

NEWINGTON TOWN PLAN AND ZONING COMMISSION

Public Hearing and Regular Meeting

February 25, 2015

Chairman Cathleen Hall called the regular meeting of the Newington Town Plan and Zoning Commission to order at 7:00 p.m. in Conference Room L101 in the Newington Town Hall, 131 Cedar Street, Newington, CT

I. ROLL CALL AND SEATING OF ALTERNATES

Commissioners Present

Commissioner Frank Aieta
Commissioner Carol Anest
Commissioner Michael Camillo
Chairman Cathleen Hall
Commissioner Kenneth Leggo
Commissioner Robert Serra Sr.
Commissioner Stanley Sobieski
Commissioner Brian Andrzejewski - A
Commissioner Anthony Claffey - A

Commissioners Absent

None.

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Craig Minor: I recommend deleting item New Business Item 7b, the fireworks tent at Costello Road. The applicant is not available tonight, and he asked that it be postponed until next month.

Chairman Hall: Okay, that's 7b, postponed. Any other changes?

Craig Minor: No.

III. PUBLIC HEARING

- A. Petition 04-15 Special Exception (Section 3.11.6: Restaurant) at 337 Willard Avenue. Romraj LLC, owner, Dale Hume, applicant; Adrian Myles, 115 Fuller Drive, West Hartford, CT, contact

Chairman Hall: If the petitioner is here, if you would come forward, state your name and address for the record?

Adrian Myles: Adrian Myles, 115 Fuller Drive.

Chairman Hall: Feel free to bring some chairs up.

Mervyn Rimai: Mervyn Rimai, 1560 Asylum Avenue, West Hartford, Dai Rimai, 1560 Asylum Avenue, West Hartford.

Chairman Hall: Thank you. If you would tell us what you would like to do, we have the application form, but if you could tell us a little bit about the project.

Mervyn Rimai: Briefly, what we would like to do is to take a unit in an area where there is a 7-11, a liquor store, two restaurants, and put a third restaurant in that would be a take out restaurant for Caribbean food. We don't plan on having anybody seating, or eating in the restaurant, except perhaps somebody may want to come in and have their lunch if they don't want to sit and eat in their car.

Chairman Hall: And do you have, we have in our packet a sketch, do you have anything that you want to use the board for?

Adrian Myles: No we don't, however we added to the sketch since we submitted the sketch the last time and I'd be happy to pass some of these around. We pretty much just added a few more items to the sketch that we had made out. I made one for everyone. So the kitchen space, as it stands right now is probably about 760 give or take square feet. And what we are proposing to do is to turn it into a kitchen for a West Indian style take out restaurant. Presently there is only one restaurant, heading south from here which is a Mexican Pizza Place, and then in the same facility that we are proposing here, two other restaurants as well, non-competing style restaurants. One is a pizza place and the other is more of a family style restaurant, serving hamburgers and hot dogs. To add to that, we could go maybe a couple of miles more towards New Britain Avenue, and there is a Sliders Restaurant there, which is a full service kind of sports bar.

Chairman Hall: Has the applicant given the information to the building department already?

Craig Minor: I don't know, we'll have to ask the applicant, but I see the sketch, Mr. Myles, that you submitted shows a little bit larger public area than we were originally told about. This might be more area than you can have, because there is a limited amount of parking, and the amount of parking that a restaurant needs is based on the amount of public area. I know that you spoke with Mike D'Amato and he calculated that, based on the amount of area that you originally told us about, would be okay. But if it is going to be as big as you have shown, which looks like.....

Adrian Myles: It's the same.

Craig Minor: It's the same amount, just reversed, mirror image? Okay, good.

Adrian Myles: What you are seeing is the counter space, but as far as what is being represented as customer space, it's the same.

Craig Minor: Good. That was my only concern. Thank you.

Adrian Myles: And as regards to your question Madam Chair, we submitted it to, according to the guidelines submitted by the Health Department in bringing a new restaurant in, this becomes the first step. Once we pass this step then we have the permission to submit it to the other departments.

Chairman Hall: What I meant was, had they seen this new sketch, and the answer is no, right? You hadn't seen this new sketch until tonight. So, this line is the counter, and this is a flap that goes up and down so that people can walk through, is that what that is?

