



Summary Report and Housing Workshop Results
For the Housing Chapter
of the Town of East Windsor
Plan of Conservation and Development

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SUMMARY REPORT AND HOUSING WORKSHOP RESULTS

TOWN OF EAST WINDSOR PLAN OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT

1 Introduction

The Town of East Windsor retained a consultant team in March 2014 for purposes of coordinating with the Town Planner on the housing chapter of the East Windsor's 2014 Plan of Conservation and Development. (PoCD) The Town Planning and Zoning Commission and the Town Planner, Ms. Laurie Whitten, AICP, were completing the update to the PoCD in-house and had focused on the commercial, open space and historic resources portions of the PoCD since 2012. Their work to date included a resident survey, a visual preference survey for commercial architecture and commercial uses and coordination and background info and workshops on historic resources and walkability. LADA, P.C. Land Planners (LADA) of Simsbury, CT was retained by the town to complete a housing workshop where the results could be incorporated into the Housing chapter of the PoCD. The LADA Team consisted of Principal, Terri-Ann Hahn and other members of the LADA staff as well John D. Pagini, AICP, consultant planner from Coventry, CT.

2 Process

From May to June 2014, the LADA Team worked to compile background information typically required for a PoCD. Agencies were contacted and recent demographic data gathered from a variety of sources. These sources included:

1. *2014 – 2024 Regional Plan of Conservation & Development*, Capital Region Council of Governments
2. United States Census: East Windsor, CT (1790 – 2010)
3. United States Census: American Community Survey, 2008 – 2012
4. Town of East Windsor, Office of the Assessor
5. *East Windsor Housing Data Profile, 2013*: Partnership for Strong Communities
6. Commuter Statistics: CROG, *American Community Survey, 2006-10*, and 5 year survey, 2012
7. U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (Unemployment Statistics)
8. CT. Dept. of Labor (Unemployment Statistics)
9. Town of East Windsor Zoning Regulations and Zoning Map
10. Town of East Windsor, Planning and Zoning Commission: *2007 Plan of Conservation and Development*
11. Town of East Windsor, Office of the Town Planner

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12. The Warren Group (Publishers of *Banker and Tradesman* and the *Commercial Record*) (website subscription)
 13. Santander Bank Web-based Mortgage calculator
 14. CNN Money Mortgage Calculator (web-based)
 15. Goodmortgage.com PMI Calculator (web-based)
 16. *Making it Happen: Opportunities and Strategies for Transit Oriented Development in the Knowledge Corridor: A Market Analysis for Transit-Oriented Development in the Region's Bus Rapid Transit and Rail Corridors*, September, 2013, prepared for Capitol Region Council of Governments & Pioneer Valley Planning Commission by Jonathan Rose Companies, Center for Transit-Oriented Development
 17. *2013 – 2018 Connecticut Conservation and Development Policies Plan and Locational Guide Map*: State of Connecticut, Office of Policy and Management
 18. Freddie Mac: 30-Year Fixed rate Mortgages Since 1971
 19. *Connecticut Population by Town: 1900 – 1960*: State of Connecticut, Department of Economic and Community Development
 20. *Population of Connecticut Towns*: Connecticut Secretary of State
 21. CGS, Section 8-23 (municipal POCD)

The background data compiled from this research is included in a powerpoint presentation entitled "Analysis in support of the Residential Component of the East Windsor POCD" prepared by John Pagini which is submitted under a separate cover.

At the same time, LADA collaborated with the Town Planner to see what had changed since the 2004 Plan of Conservation of Development. Based on information from the Building Department and Planning Department, the town had experienced steady growth in the amount of and type of housing units from 2000 until 2005/2006. The 2007/2008 recession was evident in the drop off in the number of building permits issued annually and the lack of new construction. The low point was 2013 and there is some evidence that building permits for new construction were increasing in 2014. Population growth has been statistically flat for the last three years and reflects the lack of a vibrant employment base in the region as a whole. Due to these conditions, the Town's focus has been on commercial growth to support the tax base and increase the grand list rather than residential growth.

LADA held a series of mini-workshops with the Planning and Zoning Commission (the Commission). The first was held on March 25, 2014 to consider the scope of issues that the Commission wished to cover in the PoCD. The Commission determined that they were

interested in understanding the existing housing stock better and felt that future residential growth would be best focused in the Broad Brook and Warehouse Point area but that they were concerned about providing guidelines for what those units would look like and where they would go.

