



Mansfield Tomorrow

OUR PLAN ► OUR FUTURE

Advisory Group Meeting
Wednesday, March 26, 2014
6:30 pm
Council Chambers
Minutes

Advisory Group Members Present: *Quentin Kessel, Jim Morrow, Jonathan Sgro, Tom Callahan, George Rawitscher, Meg Reich, Matt Emery, Al Cyr, John McGuire, Betsy Paterson, Jeff Polhemus, Toni Moran.*
Project Staff Present: *Jennifer Kaufman, Mansfield Tomorrow Project Manager; Linda Painter, Director of Planning and Development.* **Guests Present:** *Vicky Wetherell, Beverly Wood.*

- I. Meeting was called to order at 6:35. Jennifer and Linda welcomed members.
- II. Minutes of March 11, 2014 were reviewed
- III. Discussion of Draft Plan-
 - George Rawitscher read a statement about the importance of establishing a Climate Change Committee in the town of Mansfield, whose mission is to call attention to the threats of climate change, and encourage members of other town committees to formulate concrete recommendations for protective actions against droughts, fires, diseases, etc. Once the town has "shovel-ready" plans, it will be well positioned to take advantage of funding opportunities from the State or Federal government, as they arise (his official statement is attached).
 - Members discussed chapters 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7; a summary of comments is attached.
- IV. Linda and Jennifer provided an overview of the review process. The Planning and Zoning Commission would like to have more time to review the plan so have asked that the process be slowed down. Planning and Zoning will be reviewing the plan in late March, April and May. The plan will then be revised based on the comment. A revised plan will be presented to the Planning and Zoning Commission in late June for the purpose of scheduling public hearings.
- V. Public Comment-none.
- VI. Next Steps- The next meeting is scheduled for April 2 in the Buchanan Library. . Members were asked to come to the meeting prepared to discuss chapters 8, 9, and 10.
- VII. Meeting adjourned at 8:45 pm.

Advisory Group Comments-March 26, 2014

| Chapter 3 | |
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| Page/section of plan | |
| General | Rename Chapter: “Natural Systems <u>and Benefits</u> ” This Chapter should focus on the resources: what we have, how we care for, and what benefits these resources provide. These natural factors determine the best places for various activities, such as where to grow crops, build a road, recreate, support wildlife, etc. |
| | Information on agricultural land is currently split between chapter 3 and chapter 4; this information (including related goals/strategies) should be consolidated into chapter 4 |
| | Need “headline”/emphasis on maintaining water quality |
| | Need to reference flood hazard map zones in narrative |
| | Add reference to Lands of Unique Value Study |
| | Consider adding existing public education/awareness documents to appendices |
| 4 | Landscape/Topography section is difficult to follow |
| 6 | Move Agricultural soil classifications and map to Chapter 4. |
| 10 | Clarify purpose/function of table related to surface water bodies; if keep, think about adding information related to condition and size |
| 10 | Geologic Table 3.x needs to be reworded. The information does not seem useful. |
| 19 | Move Section 7: Natural Systems Protection Agencies and Organizations to Chapter 4 |
| 21 | Goal 1: Awareness: Amend Strategy B.1 to add references to schools and UCONN/ECSU |
| 21 | Goal 1, Strategy B, Action 1 add school, university, EastConn |
| 21 | Goal 2, Strategy A Action 2 look at all stratified drift aquifers in a broader way. |
| 22 | Goal 2 Strategy B Action 2- Reword to make clearer. Determine what the Town is empowered to regulate (ensure local regulations do not conflict with state and federal regulations) |
| 22 | Amend Strategy B.2 related to hazardous materials (limited local authority to regulate; sub-actions are not all regulatory in nature, etc.) |
| 26 | Change text concerning soils to a discussion that is relevant to all soils. Discuss issues of erosion and contamination. |
| Chapter 4 | |
| 1 | This Chapter covers how we relate to the land: how they interact with it and use it, such as agricultural use, enjoyment of parks, stewardship and preservation |
| 1 | Rename Chapter: “Open Space, Parks and <u>Agricultural</u> Lands” – most people don’t know what ‘Working Lands’ means; Agricultural lands includes croplands, pastures and forests managed for agricultural use |
| 1 | Add short introductory section on natural systems (forests, water resources, etc.) as important part of open space and direct reader to Chapter 3 for details |
| 1 | Provide clear definition of ‘Agricultural Lands’ that includes forest based agriculture (timber, tree farms, sugar maple) |
| 1 | Provide a more complete discussion about agriculture and about the use of agricultural land: add agricultural soils classifications, add information about forest-based agriculture, such as sugar maple groves, Christmas tree farms, timber management. |