Adrian Myles: That's correct, for employees.

Chairman Hall: Right, you lift up and go behind it, but no customers behind that. They would be up in the front.

Adrian Myles: Yes.

Chairman Hall: There's a bench and window sill seating?

Adrian Myles: There's like a bay window there that we thought we would use, maybe put some cushions in the window or something, but not as a dine-in area.

Chairman Hall: Right, so you would be expecting people to call and order and then come and pick up, or drop in and order and wait?

Adrian Myles: Correct, similar to what goes on in the pizza restaurant, which would be to the left of our facility.

Chairman Hall: Right. Questions from the Commissioners?

Commissioner Aieta: It looks from the sketch he gave us that it is really a takeout restaurant. It's really not servicing anyone coming in, there's no tables, and he does have an area for people to wait, to pick up their take out orders. You have to remember, we base our parking calculations on that.

Chairman Hall: Any other questions of the applicant? Seeing none, since this is a public hearing, we're going to invite the public to make comments on the application. So that will be the next section of the meeting, so if you want to just take your seats back, and we will invite the public.

Adrian Myles: Thank you.

Chairman Hall: Anyone wishing to speak in favor of the restaurant, come forward, state your name and address for the record please.

Marvelyn Rockford: Good evening. I've known Mr. Myles for about six years now, and when he told me of this idea to have a Caribbean style restaurant in Newington I thought it was a perfect idea, because Newington is like a melting pot, and there are so many different cultural restaurants around here currently and the only one I haven't seen is a Jamaican restaurant. We have to travel to Bloomfield or Hartford if we want that type of food. Selfishly, I love Jamaican food, so I was truly excited to have it here. I know they are very responsible individuals, they are very honest; I know them professionally and personally, and they have been a joy, and I think this restaurant is a good idea. It will bring in more people, because I live in New Britain, I work in Newington, and I venture out dining with my husband, and it's a chance to see what else is going on in town.

Chairman Hall: Thank you. Now did you give your address for the record?

Marvelyn Rockford: My address is 364 Lewis Road, New Britain, CT. 06053

Chairman Hall: Thank you very much. Anyone else wishing to speak in favor of the petition? Anyone wishing to speak in opposition? Come forward, state your name and address for the record please.

Kathleen Horner: Kathleen Horner, 24 River Camp Drive which is the neighborhood where this restaurant would be located. My concern is less with this particular request for this particular establishment, my concern is with this property owner. The property owner is not a good neighbor.

Chairman Hall: But this evening, what we are talking about is this petition for this restaurant.

Kathleen Horner: I understand that. We already have two restaurants in this plaza and we also have food that is taken out from the 7-11. This is a property that is messy, dirty, and I'm really concerned about more food wrappers, trash, garbage which already is not cleaned up. I don't know anything about this applicant, I'm sure that they are conscientious and responsible, but we now will have, we already have our stuff with the 7-11 in a residential neighborhood, which we can't do anything about, and now we would have an additional food establishment with all of the trash that is created by that. I would prefer not

to provide a special variance or exception so that more businesses like this can be conducted at this location.

Chairman Hall: Thank you. Anyone else wishing to speak in opposition? Anyone wishing just to speak to the petition, not for or against, just speak? Seeing none, Commissioners, anything else?

Commissioner Anest: I don't recall hearing his hours of operation?

Adrian Myles: We plan on 11:00 a.m. open, to 10:00 p.m. closed, which kind of coincides with the operation of the plaza itself. I know the liquor store, they close at 9:00 and we would consider maybe closing within those time lines as well, but since this is a new business and we are new to the community, as far as serving food in the area, we will see what works. But as far as the proposal, we are expecting to be somewhere from 11:00 in the morning until maybe 10:00 at night.

Commissioner Anest: And days of the week?

Adrian Myles: Monday through Saturday.

Commissioner Anest: Closed Sunday?

Adrian Myles: Yes.

Commissioner Anest: What would you do to help curb the trash? Do you have any extra trash receptacles outside to help the landlord monitor or to alleviate the issues of the neighborhood?

