

**BRISTOL PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF MONDAY MAY 23, 2022**

CALL TO ORDER:

By: Chairman Veits

Time: 7:00 P.M.

Place: City Hall

ROLL CALL:

MEMBERS	NAME	PRESENT	ABSENT
REGULAR MEMBERS:	Chairman William Veits (Chairman)	X	
	Commissioner John Soares (Vice Chairman)	X	
	Jon Pose	X	
	Tracey Bacchus	X	
	Jeff Hayden		X
ALTERNATE MEMBERS:			
	Christopher Nardi (Acting Secretary)	X	
	Kenneth Rasmussen-Tuller		X
	Anthony Lorenzetti	X	
STAFF:	Robert M. Flanagan, AICP, City Planner	X	
	Nancy Levesque, P.E., City Engineer	X	

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Chairman Veits reminded the Commission the next Regular Meeting of the Planning Commission is Monday, June 27, 2022. The June Regular meeting will take place at the Board of Education (BOE) Auditorium located at 129 Church Street.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

There was no public participation.

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS:

- Minutes from the April 27, 2022 Regular Meeting

MOTION: Move to approve the minutes of the April 27, 2022, regular meeting.

By: Pose

Seconded: Soares.

For: Soares Pose, Bacchus, Nardi and Veits.

Against: None.

Abstain: None.

RECEIPT OF NEW APPLICATIONS:

There were no new applications.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

- Proposed 2022-2027 City of Bristol Affordable Housing Plan

The Commission acknowledged receipt of the following items in their electronic packets: a report entitled "*Updated AH Plan – Updated Proposed Plan for Public Hearing, Bristol 2022-27 Affordable Housing Plan, and Updated Proposed Plan for Public Hearing Scheduled for May 23, 2022, Planning Commission.*"

Glenn Chalder, of Planimetrics, 70 County Road, Simsbury, CT, President and Consultant for the City of Bristol, reviewed the final proposed 2022-2027 City of Bristol Affordable Housing Plan with the Commission and Staff. Mr. Chalder explained that in 2017 the CT Legislature enacted Public Act 17-170 requiring municipalities in CT to prepare an affordable housing plan required to be adopted by June 1, 2022. The Commission will meet that deadline.

Mr. Chalder reviewed the following items of discussion within the report:

Increase the Number of Affordable Housing Developments – Housing has become more unaffordable. In the 1960's typical residents spent an average of 2.5 to 3 times their yearly income on housing. There was a Sub-Prime Mortgage Crisis about 2008 and house prices have continued to increase, but the data does not include the COVID-19 increases. The housing unaffordability index has increased significantly.

Housing Cost Burden and Affordable Housing Challenges in Bristol – Bristol has about 26,000 units and about 2,000 of those units are owned by the Bristol Housing Authority and/or different developers. There are an additional 2,000 units that receive rental assistance or owners received a CHFA mortgages.

In Bristol, there are 15,000 houses that are/were naturally affordable that are sold or rented. The 2022 census was delayed and unavailable until 2023. COVID-19 has made this situation worse, eviction moratoriums have been removed and some leases were not renewed, and there are waiting lists for assisted housing developments.

The need for more affordable units is across the State of Connecticut. Sometimes there is community opposition; also, lack of leadership or support in the communities with not enough social service resources to help residents.

Support the Housing Authority – this should continue to retain their units and work with different housing developments/developers to maintain affordable prices; educate the community about affordable housing; and advocate for affordable housing.

These are the recommendations for a five-year action document that was similar to the Plan of Conservation and Development. The Commission will be able to adopt the Plan this evening.

No one else spoke in favor of the application.

No one spoke against the application.

The following person did not speak in favor or against the plan, but had inquiries: Attorney Mark Ziogas, 88 Valley St. and Dawn Ledger, Ph.D., CBG Coordinator, City of Bristol, 111 North Main St., Department of Economics and Community Development.

Attorney Ziogas inquiries: Mr. Chalder reviewed the definition of affordable housing and sale prices (Pg. 22 & 23.) He explained the methodology and numbers generated the sale prices and lease rates. HUD has new median incomes each year and the numbers changed on a regular basis. He reviewed the calculations and various items for that basis; Fair Market Rent in the area.

Attorney Ziogas did not disagree, but houses cannot be built for these prices with the cost of materials. Unless there is government financing, houses cannot be constructed for \$248,000. Persons age 25 to 40 cannot get into this market because the older housing was bought by people that rehab houses.

Commission inquiries: Mr. Chalder explained the recommendations were on Pgs. 10, 11 and 14. Bristol was exempt to Statute 8-30g, but some towns are subject to the 10% affordable threshold. Permitting fees were out of their control.

