft and if we continue to put in a lot of condos, I'm concerned that you know, then we may end up having a lot of people who can't pay their taxes if the condo market goes soft again.

It seems like a lot of builders are now, as we run out of land, turning towards these quarter acre lots and putting condos on them. So, Jim Sinclair, actually had, we had discussed this issue and had brought up about changing the R-12 to R-12L. So, I just wanted to say to the Commission, if you could, I know you're still in discussion about that issue, if you could discuss it more. I just feel like, you know, it's fine to have a quarter acre lot for a person who wants a small home. We still need to make availability for small homes and small businesses to have areas. I'm very concerned that all of those are going to slowly become condo complexes.

And, nobody wants to see that. You should be able to have a thousand square foot home if that's what you can afford and that's what you want in Southington. We have a lot of those in Southington and there is nothing wrong with that.

So, I really highly support change on that particular issue.

The second issue I wanted to talk about which we have discussed before as well is the soil and water tests that are done by developers. I know there really isn't money in the PZC budget. I'm sure with the town budget the way it is this year, there's no really room to ask for more money. But you have all made it very clear that in certain cases you would love to do your own tests or have a second test done or whatever the case may be on certain properties.

So, impact fees, I know are, we've discussed that and that that may not in the State of Connecticut necessarily be legal as they're called impact fees, but you know, I would think we could kind of get creative and couldn't we have the fee for, you know, when someone applies, instead of it being \$250, couldn't we just make it \$500 or \$750? And, that money goes into a little fund

and we have that money for when we need to do this test. Because you know, right now, we are not going to have the money through the town.

So, I would just think, you know, get creative whatever way you could think of ---you don't have to put a new fee in, just take the fees you have and maybe increase them so that your budget is a little bigger so when you really have something that's questionable, what can you look at.

And, you know, the last thing I kind of just want to touch upon is you're probably not going to be changing the regulations anytime in this manner, in sort of a sweeping manner, anytime soon. So, I know that you guys have the knowledge of every court appearance that has happened every time a developer has overturned us and you know, I just, I defer to your knowledge and to Mary's knowledge and just ask that you really look at each one of those regulations and that you say, what could we have done different so that we're not taken to court again.

So, just, you're doing it. I appreciate that you're doing it and just keep doing it and doing it well.

Thank you.

THE CHAIR: Thank you.

(Pause)

Don't be shy. Come on up!

ANNE MARIE CONATY: 1237 Mount Vernon Road. I really didn't even have time to look at the regulations. And, can I point out, it would've been nice if we could've gone on the website before public input instead of having to go to the Town Clerk's Office to get them. So, I haven't even reviewed them and ---

THE CHAIR: The regulations have been on the website now, I guess, for a couple of years now.

MS. CONATY: Because we couldn't fine the amendments. The proposed amendments.

MR. SAUCIER: They haven't been presented, yet.

THE CHAIR: The amendments aren't actually out there because the amendments ---

MS. CONATY: Okay, I mean, isn't that what we are talking about here?

THE CHAIR: No. Actually, we're asking for your opinions of the areas, people's opinions for what you would like to see us look at, the areas that you feel are of concern. That you would like us to look at.

MS. CONATY: Okay. All I'm saying is it would've been nice to see what you're looking at to see if we could've spoken to that, to incorporate our concerns into it. It just seems like we're, we weren't given all the knowledge easily to come up here. So --- and, I like to be prepared. So, I only know what is on the books now.

I'm just hoping you're looking at all the cases you've lost in court and you're looking at those regulations specifically so we don't have to continue to read we lost another one in court. Because you overstepped your bounds in your interpretation of something for this or that.

And, I think one of the best things in it's own way that happened to this town was the Hart Street and West Street debacle. Because it got people involved and interested and hopefully, speaking up.

This is positive. It's not negative, but what we --- I was one of the people involved in the petition drive. It was never meant to be a formal petition. It was just meant to show this Commission how important this issue was for people in Southington. And, what we read in the papers and what we saw at some of some of the meetings, the arrogance and the sarcasm that came out from Commission members, I think was inappropriate.

You know what they say. You get treated -- then people came back and targeted you guys. But there is a saying, you treat people the way you want to be treated. And, I find that since you've been publicized, a lot of that sarcasm and arrogance is gone and it's very nice to see some respect, some mutual respect here. And, I think if all commissions and boards in this town start acting that way, you'd be surprised at what could be accomplished because people will put their heads together and work together.

One big issue I'm looking at now is you're seeing a lot of threats for affordable housing. Affordable housing is necessary and I believe Southington is below the quota. However, once you get your quota, you don't want every developer using that as a threat. Okay, you're not going to give us what we want, so now we're going to go for an affordable housing.

So, if some of your regulations, when you are looking at the regulations, if you could look to that, so that you have some teeth when you go to court. And, I'm not saying to deny

affordable housing but so where Bonnie is concerned about condos, I don't think we want to see a town full of affordable housing complexes, either. I think you want to see homes, condos, affordable housing and it all well planned out like if you had a big board out there and you put colored pins up. And, you know, just look at it for a master plan for the town so that we have still a quality Town of Southington.

The wetlands, um, the environment. It needs to be kept in serious mind when you are looking at these. It's real troubling to hear sometimes, even Conservation Committee members, laugh at somebody questioning the extinction of a turtle. I'm not that big environmentalist, but there is a reason turtles are becoming extinct. And, the polar bear will become extinct in 25 years. They all speak to this Commission and Conservation and you want to leave something for your children, don't you? I don't have any little children, but all of you probably do. And, I don't see that we're leaving a whole lot for them right now.

But I want to thank you for your time in doing this and I hope you do the right thing for the town.

THE CHAIR: Thank you.

SPEAKER: Good evening. And, I applaud the work this group has done so far in making these new regs out there. I was here maybe about a month ago ---

RICHARD TANGUAY: From 1597 Meriden Avenue. And, I'm a contractor in Southington, swimming pool contractor. And, I am looking for a place to relocate my business so it's not in my residence.

I did mention last time that I went down to Lou Perillo's office and I stated there about a dozen names up on his bulletin board, people looking for contractor space like I am. I went back the next day and there are actually 23 other contractors looking for space for their equipment.

I mentioned that maybe I-1, if we can do outdoor storage in I-1 because there is some I-1 space around and I don't know if that got passed or is that still in the works? Okay.

The other thing I was thinking, I did find one lot in Southington. There was a three-acre piece and I really need about a two-acre lot for my business. But if there was a way that I could --- the parcel I'm looking at, right now there is a cul de sac that would have to be extended. I looked into the expenses to do that. It would be about a hundred thousand dollars to extend the cul de sac and then it would have to be

turned over to the town. This is on Robert Porter Road, at the end of that cul de sac. I'm looking at the expenses to do that and then to get this lot in there, it's going to be more than what my building would cost to put up.