Adrian Myles: Well, I'm glad she came forward and I'm glad that she had an opportunity to voice her concerns because those would become our concerns as well. I believe those concerns lie more towards Public Works or somewhere taking care of the facility as far as monitoring that, as opposed to the negligence of the facility itself. However, I'm still glad that she did voice those concerns and we will make sure that we pay special attention to that. We're not in the industry of creating bad neighbors. I would welcome her to the restaurant, and just like the other people in the restaurant, we are there to serve the community, not to be a nuisance to the community.

Craig Minor: Could I follow up on that question? Where are the trash cans on the premises, or maybe Dr. Rimai can answer the question, where are the trash, waste baskets currently on the premises?

Dr. Rimai: I haven't looked for them from that standpoint.

Chairman Hall: There are dumpsters in the back.

Craig Minor: I don't mean dumpsters, I mean.....

Adrian Myles: I can answer that. All-Waste is, I believe All-Waste is the company that picks up the trash. The trash cans are identified in the back of the facility.

Craig Minor: I don't mean dumpsters, I mean waste baskets that a customer can drop a candy wrapper in.

Commissioner Anest: 7-11 has them right in front.

Craig Minor: So only at 7-11?

Commissioner Sobieski: Do you anticipate people getting their food and eating it in their vehicles at your place?

Adrian Myles: I would say yes, and the reason why I'll say yes is that I notice that is the practice now. In staking out, for lack of a better description, in staking out the facility, seeing what the traffic is like and what is a common practice, and honestly I did it in the wintertime, and I don't know if it was more comfortable because it's easier to take a warm break and sit up front and eat, but I did notice trucks, cars, whatever the case might be. We are proposing a take-out facility but we really don't have any control over what the patrons do once they take that food and go through the door, but with regards to maybe placing community style garbage receptacles out front, which, now that I think about it, I don't recall seeing any, whether it's for cigarette butts or whether it's for garbage wrappers, we will make sure that we do something along those lines to help satisfy the concerns of our neighbors.

Commissioner Sobieski: My concern is, you have X number of parking spaces and with people taking the food out and eating it in the vehicle, you are going to be limiting the amount of parking space there, that's my concern.

Adrian Myles: The parking regulation is based upon square footage allowed per customer eating. Twenty parking spots for 1,000 square foot for the facility, which we are way under, so according to that regulation, we're only expected to have two, maximum of three parking spots which we are right within the guidelines for that.

Commissioner Sobieski: But I'm saying if someone goes in, then sits in the parking lot for a half hour, twenty minutes, you are going to be overflowing the parking, that's what I'm saying.

Chairman Hall: I know what you're saying, but I don't know how we regulate that. His square footage meets the criteria for the number of spots, but I do know what you are saying.

Commissioner Serra: Is there a grass area or somewhere where cans can be placed, not on the pavement itself, but outside, somewhere that's not actually in the parking lot?

Chairman Hall: There are sidewalks right in front of the restaurant.

Adrian Myles: Right, there are sidewalks right in front and there is also a three foot wide by maybe twenty foot space grass area, there's plenty of space for outside garbage cans in front of the facility, which as I said is not a practice now, and it could be the solution to one of the problems. In addition, I did hear a little murmur about the garbage cans in the back: each unit is responsible for its own garbage cans in the back. Right now I believe there are five garbage cans in the back of the facility. These are picked up by All-Waste.

Chairman Hall: Any other questions from the Commissioners?

Commissioner Aieta: One other place that the people could go if there is a problem with that property: We have an anti-blight ordinance and if there is trash in the parking lot, and problems like that, or unkempt, there is a whole ordinance that we have in the Town of Newington, anti-blight and I think that might be a place to bring concerns about the whole particular piece of property, including 7-11, the pizza place, and everything else. That's another area where you could bring your concern that something happened in there that is detrimental to your property.

Kathleen Horner: There have been so many problems with that property for quite a long time that I actually have reported that property to the Health Department previously, and provided pictures of overflowing dumpsters and the bushes in the front full of trash, and the little liquor bottles on the ground. I understand that we're not here to talk about the 7-11, but since we are talking about dealing with additional amounts of trash or garbage maybe it's relevant.

