

**TOWN OF VERNON
Planning & Zoning Commission (PZC)
Special Meeting Notice*
Tuesday September 14, 2021 7:00 PM
Rockville High School Auditorium
70 Loveland Hill Rd
Vernon, CT**

AGENDA

1. **Call to Order & Roll Call by Roland Klee, Chairman**
2. **Public Hearing**
 - 2.1 Draft Plan of Conservation and Development, dated May 25, 2021
3. **Adjournment**

Roland Klee, Chairman
Planning & Zoning Commission

*Note: This meeting is scheduled to be an in-person, public meeting; no virtual or hybrid participation option is available.



OFFICE OF THE
TOWN PLANNER

TOWN OF VERNON

14 PARK PLACE, VERNON, CT 06066-3291
(860) 870-3640
gmcmgregor@vernon-ct.gov

MEMORANDUM

TO: Planning & Zoning Commission

FROM: George K. McGregor, AICP, Town Planner

SUBJECT: Plan of Conservation and Development Public Hearing

DATE: September 14, 2021

On September 14, 2021, the Planning and Zoning Commission will hold a public hearing on the draft Plan of Conservation & Development (POCD), as required under Section 8-23 of the Connecticut General Statutes. After a year-long public process and along with its project partner, SLR, the PZC released a draft document dated May 25, 2021 for public review and comment.

The draft POCD, an update of the 2012 document, is the official policy statement of the Town of Vernon setting forth the future land use, development, and conservation priorities of the community. The Plan was prepared by an examination of existing conditions, demographic analysis, stakeholder involvement, a public survey, and two public input sessions (not including the aforementioned public hearing).

Consistent with State law, the draft document was placed on the Town website, provided to the town Council, Town Clerk, and regional Council of Governments for review and referral. The public hearing has been advertised in the Journal Inquirer and on the Town web site.

During the 65-day silent period (period between publication and the public hearing), no revisions or amendments have been made to the May 25, 2021 draft. Public comment received during this period (through date of publication of packet) are attached to this memorandum, including the Capitol Region COG referral.

The public hearing is intended for the commission to receive comments from the public. Once concluded, the PZC to may make revisions and then adopt the document by resolution.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

GKM

August 6, 2021

TO: VERNON PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

REPORT ON ZONING REFERRAL POCD-2021-1: Comprehensive update to the Town's Plan of Conservation and Development

COMMISSIONERS: Receipt is acknowledged of the above-mentioned referral. Notice of this proposal was transmitted to the Policy and Planning Division of the Capitol Region Council of Governments under the provisions of Section 8-23 (h)(4) of the Connecticut General Statutes, as amended.

COMMENT: The staff of the Regional Planning Commission of the Capitol Region Council of Governments has reviewed this referral and finds no apparent conflicts with regional plans and policies, the growth management principles of the State Plan of Conservation and Development, plans of conservation and development of other municipalities in the region, or the concerns of neighboring towns. Staff commends the town's priority to balance economic growth with maintaining natural resources and priority conservation areas. Staff would encourage careful consideration when identifying new industrial zones or sites, especially in relation to priority conservation areas or town borders. Staff has noted that sites around the Exit 67 Node may conflict with identified Priority Conservation Area in the regional POCD. Many of the characteristics for conservation areas (i.e. steep slopes, wetlands, etc.) have also been identified by the town. Staff also commends the Town for integrating natural hazard mitigation issues into the POCD.

Staff commends the town's commitment to improved housing diversity and transportation improvements, with an emphasis on biking and walking. The Town may find the Sustainable Land Use Code Project Model Regulations helpful regarding affordable housing and accessory dwelling units. This code can be found at <http://crcog.org/2016/04/28/sustainable-land-use-regulation-project-crcog-model-land-use-regulations/>.

The public hearing date has been scheduled for 8/17/2021.

In accordance with our procedures this letter will constitute final CRCOG action on this referral. Questions concerning this referral should be directed to Christopher Henchey.

DISTRIBUTION: Planner: Tolland, Ellington, South Windsor, Manchester, Bolton, Coventry

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Bartiss-Earley, Chairman
Regional Planning Commission

Brendan Malone, Vice Chairman
Regional Planning Commission



Christopher Henchey
Transportation Planner

Town of Vernon Planning & Zoning Commission
Plan of Conservation and Development Public Hearing

September 14, 2021

Public Comment received from May 26-September 7, 2021*

Referrals

1. 8-6-2021 Capital Region Council of Governments

Letters/Emails received May 26-September 7

5-26-21 A. Lentendre/Open Space Task Force

5-28-21 W. Bray

6-10-21 A. Letendre/Open Space Task Force

7-17-21 P. Paul

8-2-21 N. Strong

8-5-21 N. Steffens & B. Felber

8-17-21 C. & L. Palifka

8-30-21 J. Williams/Friends of Bolton Lakes

8-31-21 B. Knowles

8-31-21 M. Virkler

9-3-21 D. Morgan

9-7-21 C. Connor

*Public input received between September 8, 2021 and the Public Hearing will be presented at the hearing.

From: [ckconnor](#)
To: [McGregor, George](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] upcoming meeting Sept 14 2021
Date: Tuesday, September 7, 2021 7:53:34 PM

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Hello

I would like to express my thoughts and also encourage the town to seriously consider the not so good effects of allowing more apartments in Vernon/Rockville and/or changing zoning to accommodate those who have been pressuring the town into giving in to more apartments.

Fact check, numerous serious daily accidents on rt83 mostly, due to mass congestion . Along with rt30, and other neighborhood roads like South st where these rental residents not only do not have proper insurance and registration in Ct, but do not obey the speed limit within 10 mph over at least, blow stop signs and also fly up south st and nearly hit those in crosswalk near Knollwood dr.

Fact check I have reported out of state cars/suv's motorhomes to the tax dept since they are all out of state, do not carry insurance to Ct standards, do not pay town taxes and have been ignored, this is lost tax revenue in the hundreds of thousands of dollars. No one is enforcing this, which needs to be addressed, I gave specific information along with previous years tax paid, one neighbor who brags about it with Vermont plates on a motorhome thats stored here in Vernon over 350 days a year, this resident also has numerous motor cycles registered in Vt also.

We have enough apartments, we need open land space and/or 1 acre for homes and apts to be the NEW norm

Thanks for your time in reading this.. Craig Connor 25 Bancroft Rd

From: [Dennis Morgan](#)
To: [McGregor, George](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Upcoming hearing at Rockville High School
Date: Friday, September 3, 2021 8:41:57 PM

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Good evening,

I'm not sure how many people will attend the meeting/hearing due to COVID. It would be nice if you guys could stream the meeting live so that those who can not attend could watch and then maybe e-mail their feelings on the subject to you post meeting.

I am one who believes Vernon has too many apartments. I was okay with Santini expanding on the other side of Rt 30, but then to see the MASSIVE Complex being built on Rt 83 across from the old Center Court Health Club seems a little excessive. That land would have best used if it had been cleaned up, trees planted, and it allowed to be a natural area.

Some people will allocate for more single family homes to be built. I'm not sure we need more homes unless they are going to be built on existing lots that have been zoned for homes or built on former business lots.

