

**SALISBURY PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION**

**SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES  
September 30th, 2024 6:30PM**

Hybrid Meeting by Live Internet Video Stream and Telephone, and in person at Town Hall (The Upstairs Conference Room at 27 Main Street Salisbury, CT 06068)

1 **Members Present:**

2 Dr. Michael Klemens (Chair)

3 Cathy Shyer (Vice Chair)

4 Martin Whalen (Secretary)

5 Allen Cockerline (Regular Member)

6 Bob Riva (Regular Member)

7 Dr. Danella Schiffer (Alternate Member)

8

9 **Brief Items and Announcements**

10 1. Call to Order / Establish Quorum

11 Chair Klemens called the meeting to order at 6:00PM. A quorum was established with five regular  
12 members present (Dr. Michael Klemens, Cathy Shyer, Martin Whalen, Bob Riva, Allen Cockerline).  
13 Alternate Member Dr. Danella Schiffer was also present.

14

15 2. Public Engagement Meeting for the Plan of Conservation & Development (POCD)

16

17 Chair Klemens introduced the Public Engagement Meeting. He explained the goal of the POCD document  
18 is to catalog a variety of ideas, some of which are more popular than others. Unlike a Town vote, the  
19 number of individuals in favor or opposed to the inclusion of strategies will not determine their inclusion  
20 in the POCD. Chair Klemens explained that the forum cannot be used to voice concerns about any  
21 pending items that are before the Planning & Zoning Commission or Inland Wetlands & Watercourses  
22 Commission (IWWC). Chair Klemens said due to substantial public interest in the POCD, priority to  
23 comment will be given to those members of the public who have not submitted comments in writing.  
24 Comments may be limited to four minutes per person, and will alternate between comments received in  
25 person and via the Zoom platform. Chair Klemens explained a procedural handout is available on the  
26 Town website that provides further guidance about the process.

27

28 Chair Klemens explained letters of correspondence have been received from members of the public  
29 Jeffrey Braun, David & Joan Bright, George & Lorraine Faison, Jerry Friedman, Vivian Garfein, Pat  
30 Hackett, Loch Johnson, John Landon, Jonathan Newcomb, Theodore Rudd O’Neill, Robin Roraback, Tom  
31 Shachtman, Attorney Marjorie Shansky, Abeth Slotnick, Sally Spillane, and the Salisbury Pathways  
32 Committee.

33

34 Chair Klemens explained the previous POCD was from 2012. Due to the pandemic in 2020, completion of  
35 the current draft POCD was delayed to 2024. Adoption of this document in 2024 is essential for the  
36 Town to continue receiving discretionary State funding. Chair Klemens explained funding contributes to  
37 municipal projects including infrastructure improvements and acquisition of Open Space.

38

39 Chair Klemens said following the Public Engagement Meeting, comments and suggestions will be  
40 evaluated and incorporated in the document for review and approval at a Planning and Zoning  
41 Commission meeting on October 7, 2024. Any changes made by the Commission must be completed by  
42 October 10, 2024 when the statutorily required sixty-five-day review period begins, (including review by  
43 the Salisbury Board of Selectman and the Northwest Hills Council of Governments). Chair Klemens  
44 explained during the sixty-five-day review period, the Board of Selectmen may choose to hold one or  
45 more public hearings on the POCD, provide comment, recommended changes, and subsequently  
46 endorse or reject all or part of the document. The Commission has legal authority to adopt the POCD

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47 with or without recommended changes, however any portion of the POCD not endorsed by the Board of  
48 Selectmen may only be adopted by a vote of no fewer than two-thirds of the Commission Members. A  
49 final draft of the POCD will be presented for adoption at a public hearing held by the Commission on  
50 December 16, 2024.

51

52 Chair Klemens opened the floor to the public for comments and questions.

53

54 Mary Oppenheimer complimented the Commission on their hard work and dedication to the POCD.

55

56 Steve Ohlinger asked for the contents of the previous POCD, and inquired what plans were pursued or  
57 completed from that document. Chair Klemens explained the 2012 POCD document is accessible on the  
58 Town website for viewing and that the Commission began this process by reviewing the 2012 Plan to  
59 determine what wasn't completed and if those priorities were still pertinent for inclusion in this Plan.

60

61 Jim Dresser asked for clarification of the current percentage of affordable housing present in town. He  
62 mentioned page 18 and asked where the town is in relation to the State's ten percent requirement. Mr.  
63 Dresser suggested including up to date percentages.

64

65 Sally Spillane mentioned she is a member of the IWWC. Ms. Spillane believed there are unintended  
66 consequences from Page 67 Section 20 and 21 regarding the Colliers study's suggestion of developing  
67 Academy Street, Railroad Street and Library Street as a one-way loop. Ms. Spillane read her previously  
68 submitted letter of correspondence and suggested eliminating the reference to the Colliers study. LUD  
69 Conroy asked Ms. Spillane if she is concerned with the way the study is cited and if she feels the  
70 Commission has taken a position as opposed to advocating for exploration of all options. Ms. Spillane  
71 replied she would like to clarify the connection between the references to Colliers studies and their  
72 influence in a potential plan.