Chairman Hall: Thank you. So what is the pleasure of the Commission?

Commissioner Aieta: I would like to move that we close the public hearing portion and move the petition to our next meeting to Old Business for action. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Serra. The vote was unanimously in favor of the motion, with six voting YEA.

Chairman Hall: We will bring this up again at our next meeting, but it won't be a public hearing, it will be under Old Business, so at that point we will deal with it. Thank you for coming in tonight.

Lee Ann Marone: Excuse me, can I interrupt for a second? I missed the first part of this meeting and the opposition I understand is due to garbage on the property, but knowing the applicant for several years, I'm Lee Ann Marone, I'm the branch manager of the Berkshire Bank here in Newington, I can attest to the responsibility and concern and care and the professionalism of these people. I would feel completely comfortable that they would maintain the property to the Town's expectations, and I understand that they would understand the impact of their business, with garbage present, for a food service environment. I can't see the conditions described here tonight being applied to these people and they would maintain it with the utmost care and respect. I'm kind of looking forward to a Jamaican beef patty myself, so I would just support their application.

Chairman Hall: Okay, thank you.

IV. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION** (for items not listed on the Agenda; speakers limited to two minutes.)

None.

Chairman Hall: This evening we have Economic Development Director Andrew Brecher who will present to us a presentation of high density residential development. Welcome.

Andrew Brecher: Good evening. We need to get our technical equipment operating here... it looks pretty good.

As many of you know, I gave this presentation to the Town Council at their goal setting session on January 31st, and after I left that session evidentially the Council decided it would be a good idea to repeat the presentation for the public and to invite members of land use boards, the Economic Development Commission to hear it again, so my voice, I don't have too much left, after giving this presentation numerous times and being on the phone all day. Now what I'm hoping is, because my presentation was delayed last night until some time after 9:00, that maybe some of you turned on the TV and caught part of it, maybe all of you, so we could go through this a little faster if that's possible. If not, I will go through this as best I can, so this is what generated the basis of this discussion. Obviously those of you who pay attention know that this is what the National Welding site at the corner of Fenn Road and Cedar Street looked like just a few months ago, and now, it looks more like this. We begin to think more about what will happen here next, and actually this is even a six weeks old or so, this whole pile is now gone and it's in its current phase of activity, will be wrapped up in the next week or two. Following that, we will have to do the scientific work to then have the EPA to allow up to cap this site, which is the recommended means of dealing with the remaining trace amounts of contamination, and then the property truly will be able to be built on. So, when we look at, what sort of development can go here, I advocated to the Council that what we really wanted to do was think about what sort of development can occur in the entire town, and to do that, we have to take a step back, look at the economic drivers that developers look at when they are thinking about, well, what sort of confidence am I going to have to be able to build the type of development that I want.

The first thing that they look at is population, and the harsh truth is, in our section of the country, and in particular in Connecticut and in the capital region, we don't have population growth, and Newington is a good example. We've had a population of about 30,000 for as long as most of us can remember.

The next thing that they look at is employment. Kind of the same story here, that employment isn't growing. Thankfully we have recovered the losses of employment that we suffered during the last recession, but we all know that the jobs aren't the same. The quality of jobs aren't there. There are a lot of people who just plain aren't looking for work any more, a lot of folks have retired from the work force, and even though Newington's unemployment rate is now down to 4.8 percent, it doesn't feel like it. It feels like a lot more people are hurting than what a structural unemployment rate would seem to imply. I think a lot of that is because people are underemployed. They're working, but they aren't working up to their full capabilities.

Spending is a big issue for developers. They want to know that people are going to reach into their pocket and spend, and that means that you could build theoretically more retail spaces if people are spending more except that the nature of spending has changed a lot because of the Internet. So many people are buying so much on the Internet there is not much demand at all for a retail building. Good news, you can get more money, unfortunately a lot of it is going to student loans that are going to take a whole long time to pay off, but there is money. More people are able to buy cars, less interest in home purchases even though the capacity is there for people to borrow. Credit card debt is a two way sword. Obviously now people have credit rating, they have credit capability on their cards, they can spend just like that, they can go out spending, all the things that they were billed for, they have the ability to buy, though people are much more interested in experiences, going to the casino, going to New York to a show, to a concert, eating out all of the time, much more interested than in purchasing durables, the traditional, your washing machines, your refrigerators, and all of the things that you are going to have forever. This of course comes to an end at some point as we have seen before. When you max out credit cards and you have to pay the piper, now what happens to the economy, but for this period at least, right now, credit card spending is increasing, and of course that matches with the savings rate not being any where it should be. Those of us, like Stanley and I, and others who have been around a while remember the old adage in the 1950's save ten percent of what you earn. You make sure you put ten percent away. Well, that's what used to happen in the 1950's, eight percent, nine percent, ten percent, that dropped to one percent in 2006 and we're back to about four and a half percent which is better than one percent, but it doesn't position people well to have the money in their pockets to make big purchases.

Inflation, we all know inflation has been low for a long time, much longer than any economist ever predicted. Inflation is a big deal to developers because they are borrowing, they're leveraging and it takes them a long time between when they plan on building something, when it finally gets done, if they have a variable rate financing, they know that they're going to get hurt if there is inflation and interest rates start bouncing around, particularly if they are going up, and it also hurts the capacity of people to buy if interest is taking up more of their discretionary dollars.

Income, another big deal for developers. You might recall just a couple of years ago President Obama was suggesting extra taxation on the top one percent, top two percent. One percent, back just a couple of years ago, was characterized as those households making \$400,000 a year or more. \$394,000 to be correct. In just a couple of years, that has grown to this. So everything that you have been hearing about income and equality, these numbers from the IRS certainly bear that out. The people who are making a lot of money are making even more money. Top two percent, reasonable, top ten percent, this is interesting, these are nationwide statistics, but even this is up from \$113,000 a few years ago in Newington which was just \$73,000 two or three years ago. So what does all this mean? Well, from a developer's point of view, all of those factors are producing what type of demand? Frankly, there is always some sort of institutional demand, colleges, municipalities, hospitals, but not much, and even private schools. Everybody is being very cautious, with the projects they commit to. There is always something going on, but it's not a big driver. Industrial, very important for Newington. As a matter of fact, there was a lot of discussion about this last night, Newington had a lot of aero-space manufacturing. We still do. It's still growing. GKN just completed a 42,000 square foot addition, Advance Torque Products moved into town, Richard's Manufacturing moved into town, B & F Machine bought the old Bridge and Iron building and trying to talk to them about growing operations here. That's good. Our aero-space

academy is supporting that, and I think that is going to be a real help in keeping the manufacturers that we have here, here. But let's face it, let's be honest, everybody, every community is trying to recruit aerospace manufacturing to their community. We have a little bit of a leg up because of the critical mass that we already have, but frankly there isn't a lot of industrial being built, and you can wish and hope and beg and cajole and give all the incentives that you want, but realistically you cannot expect to see a lot of them.

Offices, because of people working at home, not as much need for offices. You know that office building in the Greater Hartford area has been negligible for almost thirty years and frankly, we can't expect to see offices in Newington because we have never had the Class A office building.

Hotel, recreation, I work on that all the time trying to get a hotel, banquet hotel, to open up in Newington. I think it's justified, I think it would work, Berlin Turnpike is the location for it. We already have eight approved hotel properties on the Berlin Turnpike but you can't get any of them to sell, and the people who are building these are very limited in the way that they are looking at it. Everybody has a content, certain size, number of rooms, square feet, whether there is an efficiency, a kitchenette in room, so yes, there will be hotels being built, but we're not going to see eight new hotels to replace the eight motels that we have on the Berlin Turnpike.

Warehouse, definitely seeing some warehouse activity, but not a fit for Newington because we don't have twenty acre parcels. You are not going to see Amazon type place opening up new facilities in Newington.

Retail is dead. Now, that being said, the Berlin Turnpike is always going to do well because it is a regional draw, but frankly, for every Auto Zone that opened, there is going to be a Radio Shack that closes.

