

PLANNING & ZONING
COMMISSION
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TOWN HALL ANNEX
238 Danbury Road
Wilton, Connecticut 06897

WILTON PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION MINUTES*
SEPTEMBER 28, 2023 - SPECIAL MEETING
(CONDUCTED ELECTRONICALLY VIA ZOOM)

PRESENT: Chairman Rick Tomasetti, Secretary Eric Fanwick, Commissioners Matthew Murphy, Christopher Pagliaro, Christopher Wilson, Ken Hoffman, Mark Ahasak. Absent were Melissa-Jean Rotini and Jill Warren; Barbara Geddis and Sam Gardner from the Wilton Center Area Master Planning Subcommittee; Frank Fish, Jonathan Martin, and Christine Jimenez from BFG Planning.

Also present was Town Planner Michael Wrinn.

REGULAR MEETING

- A. CALL TO ORDER at 7:00 PM** by Chair Tomasetti
- B. SEATING OF MEMBERS** – Members present were seated by Chair Tomasetti.
- C. WORK SESSION**

Mr. Tomasetti opened the meeting by giving the background and need for Wilton to have long range planning in place to support the growth of Wilton Center into a more vibrant and attractive community for residents. Mr. Wrinn then went through the details of the presentation and emphasized that this does not prohibit anyone from doing anything under today's zoning regulations, which will stay as is. This is designed to be a carrot to allow for development in areas that have not been developed to date. Mr. Wrinn then introduced Mr. Fish.

Mr. Fish opened by saying that the Master Plan is consistent with the 2019 Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD). He then gave details of the layout of the draft plan, reviewing each of the seven chapters: 1. Study Area Boundaries, both sides of Danbury Road, and Wilton Center for the form-based code; 2. Zoning Districts, which can take advantage of overlays but can stay with existing zoning regulations; 3. Environmental Constraints; 4. Market Conclusions for the Greater Wilton Center Area. Wilton Center primarily services Wilton residents and workers. The most significant demand is for residential use. A more mixed-use center would

bring more vibrancy; 5. Pedestrian Connectivity and Circulation Plan; 6. Four Proposed Overlay Zoning Districts: one form-based code overlay district (WCOD) and three districts along Danbury Road.

Mr. Martin gave a brief definition of overlay zoning, and its relationship with the existing zoning regulations. He then defined form-based zoning as it relates to traditional zoning. He then discussed the purpose of form-based zoning: promote a diversity of architectural styles and streetscapes; establish a riverwalk along the Norwalk River; ensure that designs meet high standards and create a welcoming environment. He then discussed the regulatory plan: encourage in-fill development; bonusable height for projects that provide exceptional public benefit; all new development will provide sufficient parking and civic space. He then discussed the different street types and the kinds of uses and forms that belong on different streets.

Next, he discussed Building Placement Regulations, and that the relationship between the building, the sidewalk, and the street should be regulated in a form-based code. He then reviewed Building Height and Eave & Stepback standards, Lot Frontage Types, and Edging Elements & Design Standards.

Ms. Jimenez then gave an overview of the Danbury Road overlays. She mentioned the commonality of the regulations of the three: minimizing curb cuts, the need to provide sidewalks and pedestrian connections, the use of green elements, and all developments will have 10% affordable housing.

OL-1 Danbury Road East was designed to facilitate neighborhood-scaled, multi-family development. OL-2 Danbury Road West was designed to facilitate the creation of an auto-oriented business corridor with improved pedestrian connectivity. OL-3 Danbury Road TOD was designed to facilitate larger-scaled, multi-family development, capitalizing on the proximity to the Wilton train station.

Mr. Wilson asked if there was any thought given to a gas line servicing the Danbury Road corridor. Mr. Tomasetti said that it was briefly discussed, but would be considered when the demand materializes. Mr. Fanwick expressed support of the work that was done. Mr. Ahasak expressed concern about the allowable heights, which he thinks are out of character for Wilton Center. He sees height as creating density in this plan, but suggested that density could be achieved horizontally. Ms. Geddis responded by saying that height was not a singular focus. Architectural variety and civic spaces were drivers. Mr. Hoffman wanted to know how the Committee arrived at the street setback distance. He also asked about staging and funding, and would like to see stronger language in the plan relating to changing the soul of the town. Mr. Murphy expressed that he supported the plan.

Mr. Wrinn stated that there does not need to be a motion to accept the master plan; it is an advisory document that does not have to go to a public hearing. The regulations need to go to a public hearing.

Mr. Murphy made a motion to move the process to a public hearing which was seconded by Mr. Fanwick. Mr. Tomasetti then wanted to amend the document, making a change to page 17 to

show that the “H” line indicating 39’ should be to the bottom of the eave. The Commission then voted unanimously to approve the document and move to a public hearing. The public hearing is scheduled for October 19.

E. ADJOURNMENT

UPCOMING MEETINGS

1. Thursday, October 19, 2023 – Planning & Zoning Commission Public Hearing

Respectfully submitted by Rich Callahan – Recording Secretary

***MINUTES HAVE NOT BEEN REVIEWED BY THIS COMMISSION AND MAY BE SUBJECT TO
REVISION IN FUTURE MINUTES. FULL AUDIO RECORDING OF MEETING IS AVAILABLE
AT: <https://www.wiltonct.org/node/86/minutes-agendas>**