Lastly, often times new developments are approved and built with little effort put into improving road conditions. On Rt 83, the installation of traffic lights and the minimal roadwork done for the new complex is inadequate. Rt 83 was already overwhelmed with traffic and needed to be widened, and this complex just adds to the problem.

D.Morgan

Sent from my iPad

From: [Michelle Virkler](#)
To: [McGregor, George](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] PLAN OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT- MEETING SEPTEMBER 14TH
Date: Tuesday, August 31, 2021 1:00:28 PM

CAUTION: This Email is from an EXTERNAL source. Ensure you trust this sender before clicking on any links or attachments.

We are opposed to any more density planning for the town of Vernon (Density planning; Village Density; Medium Density) At present 44% of Vernon's housing is renter occupied which does not bring value to the Town of Vernon. We have found that apartment housing does not help our tax base at all. We feel that Vernon has way too many rental units. Lets think and focus on bringing value for the Town of Vernon. When you own a home or condo, the owner takes better care of their property. We vote to oppose your development of Density Planning. We are not able to attend the meeting. Thus the email presents our position. Thank you!

Wayne & Michelle Virkler
16 JEN DRIVE
Vernon, CT 06066

From: [Gately, Shaun](#)
To: [McGregor, George](#)
Subject: FW: Commercial Land in Vernon
Date: Tuesday, August 31, 2021 12:07:55 PM

George, I just received this comment on the POCD and future land use map.

From: Brian Knowles <bknowles@shcne.com>
Sent: Tuesday, August 31, 2021 12:06 PM
To: Gately, Shaun <sgately@vernon-ct.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Commercial Land in Vernon

<p>CAUTION: This Email is from an EXTERNAL source. Ensure you trust this sender before clicking on any links or attachments.</p>

Shaun, I was reviewing the draft POCD and future land use map and was curious if 97 Dobson, 15 Pitkin and 89 Dobson would be considered as future commercial parcels?

Please advise at your convenience.

Thanks-

Brian Knowles
SullivanHayes Companies
D: 860.470.1979
M: 413.433.6492
bknowles@shcne.com

From: [John Williams](#)
To: [McGregor, George](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Vernon's POCD and the Bolton Lakes
Date: Monday, August 30, 2021 4:12:21 PM

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George K. McGregor, AICP
Town Planner
Town of Vernon
55 West Main Street
Vernon, CT. 06066-3291

Mr. McGregor,

I am writing to you to comment on the draft of the Plan for Conservation and Development (PCD) dated May 25th, 2021. I am the Vice President of the Friends of Bolton Lakes (FBL). We are a non-profit organization whose mission is: "To conserve and preserve the pristine condition of the lakes and their watershed areas". We have been in existence for almost ten years and have developed a strong working relationship with Vernon's town administration and leadership. That includes partnering with the towns of Vernon and Bolton this spring to secure a state Aquatic Invasive Species grant award, successfully lobbying at the state level for the repair and reconstruction of the Hatch Hill Dam that is scheduled to begin this fall, partnering with Vernon officials as an extension to their emergency preparedness program, and establishing a Bolton Lakes comprehensive water monitoring program.

Beginning last fall, FBL convened a steering committee with the purpose of developing a watershed management plan. Included were officials from Vernon, Bolton, Tolland and Coventry. The Vernon contact is Marty Sittler. Along with the towns' lakes consultant, a draft of the plan was presented to DEEP in the spring and is awaiting their feedback before being presented to the public. I can provide the draft to you if it would be useful..

It seems appropriate for FBL to be part of the PCD in some form. Our organization's goals closely align with the stated goals of the PCD, specifically Goals 5.3, 6.3, 7.3 & 7.4, and most especially Goal 8. The lakes are a valuable recreational and natural resource for the town as well as the region.

Thank you for your consideration.

John Williams
Vice President, Friends of Bolton Lakes

McGregor, George

From: Lester Palifka <lesterpalifka@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, August 17, 2021 9:09 AM
To: McGregor, George
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Response to POCD Draft
Attachments: Apartment Map South Street Area_Rev C.pdf

CAUTION: This Email is from an EXTERNAL source. Ensure you trust this sender before clicking on any links or attachments.

Lester & Carol Palifka
12 Bancroft Road
Vernon, Ct. 06066

August 17, 2021

Dear George,

After reviewing the draft document of the town's Plan of Conservation and Development, My wife and I are expressing several concerns and hope the Planning and Zoning Commission will take them into consideration before approving an updated POCD. I plan to attend the Sept. 14 public hearing on the POCD, but also would like to submit this letter of comment. I have also included a map I made of the saturation of multi-family housing that is currently in our vicinity. As you can see we now have a high saturation of multi-family housing and changing the POC as proposed will only increase this.

Please re-consider the concept of "**density areas**" for Vernon since one size does not fit all. The consultants who drafted this plan work with many towns that do not have enough rental units or affordable housing. **Vernon is not one of them.** In fact, our town has more multi-family units than in any surrounding town, with 44% of the housing in Vernon being renter occupied. In contrast, the percentage for Tolland County is much lower, at 28%, and the statewide average is 30%. **Additionally, affordable housing in Vernon stands at 14%, well above the required 10% that most towns are struggling to achieve.**

The current POCD contains language that addresses the need for a better housing balance between owner-occupied and rental units. Unfortunately, the draft POCD is missing any mention of this imbalance, and instead, the density areas make it easier for developers to convert any remaining land designated for single-family housing to even more rental units.

Vernon's current POCD includes the following language that we hope the PZC will retain in some manner to help maintain a better balance of of home ownership and rental units:

- Vernon's housing stock has a high percentage of multi-family housing and *could be balanced with more ownership and single-family housing opportunities.*
- The goal is to "*Increase Homeownership Opportunities,*" and to "*Retain zoning patterns which reserve appropriate areas of the town for single-family homeownership.*"

Vernon's POCD from 2001 raised the same concern with this language:

- "In sum, the changes in the Vernon housing inventory and the demographic characteristics of the Town since the last plan update suggest that on matters of housing, the direction for the next ten years is 'steady as you

go', with an emphasis on increasing the percentage of homeownership within the housing inventory and addressing the growing needs of the **elderly population**."

In 1996, when a developer tried to change six acres on South Street from residential zone to multi-family, the Town Planner noted: "With more than 40% of the town's units being multi-family, there is a legitimate question as to whether more multi-family units are needed."

Since 1996, the percentage of multi-family housing has increased to 44%. Additionally, from 2015-2019, the town averaged 121 new housing units a year, with the majority being multi-family. Trail Run alone represents 700 Multi-Family units. In just the Vernon Avenue/Route 30 area, there are over 1,200 apartments.

A better housing balance is even more critical at this time since there is high demand for single-family homes as more people are working from home and desire office and outdoor space. To ensure thoughtful planning and development for Vernon's future, we hope the PZC will look at these specific pages in the current POCD and include these strategies and goals for the 2022 POCD:

Page 75: The Plan notes these two strategies:

- "Protect residential neighborhoods"
- "Increase homeownership opportunities"

Page 76: The Plan notes that the town should focus on "rebalancing Vernon's housing portfolio. The housing stock, which has a high percentage of multi-family housing, could be balanced with more ownership and single-families housing opportunities."

Page 80: The Plan notes that "Homeownership represents a commitment by the homeowner to Vernon, and thus they may be more likely to volunteer for boards, commissions, and other groups." To increase homeownership opportunities: "retain zoning patterns which reserve appropriate areas of the town for single-family ownership."

