

Booklet 1: Planning Primer

Overview

South Windsor is updating its Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD). A POCD is a long range land use plan. It will identify strategies to:

- preserve important resources,
- guide future development,
- enhance community character, and
- promote quality of life.

What Is Planning?

Webster's Dictionary defines 'planning' as:

- to draw up a plan of,
- to have in mind, or
- to formulate a way to achieve or do.

'Planning' is a continuous, iterative process to keep a community appropriately matched to its conditions and trends. Planning is a process for making informed decisions about the future.

Planning is the foundation that provides a framework and direction for a community to follow. While preparing a POCD can take one to two years, implementation may last 10 to 20 years.

Why and When Should We Plan?

Planning is something that we perform every day. We plan our routes to work, shopping needs, social gatherings, financial needs, and a variety of other things. In fact, we often make plans without thinking about it.

Planning provides the opportunity to:

- focus on the 'bigger picture' and identify significant goals,
- promote overall values,
- coordinate efforts and produce consistent results, and
- achieve efficiency and economy in implementation.

South Windsor has a strong history of planning town-wide and for specific areas of town.

About Plans of Conservation & Development

A Plan of Conservation and Development is a tool for guiding the future of a community. Its purpose is to establish a common vision for the future of a community and then determine policies that will help attain that vision. The goals and recommendations of the Plan are intended to reflect what South Windsor residents feel is desirable for the community in the future.

A Plan of Conservation and Development becomes an official document after a public hearing and adoption by the Planning and Zoning Commission. Once adopted, the Plan is used to:

- coordinate development of the municipality,
- guide land use decisions and regulations, and
- provide programs for implementation.

However, the Plan of Conservation and Development is primarily an advisory document. It is intended to guide local officials and to provide a framework for consistent decision-making with regard to conservation and development activities in the Town of South Windsor over the next decade or so.

How Will The Plan Be Created?

Updating the Plan of Conservation and Development will involve an intensive process. The Planning and Zoning Commission will seek input from residents, Town officials, staff, and others and then determine appropriate strategies for South Windsor's future.

The process will include opportunities for public input at workshops and through a community survey. Local officials and members of various boards and commissions will also have the opportunity to discuss those issues that they work on regularly.

Once the Commission has created a first draft of the Plan, there will be additional opportunities for public input.

Prior to adoption, the Plan must be referred to the Town Council and the regional planning agency for review.

On Plans and Planning

"If you don't know where you are going, you'll wind up somewhere else."

Yogi Berra, Baseball Legend, Renowned Punster

"Plans are of little importance, but planning is essential."

Winston Churchill

"Our goals can only be reached through a vehicle of a plan, in which we must fervently believe, and upon which we must vigorously act. There is no other route to success."

Pablo Picasso, Artist

"Each generation imagines itself to be more intelligent than the one that went before it, and wiser than the one that comes after it."

George Orwell, Author

Highlights of State Laws on POCDs

Connecticut General States (CGS) 8-23 sets forth requirements for a municipal plan of conservation and development. The following summarizes those parts of the statute related to the content of a POCD.

The Commission **shall**:

- prepare, adopt and amend a POCD
- review the POCD at least once every ten years

The Commission **may**:

- adopt such geographical, functional or other amendments to the plan or parts of the plan
- prepare, amend and adopt plans for the redevelopment and improvement of districts or neighborhoods which contain special problems or opportunities

The Plan **may**:

- show the commission's recommendation for
 - conservation and preservation of traprock and other ridgelines
 - airports, parks, playgrounds and other public grounds
 - the general location, relocation and improvement of schools
 - the general location and extent of public utilities...for water, sewerage, light, power, transit and other purposes
 - extent and location of public housing projects
 - programs for implementation of the plan
 - proposed priority funding areas

The Plan **shall**:

- be a statement of policies, goals and standards for the physical and economic development
- provide for a system of principal thoroughfares, sidewalks, multipurpose trail
- promote coordinated development to have compact, transit accessible, pedestrian-oriented mixed use development patterns and land reuse, recommend the most desirable use of land for residential, recreational, commercial, industrial, conservation and other purposes and include a map showing proposed land uses
- recommend the most desirable density of population
- note inconsistencies with the following growth management principles: redevelopment and revitalization of commercial centers; expansion of housing opportunities and design choices; concentration of development around transportation node; conservation and restoration of the natural environment, cultural and historical resources and existing farmlands; protection of environmental assets critical to public health and safety; integration of planning across all levels of government
- make provision for the development of housing opportunities
- promote housing choice and economic diversity in housing
- consider:
 - the community development action plan
 - the need for affordable housing
 - the need for protection of existing and potential drinking water supplies
 - the use of cluster development and other development
 - the state plan of conservation and development
 - the regional plan of development
 - physical, social, economic and governmental conditions and trends
 - the needs of the municipality including the objectives of energy-efficient patterns of development,
 - protection and preservation of agriculture

How Can Residents Be Involved?

Information about the project, notices of upcoming meetings and the current Plan of Conservation and Development can be found on the Town's website at: <http://www.southwindsor.org/pocdupdate>.

The Town's Facebook page will also alert residents of POCD-related activities.

There will be public workshops during the POCD update and residents may attend working sessions of the Planning and Zoning Commission to hear discussions. For additional information on these and other meetings, contact the Town Planner, Michele Lipe, at 860-644-2511 ext. 252.