Ms. Ledger reviewed a housing program for people that can buy older houses (\$300,000 this year.) The bulk of the funding was spent, which helps younger people's get into their first house and older persons trying to stay in their houses. They are partners with their CDGB Program to help the Greater Bristol Realty Corporation, which is building affordable single-family houses with State and Federal funds (Pine St. and Gridley St.) They cannot finance new construction with CDGB funds. It takes a lot of effort to get these houses, but this also helps families stay in their houses. Right now, Bristol is okay but there was a lot of houses off the market, which was a future concern because in about 10 years Bristol would likely not be at the 15% affordable.

Commission inquiries: Mr. Chalder explained the Affordable Housing Appeal Act (8-30g) was adopted in 1989 and sets a goal for each municipality to have 10% of its housing stock be affordable. The State established a threshold to provide diversity; Bristol is currently at 14.8% percent.

MOTION: Move that the Public Hearing on the proposed 2022-2027 City of Bristol Affordable Housing Plan be closed.

The hearing is closed.

By: Soares

Seconded: Pose.

For: Soares Pose, Bacchus, Nardi and Veits.
 Against: None.
 Abstain: None.

MOTION: move to adopt the 2022-2027 Bristol Affordable Housing Plan (the Plan) pursuant to General Statutes of Connecticut Section 8-30j for the following reasons:

- It is consistent with the 2015 (updated to April 1, 2018) Plan of Conservation and Development
- It advances implementation of the 2015 (updated to April 1, 2018) Plan of Conservation and Development
- It helps address an issue of significant public policy concern in the City and the State at the present time
- Adoption by June 1, 2022 is required by CGS Section 8-30j.

Pursuant to General Statutes of Connecticut Section 8-30j, Staff is instructed to file the Plan, as adopted, with the State of Connecticut Office of Policy and Management (OPM) prior to the June 1, 2022 deadline.

By: Soares

Seconded: Pose

For: Nardi, Bacchus, Pose, Soares and Veits.
 Against: None.
 Abstain: None.

The 2022-2027 City of Bristol Affordable Housing Plan is adopted.

Mr. Flanagan inquiries: Mr. Chalder would e-mail the procedures for the City filing the Plan with the State Office of Policy and Management. They should also file a legal notice of the adoption of the Plan.

ZONING COMMISSION REFERRALS:

3. Application #2436 – Change of Zone from R-15 (Single-Family Residential) zone to I (General Industrial) zone at 54 West Washington Street; Assessor's Map 44, Lot 60; Jeremy Berube, applicant.
- 4.

The Commission acknowledged the receipt of the following items in their electronic packets: a referral memorandum dated April 5, 2022, from the Bristol Zoning Commission to Therese Pac, Bristol Town and City Clerk, regarding Referral of Proposed Amendment to the Zoning Regulations; a referral memorandum dated April 5, 2022, from the Zoning Commission to the Planning Commission, regarding Referral of Proposed Amendment to the Zoning Regulations;

Attorney Mark Ziogas, 88 Valley St., representing the applicant reviewed the Plan of Conservation and Development, and stated that the Plan wants to promote business development and/or grow existing businesses; in order to attract more businesses, the City had to have more I-zone properties.

At this time there are a limited amount of I-zone properties (about 6%) and I-zone Parks (about 10%.) It would be difficult to expand businesses without expanding the number of I-zone properties. He reviewed the resident survey contained within the POCD and one of the most important things for Bristol was business development. Bristol needs to focus on this for the tax base, more jobs, downtown development and student education.

The applicant is requesting the extension of a like zone. The site is 6.6 acres and the buffer near the school property would remain. To expand Bristol's economy, zone changes were inevitable. This would allow for an increased the tax base, and achieve some of the development goals of the POCD by assisting businesses. He requested the Commission to grant a positive recommendation for the zone change.

Mr. Flanagan cautioned that when a zone is changed it makes available all the uses in the zone to the applicant. The zone change may be granted and a change of plans may occur and a different use than what has been suggested is submitted for review. Mr. Flanagan's main concern was the proximity of Hubbell School to this site.

There are also Inland Wetlands and Floodplain areas on the eastern portion of the property, which would push any potential development towards the western border that the property shares with the school, which is a major concern. If there is a negative referral to the Zoning Commission, this would not stop the process, but a super-majority vote would be required.

The Commission had concerns of the proposed I-zone across the street and adjacent to residential uses, as the property was part of a residential neighborhood. Any development with the Floodplain and Inland Wetland areas on the property needed to be on the west side of the site, which is closer to the school.

Attorney Ziogas understood their concerns, but an A- zone would generate more traffic versus a body shop. There is an industrial zone to the rear of the school. An oil company was across the street, and the majority of the area is industrial zoned. His view was that the traffic was not a concern.

