

**TOWN OF CROMWELL
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
SPECIAL MEETING
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 2006
7:00 P.M. TOWN HALL ROOM 224/5**

MINUTES

Present: First Selectman P. Beaulieu, Deputy First Selectman S. Stachura, R. Newton,
A. Waters, M. Johnson (arrived at 7:50), S. Salvatore

Absent: F. Monnes

Also Present: Director of Planning and Development C. Minor, Economic Development
Consultant C. Stevenson, Chairman Economic Development Commission
R. Nobile, members of the Economic Development Commission, POCD
Chairman T. Madden and members of the Plan of Conservation and
Development Committee, Public and Press.

A. CALL TO ORDER

First Selectman Beaulieu called the Special meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

B. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

This being a special meeting the agenda stands approved as published.

C. CITIZENS COMMENTS

1. Lauren McEntire, Pasco Hill Road –Chairman of the Conservation Commission and member of the POCD Subcommittee –Stated that the POCD sub-committee worked hard and hopes that P&Z will put the POCD to good use.
2. Dick Coughlin, Glenwood Terrace - member of the POCD Subcommittee –Hopes that once the plan is approved it will be used. Suggested that the POCD committee stay intact and keep the focus on the plan. Mr. Coughlin also suggested that after the plan is approved and in place a Grant Writer should be brought on board.
3. Peter Keithan, Iron Gate Lane – former member of Economic Development Commission and member of the P&Z–Feels that it is a good program. Hopes to keep the ball rolling.
4. Marvin Selsky, Willowbrook Road –Feels that it is important to delete the mix-used zone as shown on page 27. Stated that mix-used zone should be kept to Route 372. Recommended that various Boards and Commissions should meet regularly with citizen’s groups to determine their concerns.
5. Victor Harpley - member of Economic Development Commission – Stated that Mr. Selsky might be asking the wrong question and asked, for clarification, if this is binding? First Selectman Beaulieu stated that it is not binding.

D. NEW BUSINESS

1. Discussion and action Plan of Conservation and Development

POCD Chairman Madden and Director of Planning and Development C. Minor presented the Final Draft of the Plan of Conservation and Development to the Board of Selectmen.

R. Newton Comments:

- Plan needs to be implemented and used as a working tool.
- Advisory POCD Committee should continue to oversee the plan.
- Page 15 should be clarified; Plan states that Zoning Board is elected and not appointed as it says in the plan. 8-23 of the General Statutes states that P&Z Commission adopts the POCD not the Board of Selectmen.
- Waterfront Development...Connecticut River is a major natural resource for the citizens of the Town of Cromwell. Whatever development is proposed along the Connecticut River should maximize public access and use of the River by the citizens. Would not be in favor of seeing development that dedicates riverfront property to private use.
- Multiple Family Housing in the Town Center –(North of New Lane and Hillside the former Pierson Property) –There was a plan when Pierson was going out of business to propose exactly this kind of higher density affordable income housing that seemed to have validity to it. We should not forget that plan exists. If anything gets people to live closer to the Historic downtown area it is a good thing. It promotes the village atmosphere.
- Insure that new housing is located in areas where the infrastructure can support it and protect the environment.
- Planned Office Development – For years has been in favor of Planned Office Development or Planned Business Development instead of the term Industrial. Mr. Newton strongly endorses the continuation of Planned Office Development; it is a great Economic Development tool.
- Strongly agrees that a new Senior Center is needed. Does not necessarily agree that Town Hall should be converted to a new Senior Center and finding a new location for a Town Hall. Suggested that a good place for a new Senior Center location may be near the River.
- Asked if the letter that was sent by MidState Regional Planning Agency regarding the initiatives in the POCD relating to the Six Principles of Smart Growth was being addressed? C. Minor stated that he is in receipt of the letter and is working with Jeff Cosgrove at MidState.
- Would be careful about establishing Historic Districts.
- Interesting POCD, thinks it's a good plan for the Town of Cromwell and the future and should be adopted pretty much as it is.

S. Stachura (Member of POCD sub-committee) Comments:

- Page 3; Purpose of POCD is to establish preferred land use plan, establish potential plan for the town, establish benchmark evaluation; looking out for the best interest of the Town and not mandate that these things are done.
- Increase scope of work for a Town Grant Writer on a regular basis.
- Improve Public Involvement –POCD Committee and P&Z and Public should meet yearly to see that things are on track.
- Update use of Land Regulations – Once this POCD is adopted P&Z should appoint a sub-committee to review their regulations to look at the overall picture.

- Community Center is a big issue. The board should look at getting a committee together to look at a Community Center; where to put it and what should be included, a pool, senior center etc.
- Design and construction of Historical Main Street Landscape –A lot of committees have worked on this in the past. We should support this; a Grant Writer may prove to be beneficial in this matter.
- Supported a comprehensive sidewalk plan.
- Town missed the boat on Active 55 Adult Housing District.
- Town should look at purchasing River Front property as it becomes available.
- Additional Parking is needed in the Downtown area.

M. Johnson Comments:

- Asked if any grants are available specifically for towns or cities that are on the River's Edge? C. Minor stated not to his knowledge but he would find out. If the Board of Selectmen identifies a need in a particular area they would turn to a professional grant writer to see if the money could be found. Mr. Johnson asked if the board could be advised of all available grants in the future. Mr. Minor stated that he would be happy to comply with the request.
The DECD is responsible for funneling all of the HUD money to the Towns in Connecticut. Mr. Minor recently attended a Workshop at DECD on the process for applying for the Small Cities Grants, the program for which Cromwell is eligible. All kinds of programs are eligible, housing rehab programs, infrastructure in low-income areas and economic development, just identify the need and they will look into locating the funds.
- Asked if mixed used business and housing in the Historical area is part of the plan? Mr. Madden stated that the New Lane is where they are talking about Medium density.

S. Salvatore Comments:

- Feels that the POCD is a comprehensive document. Agrees with the sections regarding Affordable Housing, the Historic and the River Front property.
- Asked who takes the ball and runs with it after P&Z adopt the plan? C. Minor responded that the plan recommends that the POCD Advisory Committee be kept together to monitor the plan.
- Asked when a grant writer would come into play? C. Minor stated that Cromwell uses a Professional Grant Writer as needed. The Grant Writer is compensated out of the grant at no cost to the taxpayers. P. Beaulieu stated that he is notified when grant money is available and passes the information on to the proper departments.

F. Monnes – Was not able to attend the meeting but sent written comments regarding the POCD, which are attached to the minutes. First Selectman brought up one of Mr. Monnes' points.

- Regarding the Development of the Riverfront; Lived in Town his entire life and pointed out in his lifetime the River flooded every five or six years. Asked if we are going to build a dike or dredge the river so the area could be developed?

P. Beaulieu Comments:

- Thought the best things about the POCD were the goals, objectives and policies. They were enunciated very well. The report turned some of the things that were identified in the past as wishes into actual plans.
- As far as Zoning or land use decisions, there has been a lot of talk about larger lot sizes as a way to slow down the increase of density. The POCD seems to avoid the issue. Mr. Madden stated that they did not avoid it at all but it is his perception that is going to be something that P&Z will have to look at.
- Since this is something that is done every ten years, he would expect that the scope of this would be a ten-year time frame. What he sees here is a longer scope. For example, the downtown district and the need for higher density housing plan for that area. Cromwell Growers and Bartolottas' are rapidly expanding and Mr. Beaulieu can't see high-density housing on that property in the near future. Mr. Minor stated that the POCD is just a tool, until the P&Z actually changes the zone for a piece of land, the owner can continue to use it as it is currently zoned. Right now it is just an idea. If the zone change is made and the property owner disagrees they could appeal. If the appeal stands, the property owner could then take the decision to court.
- Was there a specific recommendation for acquiring land on the Riverfront? Mr. Madden stated that acquiring land on the Riverfront was not specified in the plan.
- During the School construction they discussed putting in a multi-function field at the High School. Was this discussed during the POCD process? S. Stachura stated that the topic was discussed under 'field improvements'.

Dick Newton: Question, what happens now?

Craig Minor:

1. Board of Selectmen will submit memo to P&Z, hopefully it will be a recommendation to adopt the plan, with the following comments or suggestions.
2. That document will be read into the record of the November 9th P&Z meeting. Mr. Minor will make sure that the document is distributed to P&Z members and the advisory committee prior to the meeting.
3. The Consultants from Buffalo, New York, will make a presentation on the POCD.
4. Public Comments will follow the presentation.
5. Depending on the outcome, if the general consent is that the POCD is on the right track, the recommendation will be to keep the Public Hearing open and give the commission and consultant time to revise the POCD. The Public Hearings would be continued two weeks later. At that time the P&Z Commission will adopt it.
 - T. Madden recommended that the POCD Advisory Group should meet yearly with P&Z to make sure that the plan is being followed.
 - First Selectman Beaulieu thanked the Advisory Committee for their hard work.

(Citizens Comments continued) 6. Michael Millane, Field Road –(was allowed to speak at the end of the meeting because he was given the incorrect starting time of the meeting.) Mr. Millane reviewed the plan two months ago. He concurred that the committee put a lot of work into it. Mr. Millane spoke regarding; the higher density housing in the New Lane area and also recommended that all of Main Street be zoned for mixed use. Mr. Millane stated that he is concerned because this is a ten-year plan and as far as his business is concerned, he has no intention of going out of business in the next ten years and seriously doubts that Cromwell Growers or Bartolottas' have any intention of going out of business within the next ten years. The POCD indicates Open Space and Premium Office for Mr. Millane's land. That concerns him. Mr. Millane offered to meet with a small group of people to discuss his concerns and talk about his plans for the future. Mr. Millane also recommended that a plan that involves the Post Office should be considered, if possible.

A. Waters Comment:

- Cromwell Growers is growing by leaps and bounds. In today's world corporate American can come along and say, I want to buy you up. After ten years or so they might not be turning a large profit and decide to pull out of Cromwell. If the property goes back on the market that would be the time to implement the POCD recommendations.

First Selectman Beaulieu asked that some of the board's bulleted comments be included in the minutes so they could be transmitted to the next level of review.

E. ADJOURNMENT

Motion made by S. Stachura seconded by R. Newton and *unanimously carried* to adjourn at 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Re Matus
Secretary

Paul C. Beaulieu
First Selectman