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| 21 | Strategy B.1-What does permanent mean? For example, UCONN has 50 year conservation agreements on certain parcels. What does important mean – clarify, refer to Lands of Unique Value Study, Open Space Acquisition Criteria, etc. |
| 25 | Action 5-Common driveways are often used by developers because they are low cost. They should be used so that the development is clustered and does not disrupt interior forest tracts or other natural systems. |
| 25 | Measures of Effectiveness- make sure we have good baseline data before setting goals. |
| General Comment about Chapter 4 | There’s plenty of good hopeful statements in the document but I didn’t see much in terms of measureable goals. There’s goals as to preserving land but it would be more powerful with a quantifiable goal and give us a way to track how we’re doing. I read recently that Lebanon’s Plan of Conservation and Development calls for preserving 2,000 acres over 10 years. I think we should have goals like that. Then I could really stand behind this plan. (Also added to chapter 11 comments) |
| Chapter 5 | |
| | Rename Chapter - Sustainability is woven throughout entire plan; this chapter focuses very narrowly on certain elements of sustainability. Possible Chapter Titles: “Climate, Energy and Waste” or “Climate Adaptation and Resource Conservation.” Alternatively, broaden chapter focus and content to include larger sustainability concerns such as integration of land use and infrastructure planning. |
| 1 | The applicable Sustainability Principles (or Objectives?) need to be clearly distinct from the Implementation Precepts. |
| 21 | Strategy A: Is the Climate Action Plan intended to be focused on municipal actions, or town-wide, including UConn and private property owners? |
| 32 | Goal 7: Climate Change Adaptation Add a strategy to task a Town Advisory Committee with responsibility/focus on climate change – mission would be to call attention to the threats of climate change, and encourage members of other town committees to formulate concrete recommendations for protective actions against droughts, fires, diseases, etc. Once the town has "shovel-ready" plans, it will be well positioned to take advantage of funding opportunities from the State or Federal government, as they arise |
| 33 | Ensure that measures of effectiveness are achievable; develop a baseline so we are clear what we are tracking. |
| | EITHER: The title of this chapter needs to change to something more focused. The entire POCD/Comprehensive Plan addresses sustainability throughout in a holistic way, while this chapter focuses on energy, waste, water and climate change resiliency in a much more specific way. This tends to dilute and confuse the use of the term. OR: The goals and/or strategies need to expand to discuss more integration with sustainable land use and infrastructure planning issues. |
| | In a related vein, the use of the term sustainability in the current Goals 3, 4, 5 is very broad sounding, but not covered in a broad way in the strategies and actions: Goal 3: Town facilities and practices are models of sustainability . – How so? There is only one strategy under that goal (is this a mistake?), which is C. Use materials that mitigate the heat island effect due to hard-scape surfaces. But what about siting new facilities to consider transportation and land use-related issues, as we have discussed at great length with the school siting project? Under Goal 5 related to UConn, what about a strategy for coordinating land use planning efforts? |
| | IF the scope of the chapter is increased to address sustainable land use and infrastructure integration, the section on current conditions should expand to reflect this . . . Storrs Center, Four Corners, etc. |
| | It seems like Goals 1, 2, 6 and 7 all relate more to climate change and resiliency and so should be grouped together. |

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| | The only maps or images used in the draft are Flood Risk Zones and Dams. It seems like there could be more mapping informing this chapter . . . watersheds, etc. |
| Chapter 6 | |
| 32 | Adopting procedural regulations and design standards for local historic districts are a high priority. |
| 32 | I love all the talk about the historic villages. And I see the maps regarding what type of businesses limiting the types of businesses that could be developed in a historic village. Such as in Mansfield Center, a general store fits the character, a CVS does not. |
| | There's a section on Scenic Roads but I didn't see anything in the strategies regarding them. I'd like mention of increasing number of scenic roads, with a goal would be nice. |
| 36 | Recommendation for 3-to-5-acre lots as counterproductive to preserving large enough areas of open space to be useful for Goals in Chapters 3 and 4. Perhaps replace with mandatory cluster housing and shared driveways that are allowed only in a cluster area in order to preserve significant areas of open space and their functions. |
| 36 | Several comments opposing proposed 3-to-5-acres lots. |
| 36 | Concern about minimum size of housing associated with agricultural land. Recommend allowing smaller minimum size so it is more affordable. Suggest waive or reduce building inspection fees for housing and other buildings associated with agriculture. |
| 44 | Goal 8, Strategy A, Action 2- remove "high amenity" |
| 45 | Some confusion about what co-housing actually is. |
| 45 | Under measures of effectiveness, bullet 3 add state before standards. |
| Chapter 7 | |
| 31 | How is quality of life defined.. |
| | Would the Town consider expending funds to create a land bank for economic development? Is there a role for a redevelopment agency? |
| | Water is the basis for economic development. Such a statement should be added in the economic development chapter. |
| 39 | Farmland restoration should be a high priority to create more land to cultivate for agriculture. |
| 40 | Look at regulatory barriers to the creation of new market channels for agricultural products. |
| 44 | Clarify goal 8 |
| | Explore the development of Town resources outside of UConn to encourage Economic Development. |

Comment by G. Rawitscher for the Mansfield Tomorrow meeting of 3-26-14

President Obama has launched a new website that popularizes the advent of climate change, called "Open Data Initiative". An excerpt from the content of this website reads " In his budget request for fiscal year 2015 being transmitted to Congress today, President Obama is following through on those commitments and taking a wide range of steps to "up our game" in promoting preparedness for, and resilience against' the impacts of climate change". The budget request will continue to support programs that promote climate preparedness at the local levels, and examples are given for programs in the Departments of Health and Human Services, Transportation, Agriculture and Interior. EPA and other agencies will continue to provide technical assistance and funding for sustainable communities, and the Department of the Interior will support efforts by tribal communities to enhance their own preparedness.

Request: I would like to see a Climate Change Committee be established in the town of Mansfield, whose mission is to call attention to the threats of climate change, and encourage members of other town committees to formulate concrete recommendations for protective actions against droughts, fires, diseases, etc. Once the town has "shovel-ready" plans, it will be well positioned to take advantage of funding opportunities from the State or Federal government, as they arise (See above)