

**MINUTES  
COMMISSION ON THE CITY PLAN  
FEBRUARY 21, 2017 -7:00 P.M.  
23 UNION STREET NORWICH CONNECTICUT  
LOWER LEVEL MEETING ROOM  
REGULAR MEETING**

**A. CALL TO ORDER:** Art Sharron, Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:03 P.M.

**B. ROLL CALL AND SEATING OF ALTERNATES:**

Present: Art Sharron, Daniel Daniska, Kathy Warzecha, Michael Lahan, Swarnjit Singh Bhatia and Jason Arndt. A quorum was present.

Absent: Frank Manfredi & Les King

Other Present: Deanna Rhodes, City Planner

**C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** A motion was made by Michael Lahan to approve the minutes from December 20, 2016. The motion was seconded by Dan Daniska. The motion was unanimously approved.

**D. COMMUNICATIONS:**

- Ms. Rhodes read a letter sent to her from Attorney Michael Driscoll informing her about a Montville application for a text amendment to add a new proposed special permit use (manufactured home park) in their R-120 Zone. The public hearing will be held May 14, 2017.
- Ms. Rhodes reminded them about the public meeting for the Regional POCD which will be held at the Otis Library on February 22, 2017.
- Ms. Rhodes informed them about the Uncas Leap public meeting to be held March 1, 2017 at 7:00 pm. at the Slater Auditorium at NFA.

**E. OLD BUSINESS: Discuss Planning Priorities**

Kathy Warzecha recommended that the City capture the benefit of the Norwich State Hospital re-development in Preston to promote economic development in the Norwich downtown area. She suggested that the City's 20+ year old downtown master plan be updated and that the City seek out economic development grants from the EDA, DECD or others to study the downtown area. A discussion then ensued and Kathy shared the amenities proposed in Preston by the Mohegan Tribe which include a banquet hall, hotel, waterfront park, housing, retail, restaurants, theme park, RV camping sites and "glamping".

Mike Lahan spoke about the role of a planning commission and its jurisdiction. He noted that per charter, the Mayor can hire an economic development coordinator. The board then spoke about Ms. Rhodes working with NCDRC to apply for economic development grants due to the state hospital development and Electric Boat expansion. Ms. Rhodes reminded the commission that many grants require some type of financial match, usually a percentage, so the City Council will need to be on board before applying for any grants.

Ms. Rhodes shared that she has been working with the Public Works Department and Dan Daniska regarding transportation planning and the creation of a Complete Streets Policy for the community. Mr. Daniska gave a brief explanation about complete streets and ideas to improve pedestrian and bicycle transportation throughout the City to promote neighborhood revitalization. He shared that he thinks that the City should connect Taftville, Occum and Greenville to downtown, as well as Norwichtown to Three Rivers Community College through bike lanes. He feels these types of improvements in transportation will make Norwich more marketable to the younger demographic that is leaving the State of Connecticut. A discussion then ensued about traffic circulation related to one way streets, potential for roundabouts on Franklin Street and at the intersection of Boswell at North Main. Also discussed were parking availability, the need for a single designated parking spot assigned for each business located downtown, and traffic lights. Jason Arndt shared his experience riding his bike through Norwich.

Singh Bhatia stated he felt the City has a lot of diversity and it should be promoted through "Welcome" signage and streets signs having multiple languages. He said he has already spoken with the Mayor about the welcome sign.

The Commission then discussed implementation of the POCD, adopted in 2013, including priorities in the Plan and leadership roles. It was recommended by the Commission members that Ms. Rhodes prepare a letter to the Mayor on the Commission's behalf to respectfully request that the City start the process to establish the plan implementation committee as recommended in the POCD. Dan Daniska stated he would volunteer to serve on the implementation committee. The members then stated their interest in holding a workshop with the Council and other Norwich group leaders to discuss their planning priorities. However before this is to occur, members decided they will each share their recommendations for planning with Ms. Rhodes who will compile a list and distribute for discussion at their next regular meeting. Once the Commission decides on their 2-3 top priorities, they will chose a date to host a workshop with the intention to start a dialog with the Council to create better synergy and consensus between them moving forward.

**F. NEW BUSINESS: Discuss requirement for on-line Ethics training**

Ms. Rhodes read excerpts form a memo from Jacquie Barbarossa, Executive Assistant to the City Manager. The Commission members were informed that they will receive notification from planning department staff when the system is set up for them to take the on-line ethic training which must be completed by March 31st.

**G. EXTENSION REQUESTS: None**

**H. BOND RELEASES: None**

**I. ADJOURNMENT: A motion was made Michael Lahan to adjourn at 8:30 p.m. The motion was seconded by Dan Daniska. The motion was passed unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted,

  
Deanna Rhodes