

TOWN OF WESTERLY
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN CITIZENS' ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Regular Meeting – January 24, 2018 – 5:00 p.m.
Development Services Conference Room – Town Hall – 45 Broad Street

A. 5:00 P.M. CALL TO ORDER

Members Present: Gail Mallard, Chair
Joseph MacAndrew, Vice Chair
Faith Bessette-Zito
Stuart Blackburn
Nancy Richmond

Members Absent: James J. Federico, III
Gina T. Fuller

Liaisons Present: Catherine DeNoia, Planning Board

Staff Present: Benjamin Delaney, Planning Associate

B. 5:00 P.M. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion to approve the minutes of December 13, 2017 was made by Mr. MacAndrew and seconded by Ms. Bessette-Zito. The motion **CARRIED** by unanimous vote.

A motion to approve the minutes of January 10, 2018 with the revision of "...cost of maintain..." to "...cost of maintaining..." was made by Ms. Bessette-Zito and seconded by Mr. MacAndrew. The motion **CARRIED** by unanimous vote.

C. 5:02 P.M. DISCUSSION – FUTURE MEETINGS

Ms. Mallard stated the Committee may complete its review of the draft Comprehensive Plan at the meeting and cited she had requested copies of the Appendices be provided to the Committee once finalized.

Mr. Delaney confirmed a Committee version was being kept separate from the Planning Board version.

D. 5:05 P.M. DISCUSSION – DRAFT PRIMARY REPORT AND APPENDICES

Appendix I: Historic and Cultural Resources

Page 4

The Committee was in consensus to revise "The Westerly Revolving Fund..." as "The Westerly Revolving Fund has also purchased and rehabilitated an existing historic mixed-use structure at 6 Beach Street."

Primary Report

Page 1

The Committee was in consensus to identify retitle the cover page as "Comprehensive Plan: Primary Report."

Page 14

The Committee was in consensus to revise "Westerly's population diversity... its industrial boom." as "Modern Westerly's land was first inhabited by Native Americans and its population diversity began in the seventeenth century, with the arrival of colonial settlers. Immigrant families who came to

work in the town's mills and quarries during its industrial boom in the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries further diversified the population."

Pages 14-15

The Committee was in consensus to revise "There is a... State and country." → "There is a recognition that commercial sprawl has turned a significant portion of Route 1, including Granite Street, Franklin Street, and Post Road, into a generic commercial arterial strip which lacks character."

Pages 16

The Committee was in consensus to revise "Westerly granite... as, and elsewhere." → "Westerly granite is featured in architectural elements of structures such as Westerly Town Hall, the War Memorial at Wilcox Park and the United States Post Office in the Downtown and on Elm and Main Streets, and is prominently visible in various handsome buildings elsewhere within the Town and elsewhere across the United States."

Page 22

The Committee requested clarification on the combined municipal budget (FY17 \$96,863,476) in comparison to the Grand List (FY17 \$6,250,339,070) and property tax rate (FY17 \$11.36/\$1,000 assessed value) cited in Table 2-1 Facts and Statistics.

Page 24

The Committee was in consensus to revise "Maintaining a balance between the competing needs of seasonal and year-round residents and short-term visitors..." as "Maintaining a balance among the competing needs of seasonal residents, year-round residents and short-term visitors..."

Page 29

The Committee was in consensus to revise "In total, there... vacant year-round" as "In total, there were 12,320 housing units in Westerly in 2010 with 21.5% identified by the US Census as being vacant (as defined by the US Census Bureau); however, as noted above, 71.2%, of vacant units are used seasonally."

Page 31

The Committee was in consensus to insert the sentence "Therefore, vacant units as traditionally understood compose approximately 6.0% of the total housing stock." after "Vacant housing units... of vacant units." under section 3.2.3 Housing Characteristics.

Page 35

The Committee was in consensus to revise "The Town of... for affordable housing." as "The Town of Westerly is "meeting local housing needs" through its long-standing commitment to the preservation of its traditional rental housing stock. The Town should continue to seek legislative action that will exempt Westerly from the 10% mandate of the Low and Moderate Income Housing Act and allow the community to focus on the rental market as the vehicle to address the State's need for affordable housing."

Page 36

The Committee was in consensus to revise "Westerly and its... last several years:" as "Westerly and its surrounding area have achieved significant national and international distinctions:"

Page 38

The Committee was in consensus to revise “For several years... and local neighborhoods.” as “For several years the Town of Westerly has struggled with the review and revision of ordinances and regulations that would promote longer stays by visitors and tourists while limiting impact on the environment and local neighborhoods.”

Page 51

The Committee was in consensus to switch “measures” and “actions” under the bulleted text “According to the...”

Page 67-68

Mr. Delaney confirmed he would update the recycling and overall diversion rates.

Page 68

The Committee was in consensus to revise “Currently, the Town is also considering the closure of another elementary school...” as “In June 2017, the Town also closed another elementary school...”

Page 74

The Committee was in consensus to revise “This Plan specifically... not be enlarged.” as “This Plan specifically provides that no commercial zoning districts should be enlarged.”

Page 75

The Committee was in consensus to revise “Town officials necessarily... for nearby residents.” As “Town officials necessarily must therefore encourage the reuse of underutilized industrial facilities provided that doing so is consistent with environmental considerations and quality of life for nearby residents and no expansion in the area of industrial zoning districts occurs.”

Page 76

The Committee was in consensus to revise “Land in the... Space and Recreation.” as “Lands in several zoning districts are protected in perpetuity by conservation easements; therefore, these lands will be rezoned Open Space and Recreation.”

The Committee was in consensus to update the bulleted text “An Airport Protection... buildings and trees.” as “An Airport Protection Overlay District has been developed as required in RIGL § 1-3-5(1), which states that municipalities shall establish an airport hazard area to specify appropriate land uses with restricted heights for buildings and trees.”

Page 78

The Committee was in consensus to revise “The Plan prohibits... Route 1 corridor.” as “The Plan prohibits the expansion of commercial and industrial zoning districts and encourages redevelopment of existing under-utilized commercial and industrial space, particularly in the Route 1 corridor.”

Page 48

The Committee was in consensus to update “Additional shared vehicle... surrounding the downtown.”

General Discussion

The Committee was in consensus for each member to identify their top ten action items for discussion at the next meeting.

E. 6:55 P.M. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

F. 6:55 P.M. ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn was made by Ms. Bessette-Zito and seconded by Mr. MacAndrew. The motion **CARRIED** by unanimous vote.

Minutes for the January 24, 2018 meeting submitted by:



Benjamin Delaney

Benjamin Delaney, Planning Associate: