

1 **SPECIAL MEETING**

2 **Joint Meeting of the Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) Implementation**  
3 **Committee and the Planning and Zoning Commission**

4 **Induction of Implementation Committee**

5 **Monday, January 30, 2017**

6 **7:00 p.m.**

7 **Wallingford Town Hall – Room 315**

8  
9 **PRESENT:** Jim Seichter Chair Planning and Zoning Commission; Armand Menard; James  
10 Fitzsimmons, Gina Morgenstein (all from Planning and Zoning); Christopher Shortell Town  
11 Councilor and Tom Laffin, Vice-Chair, Town Council; Mary Heffernon -Chair Conservation  
12 Commission; Liz Landow, Wallingford Center, Inc.; Don Crouch, Recreation Commission;  
13 Patricia Cymbala, Economic Development Commission; Maria Harlow, Spanish Community of  
14 Wallingford (SCOW); Patrick Birney, Public Utilities Commission; Kacie Costello, Town Planner.

15 Mr. Seichter called the Meeting to order at 7 p.m. and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

16 Mr. Seichter said this was the initial meeting of the Implementation Committee for the Plan of  
17 Conservation and Development, (POCD), and thanked everyone for volunteering to be on the  
18 Committee. Mr. Seichter said the POCD was approved last year and one of the key items put  
19 into the Plan was to set up an Implementation Committee. He said clearly, this Committee  
20 cannot direct any of the various Commissions, Agencies or Departments targeted in the Plan to  
21 do anything. Mr. Seichter said what we are looking to do for this Committee is to look at the  
22 targeted items in the POCD, and to conduct meetings on a quarterly basis and to see what  
23 progress is being made towards this Plan.

24 Mr. Seichter turned the meeting over to Ms. Costello who said the focus should be on the first  
25 part of the agenda, but in moving forward, the focus will be on the Action Agenda. Ms. Costello  
26 provided a brief background.

27 **Introduction of POCD Implementation Committee**

- 28 1. Brief overview of Plan of Conservation and Development – Purpose, General  
29 Findings/Outcomes/Recommendations/Application

30 She noted the Planning and Zoning Commission adopted the updated POCD on June 6, 2016.  
31 She said the focus of the Steering Committee that works on the POCD is how to keep the  
32 momentum rolling. She said the Consultant’s recommendation was to form an Implementation

1 Committee. She said the Plan of Development identified an action agenda and said there  
2 seemed to be a feeling expressed by P&Z, the Steering Committee and members of the  
3 Community that there wasn't enough focus in the previous plans in terms of specific directions.

4 Ms. Costello said the focus will be on specific steps each agency can pursue. She said each of  
5 these agencies is composed of one to two members. She said the idea is two-fold, one being to  
6 keep each agency accountable and to report back to each other, and co-operate and be able to  
7 work together and to keep one another informed. Ms. Costello pointed out that a lot of these  
8 items require action by one or more agency. She said the Implementation Committee is an  
9 advisory committee to the Planning and Zoning Commission and stressed this is two-way; the  
10 Planning and Zoning Commission is the keeper of the Plan of Development and the idea is that  
11 once every two years to have a formal meeting with Planning and Zoning to report back to  
12 them on what is being worked on and what has been accomplished; are there changes which  
13 should be made and what is holding up an item. Ms. Costello said this Committee was formed  
14 by the Town Council but will report to the Planning and Zoning Commission regarding its  
15 findings, but noted the Council will want a formal report. Ms. Costello told Committee members  
16 that based upon State Statute 8-23, the POCD must be updated every 10 years.

- 17 2. Role and Responsibilities of Implementation Committee
- 18 3. Introduction of Implementation Committee Members (noted above).

19 Ms. Costello said she wanted discussion on how the Committee wanted to move forward. She  
20 noted what was most important, and what had the most discussion was that when dealing with  
21 the POCD, that the Implementation Committee is advisory and can't force a staff member to  
22 focus on one item. Ms. Costello said this Committee will keep us continually working on the  
23 POCD. She said there is a co-operation and an accountability component.

- 24 4. Discussion, questions, comments re: Implementation Committee Role and  
25 Responsibilities

26 Ms. Harlow said she would like to look at the Plan as to what is doable and what is not and the  
27 Committee should prioritize.