I was thinking if that lot could be left as a rear lot and make a driveway into it, maybe if we had multiple rear lots available where we can have one driveway rather than make three or four curb cuts for a certain amount of parcels there. Just leave one common driveway and go down there and have it be a multiple rear lot --- that's what I'd be possibly looking at.

The other thing, I don't know if this was addressed, or not, but the 400' between driveways on industrial, I don't see what the reason for that is. If you have enough room to plow your snow without plowing it on your neighbor's yard or on his fence, I don't see what the difference is if it's 100' apart or 400' apart or 50' apart, as far as that goes.

So, that's all I have to say.

THE CHAIR: Thank you.

ELAINE HAIGH: Hi. I'm Elaine Haigh from Woodruff Street in Southington and I've been here since 1976 and these are my observations and when I go away for a while and come back, it doesn't look good.

I'll start with Queen Street. I don't know how much more you're going to build on Queen Street and what is on Queen Street, all of the way up to Plainville, doesn't look very pretty.

The type of buildings, some of them ---- uh, okay. My mother lived in Florida and they have all these strip malls. Miles and miles. And, after a while, it isn't pretty looking. And, we have this heavy, heavy concentration on Queen Street. All these ugly, I'm sorry, ugly looking buildings as opposed to if maybe you went and looked at the shops at Evergreen Mall or I don't know what they call those types of shopping centers? Okay. And, they're prettier. Okay?

And, I don't know how many more restaurants we need in Southington. I do know that in my line of work, I have to do a lot of traveling and it has taken me sometimes 15 minutes from Woodruff Street to get to 84. That's insane and I think it's ridiculous.

The next thing that I observed is we build these big homes on cemetery plots or to use another phrase, postage stamp lots.

That's insane. I don't think it's pretty. It's not, to me, when I want to use the term conforming, I don't know how you could call that conforming when you look and around that area there might be nice-looking homes and the lots are spaced and then all of a sudden this huge, huge home like up on Woodruff Street. This big, huge Victorian style home and then next to it are ranches and small homes. It's insane.

I wasn't prepared, I wasn't going to come here tonight because I don't feel well. I have an awful lot of stress. Then I read in the paper what the developers are going to do on Woodruff Street, so -- maybe one day you will read in the paper that I will have had a stroke and end up in the hospital and maybe you might be happy here. Okay? I mean --- you may think it's funny. It can happen to people. Okay?

It's just, let me finish, Mr. Oshana. You look like you are getting a little impatient.

THE CHAIR: No, no. I'm not impatient. I'm ---

MS. HAIGH: Oh, okay. So then, then if that's not enough, then we drive up on Flanders and I can't think of the street across from Price Chopper. I should know, but I've been here so long ---

FROM THE AUDIENCE: Loper Street.

MS. HAIGH: --- that I drive on automatic pilot now. Okay? So, you drive on Loper Street, okay. Then you have homes that appear to have a right of way, all right and the front of their house faces the back yard of another house. Do you --- have you -- do you know what I'm talking about?

MR. DELSANOT: I do.

MS. HAIGH: You do?

MR. DELSANTO: I do.

MS. HAIGH: I don't think it's pretty! I think it's insane. That's another situation. It's insane.

Then you have, I hear constantly these 100-year floods. I am an intelligent and informed woman. And, not only do I pay attention to what goes on in this town, I do a lot of reading. I am consumer-oriented, as well. And, oh, God. Now I lost my thought. Because I am so upset about what's going up on, going on in this town.

Then I hear about 100 year floods. The national weather service is saying this past Northeaster, was a two-year flood. Not a 100-year. They're happening all the time. So that's said.

On Woodruff Street now, now we had some people in town and I thank them very much. They go at 6:00 at night to look at the wetlands and floodplains that these developers think they have a right to build on. Okay, fine.

All right? But guess what? When it gets dark and the town can't come out and I understand. Tony may have come out. I forget who came out, maybe Mary Savage, I don't know, but we had another vehicle come out. By 7:00 pm the flooding started. Guess what developers? Woodruff Street Associates. That wonderful piece of property that you want to build on ---

MR. DELSANTO: It's been five minutes and I think we have plenty of people here that probably want to speak.

MS. HAIGH: Did I talk for five minutes? Did you time me?

MR. DELSANTO: That beeping that went off.

MS. HAIGH: Oh, I'm sorry.

MS. SAVAGE: If you could just wrap up. Finish your thought.

MS. HAIGH: Okay. That property was completely flooded and the street that they want to build on was underground and a whole section of Woodruff Street was underwater, one foot underwater.

So, you need to address where you're building as far as floodplains and um, and wetlands and you need to pay attention to how many more homes or condos you are going to put in and existing neighborhood that's already saturated with condos and the like.

And, that's not going on.

Thank you.

THE CHAIR: Thank you.

LYDIA HOLBROOK: Hello. My name is Lydia Holbrook. 1109 Mount Vernon Road. I've lived in this town my entire life and I've got to say the last ten years, there's been a lot of building. It's been kind of scary. Looking at how many houses are put on small, tiny lots. And, the environment seems to be struggling through it.

I live, I happen to live on a large piece of property over by the mountain -- Mount Vernon Road. And, it is, you know, you see a lot more coyotes running through my property because there's no place else for them to go. I'm lucky enough to live next to another gentleman who has a large piece of property, so between the two of us, we have quite a large field and quite a bit of woodlands between the two of us.

There is a lot more coyotes, a lot more foxes, a lot more deer. Everything is coming in. Not that I mind, because it is educational but, when you know, a coyote is sleeping in the backyard, not a great feeling when you have kids.

Let's see. Protection of this town falls upon you guys and us. And, that is what we need to protect. We need to protect the environment. We also need to protect our taxes. As you know, every residential home, every residence that is built in Southington is more taxes upon us.

This lovely scene is not how the town looks any more. It doesn't look like that. Rolling hills? You've got to sprinkle some houses in there.

So, also, the contractors, it seems like what happens is the contractors seem to be in control over a lot of the things that happen in this town. If you look at what happened right around Mount Vernon Road, those people that purchased houses on a hill. Now, got to tell you, I didn't feel too sorry for them because as we all know, water flows down.

(Mr. DeMello entered the room)

And, if you're going to build a house on a mountain, and put a well in -- well, there you go. You're not going to get very much water in there.

Oh, gosh. And, also about the building about -- also about Queen Street. As I drive down Queen Street, aesthetically, again not the prettiest. However, I count the buildings that are vacant. I count the buildings that have no more -- no more Shaw's. No more Palmieri's Florist. There's countless of them that are empty and vacant. All over Queen Street.

Yet, I hear we're building Target on West Street. Why do we need a Target on West Street when we have all these empty buildings all over Queen Street?

And, I'm done. Thank you very much for your time.

THE CHAIR: Thank you.

MS. HOLBROOK: Oh, just one more thing? Really quick.