Page 121: The Plan lists Six Growth Principles. Principle number two is: "The POCD aims to attract more homeowners to better balance its housing stock."

The current POCD, dated 2012 recommends Vernon continue these strategies:

- Promote homeownership and work to attract families to Vernon.
- Maintain residential neighborhoods and re-think how and where new multi-family housing is built.

When considering updates to Vernon's POCD, we hope the Planning and Zoning Commission will also take into account this feedback from Vernon residents:

- At the Jan. 14 POCD public workshop, **90%** of those participating said there were too many or enough apartments in Vernon.
- In the survey sent to residents last fall, **32%** respondents said they would like to stay in Vernon and downsize to smaller homes.
- At both virtual workshops, residents were clear that Vernon should put a priority on capitalizing on its recreational opportunities, such as Rails to Trails, Valley Falls and open land.

Although Carol and I strongly feel that "**density areas**" are not right for Vernon, we also think the draft POCD proposes that too much of Vernon's land be designated "Village Density." We also find it curious that the

proposed "Village Density" concept that begins at Route 30 and travels up South Street ends at the edge of Bancroft Road, and then turns into "Medium Density." It would seem more logical to end the "Village Density" designation at Vernon Avenue. Should the PZC adopt density areas for the town's updated POCD, we suggest that areas designated as "Village Density" and "Medium Density" be re-evaluated to help ensure a better balance of housing in Vernon. Please see my visual map outlining the proposed village vs medium density and what would be a logical demarcation line for village and medium density.

Carol and I are NOT against multi-family housing, but we feel that our area is already saturated with multi-family housing. We feel that changing the proposed changes to the current POCD will DEGRADE our quality of life. We love Vernon and love the neighborhood in which we live and it would be sad indeed if this was to change through this proposed POCD. Please consider this change very carefully and I hope you will come to a reasonable conclusion.

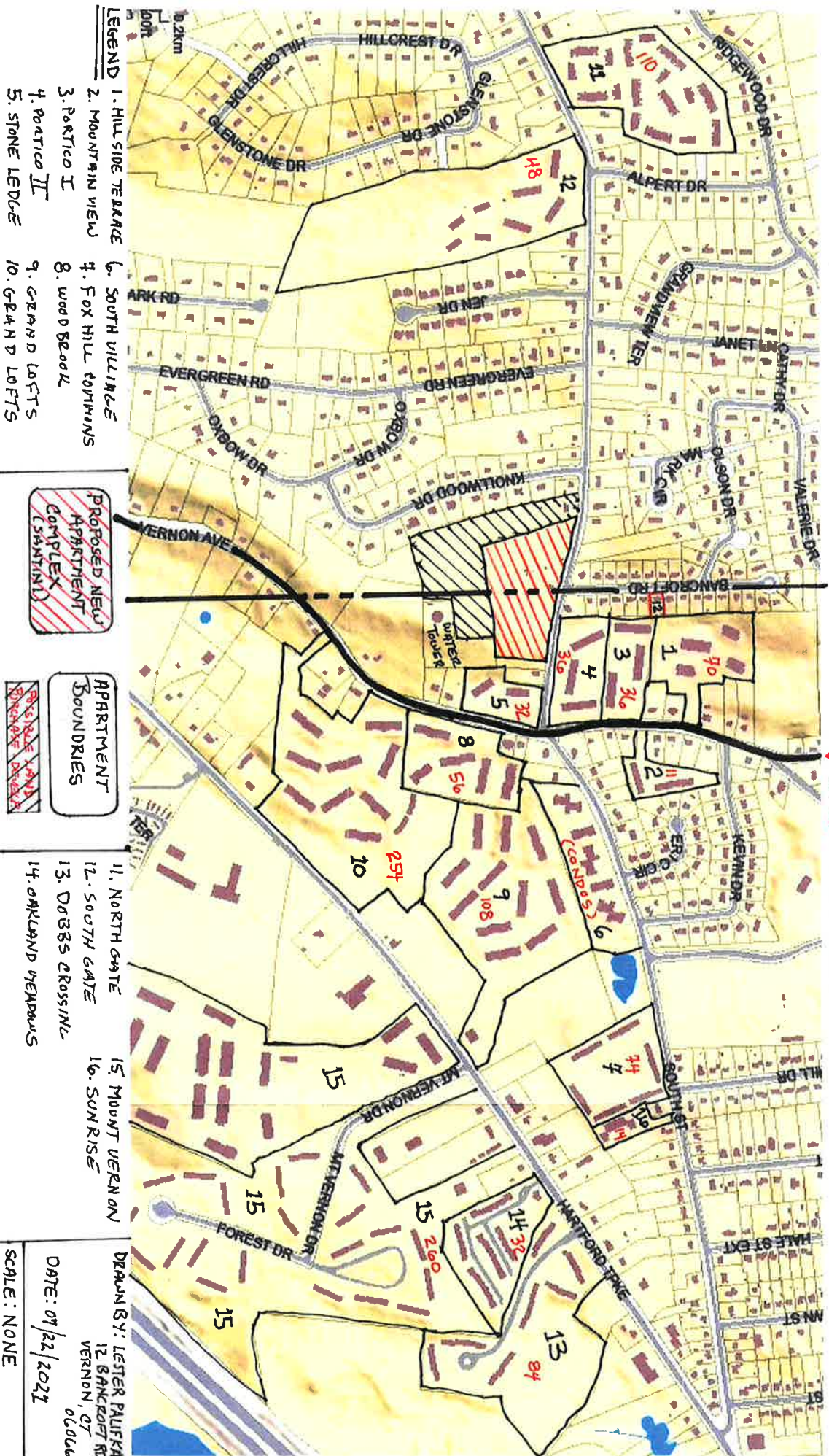
We appreciate the work our PZC Commissioners do in helping promote responsible land planning, and we hope they recognize the need to adopt a POCD that BALANCES the sharp increase in multi-family units in our town with more single family home ownership.

Sincerely,

Carol and Lester Palifka
12 Bancroft Road, Vernon, CT 06066

PROPOSED MEDIUM DENSITY
2021 POLD

(VERNON AVE)
LOGICAL LINE BETWEEN
VILLAGE/MEDIUM DENSITY



SCALE: NONE

DATE: 07/22/2021

DRAWN BY: LESTER PALUFKA
12 BANCROFT RD
VERNON, CT

August 5, 2021

Dear George,

After reviewing the draft document of the town's Plan of Conservation and Development, we are expressing several concerns and hope the Planning and Zoning Commission will take them into consideration before approving an updated POCD. We plan to attend the Sept. 14 public hearing on the POCD, but also would like to submit this letter of comment.

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We appreciate the work our PZC Commissioners do in helping promote responsible land planning, and we hope they recognize the need to adopt a POCD that balances the sharp increase in multi-family units in our town with more home ownership.

Sincerely,
Nancy Steffens and Bob Felber
224 South Street, Vernon, CT 06066

McGregor, George

From: Nancy Strong <nrstrong@aol.com>
Sent: Monday, August 2, 2021 8:38 AM
To: McGregor, George
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Corrections and comments on CPOD

CAUTION: This Email is from an EXTERNAL source. Ensure you trust this sender before clicking on any links or attachments.