LADA staff drove most of the -----miles of roads in East Windsor taking photos of various neighborhoods, housing types and architectural styles. The second mini-workshop, held on April 22, 2014 with the Planning and Zoning Commission, was to review the many types of the existing housing stock to demonstrate the existing housing type diversity and historic architectural styles. Most of the existing housing stock is pre 1980's with a significant portion pre- 1940's so the mix of architectural styles was comprehensive. The most identifiable style was the colonial farmhouse but both Broad Brook and Warehouse Point have their own unique vernacular style with siding, rooflines and window configurations that are pleasing and considered visually attractive. The mini-workshop results indicated that the existing housing styles were valued by the participants and that future new construction should be based on these older styles.

The third mini workshop was held on May 27, 2014 to consider architectural styles and densities from other places. The Commission acknowledged that the existing styles and sizes of historic housing stock would need to be refurbished to meet today's resident space requirements, codes, and style expectations. So examples from various locations around the country were presented to see what kinds of new construction might be deemed suitable for East Windsor in the next 10-20 years. Many examples were reviewed and those determined to be suitable were to be added to the presentation for the formal Workshop with the Public to be held in June. An initial discussion regarding where in town new residential housing would be suitable was lively. Warehouse Point and Broad Brook were clearly considered to be appropriate locations and opportunities for growth. There was concern for the potential of new subdivisions located in the southern and eastern portions of the town (Scantic and Windsorville) where there was existing farmland and larger pieces of land but there was not consensus to pursue this topic rigorously.

The Public Workshop was held on June 22, 2014 in Town Hall at 6:00 pm. Attendance was low (about 6 participants plus the Commission) but those participating were very interested in the topic. The Workshop began with a short presentation and then participants were asked to rate a series of images and statements regarding housing and architectural styles. A PowerCom rating fob system was used to visually display the ratings chosen by the

participants immediately after their selections. The results were then presented on the screen and a discussion regarding the results followed.

Based on the Workshop results, the background data and discussions with the Commission and Town Planner, the LADA team then prepared recommendations which are located as the last chapter of this report.

3 Acknowledgments_

The LADA Team would like to thank the attendees of the workshop and mini workshops; the Commission and the Town Planner for their insightful questions and willingness to try new technology during the Workshop.

5 Recommendations

Based on the Workshop, input from the public and the Planning and Zoning Commission, the background research and observations from the Team, we offer the following recommendations as the Town completes its Plan of Conservation and Development:

1. The existing pre-1970's architecture is considered to be visually attractive and should be used as style precedents for future architectural guidelines. Architectural guidelines should be developed for both commercial and residential new construction. These guidelines should also include elements which address additions and rehabilitation of existing buildings.
2. The use of period-appropriate ornament (materials, shutters, gingerbread, colors, etc.) is preferred to a plain façade.
3. Houses where garage doors appear to dominate the front of the house are not preferred.
4. Roofline changes, gable ends facing the street, dormers and other period-appropriate methods to reduce the view of the roof from the street is preferred.
5. In general the preferred Building Type is one where the building looks like single-family homes, a Broad Brook duplex, or mill buildings
6. Mixed use (commercial and residential) is recommended along Main Street (between Wesley Road and Town Hall) and Depot Street in Broad Brook as well as Bridge Street, North Main Street, and Main Street in Warehouse Point.
7. Increased residential density should be considered in Broad Brook and Warehouse Point.
8. Work with the Capital Region Council of Governments to include Warehouse Point as a priority TOD development area associated with the TOD designation of the Windsor Locks inter-city rail stop identified in the Jonathon Rose market analysis for the Knowledge Corridor. Encourage bike and pedestrian linkages to the rail stop across the Route 140 bridge by working with CRCOG, ConnDOT and Windsor Locks to expand the existing minimal pedestrian access and environment on the bridge and into Warehouse Point. Designate a representative to serve on the committees and delegations associated with the Windsor Locks station improvements.
9. The CRCOG Regional Plan concludes that Millennials, now entering the workforce, "will be looking for compact, walkable, mixed use communities with a selection of restaurants, shops, services and cultural amenities. They are a generation that

embraces transit over the automobile and will choose housing based upon what transportation options exist.” The CRCOG Regional Plan also concludes that 89% of aging “Baby Boomers” prefer to live in place (same home or community), and in many cases downsize to live in vibrant, walkable mixed use communities. There will be a significant reduction in demand for large suburban homes. In light of those predictions, East Windsor should consider establishing mixed use zoning (village style development) for Broad Brook and Warehouse Point, with architectural guidelines to govern infill construction, new construction, rehabilitation, and public infrastructure / streetscape improvements, pedestrian and bike systems. The guidelines would be based on the visual preference workshops of 2012 and June 24, 2014 for residential and mixed use development. This work should be done in association with an overall Village Plan for each of the areas.