Not completely done. Also, I just want to let you know that as I went around the past ---I found out about this meeting about two or three days ago. I went around telling people about this meeting hoping that there would be more than --- well, WOW -- there's a lot of people back there. Hoping there would be more than what was here.

A lot of people that I talked to were discouraged about coming here and making a point and saying what they need to say to you because they feel nothing ever gets done. Nothing ever happens. It's the wrong kind of attitude in the United States to have when we should be able to stand up and say what we feel.

That's it.

THE CHAIR: That is absolutely the wrong attitude to have and that's why we're having this meeting tonight. We agree with you 100 percent.

RAY KASTNER: Good evening. My name is Ray Kastner. First of all, I'd like to say I'm a builder and a developer in town. Personally, I feel the zoning regulations in this town are pretty fair. I've done work in Cheshire, Burlington, Plymouth, Plainville and compared to those towns, we're right basically the same.

I also feel that our wetlands is more than fair, the buffer right now. What I think has to be done with the wetlands is enforce the buffer. When I started in building many years ago, I'm pretty sure our buffer was a 10' buffer. Then it went to 15', 20' and the reason for the increase every time was strictly because homeowners, not builders, not developers, would infringe on these buffers.

So, they would keep increasing them. Now anyone of you that have a house and you have wetlands in your backyard. You know, you're going to honor the wetlands buffer but you're going to look at it also, saying, wow, that's still nice land even though the wetlands is 50' or 40' beyond it. You know, I've got to give up that land? I just think we have an adequate wetlands buffer. It's got to be enforced.

I've been fortunate to travel. Everybody says postage stamp lots. You got all around this country, Connecticut is a small state and we don't have a lot of land but we have two acre zoning, we have one acre zoning. I've been to places where they put fifty houses or fifty condos on one acre.

So, again, restricting developing in this town unfortunately or fortunately, anyway you want to look at it,

doesn't hurt the developers. Okay? It hurts the homeowners, the landowners in this town. If you're a landowner, your parents or your grandparents owned a parcel of land, they're the ones that're going to be hurt. They're looking at their property and saying, well, here's the value. You can just almost take away half their value if some of these rumors that're going around on some of the restrictions you're about to put on.

I think we have good zoning. We just got to enforce good zoning.

Some of the things I think that could help this town is somebody brought up Queen Street. Maybe an architectural review committee. I know its more volunteer work for people but uh, you know, there's a valid point. There's a lot of unfortunate, buildings in this town that are not attractive.

Um, getting back to land, as far as developing, if you try to buy land in town, it's, it's ridiculous now. The price of a lot, I don't think you can get a lot under \$175,000. That's only going to go up higher and higher.

People are complaining about condos. I've built a lot of condos in this town. Condos, unfortunately, are for two people. First time buyers because they can't afford to buy a house in Southington. So, they've got to go to a condo, okay? Or, older people who are more on a fixed income.

So, we want to restrict development but we also somehow got to make this town affordable for the people who are from here and who want to come here. This is a desirable town. It's a great town. I've lived here all my life and I think we've got to look at the regulations that will keep people in town, make the town attractive but I don't think we have to go crazy. It's more enforceable.

One of the things that I've done in Burlington that they did is private driveways. Creatively, you can do some private driveways where the driveways are like a condo association where you don't have town roads ---help out on our taxes in our town.

Especially if there's areas where there's no well or septic. You can still get nice big lots, private drives, the town doesn't have to go out there and maintain them. You can put your fire tanks out there for fire.

Another thing that we can look into more, which this town is pretty good at, is buying open space or developmental rights. That's another way of restricting development in this town but also being fair.

I think that's basically it. Thank you for your time.

THE CHAIR: thank you.

SEV BOVINO: Good evening, Sev Bovino, Planner with Kratzert, Jones and Associates.

First of all, the Commission, I think have worked very hard and done a lot of --- made a lot of progress in the last few months in terms of regulations.

I think that you will continue working hard on the issues until things get completed.

First of all, on the industrial zone, I'd like to request again to allow industrial lots in an I-1 zone to have 150' of frontage with septic systems as long as the health department approves them. Right now they're allowed to have 200' by 200' deep and you can have a sep system. To encourage the ability to have more lots and use the land more properly, 150' is plenty.

There's homes, one-acre zone, 150' frontage, and homes generate more effluent than a small factory. So, I really would like you to consider that.

The other thing, I tried to put together a few things. I want to thank you for this meeting so that you have an opportunity to think about things before you make such a big decision in terms of changing the regulations.

I have a book here: Rural by Design. This is a book that tells us, the designers, how to design subdivisions, shopping centers with the rural character in mind and maintaining the small town character. What I did is I copied as many articles as possible, as many pages as possible from this book and I'm going to give you copies. You can study it.

But in the meantime, I'll just do a quick overview. First of all, the issues of zoning. The zone, as you know, you have your CB, RO, R-12, R-20/25, R-40 and R-80. Each one of these zones go from the center of town to the outskirts and the sizes of the lots increase with the zone as it goes towards --- from the CB to the R-80.

The reason for that is because either you have steeper land or no utilities or partially. You have either sewer or water. So, the land was already designed, the zoning was already in place to have or to take into consideration those issues, steep grades, wetlands, no utilities or partial utilities. So you already have those in place.

In terms of open space, we have requirements right now to provide open space. If you want to look at increasing the requirement in terms of percentage, that's one thing you could do.

In so far as the town character, I can't read that far, either.

(Chuckles)

The town character, when I consider the town character, I hope you agree with this, is the open fields, the vistas, the stonewalls, the wooded areas that you see as you travel through Southington. It's like on Pleasant Street, used to be those two farms there. That's what I think is your town character.

Now, the um, the up zoning, the restriction of development, the limiting of development will not preserve the town character because what you're doing is you're really --- take as an example, those subdivision that took place on Pleasant Street. Instead of half-acre zone, it was an acre zone, let's say, okay? You still would be driving by and seeing the neighborhood of houses. You're not going to maintain the open field unless you develop more flexible zoning where you allow the developer to use the property and still maintain some of that property open. That's very important because everybody talks about let's limit development, let's restrict development and let's do it by making the square bigger, limit the size --- I mean diminish the amount of the wetlands that can be counted or the floodplain and so forth. That will not accomplish maintaining the character of the Town of Southington.

The open space purchases, obviously, like we know, it's been going on. They should continue that.

And, the same thing with the property rights or the development rights purchases.

We know it's expensive. You know, you see the articles in the paper, it doesn't mean it has to be \$14 million. You look at properties one by one and you take into consideration and make your judgment call to which property you want to purchase or which property the development rights you want to purchase and take it from there.

I may be longer than five minutes. The current proposal, the square, should be allowed in my opinion if you're going to request to have a square on the lot, it should be allowed anywhere on the lot, not just on the ---in the front of the lot. Because different shaped lots actually have more character than the typical cookie-cutter, 100 x 200, 150 x 250, whatever.