MOTION: move to send a negative referral to the Zoning Commission for Application #2436 – Change of Zone from R-15 (Single-Family Residential) zone to I (General Industrial) zone at 54 West Washington Street; Assessor's Map 44, Lot 60; Jeremy Berube, applicant because the Planning Commission finds that the use of the property, as presented, would NOT be consistent with the goals and policies of the 2015 Plan of Conservation and Development, amended to April 1, 2018, and specifically:

1. Section 9.3.2.1. – Discourage expansion of business uses and activities onto residential side streets if it would negatively affect residential neighborhoods.

By: Pose

Seconded: Soares.

For: Nardi, Bacchus, Pose, Soares and Veits.

Against: None.

Abstain: None.

The Zoning Commission Referral is not recommended for approval.

CITY COUNCIL AND OTHER REFERRALS:

5. C.G.S. Section 8-24:
 - a. Map 43 Lot 16 Church Avenue
 - b. Map 29 Lot 68 School Street

The Commission acknowledged the receipt of the following items in their electronic packets: a letter dated May 11, 2022, from Therese Pac, Town and City Clerk, regarding the City Council's vote to refer the item to the Planning Commission and the Corporation Counsel; a copy of the Connecticut General Statutes 8-24 – Municipal improvements Current as of: 2014. Also, an e-mail dated May 18, 2022, from Attorney Jeffrey Steeg, regarding the City pursuing vacant land to build a new firehouse in Forestville replacing the Firehouse #3; the Board of Fire Commissioner's vote to refer the potential purchase of this lot to the Real Estate Committee.

Mr. Flanagan read into the record the letter dated May 11, 2022 and explained that this was a referral from the City Council for Map 43 Lot 16 Church Avenue and that this was an allowed use in the zone. There are no Inland Wetlands and the property has been vacant a long time.

Chief Rick Hart, 181 North Main St., explained the past administration had reviewed purchasing this property for expansion of Firehouse #3. Mayor Caggiano asked him to review area properties that would not affect response times for Engine #3. There were no properties within this price range. This property was the best solution to construct a new firehouse for expanded response services for Forestville section of the City.

Commission inquiries: Chief Hart reviewed the concerns of space and that it was undersized. The apparatus floor is also used for a workout area and they are exposed to apparatus fumes. The bathroom and kitchen are outdated. The building was hit 5 times because the property slopes down on a curve. There was sufficient area to have a drive thru facility for rear loading apparatus.

Commissioner Pose noted there was no parking and that the Fire Department shares parking with a next-door neighbor. Chief Hart explained the construction would be a similar one- story residential style building of 11,000 to 12,000 sq. ft. with a gable roof and similar architecture to fit in with the neighborhood.

MOTION: Move to send a positive referral to the City Council for Map 43 Lot 16 Church Avenue because the Planning Commission finds that the proposed construction of a new municipal parking area on this parcel, as presented, is consistent with the goals of the Plan of Conservation and Development, and specifically:

1. Section 12.2.1.1. – Facility Planning: Anticipate the need to upgrade and improve municipal facilities, as necessary, to keep pace with community needs.

By: Bacchus

Seconded: Pose.

For: Nardi, Bacchus, Pose, Soares and Veits.

Against: None.

Abstain: None.

The CT General Statute 8-24 Referral is recommended for approval.

b. Map 29 Lot 68 School Street

The Commission acknowledged the receipt of the following items in their electronic packets: a referral memorandum dated May 11, 2022, from Therese Pac, Town and City Clerk, regarding the vote of the City Council to refer the item to the Planning Commission, Park and Recreation Department, the Water and Sewer Department, Economic and Community Development and Public Works; a copy of the Connecticut General Statutes 8-24 – Municipal Improvements.

An e-mail dated May 18, 2022, from Attorney Jeffrey Steeg; and a memorandum dated May 12, 2022, from Raymond Rogozinski, P.E., Director of Public Works, to Mayor Caggiano and the Board of Public Works, regarding the City Council referral of Lot 29-68 School Street.

Mr. Flanagan explained Raymond Rogozinski, P.E., Director of Public Works, and the administration has been reviewing plans for potentially 6 parking spaces in the west end of the City at the intersection of Routes 69 and 72. The City is concerned that these businesses will have their customers displaced and was making an effort to construct additional municipal parking.

MOTION: Move to send a positive referral to the City Council for Map 29 Lot 68 School Street because the Planning Commission finds that the proposed construction of a new municipal parking area on this parcel, as presented, is consistent with the goals of the Plan of Conservation and Development, and specifically:

1. Section 8.3.4.1. – Seek ways to provide for convenient parking, for residents, pedestrians and shoppers.

By: Bacchus

Seconded: Soares.