28 Mr. Seichter said the low-hanging fruit should be addressed and the Committee should request  
29 various Agencies and Commissions look at the priorities they are assigned and accomplish the  
30 things most important to them. He emphasized the Committee is not directing and enforcing  
31 people to do this, but to set goals. Ms. Costello asked each member to bring back from the  
32 Agencies, their assigned tasks and what they believe are their highest priorities. She said it is  
33 helpful to be able to report back to Planning and Zoning about their plans, which they can then  
34 consider in the next POCD. Ms. Costello said it ultimately might be helpful to identify the top  
35 priorities as a whole so there can be common ground.

1 Mr. Laffin said when presenting to the Council, it would be good for the Committee members to  
2 remind the Chairpersons of these bodies to point out in your budget items, that these are POCD  
3 items. He said this to the Council would be enough to insure we are focused on where the  
4 priorities lie and to demonstrate to the Council what Commissions are following suit and  
5 knocking their checklist items off. Ms. Costello included an excerpt from the POCD that  
6 discussed the formation of the Implementation Committee. She went over the objectives and  
7 responsibilities which included: taking stock of changes in conditions, successes, and failures in  
8 moving towards the Plan's goals; reaffirming goals that remain relevant and important, and  
9 adjusting or changing goals that are no longer appropriate; reporting results and making  
10 appropriate recommendations to the Planning & Zoning Commission.

11 5. Election of Implementation Committee Officers – Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, and  
12 Secretary

13 Mr. Laffin nominated Jim Seichter as Chair of the Implementation Committee and James  
14 Fitzsimmons as Vice-Chair. Mr. Laffin said both of the people have proven experience and  
15 knowledge and are proven leaders and this is a bi-partisan effort that no one can argue. Mr.  
16 Menard seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

17 The Committee agreed the position of Secretary was not needed. Mr. Seichter and Mr.  
18 Fitzsimmons thanked the Committee for this “awesome” responsibility.

## 19 **Action Agenda**

20 6. Action Agenda Summary and Navigation Review

21 Ms. Costello said she reviewed the general concept behind the Action Agenda. She said there  
22 might be different ways to look at this. Ms. Costello went over the Wallingford POCD strategies  
23 and priorities highlighted in yellow. Ms. Costello recommended taking turns going around the  
24 room and having each member identifying which action items their particular Agency has  
25 completed or which item the Agency has had a problem with. She said at the next meeting, the  
26 Committee should talk about priorities, noting that it is helpful for all of us to know what each  
27 other is doing. Ms. Costello said she wants to have a break-out session for each member to talk  
28 about priorities; for everyone to sit down together for the next step. She said it is important for  
29 us to identify a specific step.

30 Ms. Costello suggested the Committee focus on two things: identifying the general highest  
31 priority items for the Committee as a whole and identify any particular issues on behalf of their  
32 Agency and what you are working on. She asked everyone their top goal for their Agency.

33 In answer to Ms. Heffernon's question, Ms. Costello spoke about the “sustainability items”. She  
34 explained “Wallingford's 2016 POCD includes a variety of goals addressing the social,  
35 environmental and economic sustainability of the community, or its ability to meet present

1 needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Topics  
2 that fall under this imperative include encouraging energy-efficient development patterns, the  
3 deployment of renewable energy sources and energy conservation measures, and preservation  
4 of agriculture". Ms. Costello said under State Law, these items have been given extra priority.

5 Mr. Laffin noted the Mayor's budget is being finalized for April 1, and asked the Commissioners  
6 to look over where their items ended up when the budget is announced, and suggested  
7 meeting or getting out a report before the Council budget sessions begin so we can be aware  
8 as a Commission where everything has fallen and what efforts need to be made to aid, assist or  
9 realign to move forward any priority items the Commission needs to focus on.

10 7. Action Agenda Progress – Brief Report by each Member Agency (completed tasks,  
11 currently active tasks, plans moving forward, roadblocks encountered).

12 Ms. Costello asked everyone their top goal for their Agency. Chair Seichter said the three  
13 priorities Planning & Zoning have identified would be to create a new Town Center Zoning  
14 District. He said the P&Z recently passed some revised parking regulations for the CA-6 zone  
15 and in those parking regulations, also provided some flexibility for the use of buildings; i.e. if  
16 there is a building that is strictly retail, there are certain parking requirements. Chair Seichter  
17 said if the building changes to restaurant use, the parking requirement would increase which  
18 has created some issues for property owners, because there may have been sufficient parking  
19 for the retail use, but for the restaurant use there isn't sufficient parking, which may necessitate  
20 someone going for a variance.