In regard to the natural resource area, the lot area multiplier for wetlands, slope rights, slope of excess (inaudible) floodplains, ponds, lakes and so forth --- you have a multiplier there but to me that's a discounting of the land area which really 75 percent and in some cases as high as 100 percent.

A utility easement on a property does not discount the use of that property. You have a drainage easement that is underground, the pipe. The sewer easement, the pipe is underground. So, why take away that area from allowed?

Open space regulations. Your open space regulations are already on the books and you talk about usage of the land, no discounting of the land. And, it talks about 75 percent usage and so forth and so on.

I just want to give you a quick example and then I'll stop. One example of over regulation is this one right here. Property owner has 7 acres of land, in a half-acre zone, one house on it. He wanted to give two lots to his children. Because of frontage, he couldn't do that because rear lots, you allow only one rear lot up to 20 lots. I could've done a subdivision here, two rear lots, on 7 acres of land with one house and two new lots.

No. I have to put a road in, 350' and now we're going to request four lots. There's alternatives in this book, which I'm going to pass copies of.

THE CHAIR: You can give those copies to Mary and we'll do that. And, we're going to need to wrap it up just to give other people time, Sev. Thank you, though. Your input is very important and we appreciate it.

SANDRA FELD: 821 Glacier Way. I have read the amendments that you proposed. I think they really show a tremendous amount of work and they're moving in the right direction.

But there are some additional, some things I'd like to compliment you on and some things that I see are missing that I would hope that you would look at --- just a suggestion.

I really like 3-17 and 3-18. The protection of natural resources and physical attributes. And, the minimum buildable square requirements. I think that they will add a tremendous amount to two things that matter a lot to us which are curtailing residential building and encouraging industrial building in town. We hope both are done.

We would like to see minimum site disturbance. Something that would prevent clear-cutting that occurred more than just West and Hart. It's occurred a number of places.

There are a number of organizations that can discuss these things with you that do it all the time. They discuss smart growth. They discuss sprawl. Things like that. One of them is A Thousand Friends of Connecticut and another one is CLEAR which is at UCONN and they'd be more than happy, I know, to discuss suggestions with you and you can pick one from Column A and one from Column B as you see fit.

(Pause)

The fees. When you had your workshop on February 15<sup>th</sup>, you talked at length to us about possibly spending your own money in the more controversial cases in order to get independent and objective experts in and not accept the developer's experts.

One thing that occurred to us was a way to avoid charging the taxpayer or putting it in the budget would be to have whatever kind of fee you want to call it, a fee to developers. Our fees and I know you are working on the fees, too. I know that our fees are well below fees in surrounding towns. You could have a flat developer's fee that you put in a special account and when the more controversial applications come before you that you feel you need some extra help with, objective help with, you could use that money and it wouldn't charge or cost the taxpayers anything that way.

I want to impress upon you how important it is that we continue to educate our children. We have a tremendous reputation for education in this town and in order to continue to educate our kids the way we want to and the way we have been, we have to keep the schools at a reasonable size. Classrooms at a reasonable size. Taxpayers can't keep building new schools to house the children that keep coming in.

To just give you some idea -- single family and I'm sure you know this -- single-family new house construction building permits in 2005 was 152. In 2004 was 147. In 2003 was 188. In 2002, 188. And, 2001, 195. In 2000 206. In 1999 231. And, we're paying for this, \$10,000 a kid to educate them. And, then the extra costs for services. The extra costs for building new schools on top of maintaining the schools that we have. We're paying \$4.5 million now just to maintain the schools that we have, not counting South End and Plantsville. This is for capital improvements on the schools.

How much more can you expect property owners to carry? So, I'm asking you to please keep that in mind when you make your further amendments and I think you are doing a fantastic job.

Thank you.

THE CHAIR: Thank you.

JOHN TALLY: Good evening. I live at 151 MacKenzie Drive. I appreciate all of your serving the town as you do and I appreciate the opportunity to speak here tonight.

I've lived in Southington for 12 years and I love this town. Most importantly, this town has enabled my wife and me to raise our three children in a safe, nurturing and supportive environment. In an effort to give back to the community that I love, I have spent and continue to spend, numerous hours volunteering in youth related activities. Including sports programs, religious education, youth ministry and financial education.

I am certainly not alone in this effort as there are hundreds of individuals that help to make this a great town to raise a family.

In order to preserve this safe, nurturing and supportive environment, it is important that we take steps to (a) expand our park system (b) preserve open spaces and (c) prevent the redevelopment of our privately owned recreational facilities.

Therefore, I urge the town to give serious consideration or purchasing the development rights to Mount Southington, Southington Country Club, Hawks Landing, Pine Valley and Mountain Grove.

On the other hand, when it comes to efforts to limit future residential development in town, I fear that we are on a slippery slope of hypocrisy with our Not In My Back Yard attitude towards the development of affordable housing in our town. You see, with all the time and effort that we invest nurturing and educating our young people, in a safe, supportive environment, with the hope and expectation of a college education and a productive life, we generate no return on this investment when we fail to provide an affordable community to which they can return to live, work and raise their families.

Did you know that state housing prices have risen 63.6 percent from 2000 to 2005, 3.5 times faster than wage growth?

Also, in 157 of Connecticut's 169 towns, a family earning the median income cannot afford the median sales price home. Connecticut has lost more 20 to 34 year old population since 1990 than any other state in large part due to the high cost of housing. Businesses are beginning to experience labor shortages due to the lack of housing that workers can afford.

Home Connecticut is a statewide campaign aimed at increasing the stock of affordable housing in Connecticut. The campaign was created to preserve the quality of life and the strong competitive economy that has distinguished Connecticut but which is now threatened by a dramatic lack of housing affordable to working families and individuals. Leaders in business, banking, academia, land use, housing and government have come together as a steering committee of Home Connecticut to identify solutions to the state's housing affordability problem.

The solutions involve building and rehabilitating housing that workers, first time homeowners, young adults and people on a fixed income can afford. Assisting and encouraging towns and cities to help create housing that is attractive, affordable and an asset to the neighborhood and increasing state investment in housing development which leverages private and federal resources and stimulates the economy.

On April 17<sup>th</sup>, 2007, the state finance revenue and bonding committee approved SB-1057, the Connecticut Housing Program for economic growth, which was spearheaded by Home Connecticut. Under the Bill, municipalities that create overlay zones in which they agree to allow higher density and insure that 20 percent of all units created in the zone are affordable to those earning 80 percent of annual median income or less, would receive incentive payments and reimbursement to cover any additional school costs resulting from educating children living in the new housing.

I urge everyone to consider --- to contact their state representatives to insure the ultimate passage of this Bill.

And, I respectfully request that the Commission consider this crucial issue of housing affordability as it evaluates potential zoning reforms and considers future residential development projects.

Thank you.

THE CHAIR: Thank you.

GEORGE ROBARGE: 11 Fox Run, Southington, CT.