Medical and research, I'd love it, and hopefully Jackson Labs will have the spin-off that the State is betting on by giving them whatever it is, six hundred million dollars, and we're well positioned for that because we're only about nine minutes away on Route 9 to the medical center there, so if any of these spinning off from Jackson Labs and that service Jackson Labs want to build, Newington will be a good place for it. But it's a bet and there is nothing certain about it and that could be ten years from now, and this is great development. You're talking six hundred, six hundred fifty dollars a square foot, to build these research facilities. Just count up the taxes that would go along with that value of construction, and then add onto it the value of the personal property inside.

What is being built in this area is housing. Now communities like Newington are not seeing any interest in single family, but developers are definitely looking at high density housing. Why is that? Let's look from a national perspective, people like new, and they have made the tradeoff, that era of McMansions has been traded for wanting to have high quality apartments, finishes, furnishings, so that means granite counter tops, stainless steel appliances, 42 inch solid wood cabinets in the kitchen, even though the kitchen is only six feet wide because nobody cooks, hardwood floors, they want higher ceilings, they want built in overhead lighting, tile baths, glass showers, really nice, but not necessarily big at all, so I want to live in a great place, but it doesn't have to be the 3,000 square foot or 2,000 square foot place that I had before. People who have decided that they want to do more things with their lives or maybe they don't live in an area full time. They have a house in Vermont, or the Cape or down south, but they still want to maintain a residence in a community where their friends and family are, but they want something easier to take care of. Elderly, looking for congregate services, I missed categorized this, this is elderly looking for a simpler, more enjoyable life, not necessarily living with each other, as a matter of fact a lot of elderly people when they are moving out of their houses, they express a preference to live in a mixed age area because they want to be with young people, they just don't want to be with a bunch of old folks. So they are looking for a different type of housing where maybe they can still see their neighbors in the winter. Where they don't lose four or five months to bad weather. I know that you have heard a lot of talk about young people, twenties, thirties, where do they want to live? They aren't looking for the 1,000 square foot ranches, not necessarily, it's hard to generalize, but a lot of them want this idea of, when I come home from work I

want to ditch the car, I want to be close to something where I can walk, there are going to be other people like me, there are going to be other things to do, there is going to be the ability for me to get on mass transit and go somewhere for the weekend. And then, because we are in a university area, this is one of the focuses of developers. A lot of the development for universities now, this is across the country, is being done by private developers because all of the states, just like us, can't afford the universities that we already have, like in our state, UConn gets a billion dollars, the seventeen members of the CSU system, the seventeen other schools, get 135 million to split up between them. That's it. So how are they going to build the new facilities that they want? Well private developers are saying, we'll build them for you, and then you pay us, you lease them from us. So instead of you taking fifteen years to get approval and bonding and go through all of the procurement practices to get it built, we'll do it faster and you come up with the money through tuition to be able to pay for it on a pay as you go basis.

So, if we look at developers focusing on high density housing, and we see that at the national level there's demand, does it translate to Newington, and I would argue that it does. Many of our citizens are feeling the same way. They do want a different type of housing, and people who don't live in Newington now, but could, are looking for a different type of housing, and perhaps more importantly than anything, developers are interested in building this sort of stuff here. This I know can be controversial and arguable, but in fact, and we'll talk about it a little more, and I think you will see a different side to it. Can we create a community in Newington where people who already live here want to continue to live here, where our kids, who grew up here want to continue to live here, and a community that would be attractive for outsiders, for people who don't live here now, who would want to come in and live here, to keep us a vital community going forward into the future.

So here is where I become politically incorrect. Let's see what we have here for press again, they're back again, so I asked them last night if they would cut me a little slack and I'm going to do so again tonight. Absolutely true, if you are talking about low income, high density housing, there is more than good evidence belief that there will be a lot of kids entering the school system. If you ask the police they will tell you, there is a correlation between income and crime. The idea of that if people don't live in your community for a long time because they are transit, they never become an active part of the fabric of the community. They don't sit on boards and commissions, they don't get involved in community activity, are they citizens who contribute to their community. Arguably, yes. Low income, transit, you're on your way, you're not as involved, but it doesn't really apply to high income. If you are a higher income, we've got a lot of people now who live in apartments and condominiums and they are active in everything that goes on in town. If you are poor, you need more human services. If you are not poor, you don't. You have the ability to handle your own problems.