21 Chair Seichter said with the newly adopted Regulations, if one has a retail use in the building, it  
22 is shifting to the restaurant use, and as long as square footage isn't being increased, there is  
23 not an increase in the parking requirements. He said in the Town Center, there is some public  
24 parking and a lot of on-street parking, which differentiates this from other zoning districts. Chair  
25 Seichter said the other areas being looked at include the T.O.D. plan. He said this has been  
26 approved, but have to look at how to encourage more development in the downtown as well as  
27 the defined T.O.D. He said this is somewhat of a difficult task, especially around the current  
28 (old) train station, which is surrounded by small properties, and for anyone to develop these  
29 properties, two or three properties would have to be combined.

30 He noted the Town is looking to help with this through the Electric Division with rate  
31 adjustments. He said there have also been discussions regarding tax abatements. Chair Seichter  
32 said the third priority would be to look at the I-5 and I-X zoning regulations which are two key  
33 zoning areas in Town. He said more development in this area is being encouraged.

34 Ms. Costello said there are several strategies which relate to I-5 and I-X. She said the Economic  
35 Development Commission (EDC), is also named as an Agency that is involved in this and noted  
36 moving forward, it would be helpful to have the EDC and Planning & Zoning representatives to  
37 discuss how to make this happen. Ms. Costello pointed out one agenda change for the

1 upcoming meeting that is specific and noted she has had conversations with EDC members  
2 regarding potentially changing the requirements for the coverage and open space in the I-5 and  
3 I-X zones. She said it is good to look at zoning from a holistic approach.

4 Ms. Costello said the recommendation in this Plan and the T.O.D. plan isn't just zoning; there  
5 are also recommendations for street scape improvements which involve funding, the Town  
6 Council and WPI. She noted that one of the strategies identified in the POCD is a Town Center  
7 parking plan which she said was needed and would be helpful and would help us identify where  
8 the parking is and what improvements are needed for public and private parking. Ms. Costello  
9 noted a significant modification to parking requirements was just approved in the CA-6 zone  
10 which will become the Town Center. She asked if the P&Z representatives see the parking plan  
11 as a priority.

#### 12 8. Discussion/Identification of Priority Inter-Agency Action Agenda Items

13 Chair Seichter said the parking plan should be a priority and we need to find a way to bring the  
14 public and private together. He noted that from a parking standpoint, most would agree there is  
15 adequate parking in Town, but it is the quantity vs. the quality. He said if one looks at the  
16 parking lots; some which are publically owned and some which are privately owned, the quality  
17 of many of these lots are not up to speed. He pointed out the lot behind Simpson Court which  
18 he said was not in good shape, noting it was private, but the Town has short-term leases. He  
19 pointed out one was able to transit through from Church Street to Center Street, but there is  
20 now a mini wall blocking this type of transit which doesn't look good. He said some of the  
21 property owners are interested in resolving some of the parking. He said the Town is looking to  
22 expand the temporary lot on the Wooding property. Chair Seichter said in the not-to-distant  
23 future, there needs to be discussion on this Wooding property on a long-term vision.

24 Ms. Landow said the parking plan would probably Wallingford Center's highest priority. She said  
25 Wallingford Center has been working on low hanging fruit, trying to get the parking lots striped  
26 and signage to match the parking lot with the striping which can be sponsored by different  
27 businesses. She said paving quotes to pave both sides of the Wooding lot have been obtained  
28 from Public Works Director Henry McCully. Ms. Costello said this project is something she has  
29 considered looking for budget money for this year.

30 Mr. Laffin said it is time to revisit the parking issue and be done with it. He said however it  
31 needs to be done, so it is not the mess it was several years ago. He said this ties directly into  
32 the utmost priority to the Town Council, which is the Town Center. He said there is an  
33 economic and emotional benefit which leads to communicating the essence and energy of the  
34 Town. Mr. Laffin said if we have a strong downtown core, this will branch off and grow from  
35 there. He said he doesn't want Rt. 5 to be the core; he wants the center of Wallingford to be  
36 the core and break off from there. He said he wants people to feel Wallingford is downtown,  
37 not the core. Mr. Laffin said the rail station ties directly into this and emphasized that if this isn't