I believe this country is free. People have allowed to do what they do on certain areas. These people who own large tracts of land in this town have a right to do what they want with these pieces of land. If they want to sell the land for housing, they have that right. And, I don't think anybody has a right to tell them what they can do with this land and what they can't do with this land.

We have people coming into this town and I've haven't been here very long, who over react to certain things. We have good zoning laws in this town that have worked for years.

Now all of a sudden because of a certain few things ---

(End of Tape #1, Side A)

(Beginning of Tape #1, Side B)

(Continuing) These people who own this land, they've paid taxes on it for years as housing land and now you're going to tell them they can't develop housing on it? I think you're wrong, gentlemen. I think the people that're telling you that you can tell them what they can do and what they can't do with this land, don't know what they're talking about.

I think when you come about changing laws and doing things, you better think twice.

Thank you very much.

THE CHAIR: Thank you.

BILL NOGLE: 96 Woodberry Hill Drive. I guess I'm here tonight to talk about the need for more stringent zoning. I've seen some of the new proposed zoning and there is some appealing aspects of it. My concern is that there will be a rush to develop all parcels before the regs take effect.

I guess my optimal wish would be time-restricted moratorium. If that can't be developed, then I would recommend another time limit, a two to four acre site restriction to buy us sufficient time to explore more proactive commercial and industrial based building.

I think the gentleman raised about the cost about residential property and I think that we've seen quite a bit of commerce being done already in this town at unprecedented rates with no real regard for impact. We're looking at a state that by 2040, we're not going to have any viable farmland in the State of Connecticut.

We lost 19 percent of our farmland from 1999 to 2004. Now, I don't see that as somehow that we're impeding access to housing. People will say that we have the right to sell their land and I admit that that is true. But I also believe that this body in front of us is charged with the overall quality and preservation of land. Land is a precious commodity. And, it's just not just the reaction of the free market forces.

Regulation bodies are also there to overall insure the overall quality and contour and utilization of the land. This growth has stressed out our schools. We have one of the highest high school populations in the state. A lot of debate about, and I believe that we should have a third middle school.

It's taxed our infrastructure. It's added more police, firemen, sewer and there is reason to believe that it could eventually impact on our aquifers in light of possible global warming.

We have houses already that are running out of water on land that probably shouldn't have been developed.

We've got sewage backup. We've had soil erosion. We've had floodplain issues.

I would be in favor of the development of low cost housing to get up to 10 percent to meet the state regs, but in a way that this town dictates and not the state or the Governor or the legislative body telling us how to do it.

I do believe that the time has come to consider impact fees. I've been told that supposedly that's not a practice that's done throughout the state but it seems to be done in a lot of municipalities and towns throughout the country.

I would like to see a real, concentrated effort to consider the ban on cul de sacs. Cul de sacs tend to use more land. If you're going to allow building, you should work on a grid pattern. They tend to aid in the use of pedestrian walking which is certainly good for fighting obesity and public health issues, as well as helping and aiding the police in community policing.

You know, there's other areas that construction people can get into. Light Rail. Development of Brownfields. Restoration of buildings in center core cities.

We have not been aggressive enough in our open space acquisition. We need to be more aggressive in our use of nature conservancies, Sierra Club, Trusts for public land trusts and other entities that were cited already.

The issue of smart growth is particularly important in the northeast corridor. We have not utilized publication of the form 390 Act in trying to entice our farmers to continue to be active farmers and/or deed their land to the town and still stay an active, total viable farm.

It seems ironic that the taxpayers help pay the freight for half of the Vo-Ag, yet we're seeing a reduction in farmland. It seems kind of ludicrous.

(Pause)

I guess I'm also I guess a little struck by the lack of all the PZC members not being here tonight. I did once again, this kind of gives the appearance anyways and I don't why these gentlemen aren't here today, or women, but that they don't want to necessarily hear all the public input.

Regulations with public consumer input does insure that the grater public is well served. People have talked in this town about the increase in teen suicides, the increase in drug abuse as well as public vandalism. But those are all outgrowths of increasing population growth that goes unfettered and unchecked and not looking at the longer-term ramifications.

I think as a town we should join the ranks of the other people in the state that have signed off on the Metacomet Trail. I think it would insure a buffer and no longer no development on the ridgelines that we're already sort of seeing problematic problems regarding water.

And, I also think that there has been a conscious effort to somewhat under count the census. If we had a more accurate census, I think it would show that we are probably in all likelihood a city and if we were a city, we'd be eligible for special ed, highway department development and some other things that municipalities as cities are allowed to have versus town governments.

And, I appreciate your time.

THE CHAIR: Thank you very much.

ARTHUR CYR: 103 Berlin Avenue. Good evening. I believe the purpose of this meeting was to give some specifics and fortunately, I've been able to keep some of these notes that I've had for years. Although I do believe I've got a typo on one of my sections.

One of the things that I think we need to add to our residential regulations is a buffer to where new subdivision would be required to add an additional buffer of 40' along any border that abuts an existing developed area.

What we've seen um, and we've seen it up on West and Hart Street, and we've seen it up on Flanders and we've seen it up on Queen Street is a new development comes in and they literally go right up to the property line and they clear-cut it and then they say, oh, but we're going to plant white pines along that 20'

boarder and then they go in 20 more feet and they stop dropping houses.

I believe that would be in accordance with Section 9-02.3 of your regulations. And, I think that would cut down on some of the neighborhood opposition.

The second thing I'd like to see added to your regulations that's not in there, is that developers should be prohibited from blasting in the establishment of any new housing development. Those of you who have sat here for a long time know how upset the people were in the condo complex that I was in when the developers came in and said, well, we may have to blast down 20'. And, they were within 100' of all of our homes.

So, I feel that that should be prohibited in the establishment of any new housing development.

Section 9-03.9, regarding sidewalks, internal. It currently says sidewalks internal to the site are required whenever pedestrian safety may be at risk. I would ask that you delete everything past the word require. Not whenever pedestrian safety may be at risk because the Planners and the Attorneys will stand here and say, oh, you don't need sidewalks on both sides all the way down.

And, Mr. Chairman, you're the sidewalk man, so that one is for you.

THE CHAIR: Thank you.

MR. CYR: I would also like to see Section 9-03.8 (c), the waiver for sidewalks, only if there's wetlands in the area or the road is abutting a neighborhood or a private neighbor like you've done on some streets so that somebody doesn't have to plow or shovel 300' of snow in the winter.

The next section I'd like to see you deal with in your subdivision regulations is regarding community centers and parking for community centers. There was a proposal, I believe at the last meeting where there was, I believe, a decent sized community center with adequate parking.

But any future association which is the way these are being formed should have a community center adequate for use by a minimum of 20 percent of the total number of units and associated parking requirements for 20 percent of the total units to be built.

For those people who don't sit at planning and zoning all the time, I yelled and screamed and hollered because Applegate Development, Applegate Housing, up on Queen Street, was going to

be 96 units with a community center big enough for a card table for half a dozen guys to play cards and four parking spaces. That's not a community center.

