



CITY OF DANBURY
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PLANNING COMMISSION*
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*POCD Oversight Committee

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**2023 PLAN OF CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT (“POCD”)
OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE MEETING NOTES
MAY 18, 2021**

Although there was not a quorum to conduct business, the committee wanted to keep on its scheduled track so it was determined that FHI would make its presentation as per the agenda. Meeting notes and not official minutes would be prepared for this meeting. Since there was no quorum and no official conduct of business, the meeting minutes of April 20, 2021 were not considered for approval.

The web based meeting hosted on Zoom was called to order by Sharon Calitro, City of Danbury (“COD”) Planning Director, at 4:04 PM.

Present were Oversight Committee Members, Joel Urice (PC Vice-Chairman), Helen Hoffstaetter (PC), Perry Salvagne (PC), Sharon Calitro (COD Planning), Jennifer Emminger (COD Planning), Roger Palanzo (COD Business Advocacy), Fernanda Carvahlo (COD Health), Richard Janelli (Board of Education), Timothy Nolan (COD Public Services), Brigid Guertin (Danbury Museum & Historical Soc.) Also present from Fitzgerald & Halliday were Francisco Gomes and Rory Fitzgerald and from RKG Eric Halvorsen and Summer Pan.

Absent: Arnold Finaldi (PC Chairman), Bob Chiochio (PC), Kevin Haas (PC), Gary Renz (PC), PJ Prunty (Chamber of Commerce), Matthew Cassavechia (COD Emergency Services), Ed Siergiej (Former Env./Lake Commission), Juan Rivas (ZBA), Candace Fay (ZC), Fred Visconti (City Council), and Vincent DiGilio (City Council).

Sharon Calitro welcomed the Oversight Committee and turned the meeting agenda over to Francisco Gomes from Fitzgerald & Halliday (“FHI”).

Francisco briefly reviewed the agenda for the meeting, which would include review of the housing research and affordable housing statistics, review of the draft neighborhood map, discussion of the key stakeholder list, and review of the next steps and the project schedule. Francisco introduced Eric Halvorsen from RKG Associates to discuss the housing component.

Eric noted that the discussion would highlight demographics and housing market conditions. He noted that Danbury is a growing community with a 13% increase from 2000 to 2019 and a projected growth of 6% by 2030. Danbury residents age 18-24 increased 24% since 2010 and older residents over the age of 55 increased 31% from 2010 to 2019. Eric discussed that non-family households are increasing faster than family households and the City saw an increase in single parent female households of 24% and noted that single parent households comprise 18% of all households. Owner households dropped by 6% while renter households grew by 14% and large households with 5+ persons saw the fastest growth at 29%. Higher income households are becoming more prevalent with the fastest growth occurring in households earning more than \$200,000 per year and a 27% increase in households earning more than \$100,000 per year. Eric discussed median household income and noted that Hispanic or Latino households are earning \$15,000 to \$20,000 less than most other households. He also noted that racial and ethnic diversity is highest in Downtown Danbury. Eric went on to identify that the City is seeing an increase in incomes among renter households.

Eric next discussed employment and noted that it is projected to increase by .7% by 2030 and is mostly driven by the health care/social assistance industry.

The next topic discussed is Danbury's changing housing stock. Eric noted there is a 3% increase in new housing units constructed and growth is driven by structures with 20+ units and duplexes. He identified that 54% of the housing stock is comprised of single-family homes and 61% of housing units were built before 1980.

Eric next discussed housing tenure and noted that 58% of homes are owner-occupied and 42% are renter-occupied. The percentage of renter-occupied housing has increased by 14% and housing vacancy has increased but it still relatively low for the City at 2.4%. The median home value in Danbury has declined 12.4% and noted that 66% of owner-occupied housing is valued at or above \$250k. Eric noted that rental units and the median rents have increased for all types of rental units. Approximately 55% of all renter households are cost burdened which means households are spending more than 30% of their monthly income on housing costs compared to the 44% of homeowners.

The next topic discussed is the housing affordability analysis. Eric noted that 51% of renter households and 25% of owner households earn less than 50% of the area median income. He identified that the City has 12% year-round housing stock that is currently deed restricted. Eric discussed the supply and demand gap for ownership housing units, noting a deficit of units for households at or below 30% of the area median income. He also noted there is a significant deficit of rental units for households earning at or below 30% of the area median income which results in a lack of higher priced rental units that puts pressure on the supply of housing priced for lower income households.

Eric next discussed Danbury's estimated future growth. He noted that Danbury could add 4,910 residents and 1,748 new households in the next ten years and RKG projections suggest that the City would need to add another 331 owner-occupied and 424 new renter-occupied housing units. He identified that 57% of new housing units will be needed for 1 and 2-person households and 25% of the demand for new rental units will come from households greater than 4+ persons.

Francisco and Eric discussed the types of housing needed in Danbury and the areas that are suitable for housing development. Recommendations were discussed by the Committee members and noted within the PowerPoint presentation.

Francisco next discussed the updated Neighborhood Map. The purpose behind the map is to create specific identifiable areas that will be the foundation for the future Land Use Map.

He next discussed the updated key stakeholder list and asked Committee members to email Planning Staff with suggested contacts.

Francisco discussed the website and the expectation that more traffic will be seen on the website once we launch the community engagement phase.

The project schedule was reviewed. The next meeting will include discussion of the public engagement campaign and a discussion of zoning and land use.

The next scheduled meeting is June 15, 2021.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:23 pm.