

**TOWN OF COLUMBIA
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION**

Adella G. Urban Administrative Offices Conference Room
323 Route 87, Columbia, CT
Monday, June 27, 2016 – 7:00 p.m.

Regular Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Chair Rick Nassiff, Don Schofield, Robert Powell, Ernest Jay Starkel, Tom Currier, Vera Englert, Richard Napolitano, and Larry Preston (Alternate)

Members Excused: Walter Tabor (alternate)

Staff Present: Town Planner Paula Stahl, Board Clerk Terri Ingersoll

Others Present: First Selectman Carmen Vance, Dan O’Neill

1. **CALL TO ORDER** – The meeting was called to order at 7:01pm
2. **ROLL CALL AND SEATING OF ALTERNATES** - all members present
3. **ADDITIONS/CHANGES TO AGENDA** - None
4. **APPROVAL OF PZC REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF June 13, 2016**
R. Nassiff **MOVED** to **APPROVE** the Regular Meeting Minutes of June 13, 2016 as written.
E.J. Starkel **SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED 6-0-1.**
5. **AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS** - None
6. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS (Discussion/Possible Action):**
 - 6.1 **Adoption of the 2016 Plan of Conservation and Development**

P. Stahl discussed the revisions she suggested be made to the draft that was presented at the Public Hearing.

To address concerns raised about the specific items to be added to Recreation Park, she suggested deleting those strategies, and instead insert a strategy to implement the master plan to address needs determined by current and previous outreach efforts and surveys. And revise the implementation plan accordingly; budget for current and future capital improvements as outlined in the master plan, and instead of listing specific items, have tasks to implement phase 1 and phase 2 of the master plan.

CRCOG’s referral letter suggested including addressing natural disaster hazards mitigation. P. Stahl suggested inserting a sentence under Emergency Services to state that the town has an Emergency Management Director who is responsible for preparation and response coordination during an emergency or disaster, and add the strategy to continue to implement WINCOG’s plan. Also, to insert a new implementation task on Page 126 to work with CRCOG to incorporate WINCOG’s regional plan, and to continue to improve the town’s readiness for a natural disaster.

To put a stronger emphasis on the town’s need to address its aging population, P. Stahl suggested revising the topic on Page 80 to focus on Senior Services, and not just the Senior Center. She suggested adding the following: By 2025, demographic projections indicate that 47% of the town’s residents will be over 55. Of that, 1,290 will be between the ages of 65 and 79, and almost 400 will be 80 or older. This shift in Columbia’s demographics creates challenges that warrant attention. Columbia’s Commission on Aging conducted a survey of Columbia residents in 2015, the results

indicated that lack of transportation and affordable housing, and social isolation were the primary problems seniors experienced. Other concerns expressed related to home repairs, household chores and lack of information on local events and activities. The Town contracts with Windham Dial-A-Ride to provide transportation for Columbia residents, however transportation is limited to the Windham Region Transit District region of nine towns north and east of Columbia. Revise the goal to: Columbia's senior residents have the services needed to allow them to continue to reside in Town. And, add the following strategies: plan for the community services to meet the needs of a growing senior population; maintain and enhance town programs and services for seniors such as transportation, meal programs and household maintenance assistance; and seek ways to communicate information on services and activities. Also, on page 51 a sentence would be added to the last paragraph stating that a mixed-use village could also meet the needs of seniors wishing to live near stores, restaurants and other services.

In addition, there were a few typographical corrections, and minor changes for clarification.

Members agreed that the revisions reflected the comments made at the public hearing.

R. Nassif **MOVED to APOPT** the Town of Columbia 2016 Plan of Conservation and Development as proposed with the following revisions:

Revise the strategies on page 91 and implementation on page 126, to refer to implementing the Recreation Park master plan

Incorporate natural hazards mitigations on pages 79 and 102, and insert a new implementation task to page 125

Revise page 80 to focus on the issue of senior services and strategies to meet the needs of a growing senior population.

D. Schofield **SECONDED. Motion Passed 6-1-0 with R. Napolitano voting against.**

7. NEW BUSINESS – None

8. REGULATION REVISIONS

8.1 Updated Zone Change Priorities and status report

P. Stahl reviewed the new list that is based on discussion at a previous PZC meeting. She said a few of the items are ready for commission review. Discussion ensued on the topics and priorities.

9. COMMUNICATIONS AND REPORTS - None

10. COMMISSION OPEN DISCUSSION. R. Nassiff mentioned the passing of Dick Young.

11. AUDIENCE OF CITIZENS- None

12. ADJOURNMENT

R. Nassif **MOVED to ADJOURN** at 7:43, E.J. Starkel **SECONDED. MOTION PASSED 7-0-0.**

Respectfully submitted by Terri Ingersoll

Please see the minutes of subsequent meetings for the approval of these minutes and any corrections hereto.