And, that needs to be changed in your regulations.

The next section is proposed recreation areas and I may have a typo on this because I've got it down as Section 3-04.2 b-7. But the regulations calls for an area not less than 400 sf for each dwelling. And, in the case of elderly housing, where it said space shall be provided for active and passive recreation, could you please add the word: useable. So that we no longer see plans presented to us where they call for passive recreation around a pond, which is basically a walkway around their detention basin. I don't believe that is useable recreation area.

And, the last one I've got is a site plan with any development of private roads that it's maintained by a homeowners association, the site plan must show for mailbox clusters. Because they come in here all the time and they don't put them and then when they add them, they generally add them in areas where they can't build a house, specifically, like wetlands.

And, those mailbox clusters should not be in any areas near wetlands where they're going to be throwing salt and sand around the mailboxes, which will then go into the wetlands.

And, other than that, I like Section 8-02-2. So, anything you can do to strengthen that, I would appreciate it.

Thank you.

THE CHAIR: Thank you.

STEVE GIUDICE: I just want to go on the record, Stephen Giudice, Harry Cole & Son and 283 Deerbrooke Circle in Southington, I like Southington. I think it's a great town and I think you guys do a great job.

I come here and I listen to a lot of people complain about a lot of things and you know, I am proud of this town and I like the way it's been developed and I don't think its all as bad as everyone tries to make it sound sometimes. That's me, personally, talking to you.

Some of the things that I wanted to get into were the --- you know, these proposed changes were in my opinion some of it knee jerk reaction based on what happened up at Hart Street. I know the Commission has been trying to update their regulations

and you've gone through the master plan and things like that and that's been great. Everyone is in favor of that.

But when this Hart Street situation came up, it seemed like a lot of people jumped on the band wagon in trying to push this Commission to enact changes quicker than I think are good for this Commission and good for the Town of Southington.

Let's face it, this town, probably, when it was a farming community had probably almost no trees in whatsoever. In the last hundred years, the farming has gone and the trees have grown up and now the trees are the most important thing. And, I love trees and I'm not saying that I don't but, I think, a property owner has the right to cut down his trees. And, if Mr. Senese wants to farm that corner of Hart Street, he has the right to cut his trees down and if he wants to develop it, he has the right to do that.

These regulation changes that I'll get into for a minute are really a rehash of the regulation changes that this Commission proposed and withdrew a few years back and at that time the Commission didn't feel that it was necessary to go forward with these changes. And, I didn't think it was necessary at that time, either.

I think what the Commission really should be focusing on is getting the open space regulations up to snuff. Because, they are kind of weak and that's why you don't get a lot of open space applications. We go, Sev and myself, and we look at them but they're not really, they don't provide the benefits from the development standpoint and because that doesn't happen, you don't get the benefits of preserving the open space. That's the regulation I think that the Commission really has to look at and make more attractive.

We could be saving tons of open space with a better open space regulation, I believe. That's my personal opinion.

Again Sev mentioned the industrial septic systems. Industrial usage for septic systems is much less than a residential home or a residential subdivision. So, it really doesn't make sense to us why we can't use a septic system in there and why we have to have more area for a septic system in an industrial zone. I think that it's not necessary. I think that we could probably go with a lot less space as they use much less water and again it depends on the use. But if the use isn't supported by the land, the person is not going to build there, so from an industrial standpoint, that would be my opinion.

The buildable square. There are other communities in the area that use this square. We encounter it in different areas. Again, the intent is to force a more uniform lot development:

squares. And, in some people's opinion, I guess, square lots are happy lots. I don't think so.

I think that square lots are kind of boring. I think that we need some flexibility to work with the land. You know, we're restricting --- the next thing we get into natural resource areas, and we're trying to take away utility right of way, you're not going to get any credit for utility right of way and to me that's ridiculous. I can see an overhead wire right of way and maybe you want to give a reduction of that area but to give absolutely zero to me is unbelievable and I think it's kind of confiscatory.

Ponds and lakes? Those are great natural features and to discredit a lot area because it has a pond on it, to me, I would want that lot with the pond on it. I think the pond is a great natural feature and to discredit the lot area on the pond, to me again, the percentages that you're proposing are way too aggressive and I don't think are fair to the property owners that have the land that want to develop it.

I know I'm running out of time here. In my opinion, these changes aren't going to slow down development in Southington and they're not going to reduce the number of school children in our schools and they're not going to reduce our taxes. Our taxes are always going to go up. There's always going to be more kids. And, it's always going to be the same problem. So, I don't think these changes are going to have the effect that a lot of people think they will.

And, forcing out affordable construction for new homebuyers is another thing that will result from this type of change.

That's all. Thank you.

THE CHAIR: Thank you.

JEFF WIGHT: 161 Rawlene Drive here in Southington. And, I also agree with the opposition to the buildable square. You know, if you have a chance to travel in many areas of the country, whether it be out to Tucson, Arizona or Florida, they have large, vast areas of flat land. Nice big straight roads with grids of square blocks are fine.

New England is different. We have lots of up and down topography. We have wetlands all over the different places and many times the roads have to be wound around these things to get up and down.

To sit down and say we need a buildable square would, in many cases, eliminate some of the very nicest lots and also make

the cost of development very, very prohibitive. So, I'm somewhat against that type of thing.

As far as again, we look at the school system that some of the people have brought up. If you look at the Town of Southington's growth and I've been here my entire life, you know, in the period of 1980 to the year 2000 there were 3200 building permits issued by the Town of Southington building department but the population of the Town of Southington increased by only 2800 people. Less than one person per house. Those numbers come from the US census. They're not made up.

So basically, if you look at our school system, in 1980, the school system had 7600 kids in it. In 1990, they had 5600 kids in it. In the year 2000, you have 6200. Now, we're approximately 7000. That means we're still 600 fewer kids today than we had in the year 1980.

So when we constantly get people shouting that well development's terrible, you are overcrowding your schools, that's not really the case. We actually have fewer kids today than we did 27 years ago.

There are substantially other things that affect it. It's the legislator's mandating different things for special education. These are things and consequently, our costs are going up for developing the school systems.

But it certainly is not necessarily a product of all of our housing. If you look at the State of Connecticut last year, we have a state of 3.3 million people yet the entire population in the State of Connecticut increased by only 14,000 people.

What you are seeing today in the State of Connecticut and the Town of Southington is many of our own people moving within our own town. Myself as an example. In 1999, I lived in town, I had four kids, I built a new house. I didn't bring any more people in. The people who bought my house also lived in town and brought no new children in. A lot of what we're seeing, the development, is on local people. And, for us to try and restrict it and you'll sit down and say, let's cut it down, let's not have so much, then some of our own local people who were educated, grew up in this town are going to sit down and say, look, I want to build a house and I can't be building here, we're going to go some place else. And, I don't think we want to see that.