Hi George -

Going over the CPOD again and here is a correction and a concern on Appendix B-

Correction - The maps leaves out Strong Family Farm's 18 acres on West St. pastures that is under agricultural easement - not in green as open space.

Concern - Have the Trout Stream Dr. and other residential homeowners who are designated connectors been informed that they are a future connection plan for the Town? They should be - it's the right thing to do. A good communication move for the Town to inform each resident individually. Full and open disclosure.

Thanks - what a lot of work!

-Nancy Strong

From: [Patti Paul](#)
To: [McGregor, George](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Proposed Zoning Changes
Date: Saturday, July 17, 2021 9:27:52 PM

CAUTION: This Email is from an EXTERNAL source. Ensure you trust this sender before clicking on any links or attachments.

Hi George:

This is Patti Paul- I have owned my home on 149 Vernon Ave (corner on South Street) since 2003- 18 years now. I also run Little Farm Stand on my property.

I bought my house because I love the small town feel of Vernon as well as the amenities this town offers.. There are apartments around my property, but my friends and neighbors live in single family homes.

In my opinion rental units can be problematic since the people that are living there really don't have a tie to or a care about what happens in our town. This is an impression, but over the years... and as a small business, I see that my customers mainly are from homes in town- not from apartments.

In my opinion we should focus on more single family housing that will continue to take our town to the next generation and further- that is what is important to keep this town vital. We have enough rental units in Vernon.

What I love about Vernon is the open space, and also the sidewalks I'm able walk to Henry Park or my friend's house on Temple Street, Open space is important to town. If the town continues to allow apartments- 6 or 12 or 24... the number really doesn't matter. The hills and valleys that are so important to this area will disappear. And then what? The new apartments on South Street will get a birds eye view to the fireworks at Henry Park without paying the \$1 to get in :)

Best Regards- Patti Paul
(Patricia Gearing)

McGregor, George

From: Ann Letendre <annletendr@aol.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 10, 2021 11:26 AM
To: McGregor, George
Cc: Ouellette, Tom [External]; karl.hasel@cox.net; Motola, Brian (external); Gingras, Virginia[External]; C.Ryan Goad (External)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] POCD Inputs from OSTF on Goals, Objectives, Strategies
Attachments: POCD Goals, Objectives, Strategies - OSTF Comment 6-8-21.docx; LtrCTDEPFisheries1-16-03.pdf; Nature Conservancy to Vernon.jpg

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Good morning, George.

Inputs from the Open Space Task Force regarding the POCD are below and attached. Please provide this letter and attachments to the Planning & Zoning Commission. We look forward to continued dialogue on the document.

Thank you.

Ann Letendre

To Vernon Planning & Zoning Commission,

In re-reviewing the POCD "Goals, Objectives, Strategies" and the "Future Land Use Map" documents in light of the 2012 POCD, the Vernon Open Space Task Force has become concerned about lack of focus on our natural resources in the documents.

The attached document has culled out the goals that we believe should incorporate natural resource text. Our suggested text revisions/additions are noted in red, and comments are in red italics.

We firmly believe that a future land use map should incorporate the natural resource constraints (wetlands, river corridors/greenways, flood zones) as was done in the 2012 document. Secondly, expansion of commercial zones in the Exit 67 area is extremely concerning, given the fact that it is the headwaters region of the Tankerhoosen River, the most environmentally sensitive area in Vernon. Historically, local commissions have protected the Exit 67 region for 50 years, under severe development pressures and numerous court proceedings. Concerns about the area have been expressed in the past not only from local agencies, but also from the CT DEEP as well as the Nature Conservancy, see letters attached.

We thank you for your attention to our concerns. We realize these inputs are late in the process, and we apologize for any inconvenience we may have caused. We look forward to reviewing the full document and supporting information (including resource maps) with regard to how these issues are addressed.

Respectfully,

Ann Letendre, Acting Chairman, Open Space Task Force

Members Tom Ouellette, Karl Hasel, Ginny Gingras, Brian Motola (Town Council liaison); also Ryan Goad, Chairman, Conservation Commission.

Goal #1 Position Historic Downtown Rockville as the economic, civic, social and cultural center of Tolland County

What we know

- The Rockville Section of Vernon has significant historic, cultural, civic and institutional assets that can be leveraged as part of its revitalization

(Comment: Add a bullet about the water resources in Rockville; they are also a recreational asset (Hockanum River, Snipsic Lake, Papermill Pond); riverfront, waterfront, waterfalls can also be leveraged to enhance development sites.)

Objective 1.4 Support the redevelopment of mill sites

Strategies

- Review current adaptive reuse zoning requirements and consider more flexible site design requirements for mill sites; incorporate the riverfront into the design, and create greenspace along the river, with attention to natural resource protection and regulation requirements.

Objective 1.6 Enhance Rockville's connections to the town trail and open space networks

Strategies

- Integrate the Hockanum River into Rockville's identity, in accordance with the Hockanum River Linear Park Master Plan. Strategies may include modifying the zoning regulations to require or incentivize public improvements and strengthen LID requirements along the Hockanum River, securing public access easements and studying the feasibility of daylighting portions of the river as part of future development efforts, reducing the number of outfalls into the river, and creating protective greenspace along the river.

(Comment: "Public improvements" should include water quality improvements. Rockville has an aging stormdrain infrastructure and numerous outfalls on the river, contributing to degradation of water quality here.)

Goal #2 Create thriving, attractive, connected and diverse business districts and mixes-use corridors

Objective 2.3 Enhance pedestrian, bicycle, and transit connections

Strategies

- Incorporate Hockanum River Linear Park trail connections into landscape design plans within the Route 83 corridor.

(Comment: Residents in the large apartment complexes on Rt 83 can walk to Dart Hill Park; or to Starbucks, Wendys, a bank, etc. via the riverside trail.)

Goal #3 Promote economic growth and business expansion

What we know

The land around Exits 66 and 67 provide opportunities for business expansion

- There are about 200 acres of undeveloped land in the vicinity of Exit 66 and Exit 67. ~~While some of this land is encumbered by natural resource constraints, there is significant development potential in this area. Some of this land may be suitable for development provided the natural resources by which it is characterized, and its value thereby enhanced, are appropriately protected.~~

- The area is currently underutilized due to the lack of sewer and water infrastructure. There is ample capacity at the VMPCF to support sewer extensions in this area.

(Comment: Extension of public water infrastructure to the area must be done at the same time in order to avoid depletion of water resources in the Tankerhoosen watershed.)

- During the public outreach process, participants of public workshop #1 generally viewed development near Exit 67 more favorably than development near Exit 66.

(Comment: Bullet to be removed?)

Objective 3.2 Pursue utility improvements that support economic development and land use goals

(Comment: Clarify language here?)

Objective 3.3 Provide opportunities for industrial development and expansion

Strategies

- Expand the Exit 67 Planned Development Zone to encompass all parcels within the Exit 67 Node Future Land Use category.