1 taken care of now, while the train station is in the process of moving, it will become the worst  
2 blight problem in the world. He said setting up a Commission or Committee to take care of this  
3 ties directly into almost the same priority level as keeping the Town Center moving. Mr. Laffin  
4 spoke about Community Lake which is high priority. He said he saw the Facilities Plan as more  
5 as administrative, or with the Mayor. He said the Council can push this along or ask the Mayor.  
6 Mr. Laffin said the traffic relates to everything we are talking about. He said he didn't know  
7 whether this is something the Committee can specifically do, or it will become a by-product of  
8 advancements taking place. Mr. Laffin said he views the traffic as collateral, but the real focus is  
9 the Town Center and the train station.

10 Mr. Fitzsimmons said the facilities are something he and Chair Seichter have spoken about and  
11 this has come up a number of times, that we don't have a publically accessible list of what we  
12 have. He cited the example with Parks & Recreation that they list in their brochure, the fields  
13 they have, but is missing is the fields at all the schools and the fields they don't maintain. He  
14 said this is a staff function, but it is missing. He said a Town-wide facilities inventory is missing.  
15 Ms. Harlow said she is interested in having adequate facilities Town wide. She agreed with Mr.  
16 Fitzsimmons, that everything is scattered.

17 Ms. Costello noted a lot of conversation came from SCOW and Parks & Recreation and Board of  
18 Education. She said open space was also a part of that conversation. Mr. Laffin said this is a  
19 good example of where on a charter or official level, the Council may not be able to do this, but  
20 he and Mr. Shortell may be able to get this accomplished by working with the Mayor.

21 Mr. Crouch told Committee members the Parks & Recreation facilities audit was recently  
22 completed. He said we have Pat Wall field, but don't have the other fields. He said Parks & Rec  
23 doesn't have any maintainers and have to ask Public Works. He said some outside vendors have  
24 been used. He said he wants to get more people down there at Community Lake and get more  
25 picnic tables. Ms. Costello asked the Committee members to give her a list of what their  
26 facilities are and what their Agency represents and is the overseer of. She said this could be a  
27 starting point. Ms. Costello said what usually happens with these facility management plans is  
28 that an outside consultant is hired to look at all of the square footage and all of the locations  
29 we have. She said it is nice that SCOW and the Senior Center are near each other, but Parks &  
30 Recreation are on the other side of Town. She said the Consultant may recommend how these  
31 facilities could best be utilized.

32 Ms. Harlow said SCOW has the facilities plan as the top priority. She said her agency has  
33 spoken with Parks & Recreation regarding promoting outdoor recreational assets, and  
34 promoting an energy action plan and the parks. Ms. Cymbala noted the main priority of the EDC  
35 was to attract new businesses and support the commuter rail and for the Incentive Housing  
36 Zone. She said the EDC besides attracting new business; they want to keep businesses here.  
37 She noted many people who come to Town don't know about the downtown area, so marketing  
38 is a huge part of this. Mr. Crouch said he is working out a field audit and noted one thing not on

1 the list as short-term is the Community Pool. He said the last renovations occurred in 1999-  
2 2000. Ms. Costello asked Committee members if they would be interested in the facilities  
3 master plan.

4 Mr. Crouch said he has a list of parks, facility amenities and what has been done, noting that in  
5 2007, lighting was installed at Doolittle Park. Ms. Landow said the parking plan and connecting  
6 the Town Center to Rt. 15. She said she has been sitting in on meetings with Ms. Costello and  
7 the T.O.D. and found this has been a high priority. She said her Agency could be a sort of  
8 middle-man in approaching small property owners to see what could be done and seeing if they  
9 would be interested in selling for development in the Incentive Housing zone. Chair Seichter  
10 asked about improvements to the Street Scape especially on N. Colony. Ms. Landow said this  
11 has been a big conversation with her Agency to tie this all together. She said there could  
12 possibly be State money down the road. Ms. Costello said the Engineering Dept. is pursuing  
13 State funding for streetscape improvements along Hall Avenue in the Town Center. She said the  
14 Town applied for two grants, noting one was denied and the other has not yet been  
15 determined. Ms. Costello said this funding would be for street scape improvements on  
16 Washington St. because of topography and sidewalk issues. She said EDC, Planning & Zoning,  
17 WCI and Engineering, can talk about how to make this move forward.

