

TOWN COUNCIL SPECIAL JOINT MEETING WITH THE PLANNING BOARD  
TUESDAY EVENING - JANUARY 12, 2016

TOWN COUNCIL PRESENT: Calouro, Sweeney, Parella and Stuart

TOWN COUNCIL ABSENT: Herreshoff

PLANNING BOARD PRESENT: Murgo, Bilotti, Rossi, Katz

PLANNING BOARD ABSENT: Squatrito, Millard

ALSO PRESENT: Antonio A. Teixeira, Town Administrator  
Andrew M. Teitz, Esq., Assistant Town Solicitor  
Diane M. Williamson, Director of Community  
Development  
Edward M. Tanner, Principal Planner

The Council met in special joint session with the Planning Board on Tuesday evening, January 12, 2016 in the Town Hall, Council Chambers, beginning at 7:05 o'clock PM, Council Chairman Calouro presiding for the Council; Anthony Murgo, Board Secretary, presiding for the Planning Board.

1. **JOINT PUBLIC HEARING** - 10-Year Update to the Bristol Comprehensive Plan, **2<sup>nd</sup> reading and adoption**. All of the Comprehensive Plan Elements are being updated as follows: Vision, Goals, Policies, Land Use, Housing, Economic Development and Agriculture, Natural, Historical, Cultural Resources, Open Space Conservation and Recreation, Circulation and Transportation, Services and Facilities and Implementation Program. These amendments are made in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 45-22.2 of the General Laws of the State of Rhode Island. (Ref. Section 1-11 of the Town Code)

Stuart/Sweeney - Voted unanimously to close the public hearing (Town Council)

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Rossi/Katz - Voted unanimously to close the Public Hearing (Planning Board).

Katz/Rossi - Voted unanimously to recommend that the Town Council approve the 10-Year Update to the Bristol Comprehensive Plan.

Sweeney/Stuart - Voted unanimously to consider this action to constitute the

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Second Reading for adoption of the  
Comprehensive Plan Update. Advertise in  
local newspaper.

Prior to the votes taken, Council Chairman Calouro and Mr. Murgio opened the Public Hearing.

Director of Community Development Williamson explained that the 10-Year Update of the Bristol Comprehensive Plan was a revised document to address the comments received from the Rhode Island Division of Planning. It includes the comments and her responses. She thanked Principal Planner Tanner for his assistance with reviewing maps. This document will be submitted under the interim guidelines. The State will have 30 days to review the revisions. It is anticipated that this process will result in a 10 year approval. Zoning ordinance and maps will then need to be reviewed. She thanked the approximately 60 public members of the various steering committees involved in this revision, a few of whom were present.

Councilman Stuart thanked the Planning office and committee members involved. His only reservation was to be aware of the fact and keep an eye regarding housing and HUD, CDBG, urban development, Rhode Island Road Map.

Director of Community Development Williamson responded that the CDBG requirement was for affirmative furthering of fair housing. She felt that Bristol is in the forefront for affordable housing and is actively promoting the provision of affordable housing. Assistant Solicitor Teitz added that adopting this plan will support this goal.

Mr. Bilotti had not read the section in question, but he noted that Bristol had not used all of the CDBG funds for affordable housing. Director of Community Development Williamson responded that some funds were used for publicity, posters, etc., to educate the public against discrimination in housing. Councilwoman Parella added that the funds are directed toward people who have issues with housing and industry to promote jobs and job training for Town residents. Economic stability is an important factor. The same is being done in other communities. Dr. Rossi stated the environment is important.

It was the consensus of all that the Town should continue the focus as is.

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In response to Councilman Stuart's question, Assistant Solicitor Teitz indicated the plan can be amended up to four times a year--this is a living document.

In response to Council Chairman Calouro's question, Assistant Solicitor Teitz stated that if there are only scrivener's errors, Director of Community Development Williamson could make those changes without the requirement of another meeting.

Councilwoman Parella asked Director of Community Development Williamson if there was anything in this plan or the comments that were a surprise or a shock. Director of Community Development Williamson responded that the hardest things to respond to were:

- 1) Many of the Town policies were written as acts and acts were written as policy. She reworked those areas.
- 2) Compliance with affordable housing requirement was a challenge. She looked at Barrington. She had to take it out 30 years and had to consider the market.

Dr. Rossi stated it has to do with the demographics of the community. He asked whether a standing committee for hazardous had been created. Director of Community Development Williamson responded, "not yet." She said she had to include climate change. Dr. Rossi suggested his group could assess that.

Council Chairman Calouro asked what is triggered at the State if this plan is approved at this meeting. Director of Community Development Williamson responded that the Town should look at items in the short-term to-do list. Zoning ordinance and zoning maps must be updated within 18 months. Subdivision regulations must be updated within 24 months. Parcels that need rezoning must be identified.

Councilman Sweeney asked about circulation maps, roundabouts. Director of Community Development Williamson responded that this is will be done in cooperation with RI DOT. Councilman Stuart suggested intertwining the 3<sup>rd</sup> lane and utilities. He reported that people in Warren would like a bike lane. He did not feel that was reasonable until the traffic situation is handled.

Councilwoman Parella asked that consideration be given to access to medical care and medical homes; bring in recreation people.

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Nobody in the health field talks to planners; include in comprehensive plan.

Council Chairman Calouro invited comments from the public.

Emily Spinard of 35 Dartmouth Street expressed concern regarding protection of wetlands in the Silver Creek area. She felt there were discrepancies with references to wetland areas. Identifying areas for development that involve wetlands (5B identifies mixed use) is a contradiction to wetlands protection.

Director of Community Development Williamson responded that the discrepancies may be because one map identifies wetlands and another map identifies areas for development. The Town of Bristol wants to protect wetlands. During discussion it was noted that the RI DEM makes the determination regarding wetlands. Wetlands are not within the control of the Town. This plan is a general document and where the wetlands are is not known exactly. It is not advisable to zone private property as "open space" when the determination is not clear. Property owners could then seek payment for the loss of buildable portions of their land. Developers are currently required to obtain RI DEM approval regarding possible wetlands. Every application is carefully reviewed by the Planning Board, including drainage and run off. The Town has been and continues to have to mitigate flooding issues that have resulted from earlier wetlands decisions by RI DEM. This plan is intended to give the Town the tools needed to identify wetlands and will require cooperation with property owners. This does not include only the wetlands but also the estuary, drainage, run off areas. Bristol is required to review zoning maps within 18 months.

Solicitor Teitz cautioned that Bristol must respond to the State within a timeframe. If changes are made now, the plan would need to go back to the State for review.

There was no further testimony given regarding the Comprehensive Plan.

**OTHER BUSINESS (Planning Board)**

**Correspondence**

**Invoice for minutes**

Murgo/Rossi - Voted unanimously to approve payment of invoice from Lola

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Wright in the amount of \$300.00 for recording and transcribing the minutes of the Planning Board's regular meeting of November 17, 2015.

**Approval of Minutes**

Katz/Rossi - Voted unanimously to continue approval the minutes of the November 17, 2015 regular meetings of the Planning Board to the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Planning Board.

**Adjourn**

There being no further business, upon a motion by Mr. Bilotti, seconded by Mr. Katz, Mr. Murgio declared this meeting to be adjourned at 8:20 o'clock PM.

There being no further business, upon a motion by Councilman Stuart, seconded by Councilman Sweeney and voted unanimously the Chairman declared this special meeting to be adjourned at 8:21 o'clock PM.

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Lola Wright, Secretary Pro-Tempore