(Comments:

- *This area is the headwaters region of the Tankerhoosen River, the most environmentally sensitive area in the Town of Vernon. This strategy, as well as the Future Land Use Map, does not recognize the importance of a headwaters region. The Future Land Use map should be left as it was in the 2012 POCD. WHY would it change?*
- *A much stronger natural resource protection statement should be given here. "Balanced approach" should weigh heavily in favor of protection of this resource, given its importance.*
- *Add these strategies*
 - *Strengthen LID requirements in this area*
 - *Discourage use of herbicides, pesticides, salts onsite*
 - *Incorporate recommendations of the TWS Management Plan where applicable*
 - *Town commissions should hire their own environmental expert to review site plans here*

Goal#5 Maintain high quality, sustainable and equitable public facilities and services

Objective 5.3 Enhance access to open space and recreational opportunities in Rockville

Strategies

- Identify properties that can be used as pocket parks, playgrounds, or community gardens within Rockville.
- Improve public awareness of and access to Stickney Hill Preserve, as well as other popular park sites (Henry Park & Fox Hill Tower, Snipsic Lake, Papermill Pond; market as a destination point for rails-to-trails users, including the regional travelers on the East Coast Greenway.

Add bullet: Extend Hockanum River Linear Park trail from Papermill Pond to Snipsic Lake trails.

Goal #7 Protect, connect, and promote Vernon's natural and historic resources

What we know

Vernon's open space and natural resources ~~contribute~~ are integral to residents' quality of life

- Vernon is fortunate to have numerous boards, commissions, and volunteer organizations ~~who~~ that protect, maintain, and steward Vernon's open space and natural resources. These groups include but are not limited to the Open Space Task Force, Conservation Commission, Inland Wetland Commission, Hockanum River Linear Park Committee, the Parks & Recreation Department, Friends of Valley Falls, Vernon Greenways Volunteers, Manchester Land Trust, **Northern CT Land Trust**, **Tolland Agricultural Center**, Vernon Garden Club, and Strong Farm.
- According to the ~~2019~~ **2021** Town of Vernon Open Space Inventory, Vernon contained **2,686** acres of Managed Open Space (23% of total land area), **2,520** acres (**22%**) of which are Protected Open Space.
- About **50%** of Vernon's Protected Open Space is owned by the State of Connecticut, and 31% is owned by the Town of Vernon. The remaining **19%** is owned by water companies, land trusts, non-profit organizations, or is privately held.
- Recent Open Space preservation accomplishments include the preservation of Strong Farm, Stickney Hill Preserve, and the construction of Gene Pitney Memorial Park.
- **Forty miles of trails on Vernon's open space properties provide abundant recreational opportunity to area residents. The popular Rail Trail has the 4th highest number of users, from census data of 25 active trails in the state.**
- Vernon has one Level A Aquifer surrounding the Connecticut Water Company wellfields near Vernon Center. The Town has adopted Aquifer Protection Regulations to protect this important drinking water supply.
- **Both the Tankerhoosen and Hockanum River greenways are Officially Designated Greenways of the State of Connecticut.**
- **The Tankerhoosen Greenway is comprised of approximately 1500 acres of preserved, connected land along the Tankerhoosen River and Railroad Brook.**
- **The Tankerhoosen River is classified as a cold water stream. It provides the unique conditions needed to sustain certain wildlife species, including wild trout populations. The upper reaches of the Tankerhoosen R**

river are designated as a Wild Trout Management Area by the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection.

- There are twenty-nine officially certified vernal pools in Vernon; vernal pools provide habitat for numerous rare plants and animals.

Vernon has significant historic and scenic resources ranging from rural structures, to village centers, to ??

- Vernon is home to two National Historic Districts, three State Historic Districts, and one Local Historic District. In addition, Vernon has numerous historic structures individually listed on the National and State Registers of Historic Places.
- Vernon has adopted a Village District Overlay Zone for Downtown Rockville. This zone ensures that new development is consistent with the historic scale and design of structures in the Downtown.
- The Town of Vernon has a Local Historic Properties Commission (LHPC) that oversees the Talcottville Historic District as well individually listed historic properties. In 2010, the LHPC published Design Guidelines for owners of historic properties.
- Vernon has four locally designated Scenic Roads: Valley Falls Road, Reservoir Road, Bamforth Road, and Baker Roads. The Valley Falls Farm and Valley Falls Park area is viewed as the most scenic corner in Vernon.

Objective 7.1

Foster open space and trail connectivity

Strategies

- Annually update the Town Open Space Plan and inventory, identifying properties with high conservation or scenic value for potential future protection that do not have permanent protections; review deeds and work with owners to permanently preserve those parcels.
(Comment – There is no need to update the Open Space Plan annually. A major goal of the Open Space Plan, created in 1998, was to create protective greenways along the Hockanum and Tankerhoosen Rivers. Other key goals were to preserve remaining farmland and protect Bolton Lake and the Risley Reservoir area. The parcels that met these goals haven't changed since the plan was first drafted in 1998. Also, the priority value consideration for the plan was protection of natural resources; scenic value is not key consideration, though it is important.)
- Continue to ~~Monitor desirable~~ maintain contact with owners of desired properties in the Open Space Plan. ~~as they become available and~~. Continue collaboration with area land trusts in the acquisition of desired parcels. Pursue funding through the State's Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Program or Farmland Preservation Program and other grant sources.
- Prioritize open space acquisition in the Tankerhoosen River watershed, in accordance with the Open Space Plan.
- Develop an Urban Open Space Plan focused on small parks, natural areas, recreation, and community gardens within the built environment. Amend the Zoning Ordinance to require quality, useable open space in all development projects.
- Continue to acquire land or secure public access or conservation easements along the Hockanum River in accordance with the Hockanum River Linear Park Master Plan
- Establish policy, zoning incentives, or requirements to enhance public access along the Hockanum River as part of future development proposals.

Objective 7.2

Protect water quality and reduce non-point-source pollution

Strategies

- Add zoning incentives to further the use of Low Impact Design (LID), especially for properties near the Tankerhoosen and Hockanum rivers. Strengthen LID regulations; review situations that might require LID use rather than having it as an option (i.e. “shall” in lieu of “may”.)
- Continue to update and implement the Town’s Stormwater Management Plan in compliance with state MS4 requirements.
- As part of the MS4 plan, educate residents on best practices to reduce stormwater runoff to improve water quality. Direct them towards additional educational resources from organizations such as the Center for Land Use Education and Research (CLEAR).
- Educate landowners on water quality issues and techniques for protecting water quality. Topics could include removal of invasive species; maintenance or creation of vegetated buffer strips along lakes and streams; use of non-chemical fertilizers and pesticides; septic design and maintenance. Provide requirements or incentives in the zoning code to reduce impervious surfaces and/or treat water before discharge or infiltration.
- ~~Conduct regular water quality testing along the Tankerhoosen River, in partnership with local conservation organizations.~~ Continue to monitor water quality in the Tankerhoosen River; in partnership with local conservation organizations, organize a repeat of the 2006 comprehensive chemical water quality studies to evaluate long term changes; continue to participate in the annual DEEP volunteer water quality monitoring program within the watershed.
- Implement recommendations outlined in the Tankerhoosen Watershed Management Plan.
- Continue to protect vernal pools through the regulatory process.
- Monitor groundwater levels near Bolton Lakes to ensure that the diversion of water out of the watershed does not impact groundwater levels; continue to annually monitor aquatic invasive species as well as toxic and non-toxic algae in the lakes.