We know the type of housing that we don't want. The Berkowitz building in New Britain, Nelson Street in Hartford, Westbrook Village, classic post World War II project type housing, believe it or not, people are still living here. You can see not all of the windows have been boarded up. The city has been trying for twenty years to tear these down and produce alternate housing. We know, this is not what we want.

This is a slide that I used with the Town Council a year ago, when we were talking about understanding our population and what the potential is, and what the challenges are. The reason that I brought this slide out is again because it helps us understand kind of the citizens that we might want to appeal to in the future. If you follow this chart, assets going from no assets up to a lot of assets, income from nothing to a lot; if you live in Westport or Greenwich you're probably up here, if you live in the worst areas of Bridgeport, Hartford and New Haven, you're down here. Newington fortunately doesn't have a lot of people around here, we've got a fair number here who are struggling, and people who do need assistance and do need low cost housing, we have a lot of people here, and keep in mind that people with high assets when you count assets, that's a paid off house, that's social security, a pension, a IRA, a 401K, savings accounts, so we have a lot of retirees who have old style pensions, but they don't have a lot of income. They are very cautious about the income that they do have. But at least they have the ability to know that they have income, they've got money coming in the door next month and the month after that, and they have some assets that can be liquidated. This is a very questionable group, these are

in many cases a lot of young people just starting out, they're not saving, they're spending everything that they've got and then there are a lot of people who just make that choice, who say, I don't know what the future is going to bring, so whatever I'm making today I'm going to spend. These are actually very good people for the community because they make it and they spend it. Again, one could argue that at some point the gig is up, you've got to pay the piper on this, and these people because they have a lot of assets, they're constrained, in terms of big purchases, so everybody wants these people and frankly, we're not going to have this chunk of folks, if they're got that much money and those assets, they've chosen to live in another community for the most part. But down here, I think we've got a real shot.

Let's go back to this slide again. If I said that we have one percent of the households in Newington making this kind of money, would you agree with that or not. Well, we've got 13,000 households give or take in Newington, and I would argue that 130 of them are making 525,000 or more. I don't think so. I would say, 260 of them making \$250,000 or more is reasonable and 1300 making 118,000 or more, also reasonable. So I would argue that this would be a good target group to be able to go after. If we can get people, households, making \$118,000 or more to move into Newington, or if they are already here to stay here, that this would help us a lot, and we're not talking about a lot of money. If you have a good job, or you've had a good job. For example, you're a young engineer at Pratt & Whitney making \$70,000 a year, you've got a girl friend working at Travelers, the Hartford Group making \$50,000, bingo! You're here. You are two retired teachers in Newington, you're making well more than this in retirement income. Don't forget, there are a lot of people, not everybody, but there are a lot of people who fit this profile, and given the type of housing that they are looking for, they can be frankly a good deal for Newington and a source of subsidy for the services that we are trying to provide.

Keep in mind, this presentation was made to a town council that is under extreme stress to figure out how to balance the budget this year, with no grand list growth. They know that the only way to do that is to increase taxes on all of the citizens that are here. Looking out into the future, if we don't have grand list growth, the only source of new revenue is the people who are already here. What I'm going to suggest is that we want more, we want some new people, to ease the burden on the rest of us.

What sort of housing are these people looking for? Well this is 777 Main Street in Hartford, the Becker and Becker development, 240 units, I believe, around 685 to 2200 square feet, no I'm sorry, 1200 square feet, but they are looking at \$1300 to \$2400 a month in lease, plus \$90.00 for a car. Probably not what we want to see in Newington. Market Square Apartments, almost entirely Section 8, probably not the type of high density housing that we want to see in Newington, and certainly not attractive to people who make that target household income level. Fennwood Apartments, those of you who remember when Fennwood was built, probably around forty or fifty years ago, on Fenn Road, this was the premier place to live in Newington. Still very nice, they've kept it up, no question, but \$900 to \$1300 a month, people are making \$120,000 a year, and are looking for all those amenities, and the quality finishes, they aren't so interested in living in a place like this. This is Griswold Hills, now fifteen years ago, this is our newest apartment complex in Newington. Fifteen years old. One bedroom through four bedroom apartments and fifty percent are subsidized housing, a lot of kids. Lot of kids, when you put that many bedrooms in, you know, in a leased property, you're inviting a lot of kids.