I do agree with the need for some affordable housing but I think we should really go under what the town is looking for and not necessarily what gets jammed down our throats in some particular instances. But what you again have to do is similar to the master plan in 1990 and 1991 where they looked at what we had for all available housing in the Town of Southington. And,

at that time, we had less than 160 acres of quarter acre zone. I think if you'll pull out a map today and mark out all the quarter acre zoning, we probably have less than 80 acres. So, the knee jerk reaction that's being created right now by the number of people of who are sitting there and saying, wow, we have all this quarter acre. The reality is, we don't. We have a very, very limited amount of that.

And, to sit down and now create regulations to try and make it more difficult to even use that very small property, makes it very, very difficult for anybody to come in and build a little bit more affordable housing. I think, as I say, yes, we've developed some condos here in our town and as Ray Kastner had said, that is providing a place for some of our younger people to come in and have the opportunity to not necessarily buy 45 or 55 year old house that was built in WW II that had maybe 800 sf for a two bedroom house. They get to come into a newer colonial that may have 12 or 14 hundred square feet.

And, I'll tell you, there's been some very, very nice development. And, I am actually, very happy to see some of that. But all in all, as I said, I think the Commission does a good job and I think our regulations have done very, very well by us.

Thank you.

THE CHAIR: Thank you.

NATHAN PRIMUS: Resident at Farmstead Road, which is just a few blocks from here. And, I have been pretty familiar with most of the wetlands regulations and the P & Z regulations for more than 20 years I've been in business here in town.

I'm not going to say they're overly restrictive, but they do have sufficient teeth when they're applied to be very practical. For the most part it seems like they usually are applied that with just an occasional exception. But of course, whenever somebody gets a cut or a scrape, that's what is focused upon and not the 90 percent of the healthy body that's still left.

When I saw that clear-cutting off of my neighborhood on West Street at the corner of Hart Street, of course, I was a little astounded and I know there was a lot of reaction here in town to that.

Should you be able to address things like that, that's good. But to increase the regulations is going to make a situation where building lots just increase in cost and we're going to keep going up on that cost so after a while we'll be

exporting our children out of this town because they won't be able to afford to live here.

Now, in the 15 years I've lived around the corner from here, I've met a lot of nice, new people coming into Southington but I haven't met any poor people that come into town. Talked to a few people who would like to move here that have not been able to afford it. Actually, I talked to a lot of people that would like to move into Southington because it is a good town. We have a good school system. We've got five exits right off of I-84. Beautiful hospital that the community built up over many years. A lot of positive things.

If we go overboard and create a knee jerk reaction to some of the precedent things that have gained so much attention, I'm afraid that we may just regret this in 20 or 30 years down the road when everything is so expensive that you don't know half the people that live in your own neighborhood.

Thank you for listening.

THE CHAIR: Thank you.

(Pause)

Is there anybody else that would like to speak this evening?

(Pause)

Is there anybody else this evening who would like to come forward and speak?

MS. SICA: I didn't use my whole five minutes. Can I get up?

(Chuckles)

ATTORNEY SCIOTA: We didn't keep track of how much you had left, though.

MR. DELSANTO: one minute, twelve seconds. No.

MS. SICA: One minute, twelve seconds. That's fine. You can keep track of me.

I just wanted to say, obviously, I was the first one to speak and then hearing the other people speak and I think it's been kind of a funny misconception of saying you know, people have a right to develop their land anyway they want and now they're not going to be able to develop their land. Nobody doesn't want people to develop their land.

We're talking about smart development. We're not talking about no development. I don't want no development. My sister just built a house. My sister in law is in the process of building a house. I don't, you know, me doing the petition, I didn't knock them in the head and say don't build a house. Of course. It's beautiful and I'm glad they're building houses.

I lived in this town my entire life. And, I went through the school system and I have children in the school system and I can tell you our schools are overcrowded. I understand what people say and if you're not in the environment, you're not seeing it, but education has changed. And, what we learned in school, children are today learning geometry in kindergarten. And, when your 5-year old comes and says, Mommy, I need to know how many polygons there are in this figure. You know, and you scratch your head, it's a whole different world.

When I went to school, there were 32 in a class. You can't teach 32 in a class and teach geometry. You know, you can't do it. So, it's a very different world and we need to know education has changed. So, it has changed our school system.

The only other thing I wanted to say was, I understand a lot of the builders, what they're saying and they're saying that if you do this, it won't, it will be prohibitive to building. It's not prohibitive to building. What it is prohibitive to is your profit margin.

And, maybe you were going to make \$150,000 to build those houses and maybe now you're only going to make 80,000 to build those houses. I can guarantee you that if you do pass tighter regulations, you might have other builders, maybe even better builders who are willing to make 80,000. And, who don't mind not making the 150. That's really what it comes down to.

You're saying people're going to have trouble building. No. It's just your profit margin won't be as high.

That's all I have to say.

THE CHAIR: Thank you.

All right. Well ---

(Undertone comments)

MR. BOVINO: (From the audience) I have a specific issue I failed to mention today before. It is technically new.

THE CHAIR: All right. We have one more person who would like to come forward and speak.

DIANA MACDOUGALL: Thank you for giving me the opportunity and the public the opportunity to speak with you this evening.

My name is Diana MacDougall and I live at 86 Williamsburg Drive. I've sold real estate in this town for 28 years.

So you can imagine I've seen a lot of changes. Let me just say the first thing that I would like to suggest is an architectural review committee. I think it's strongly needed and I think some of the comments about Queen Street and the development of Queen Street and the new project going up on West Street will have a great impact on the community and if we have an architectural review committee, it would really help the kind of look that we want.

But to go a little further, development in this town, for the most part in the first few years I sold real estate, the development of the town was going very smoothly. There was a lot of local builders, developers, building in town. And, they kind of felt the character of the town and so I think a lot of the reaction that we see is some of the out of town developers that come in and they look at the regulations and they maximize as much as they can.

I think that there are some things that you can do. I think that looking at some of the development and maybe asking for some better landscaping plans. I don't think squares are going to help anything. I think it is going to make developments look a lot like some of the development we've seen on Pleasant Street. And, we all know that we don't like that. So, I think that's going to be the wrong message that you want to send.

I think that the developers are trying very hard. Everybody, everybody, no matter what profession, has to make their dime. And, to try to say that we're going to get better developers or contractors in town if they make less money, I think might be slightly unrealistic.

The consumer is the one who will always end up paying. We know that. One of the developers that's coming into New York that is looking at the Ideal Forging, probably had the best phrase that I have heard lately and that is: stopping the brain drain that's going on in this town.

It's incredible as we see it. I mean, people're moving out of town. They're moving out of Connecticut because they can't afford it. Affordability housing is necessary. Trying to create zones where we can have maybe more open space, cluster development, and having more trees and naturalization around the housing would be better than trying to create bigger zones and

having fewer, I mean, I just think that looking at the regulations is important. But trying to stop development is not the way to go.