Objective 7.3

Improve stewardship and awareness of existing open spaces and recreational opportunities

Strategies

- Publish an Open Space map on the Town website noting where parking areas and public access points are located.
- Establish partnerships between local conservation organizations and Vernon Public Schools to better market open space and recreational opportunities to youth.
- Expand opportunities for canoe and kayak access.
- Improve ADA accessibility to recreation and open space areas.
- Develop a habitat-based management plan for Valley Falls Park

Objective 7.4

Protect Vernon's historical and scenic resources

Strategies

- Update and maintain a historic and scenic resources inventory.
- Maintain Town-owned historic properties in a state of good repair.
- Preserve Clark Farm as a Heritage Farm.
- Consider creating historic preservation zoning incentives, for example, excluding historic structures up to a certain size from lot coverage calculations or creating more flexible use or site design standards for adaptive reuse.
- Educate owners of historic properties on other funding opportunities such as state and federal rehabilitation tax credits.
- Commence efforts to evaluate the relationship of suburban design and development to Historic Preservation

Objective 7.5

Promote Vernon's natural and historic resources as part of larger marketing and branding efforts

Strategies

- Market historical, cultural, and natural resource elements in partnership with state and regional organizations. The creation of a Municipal Cultural District can help leverage state resources for marketing and promotion.
- Provide directional signage on main roads and the trail to points of interest.
- Develop and publish walking or cycling routes that highlight Vernon's natural and historic resources. Potential locations include Talcottville (Talcottville Historic District and Tankerhoosen Ravine), Valley Falls, and Rockville (Rockville Historic District and Hockanum River).
- Continue to update and maintain the natural resources inventory.

Objective 8.3

Work with neighboring towns on land conservation, rails-to-trails, waste management, and other conservation issues that cross-town boundaries

Strategies

- Continue to work with regional groups in the areas of land conservation and recreation, including the ~~Hockanum River Watershed Association~~, other town Hockanum River Linear Park Committees, Northern Connecticut Land Trust, Manchester Land Trust, Bolton Land Trust, ~~EastCoast Greenway~~, Bolton Walk-Hike, and Ellington Trails Committee.
- Support regional efforts to complete the East Coast Greenway in Greater Hartford.
- Continue to participate in statewide product stewardship initiatives such as the PaintCare and mattress recycling programs.
- Continue membership in the Bolton Lakes Watershed Conservation Alliance in efforts to protect the watershed and water quality of Bolton Lake.

Future Land Use Map

Should show wetlands soils, steep slopes, river greenways, desired open space parcels



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International Headquarters
Arlington, Virginia
TEL: 703 841-5800

March 7, 2003

Gordon P. Gibson
Chairman, Conservation Commission
Town of Vernon
14 Park Place
Vernon, CT 06066

Dear Mr. Gibson:

In light of recent applications for development near the Tankerhoosen River, I would like to introduce myself and briefly mention the reasons The Nature Conservancy considers the Tankerhoosen to be a highly significant river.

The Nature Conservancy is a global, non-profit organization with a mission to preserve plants, animals, and natural communities that represent the diversity of life on Earth by protecting the lands and waters they need to survive. We have approximately one million members, and have been protecting natural places since 1951. One of my responsibilities at the Conservancy is working with local officials to highlight the ecological importance of the Connecticut River and its significant tributaries.

The Nature Conservancy recognizes the Connecticut River as a resource of global significance for the diversity of life it supports. Through an extensive planning process, our scientists have worked with experts from various agencies and organizations from four states to identify the most important rivers within the Connecticut River watershed. The Tankerhoosen was selected as one of these significant tributaries.

The highlights of the Tankerhoosen River are its high water quality and the aquatic life that only such a healthy system can harbor. Its self-sustaining native trout populations, which indicate its exemplary quality, rank among the best of their kind in the state, according to fisheries biologists. As places like this are becoming increasingly rare, the Tankerhoosen becomes increasingly precious. That is why we look forward to working with you to protect this river for future generations.

We hope the Commission will consider this information when reviewing development applications near the Tankerhoosen River. Please feel free to contact me if you would like to discuss this issue further.

Sincerely,

Shelley L. Green
Tidelands Conservation Manager

cc: Thomas J. Joyce, Jr.



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION



January 16, 2003

Mr. Alan Humphries, Chairman
Vernon Planning and Zoning Commission
14 Park Place
Vernon, CT 06066

Dear Chairman Humphries:

The Department of Environmental Protection has been informed that the Town of Vernon Planning and Zoning Commission is reviewing an application for a proposed zone change on the Bray Property, a 47 acre parcel located to the southwest of the intersection of Mile Hill Road (Route 31) and Reservoir Road. The request is to change zoning from residential 40 single family development (R-40) to Planned Mixed Use Development.

I am writing to make you aware of environmental concerns associated with the proposed zone change, and to outline specific concerns for the Tankerhoosen River and the Belding Wildlife Management Area through which this important river flows. The Department of Environmental Protection - through the philanthropy of Mr. Max Belding - was granted the opportunity and responsibility to serve as the natural resource stewards of over 300 acres of undeveloped land now known as the Belding Wildlife Management Area. These special lands and waters of unique ecological and recreational value are located approximately 1.3 river miles downstream of the parcel that your commission is considering for a change of zone.

You are referred to the attached letter from Senior Fisheries Biologist Brian Murphy of the Inland Fisheries Division's Habitat Conservation and Enhancement Program. Mr. Murphy's letter articulates agency concerns relative to the Tankerhoosen River in general, and in particular to the Wild Trout Management Area within the Belding Wildlife Management Area.

I trust that the Vernon Planning and Zoning Commission will thoroughly and judiciously evaluate all of materials presented relative to the proposed zone change, and that the commission gives utmost consideration to the environmental consequences of the proposed action.

Sincerely,

Richard A. Jacobson
Assistant Director,
Inland Fisheries Division

Cc: George Arthur, Chair, Vernon Conservation Commission

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STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION



January 16, 2003

Mr. Alan Humphries, Chairman
Vernon Planning and Zoning Commission
14 Park Place
Vernon, CT 06066

Dear Chairman Humphries,

It has come to the attention of the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection that the Town of Vernon Planning and Zoning Commission has under its review an application concerning a possible zoning change on the Bray Property, a 47 acre parcel located southwesterly of the intersection of Mile Hill Road (Route 31) and Reservoir Road. It is understood that the application is for a change of zoning district from residential 40 single family development (R-40) to Planned Mixed Use Development (PMUD). The PMUD zone allows through special permits and site plan review various uses that are typically allowed in Industrial and Commercial zones (Vernon Zoning Regulations Sect. 4.23)

Given that the State of Connecticut owns and actively manages a 302.5 parcel of land known as the Beiding Wildlife Management Area, located approximately 1.3 river miles downstream (south) of the Bray Property, the agency respectfully submits to the commission the following comments. These comments discuss the importance and value of the fisheries resources on this property and outlines concerns over how the proposed zoning change may permanently and adversely alter these resources.

Tankerhoosen River Watershed and Fisheries Resources

The Tankerhoosen River is a moderate sized (16 ft. wide) upland stream with cobble/gravel bottom. It begins as outflow from Walker Reservoir and flows west approximately five miles through Vernon to the Hockanum River. This mostly shaded stream has moderately deep pool habitats with good instream trout cover, of mostly undercut and tree roots. While starting as a warm pond outflow, its' water quickly becomes cold and clear.