10. Encourage restaurant uses within the Broad Brook and Warehouse Point areas to support the residential neighborhoods. Consider the development of village parking plans (showing shared and common parking) and on-street parking where an individual site may not be able to meet the Town’s parking requirements. Also, compare the Town’s parking requirements with new Urban Land Institute recommendations and NWCTCOG Parking Demand Study for Rural Areas to see if parking regulation should be modified.
11. Develop an overall Stormwater Master Plan for the Broad Brook and Warehouse Point area to determine the level of impervious surface which can be handled in these areas and what the requirements for water quality, stormwater and flood control and stream protection would be for the area as a whole to supplement and offset the requirements of individual sites.
12. Design streetscape improvements both in Broad Brook and in Warehouse Point to improve pedestrian and bicycle connections between the main roads and neighborhoods. The improvements should include sidewalks sized for multiple people, bike lanes, benches, light fixtures and changeable elements such as hanging plants and banners. Where possible, seek inclusion in the regional ConnDOT Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP), and ultimately the Statewide TIP to be able to access Federal funds for improvements.
13. For the Scantic, Windsorville and Melrose areas, develop Village Plans for each of these areas to establish architectural guidelines, lot requirements and densities to preserve the historic character, preserve the rural agricultural character and enhance the architectural character, respectively, of each of these areas.

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14. New construction should consider how the layout of lots can be configured to create a sense of neighborhood, preserve open space as a usable commodity and provide connections both internally within the project and external to the actual construction area (street and other destination points). This is especially important regarding the potential for larger parcels to be developed along the Route 140 and Route 5 corridors. The Commission should continue to engage in discussion to determine a clear direction regarding future residential development along these corridors as part of the PoCD.
 15. Develop a program to preserve the agricultural economy and visual resources of the Town to encourage farming to continue.
 16. Consider incentives for second and third floor residential units within existing structures; esp. in Broad Brook and Warehouse Point
 17. There is existing farm land located in Warehouse Point and Broad Brook that could provide a significant resource in the future. The development of a Farmers Market and/or clear and simple farmstand regulations may allow additional land to become viable as farmland including the currently very popular community supported agriculture (CSAs) which allow residents to share in the benefits and risks of farming.
 18. Create a Town-wide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan which allows for the connection of Broad Brook and Warehouse Point with Route 140 and possible the trolley line. Overall, the connections within the villages and between the villages should be more fully explored to increase accessibility and walkability within the town. In addition, consider the creation of a pathway which loops the town from Route 140 to Windsorville via East Road to Scantic via Apothecaries Hill or Plantation Road to Winkler Road and Trombley Road to Warehouse Point and back.
 19. Create a municipal destination along Route 140 to provide a middle point in the connections plan between Broad Brook and Warehouse Point.
 20. Consider a 10-acre mini farm overlay zone for those areas of town where there is active farming.
 21. In Scantic, enhance and protect the historic resources, the character of the land in the vicinity and the viewshed of those resources.
 22. In Windsorville, enhance and protect the agricultural/industrial character of the area. Consider the creation of a country store or other farming/agricultural business uses in this area. Future housing should use a traditional house and barn configuration which should be reflected in the design guidelines specifically for Windsorville.

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23. Where possible, seek State Open Space funds and other available funding to preserve active farmland, provide tax relief and funding for barn preservation, and overall preservation of prime habitat and agricultural soils. Many landowners find these programs benefit their ability to continue farming.
 24. Where increased density is encouraged, it may become necessary to expand the limits of the service area for existing water and sewer service or develop new larger scale underground sanitary septic systems or wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) options. This process will require an approved discharge location for new WWTP, approvals from the Health district and coordination with the regional and state PoCD in order to apply for state funding.
 25. The PoCD should identify those changes to the regional and state PoCDs that will be required to correspond to and reflect those areas where future increased density is desired by the Town.
 26. Develop gateway elements for all of the Town's villages that create a sense of arrival and which, while similar to one another define the character of each area distinctly. This is often done with light poles using changing color on the pole or fixtures changing slightly from one place to another(more detail in some areas or changing filigree on the fixture itself).