So, thank you very much.

THE CHAIR: Thank you.

ANTHONY DENORFIA: 133 Main Street, Southington. I wasn't really going to speak but when I heard that absolutely ridiculous comment about \$150,000 profit per house, I guess I had to come up and say: guys. It's an absolutely ridiculous comment. It's an absolutely ridiculous price.

MS. SICA: (From the audience) What about a \$1 million house?

(Chuckles)

MR. DENORFIA: I just, I wasn't prepared to speak tonight but I just came back from a two day, there's a group of 20 builders from New England that all get together once a year and we have a think tank. I just came back. We had a very interesting thing today. I'm just going to share a couple of things with you by -- we had an economist.

First, um, you had the housing starts that were mentioned. It would be very interesting if we didn't get the 2206 housing starts in town. And, I think you should look at the 2007 housing starts because any changes you should have is statistical.

Statewide, we've had a 30 percent drop in housing starts. And, the thing is, it's not stopped, yet. The downturn is expected to go through the year 2009. We're going to continue to have a slow down in the economy. There will not be an increase in the economy in residential construction until the year 2010.

So, if anybody out there thinks that we're going to have an outgrowth of housing and building in Connecticut, in Southington in particular, it ain't going to happen. Why? Because the customers aren't out there.

If you look at those numbers that were mentioned about the number of housing starts, again, what you have to do is go back to the master plan that was done in 1990. They projected 250 housing units per year were going to be done in the next ten years. We never came close to the 250. As a matter of fact, for some the years in the 1990's, if my memory served me right, I think we are talking about 60 and 70 housing starts.

The projection statewide as far as population, okay? For the next 30 years, Connecticut, the population is only going to

go up approximately 6 percent. We're only going to have 185,000 more people in the state in the year 2040 than we have right now. What is happening is and as Diana had mentioned, the brain, we're losing all our brain thrust, whatever. That's what is happening in the state. We're the most educated state in the country. We are the most affluent state in the country. The problem is we educate the kids and the kids don't stay. And, I had to practically bribe my own kids so they would come back and live in the state.

One of the interesting things, everybody says we want to cut down on residential, but we want business and industrial to grow. It's not a vacuum. It is not a vacuum.

Zoning and the regulations that we have are all set up where it's a balance. You can't have a new business in town unless you have people to support it. If you are declaring, let's say, you're making less housing units now or if you want to declare a moratorium on housing units, fine. You're going to do it. I mean, you've got the authority to do a lot of things. But what you are going to do is you are going to affect the businesses that are existing in town and the new businesses because none are going to open because we don't have the people.

I mean, I, the person I feel the sorriest for in all this is Lou Perillo. Here he goes out and he's got a budget. He's supposed to go out and get these industries. He goes and talks to these people and says, okay fine, where are my workers going to come from? Where are they going to live? Well, you know, we want your business, we want you to generate tax dollars in this town, but we don't want your employees. They can't live here.

Thank you.

THE CHAIR: Thank you.

DAVE CAYER: Good evening, my name is Dave Cayer, Mariondale Drive, Plantsville. And, I just have to get up here and just say that I may be the only one here but I like Queen Street.

(Chuckles)

I do. I remember when the G E Madison was there and the MacDonald's was built. I think it's appropriate -- the area, for businesses. And, I wanted to say that.

Also, I have a brother who is a Town Planner in Nebraska. And, he comes out here and he says he is claustrophobic. Too many trees. Too many hills. He lives in a grid. He helps plan and design grid development.

I don't think that's appropriate here. It's a unique terrain that we have here and it's different.

Also, I think Southington is a great product. People are trying to come here. They want to come here. And, I think we've done a good job so far.

One other point is we have spent money to hire professionals to give us advice. And, I hope that we listen to their advice when it comes forward. And, what I'm talking about is the companies that we have hired to give us advice on our future planning for Southington.

Thank you.

THE CHAIR: Thank you.

Anybody else that would like to speak this evening?

MR. DELSANTO: Zaya, could I make a quick comment? I just want to applaud the people that came out tonight and spoke. It's nice to hear compliments, which I think we rarely get. But it's also nice to hear a mix of different opinions.

We typically only hear the things we're doing wrong up here. So, not that I'm begging for your compliments, but it's also nice to hear both sides of the story. Typically, we hear one, just one-sided. Too much building and the regs are no good.

So, it was nice tonight to hear both sides of it. So, that's it.

Thank you for coming out.

THE CHAIR: Yes, it is --- we are very happy people came out this evening. It is important to get all aspects of this very important process.

A couple of points. We heard this evening a couple of times to make sure the Commission or there's a feeling that there is a knee jerk reaction to putting these regulations together. Just to maybe put some people's fears to rest, this Commission has been looking at the regulation review and this process for quite some time.

This process is actually an outgrowth of the Plan of Development that we have been working on that we have put together. This process started several years ago. As we worked

through the process of putting together and starting the Plan of Development, the natural progression of the development and all the work that went into the Plan of Development, the next phase of that is regulation review. This is not a knee jerk reaction of regulation review of anything that happened in town, any particular incident or activity. This is an outgrowth of the Plan of Development and that's what is driving the regulation review, not anything other than the Plan of Development and an orderly and proper development of the Town of Southington.

So, what we are doing is we're taking out the emotion of what's going in Southington and we're looking at the facts and we're focusing on the facts and we're focusing on the Plan of Development. And, proper and orderly, smart growth, smart development for the Town of Southington.

One comment that came out tonight was that people are discouraged about coming forward and that's a little discouraging to me and I think to the rest of the Commission. So, we hope that people're going to see this tonight and the people that are here tonight will go back and talk to their friends, their family. Because as Commissioner DelSanto said, we want to hear all sides of this.

You can hear one side all the time. You could hear the other side all the other time. We want to hear all sides of this because these regulations are going to serve everybody in the Town of Southington, not just one small group on either side. These regulations are for us and for our children and for our grandchildren for the long term of the Town of Southington.

So, we're going to do it right. This is not a knee jerk reaction and this is not something that people should be focusing on rumors or speculation that you're hearing right now. What you need to look at are the facts and you need to look at --- come to the meetings.

Because the next stage in this process, what we're going to be going through is we wanted to get the public input tonight. We will have more opportunity to hear things from the public as we go forward on this. As we get to the process of putting forward the regulations, what's going to happen is they will come to public hearing. The public hearing will be a formal public hearing where people will be able to come and give comments for and against the regulation reviews.

We will then close the public hearing come to debate amongst the Commission and we'll vote on them at that point.

So, please, if you know of people that are discouraged or don't think that they can make a difference; one person can make

a difference. So make sure they know that and come back and make sure your voices are heard.

Thank you all very much for coming tonight. We appreciate it.

MR. DELSANTO: Motion to adjourn.

MR. SAUCIER: Second.

(Whereupon, the meeting was adjourned at 8:40 o'clock, p.m.)