A 1.4 mile section of the Tankerhoosen River within the Belding Wildlife Management Area is managed as a Class 1 Wild Trout Management Area. This section of stream is unique in that natural reproduction is sufficient to produce robust populations of native brook trout and wild brown trout exhibiting above average growth rates. Native brook trout up to 8-10 inches and wild brown trout up to 10-11 inches are common (Neal T. Hagstrom, Senior Fisheries Biologist, Inland Fisheries Division, personal

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communication). These self-sustaining populations spawn in Connecticut during the months of October and November. Eggs incubate within gravel over the fall and winter periods with eggs hatching in late February through early March. Fry remain in the gravel until their yolk sacs are absorbed at which time the fry emerge from underneath the gravel and move into preferred stream microhabitats. Any development that threatens the completion of these critical life stages also threatens the very survival of these fishes. The Belding Trout Management Area is only one of two such Class 1 trout management areas within eastern Connecticut. To protect this unique resource, no recreational harvest is permitted in the trout management area.

The remainder of the Tankerhoosen River is managed for put-&-take trout fishing for stocked trout and is annually stocked by the Inland Fisheries Division with over 1,100 adult size (9-12") brook, brown, and rainbow trout. Walker Reservoir, a popular fishing destination located adjacent to the Bray Parcel and owned in part by the Town of Vernon, is stocked each spring with over 1,800 adult brown and rainbow trout. This pond has good parking and is accessible by handicapped anglers.

Potential Impacts

Stream Sedimentation

During any future development of the Bray Parcel, topsoil may become exposed and susceptible to runoff events, especially near steep slope areas. Surface topography from this parcel drains downslope into Walker Reservoir and the headwaters of the Tankerhoosen River; thus, sediment runoff could negatively impact these aquatic resources. The negative impacts of sediment runoff have been well documented by researchers. Sediment will reduce populations of aquatic insects and fish by eliminating physical habitat while suspended sediments will reduce dissolved oxygen levels (Cordone and Kelley 1961). Suspended sediments may prevent successful nest development of trout (Bell 1986). As reported by Meehan (1991), sediment deposition can severely impact spawning substrate abundance and quality. Reductions in egg survival are caused by smothering, insufficient oxygen supply and lack of proper removal of catabolic products (Bell 1986). Meehan (1991) indicated that erosion and sedimentation of instream habitat could alter channel morphology by increasing the stream width-depth ratio, incidence and severity of stream bank erosion, channel braiding, and reduced pool volume and frequency.

Stormwater Pollution

It has been reported that a change in zoning would result in the conversion of up to 19 acres of pervious area on the Bray Parcel to impervious surfaces. Stormwaters that outlet to wetlands, ponds and watercourses can contain a variety of pollutants that degrade downstream water quality to the detriment of aquatic organisms (Klein 1979). Pollutants commonly found in stormwaters include hydrocarbons (gasoline and oil), herbicides, heavy metals, road salt, fine silts, and coarse sediment. Nutrients, total phosphorous and total nitrogen in stormwater runoff fertilize stream waters causing water quality degradation. Additionally, fine silts in stormwaters that remain in suspension for prolonged periods often cannot be effectively removed from engineered stormwater detention basins and/or roadway catch basins. Accidentally spilled petroleum based

chemicals or other toxicants cause partial or complete fishkills if introduced in high concentrations. Klein (1979) recommends that watershed imperviousness should not exceed 10 percent in a watershed that supports self-sustaining trout populations such as is observed in the Tankerhoosen River Watershed.

Thermal Loading

Thermal loading or increases in ambient surface water temperatures during the summer is a serious concern with any commercial development that results in the increase in the amount of impervious surfaces. Impervious areas act as a heat collector, with heat being imparted to stormwaters as they pass over impervious surfaces. In addition, stormwater temperatures can be elevated from solar radiation as they are collected and stored in detention basins. The temperature of headwater streams is greatly influenced by groundwater input such as the case with the Tankerhoosen River where average ambient water temperatures in the Belding Wildlife Management Area are quite cold, ranging from 63.5 to 66.2° F in the months of July and August (Neal Hagstrom, personal communication). Ambient water temperatures greater than 70° F will seriously threaten trout survival; consequently, the release of warm stormwaters into the headwaters of the Tankerhoosen River will create a highly unsuitable environment for native trout.

Conclusion

It is recommended that the Town of Vernon ensure that any future development of the Bray Parcel associated with a PMUD zone change will not negatively affect fragile downstream resources within the Tankerhoosen River watershed. In light of the potential adverse affects on important riverine resources resulting from intensive development of the Bray parcel, it is recommended that the Town of Vernon carefully consider the environmental consequences of rezoning the Bray parcel from an R-40 to a PMUD zone.

Sincerely,



Brian D. Murphy, Senior Fisheries Biologist
Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection
Inland Fisheries Division
Habitat Conservation and Enhancement Program
209 Hebron Road
Marlborough, CT 06447
860-295-9523

cc. George Arthur, Chair, Vernon Conservation Commission

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From the Director

"Conservation is a state of harmony between man and land," wrote Aldo Leopold more than 50 years ago in a wonderful economy of words. However, as one flies over the eastern seaboard and views our imprint on the Earth, it is plain to see that such harmony has not been attained. The ethical relationship that Leopold espoused between society and the land that sustains us is as elusive today as it was more than 50 years ago when he wrote that "the land-relation is still strictly economic, entailing privileges, but not obligations." For the most part, land is still viewed as private property which, in many cases, is subjected to abuse in return for short-term economic gains.

In the 50 years since Leopold, we have made some advances through the passage of environmental laws and efforts on behalf of the state, municipalities and land trusts to preserve open space. But the routine mistreatment of land continues and the "relationship" that most of us have with it is more distant than ever. I recall my grandfather telling me the Great Depression passed nearly unnoticed on the family farm. Today, how many of us grow our own food? How many of us live on the same land from generation to generation? As much as we cannot afford to become "disconnected" from the land, we continue to do so.

During these modern times, we should stop to appreciate those whose deeds promote Leopold's land ethic. For example, in 1981, Maxwell Belding gifted nearly 300 acres in Vernon to the State. Even then, this land had tremendous economic potential if developed. Luckily, the land had something more, a spiritual meaning to Mr. Belding. Featuring a stream with pure, cold water that supported a healthy population of trout, the property was a quiet oasis of nature that provided a wealth of memories for the Belding family. Not only did he choose to preserve the area, he also chose to share it with Connecticut's residents.

Chapter two of the Belding story began a couple of years ago when Mr. Belding contacted the Department about establishing a trust that would provide stewardship for the land in perpetuity. We had the opportunity to revisit his wishes for the property, which are relatively simple: to maintain the ecological integrity of the area, to maintain the area as a place where visitors can enjoy and interact with nature, and to teach our young people about our relationship with nature. Thanks to his vision and generosity, Maxwell Belding and his family have fulfilled Leopold's land ethic on their property for the benefit of us all. (See article on Belding WMA on page 9.)

Dale W. May

Cover:

A piping plover broods its young on a Connecticut beach. Find out how you can help protect these threatened birds from the pressures of living close to high levels of human activity by becoming a volunteer. See page 8 for details.