18 Chair Seichter asked Ms. Costello to inform Planning & Zoning of what grants have been applied  
19 for and what grants are available. Ms. Heffernon said the top two things as far as the  
20 Conservation Commission is concerned is the agricultural aspect, noting there are three  
21 different sections on this in the Wallingford POCD strategies, noting one has a "high priority"  
22 which is the Farmland Lease Program. Ms. Heffernon said there are other areas to branch out,  
23 such as working with the schools and having land management workshops which she noted are  
24 very important to the Conservation Commission as well as the fee in lieu open space provision.  
25 Ms. Heffernon said she noted in the handout she received that it stated "open space and park  
26 land constitute 24% of the land in Town, stating she wanted to know where that figure came  
27 from because it sounded high to her. Ms. Heffernon said she believes we have fallen behind in  
28 recent years as far as open space is concerned. Ms. Heffernon asked about the CB-12 and CB-  
29 40 zones and requested Ms. Costello print up a key. She asked Kacie to email out the finalized  
30 POCD.

31 Ms. Costello noted there was a link to the POCD on the Town's website in the Planning &  
32 Zoning Dept. Ms. Costello said she would email everyone.

33 Mr. Reynolds said he agreed with Mr. Fitzsimmons as far as the big thing being inventory and  
34 how to maintain this. He said he gets periodic enrollment updates and noted nowadays, people  
35 move from town to town. He spoke about combining the two high schools which he said would  
36 free up Lyman Hall, which is the oldest of the two high schools. Ms. Morgenstein said this  
37 couldn't be done because of the taking of State funds. Mr. Reynolds spoke about the support of  
38 local farmers and the ag students doing the local gardens. He said in the past the schools have

1 tried to use local growers to supply food to the schools. Chair Seichter asked if Sheehan High  
2 could accommodate all the students. Mr. Reynolds said it sounds good, but a study has not  
3 been done. Mr. Shortell said the Mayor made a comment about this at the State of the Town  
4 address noting the enrollment would have to go way down before a high school was closed.

5 Mr. Menard said being from the Yalesville area, a few years back something was done to try to  
6 make it look more presentable. He said through the years, Yalesville has become the forgotten  
7 part of time. Ms. Morgenstein said there was talk about trying to locate a community garden in  
8 the Yalesville section of Town. She said the elephant in the room is that one can't walk/bike  
9 from Yalesville to the Linear Trail and across Town. She said Rep. Mushinsky and the Linear  
10 Trail people are working on this and said this should be a priority as well. She spoke about  
11 different locations, one being where the proposed senior housing will be located.

12 Mr. Birney said as far as the PUC is concerned, there is one item on the list "promote residential  
13 energy conservation," and noted there is a portion of each of our monthly utility bills that goes  
14 into an energy conservation fund for both residential and commercial customers. He said the  
15 Implementation Committee could be used as a sounding board for ideas to get the word out  
16 and how best to communicate to the public that there is a pool of resources to be used for  
17 purposes of conserving energy. He said broadly, as he looks through this sheet and the POCD,  
18 he is the facilitator to the PUC if there is anything they can do to support other initiatives.

19 Ms. Costello said the PUC will play a big role in implementing a lot of these ideas. She identified  
20 four ideas that had multiple choosers: the Town Center, including parking, the TOD area,  
21 facilities plan and agricultural preservation. She said for the next meeting, she asked each  
22 Committee members consult with each of their Agencies to discuss what their priorities are and  
23 what they might work on or take up in the short term to further their goals.

24 Ms. Costello asked everyone to do this for the next meeting. She asked everyone to identify  
25 budget items, where applicable that is related to the POCD or things they might like to have in  
26 their budget. Ms. Costello said she will provide everyone with the zones and what they mean.  
27 She said she will also have the Committee discuss at the next meeting, a list of facilities and a  
28 summary report of the meeting.

29 NEXT MEETING

30 Chair Seichter suggesting meeting on a quarterly basis at least for the first two years. He asked  
31 Ms. Costello to send out the survey and suggested meeting in May. Mr. Laffin suggested  
32 meeting early to mid-April because of the budget.

### 33 **Adjournment**

34 Mr. Fitzsimmons made a motion to adjourn the Meeting at 8:28 p.m. Mr. Menard seconded the  
35 motion which passed unanimously.

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Respectfully submitted,  
Cynthia A. Kleist  
Recording Secretary