73

74 Amy Longley expressed support for Ms. Spillane's comments. Chair Klemens explained the Commission  
75 will discuss this matter and decide whether to modify or discard the section of concern in the POCD  
76 document.

77

78 David Bright expressed support for Ms. Spillane's comments. He believed the POCD document has  
79 implied endorsement of the Colliers study.

80

81 Lauren Peck asked if the inclusion of multi-modal transportation could be explained. Chair Klemens  
82 explained the topic must remain in the POCD as a consideration for the future.

83

84 Robin Roraback expressed support for Ms. Spillane's comments. Ms. Roraback asked how the proposed  
85 changes would affect the Town and expressed concern about overdevelopment. LUD Conroy replied  
86 these concerns reflect why future designs must be based on facts such as impacts of traffic, and how  
87 existing infrastructure may be affected.

88

89 Tom Shachtman thanked the Commission. Mr. Shachtman asked for improved separation between the  
90 Commission and the Colliers study. Mr. Shachtman also believed Chapter 5 of the POCD is overwhelming  
91 and asked for priorities to be highlighted to simplify the Chapter. Chair Klemens explained the various  
92 Colliers reports were evaluated by the Commission and decisions were made to include or not include

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93 the recommendations in the ten-year plan. Chair Klemens added prioritization cannot be added to the  
94 POCD as it is a catalog of concepts and is not designed to prioritize them.

95  
96 Lorraine Faison expressed concern regarding addressing change in Town to avoid suburbanization. She  
97 hoped to retain the unique qualities of town. LUD Conroy asked Ms. Faison if she felt that design  
98 standards have a role to play in town. Chair Klemens asked if she desired a board of architectural review.  
99 Ms. Faison replied no, and asked for the unique qualities of a specific location where affordable housing  
100 is proposed to be considered.

101  
102 Andrew (last name unknown) explained that street patterns have remained unchanged in Town. He  
103 believed taking a suburban approach to change is contradictory to the Town's present standard. Chair  
104 Klemens replied that opinions differ on how to approach this change. He explained continuing the  
105 pattern of Town to avoid creating a separate suburban pod is desired by some, but a small designated  
106 suburban area is preferred by others.

107  
108 Mary Oppenheimer suggested including verbiage that referred to the extraordinary demographics of  
109 Town. Chair Klemens replied this is included in the POCD. He reflected one of the major challenges the  
110 community faces is escalating housing prices resulting in longtime citizens being pushed out due to lack  
111 of affordability. Chair Klemens explained the priority is to maintain all the ingredients that make  
112 Salisbury special while recognizing that change has occurred within the community.

113  
114 Kathryn Trahan recommended community members review the 2012 POCD document. Ms. Trahan  
115 believed the current draft POCD overemphasized references to outside sources such as the Colliers  
116 study.

117  
118 George Faison asked why studies did not occur prior to design concepts submitted by the Pope Design  
119 Committee. Chair Klemens replied this route would have been preferable as they will now be required to  
120 do a traffic study, investigate infrastructure capacity and address potential environmental issues.

121  
122 Keith Stein asked to what extent the POCD document considered similar plans adopted by other towns  
123 nearby. Chair Klemens explained the format was inspired by surrounding towns, and that the regional  
124 plan was considered.

125  
126 Jon Higgins, former Chair of the Commission, thanked the Commission for their hard work. Mr. Higgins  
127 asked what role the Commission plays in implementation of the POCD. Chair Klemens replied an annual  
128 meeting will be hosted to discuss the document. LUD Conroy replied that many recommendations in the  
129 POCD involve changes to Zoning Regulations. She explained a goal is for the Commission to dedicate one  
130 meeting per month to planning, but a lack of time and resources have proven to be a challenge to this.  
131 LUD Conroy mentioned some towns have separate Planning and Zoning Commissions each operating  
132 under different statutes to alleviate this concern.

133  
134 Sally Spillane suggested installation of a crosswalk in front of the Town Hall. Chair Klemens and LUD  
135 Conroy confirmed a crosswalk is suggested in one of the Colliers studies.  
136 Rosina Rand commented that the POCD document is too long and complicated to digest at once. She  
137 asked if the document could be made accessible as a hard copy without cost. Ms. Rand suggested copies  
138 be available at the library for citizens to loan. Chair Klemens agreed with the suggestion and said it will

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139 be investigated. LUD Conroy mentioned the document will be made available at the Town Clerk's office.

140

141 First Selectman Curtis Rand asked when the Board of Selectmen will be able to review the document.

142 Chair Klemens reiterated the upcoming timeline for the POCD.

143

144 Mary Oppenheimer asked if a Town vote would occur after the sixty-five-day period. Chair Klemens  
145 replied no. The document will be approved or denied by the Commission after holding a public hearing  
146 to receive input from the public.

147

148 Anne Williams asked for confirmation on the upcoming dates for the POCD process.

149

150 The public engagement meeting concluded at 8:10pm.

151

152

153 Respectfully Submitted,

154 Erika Spino

155 Secretary of Minutes