For: Nardi, Bacchus, Pose, Soares and Veits.

Against: None.

Abstain: None.

The CT General Statute 8-24 Referral is recommended for approval.

2. FY 2022-2023 – Capital Budget

The Commission acknowledged the receipt of the following items in their electronic packets: a letter dated May 5, 2022, from Diane Waldron, Board of Finance Clerk, regarding the Board of Finance Committee's vote to refer the item to the Planning Commission; a report entitled "City of Bristol 2022-2023 Capital Budget, 10 Year Capital Improvement and Strategic Planning Committee – Approved March 15, 2022 (attached 28 Pages of City of Bristol Capital Improvement Project Forms (CIP) Form 2022-2023.)

This was a referral from the Board of Finance for \$117,957,965. The Comptroller was going to be on Zoom for this meeting but could not attend. The Commission may continue this item to their June meeting to review it with the Comptroller if they wish. The Commission commented these were mostly Public Works projects, so they would review these items with the City Engineer and if they were any questions, they would continue the item to their June meeting.

Ms. Levesque reviewed the following Public Works Department projects:

- Firehouse #3 was \$7,050,000 for construction and apparatus.
- Park and Recreation and Youth Services: Stocks Playground improvements \$1,025,000. Kern Park improvements \$360,000. Pine Lake, Phase II; Page Park revitalization and Seymour Park improvements.
- Board of Education: smartboards and Northeast Middle School.
- Water and Sewer Department: screen replacements.

- Public Works Department: Brace Ave. storm drainage improvements. Brace Ave. had 8 houses being flooded and this would update the inadequate storm drainage in the area
- Broad St. retaining wall (from State) replacement; the road is caving in.
- Dog Pound: exterior improvements, air conditioning, fencing, sanitary sewer exhaust fans and for compliance.
- The Landfill had tears in the cap and needed maintenance.
- Jerome Ave. bridge: graded by State and inadequate and needs replacing (50% State funding/50% eligible State local bridge program.) The bridge would be widened and accommodate a concrete sidewalk.
- Mellon St. Bridge: State graded for rehab, qualifies for 80% Federal funding.
- Mix St.: State inspection mandated to repave and parking for commuter parking.
- North Main St. streetscape: the city is reviewing ARPA and funding from the center to (near Hope St.) Riverside Ave.
- Park St. streetscapes to be extended of west State construction from West St. to Park St. up to Muzzy Field.
- Riverside Ave.: streetscapes, lighting, sidewalks, road paving, driveway reductions, ARPA eligible (\$5,000,000).
- Railroad improvements: This is a class one rating (lowest) to transport hazardous materials. The City owned 1.5 miles and would replace ties. The class one rating was important to maintain with the approved project on Minor St.
- Centre Square parking structure: off of Hope St. The parking was needed for City Hall employees, Post Office employees and the community for downtown services.

Commission inquiries: Ms. Levesque explained the Broad St. – the wall was constructed in the 1990's and then it became the City's property after the Route 72 improvements were completed.

MOTION: Move to recommend to the Board of Finance adoption of the Capital Budget for Fiscal Year 2022-2023, as the proposed projects are consistent with the goals of the Plan of Conservation and Development by maintaining the public infrastructure and public facilities.

By: Pose

Seconded: Soares.

For: Nardi, Bacchus, Pose, Soares and Veits.

Against: None.

Abstain: None.

The CT General Statute 8-24 Referral is recommended for approval.

OLD BUSINESS:

3. Application #324 – Bristol Crossing Subdivision – Street Acceptance Memo for Phase 2 – Corbin Ridge: Assessor's Map 9, Lots 12, 13 & 26 through 42 (19 lots); Sachem Capital Realty, LLC; owner/applicant

There is one remaining item of documentation needed for a wetlands detention basin which is a soil scientist letter/report. The applicant did not have it for this evening. The item should be continued to next month.

MOTION: Move to continue discussion on Application #324 – Bristol Crossing Subdivision – Street Acceptance for Phase 2 – Corbin Ridge – until the next Regular Meeting of the Planning Commission on June 22, 2022.

By: Pose

Seconded: Soares.

For: Nardi, Bacchus, Pose, Soares and Veits.

Against: None.

Abstain: None.

NEW BUSINESS:

There was no new business.

STAFF REPORTS:

4. Monthly Subdivision Status Report

The Commission acknowledged the receipt of the following items in their electronic packets: the Monthly Subdivision Status report, updated May 18, 2022.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion was made by Commissioner Soares to adjourn.
Motion seconded by Commissioner Bacchus.
Motion carried 5-0.

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 P.M.

These minutes represent the proceedings of the meeting.
This meeting was taped.

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy King

Christopher Nardi, Acting Secretary
City Planning Commission