Photo courtesy of Paul J. Fusco

Connecticut Wildlife

Published bimonthly by
State of Connecticut
Department of Environmental Protection
www.dep.state.ct.us

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The Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Program was initiated by sportsmen and conservationists to provide states with funding for wildlife management and research programs, habitat acquisition, wildlife management area development and hunter education programs. Each issue of Connecticut Wildlife contains articles reporting on Wildlife Division projects funded entirely or in part with federal aid monies.



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Explore a Wildlife Management Area: Belding

Written by Paul Rothbart, Supervising Wildlife Biologist

The DEP's Belding Wildlife Management Area (WMA) is a 282-acre state-owned parcel, located in the town of Vernon. The area has a diverse array of habitats, including mixed hardwood and conifer forestlands, open fields, agricultural land and riparian stream corridors. Wildlife using such habitat types include white-tailed deer, woodcock, ruffed grouse, eastern bluebird, cottontail rabbit, mink, river otter, hawks, owls, woodpeckers and a wide variety of amphibians, reptiles and arthropods.

The property was gifted to the State of Connecticut by Maxwell M. Belding in 1981 under a multi-year process. The Department of Environmental Protection assumed 100 percent ownership in 1984. The Belding WMA serves as a means to promote conservation of wildlife habitat and foster an understanding and appreciation of the value and role of such lands to society. Specific management goals for the area are:

- **Promote natural resource education.** Conservation education is critical to the future of wildlife and its habitat. Outreach efforts will include the development of a self-guided trail system, individual outdoor tours and classes on vernal pools, dendrology (trees), wildlife ecology and forest management. The agricultural lands on the property will serve to define the role of farming in the ever-expanding urban character of Connecticut and the need to balance agricultural practices with the needs of wildlife. The DEP will develop cooperative programs with the local school system and the University of Connecticut, and use Belding WMA as an outdoor education site.
- **Maintain and enhance diverse habitats to improve the biological values of the area.**
- **Enhance public enjoyment of the property consistent with the natural resource values and environmental education goals.** Emphasis will be on low impact uses, such as birdwatching, hiking, fishing and photography.

Over the past decade, various management activities have taken place on the area. Forty-one acres of agricultural lands are managed through a statewide lease program. Through this process, the DEP assures that all best farming practices are followed, including soil nutrient management, riparian buffer establishment and maintaining areas of food and cover for wildlife. A forest inventory and subsequent harvest were conducted as part of an ongoing effort to maintain a healthy and diverse forest ecosystem. Belding WMA has been designated as a "Wild Trout Management Area" and, as such, has provided increased opportunities for Connecticut anglers to enjoy a quality wild trout fishing experience. In cooperation with the Connecticut Forest and Park Association, a section of hiking trail was developed on the Belding property to connect a gap within the Shenipsit Trail and the town-owned Valley Falls Park. Other site enhancements have included marking six miles of boundaries, mowing fields, developing a public access site and installing gates to control unauthorized access.

Although some accomplishments have been achieved over the past decade, many activities that are required to meet overall site goals have not been completed due to funding constraints. Through the continued generosity of Mr. Belding and his family, the DEP is anticipating



Directions: Belding WMA can be found in Vernon on Bolton Road. From Interstate 84 take exit 66 to Bolton Road.

dedicated funds for the management of Belding WMA to soon be made available. This funding will allow the DEP to conduct fisheries and wildlife inventories, develop educational outreach programs, improve trail systems, improve stream and pond water quality, construct a fish passage way on the Tankerhoosen River and provide for staffing that will develop a management plan and provide stewardship of the property.

This area has long served as a place for people and wildlife to coexist within a rapidly changing landscape. The DEP extends its heartfelt appreciation to the Belding family for sharing their conservation land ethic with the citizens of Connecticut. As ongoing activities are developed on the area and more individuals have a chance to visit, it is hoped that they too will share in this appreciation.

Read "From the Director" on page 2 to learn more about Maxwell Belding, who donated his land to the State.

5-28-21 Gkm

DEAR SIR OR MADAM,

MY NAME IS WAYNE J, BRAY. MY BROTHER AND I, WILLIAM K. BRAY SR., OWN PROPERTY OFF OF EXIT 67 OFF IN VERNON, CT. THE PROPERTY IS ON BOTH SIDES OF MILE HILL ROAD. ONE PROPERTY IS APPROXIMATELY 46 ACRES ON THE EAST SIDE OF MILE HILL ROAD. THE OTHER PROPERTY IS APPROXIMATELY 12 ACRES ALONG INTERSTATE 84. THESE PROPERTIES HAVE BEEN IN MY FAMILY FOR MANY YEARS. MY BROTHER BILL AND I ARE VERY INTERESTED IN DEVELOPING THESE PROPERTIES IN A WAY THAT IS MUTUALLY ADVENTAGEOUS FOR THE TOWN OF VERNON AND MY FAMILY. I CAN BE CONTACTED BY CELL AT 860-995-9574 OR BY EMAIL WAYNE.J.BRAY@GMAIL.COM

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION,

WAYNE J. BRAY

McGregor, George

From: Ann Letendre <annletendr@aol.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 26, 2021 3:44 PM
To: McGregor, George
Cc: Ouellette, Tom [External]; karl.hasel@cox.net; Motola, Brian (external)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Open Space Updates / POCD comment/changes
Attachments: Town Open Space Inventory as of May 2021 ACL.xlsx

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Good afternoon, George -

At the 4/22 OSTF meeting I said I'd update the OS inventory and the corrections needed to the Future Land Use Map. The key additional item to the inventory is the Strong Farm preservation. The updated spreadsheet is attached, FYI. Some minor changes to the POCD narrative will also be needed, cited below.

Please forward to PZC or whoever is drafting the text.

Future Land Use Map Changes/Corrections

Add these parcels that have open space preservation deed restrictions:

- 22 Jenn Dr, Parcel 24-0065-006L, 4.05 acres, owner TOV
- 80 Hyde Ave, Parcel 46-0071-00025, 8.24 acres, owner TAC, Inc. (Gunther Farm)
- West St, Parcel, Parcel 25-0065-00034, 18 acres, owner Strong Family Farm, Inc.

Also add Gene Pitney Memorial Park on Paper Mill Pond – it's now a Town park, though not deed restricted: 19 Grove St, Parcel 41-0122-00037, 3.5 acres, owner TOV.

Narrative changes to Goal #7, "What we know", bullets 2 and 3.

Bullet 2 would now read:

"According to the 2021 Town of Vernon Open Space Inventory, Vernon contains 2,685 acres of Managed Open Space (23% of total land area), 2515 acres (22%) of which are Protected Open Space."

Bullet 3

"About 50% of Vernon's Protected Open Space is owned by the State of Connecticut and 31% is owned by the Town of Vernon. The remaining 19% is owned by water companies, land trusts, and non-profit organizations, or is privately held."

Lastly, I note the lack of natural resource data on the Future Land Use map, such as the natural resource constraints data layer (marshes, wetlands, steep slopes, river corridors) and desired open space (parcels in the Open Space Plan). These resources were shown in the previous POCD Future Land Use Map. The only depictions of natural resources on this new map are water bodies and existing, protected open space. Why on earth would we limit a conservation policy (or interpretation thereof) to just these two considerations?

Ann Letendre, Open Space Task Force

Sent from AOL Desktop