

POCD: 4 Years In-Where Do We Stand?

**Lynne Vanderslice
First Selectwoman**

This month is the 4-year anniversary of the effective date of the Town's Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD). As stated within the Plan, the POCD "***sets forth the community's forward-looking vision for Wilton's development during the next ten years and beyond.***

The Plan was developed over an 18-month period in 2018 and 2019 under the leadership of the Planning and Zoning Commission and included a Working Group with representation from the elected and appointed boards and multiple opportunities for residents to participate. The Plan's goals, objectives and strategies to encourage responsible grand list growth, maintain/improve Wilton's natural environment and continue investment in infrastructure and amenities cut across all town boards/commissions/committees and departments. **The POCD informs the priorities and the decision making of all in town government.**

Four years in, the Plan's economic development focus and messaging helped move the needle on what had otherwise been sluggish growth with

- Further expansion of Wilton's Healthcare Corridor. Hartford Healthcare and Coastal Orthopedics moves into South Wilton and occupying previously underperforming commercial office space.
- Redevelopment of 200 Danbury Road to mixed use.
- Redevelopment of 141 Danbury Road to multi-family.
- ASML's purchase of the vacant commercial office building at 20 Westport Road and ongoing expansion of their manufacturing headquarters at 77 Danbury Road.

The following are some, not all, of the action steps within the implementation plan either completed during the four years or in process.

Economic Development/Housing/Redevelopment of Underperforming Commercial-Critical action steps:

- Develop a master plan for Wilton Center-*complete*.
- Implement regulatory changes/incentives for Wilton Center-*complete*.
- Provide a high quality and safe pedestrian connection between the train station and Wilton Center to encourage development around the train station-*complete*.
- Establish an architectural review board-*complete*.
- Plan and regulate for transition in development patterns along Danbury Road
 - Transit Oriented Development-*complete*.
 - Central Wilton Danbury Road-Proposed regulations prepared, awaiting public hearing.
- Form a Housing Committee-*complete*.
- Increase permitted residential density in the village centers and along Danbury Road.
 - Regulation change for Danbury Road DE-5 zones-*complete*

- New Wilton Center regulations-*complete*
- Evaluate requiring affordable housing set aside in Wilton Center-*complete*. 10% required under new regulations.
- Target Healthcare for investment in Wilton-*complete*.
- Consider town-owned real estate for housing-Properties on New Street and Station Road being considered by Housing Committee.
- Joint P&Z/ EDC exploration of changes to sign regulations-Ongoing.
- Consider use of an affordable housing fund-*complete*. Established and initial funding by the Board of Selectmen.
- Evaluate and improve the land use process-Online permitting in process.
- Work with providers to upgrade high-bandwidth-Complete for much of Wilton.
- Identify town-owned land for use by cellular providers-*complete*. Land at Bus Barn leased to Verizon. Siting Council approved tower. Spring installation date. Must allow other carriers.

Infrastructure-Critical action steps:

- Complete Road Restoration Program-*complete*.
- New Police Headquarters-Plan-*complete*. Fund-*complete*. Construct-In process.
- Plan for school building needs-10-year Needs Assessment commissioned by the Board of Selectmen. Report to be presented at a November 15th meeting.
- Plan for municipal building needs-10 year-Needs Assessment in progress.
- Evaluate regional waste disposal-*complete*. Joined the regional HRRRA.
- Evaluate regional firing range facility-In process. Regional grant received. Wilton is one of two sites being considered within WestCOG.
- Food waste recycling at the Transfer Station-*complete*.
- Pursue opportunities for playgrounds not associated with school buildings.
 - Merwin Meadows-Installation in the spring.
 - Schenck's Island-funded-In design discussions.

Natural Environment-Critical Action Steps:

- NRVT
 - Acquire grant funding for construction of segments-*complete* and ongoing.
 - Identify a preferred NRVT route in northern Wilton-In process through WestCOG and regional grant.

Develop a River Walk in Wilton Center-Incentivized in new Wilton Center zoning regulations.

- Continue to implement the Town's stormwater management plan (SWMP)-Ongoing.
- Develop a strategy for existing property owners to reduce and improve the quality of stormwater runoff-In discussions-WPCA.
- Dana Dam removal-*complete*.
- Norwalk River along River Road.
 - Open 'windows' of scenic views of the river and the park behind it-*complete*.
 - Remove invasive species and replant with native species-*complete*.
 - Riparian and river bed improvements-*complete*.
 - Continued maintenance-Ongoing.

- Provide 70% of municipal and school building energy needs through rooftop solar and virtual net meters-*complete*.

To learn more, the 137-page full Plan is available on this [link](#). Recommended actions steps for the implementation of the plan goals begin on page 107. A 7-page executive summary of the Plan is available on this [link](#).