

## **What is the Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD)?**

The Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) is essentially the Town's Master plan or Comprehensive Plan. The POCD is a long-range, visionary document developed with the input from residents, property owners, business owners, Town Boards and Commissions and adopted by the Planning and Zoning Commission. As closely as is practical, the POCD reflects community consensus on all aspects of future growth in Town; articulates a clear vision, and serves to guide the future development of the Town. This vision is further expressed in the POCD goals and objectives which are in turn supported by the Zoning and Subdivision Regulations.

The strategies used to manage the change in land uses and resource protection shape the community character and can greatly affect the lives of residents and property owners long into the future. The POCD will help guide decision makers when they consider regulations and policy changes that will affect future Town growth.



The POCD is intended to be a living document. The Plan must be adaptable enough to respond to changes in its underlying assumptions, and to changes in the social, economic and technological structure of the town and region. It should be reviewed from time to time to be sure

those assumptions are still viable. If changes are needed, the Plan should be amended to show them.

## **Why write the plan? Do we really need a POCD?**

Chapter 126, Section 8-23 of the Connecticut General Statutes, requires that Towns create and adopt a POCD and that it be updated a minimum of every ten years.

There are at least two big reasons why North Stonington needs a POCD.

1. To meet requirements of the Connecticut General Statutes (Sec. 8-23). The penalty for not having a plan or for not updating the plan by the ten-year deadline includes that the Town "shall not be eligible for discretionary state funding unless such prohibition is expressly waived by the Secretary of OPM."
2. A POCD is an important tool for the Town to use to determine not only the needs and wishes of the community at large, but its growth and development as well. The POCD is an advisory document that guides important decisions in the Town such as the preferred density, preservation of natural and cultural resources, variety of housing choice, location and type of commercial activity, and level of municipal services.

If the Town has no clear vision of what it wants to be and how to get there, its future will be shaped by the whims of the market potentially leaving it unable to meet the needs of the its residents for the desired quality of life and self sufficiency.

The current POCD was adopted in 2003 and updated slightly in 2009 in conjunction with the adoption of the Plan of Conservation and Recreation Lands prepared by the Conservation Commission. The Planning and Zoning Commission chose to wait until the 2010 census data became available to thoroughly update the 2003 Plan.



### **How the POCD is created?**

The Planning Commission has created a Steering Committee to facilitate public participation and to assist the Town Planner in drafting the Plan. Consultants were hired to assist the Economic Development Commission and the NS Affordable Housing Commission to write individual Economic Development and Housing Plans. The information gathered from these individual plans will be incorporated into the POCD. Together with the public input gathered at informal workshops and meetings as well as targeted focus groups, the town wide survey, and analysis of current census data, the Town Planner and Steering Committee will create a community profile; identify the town's strengths and weaknesses; create a vision moving forward; and formulate the goals and objectives for the Plan.

### **How can I get involved?**

Come to meetings and get involved! A great Community Vision is the foundation for a good POCD. We want and need your input. The POCD Update process will be conducted in a manner where all are welcome, respected, and encouraged to share opinions.



Though we have already conducted several informal planning sessions and workshops, everyone will still be given numerous chances to be part of the process. Look for the POCD Survey in January on the Official Town Website as well as the North Stonington Bulletin Board. Copies of the Survey may also be picked up at the Town Hall.

Individual "neighborhood" meetings will be conducted over the coming months. Please contact Madeline Jeffrey at 860-599-5731 or [mjeffery211@gmail.com](mailto:mjeffery211@gmail.com) for more information.

Announcements about upcoming meetings, workshops, or events will be posted on the Town Website, the [NS Bulletin Board](#) as well as announced in the local newspapers.

If you want to provide input on a certain topic but cannot attend the public meetings or workshops, please call Juliet Leeming, Town Planner, at (860) 535-2877 x27 or stop by her office in the Town Hall so she can help you determine a good time to provide that input.



### **Where can I learn more (links)?**

- General Statutes of Connecticut, Chapter 126 – Municipal Planning Commissions, Section 8-23 - Preparation, amendment or adoption of plan of conservation and development <http://www.cga.ct.gov/2005/pub/Chap126.htm#Sec8-23.htm>.
- Check out the [Home Page](#) and the [Planning and Zoning Page](#) on the Town Website to see agendas, minutes, and other documents related to the POCD update.
- Contact the Town Planner at (860) 535-2877x27 or by e-mail at: [jleeming@northstoningtonct.gov](mailto:jleeming@northstoningtonct.gov)