

1. Introduction

1.1 Plan Purpose and Authority

The 2013 Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD or “Plan”) is North Stonington’s long-range Comprehensive Plan. The POCD Steering Committee, Planning and Zoning Commission and Town Planner developed the Plan with extensive input from residents, property owners, business owners, and other town boards and commissions. 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. The POCD recommended goals and objectives serve as the town’s strategic plan for the future and are in turn supported by the zoning and subdivision regulations, town ordinances, and actual land use decisions

The State of Connecticut¹ requires that towns prepare and adopt a plan of conservation and development and that it be amended a minimum of every ten years. The town’s previous POCD was adopted in 2003 and modified slightly in 2009. The penalty for not having a plan or for not updating the plan by the ten-year deadline includes ineligibility for discretionary state funding.

1.2 The Framework for Planning

The goals and objectives outlined in the North Stonington POCD are consistent with those of the Southeastern Connecticut Council of Governments’ 2007 plan for the region. They also correspond to the following *Six Growth Management Principles* from the 2012 State Plan of Conservation and Development.

¹ See Appendix A for full text of Chapter 126, Section 8-23 of the Connecticut General Statutes

- **Redevelop and Revitalize Regional Centers and Areas with Existing or Currently Planned Physical Infrastructure.**
- **Expand Housing Opportunities and Design Choices to Accommodate a Variety of Household Types and Needs.**
- **Concentrate Development Around Transportation Nodes and Along Major Transportation Corridors to Support the Viability of Transportation Options.**
- **Conserve and Restore the Natural Environment, Cultural and Historical Resources, and Traditional Rural Lands.**
- **Protect and Ensure the Integrity of Environmental Assets Critical to Public Health and Safety**
- **Promote Integrated Planning Across All Levels of Government to Address Issues on a Statewide, Regional and Local Basis.**

1.3 Goals and Objectives

The goal of North Stonington’s 2013 Plan is to create a relationship between preservation and development by translating the selected themes of *livability, sustainability, progress, and community* into specific objectives to move North Stonington into the future in a sustainable manner. Of equal importance is the recognition that strategic master planning followed by action on the part of the town is the only way to reach this goal.



Farm on Pendleton Hill Road

We define development as a process aimed at improving the social, economic, and environmental assets in our community. While the preservation of the natural environment is worthwhile in and of itself, the rural character it creates provides a sense of place that can be a framework to attract social and financial capital to the town. Preservation of community is of the highest importance as it allows people to connect and communicate in a meaningful way, and collectively make better decisions about the future.

When residents actively participate in the planning process, town supported development occurs. New options become available to ensure *livability*, *sustainability*, and *progress* - all while strengthening the town's greatest asset – *community*.

As the economic climate continues to languish, the primary focus has been economic growth. Though successful economic development involves many aspects of community development, it does not always lead to a greater quality of life for all residents. The goals, objectives, and actions identified in the Plan attempt to create the right balance between economic development and preservation through an integrated strategy that enhances the local economy while simultaneously enhancing the social and environmental assets of the town.



The goals are organized into four primary categories.

- **Enhancing Community**
- **Growing the Economy**
- **Preserving the Environment and Rural Character**
- **Increasing Housing Choice and Affordability**

The associated objectives and actions will form the body of the POCD implementation or action plan to be followed over the next ten years.



Joint Economic Development and Housing Plan Workshop



2013 Visioning Session

The Economic Development Plan, Housing Plan (incorporated by reference) and the Plan of Conservation and Recreation Lands (Appendix C) each contain findings, goals, objectives and actions of their own which are summarized in their respective chapters of this POCD.