This is Colonial Manor on Willard Avenue. This has actually been converted to condominiums, but I took a picture because it's representative of a lot of apartments on Willard Avenue and Main Street that also rent at \$850.00 to \$1395.00 range. The property has been kept up very well. They are professionally managed, very nice, the people who live there, we have relatively few problems with, some folks have lived there 34 years, but in terms of attracting people with money, these are not the sort of places that they are looking for.

Crown Ridge, up off of Kitts Lane, also very nice, big bedrooms, two car garages, big bedrooms, big bedrooms equal kids, brings in more kids, again, it's a life style that is an option for people, but not necessarily the ones that we want to attract.

This is the Woodlands, a Pulte home project up off of Fenn Road, beautiful, nine foot ceilings, I don't know if any of you know anybody who lives there, but very nice, very well done, interestingly, a lot of the seniors who moved here are now moving again because these are one floor living, everything you have upstairs, I don't know how many first floor master bedrooms there are here, but again, very nice, families, potentially, the market that we are looking at, but not necessarily because of one floor living, what everybody is looking for.

This is Newington Ridge, across from McDonald's, the old drive-in-site, 71 units, all sold, seven kids in the school system. Seven. They pay almost \$500,000 a year property taxes among all of them, and the incremental cost for those seven kids is maybe \$40,000 maybe \$50,000. Keep in mind when you hear the statistic about \$17,000 a year per student, well, that's all of the cost divided by all the students. We don't need to build a new school because one kid gets added to the school system, or ten for that matter. Our school population is down almost 500 kids, maybe over, in the last ten years. There's a lot of room, we have a lot of capacity for students. I'm not going to get into the whole debate about the type of students and the number of teachers and staff and all that, but the fact is, the incremental cost of adding students is not \$17,000. We as a town make a lot of money off of this development. They pay a lot more in taxes than they get in services.

This is Harvest Village off of Deming Street, under construction, some units are already sold. This is double the density of all of the other condominiums that you have seen so far. They just came back into you folks for a revision to their site plan so that the street that goes back here that continues will have more first floor master bedrooms. The reason is simple, the people who are expressing interest in living here are mostly seniors who are relocating. They still want room for the kids and grandkids in the upstairs bedrooms, but they don't want to traipse up and down.

Interesting project, I don't know how many of you recognize this, this is on Newington Road in West Hartford, the Goodwin. This was very controversial, it's across from the Stop and Shop so it has a good location, but it's affordable housing. This is built by the West Hartford Housing Authority, the units here lease for \$1325 to \$1750 per month. That's a definition of affordable housing in West Hartford. Forty-seven units, looks very nice, it's still under construction, I haven't been in there, but you have to pay attention because it has some cheap factors to it, like through the wall HVAC units, not real balconies, but fake balconies, so they did cut a few corners to be able to get to that cost, but they are still giving people granite countertops, because everybody wants granite countertops.

How many of you folks know what this is? Cedar Mountain Commons, this is right here in Newington at the end of John Stewart Drive. This is an independent assisted living facility, just celebrated it's tenth year I believe. Operated by Hartford Hospital, terrific place, my mother lived there for a couple of years, costs \$3,000 to \$8,000 a year depending on the level of service that you need, but they do a very good job, it meets a very big need and, you notice the blocky architecture of it? Very blocky. Not unlike, this is the latest rendering of the Amara project proposed for the top of East Cedar Street, at the Berlin Turnpike. Also, big, blocky, totally intentional to cut down on the distance that the elderly who live in these places need to walk to get to enjoy all of the amenities, or for that matter, just to go down to dining.

This is Quaker Green in Elmwood. Now I don't particularly like the architecture of this, I don't think it looks good, but the concept of it is pretty fascinating. This is a 42 unit building, one unit has a two car garage, and all the rest have one car garage. They are 650 feet to 1100 feet again, they sell for \$200,000 to 300,000 plus depending on the amenities that you want, which translates to \$270 to over \$300 per square foot selling price. You compare that to what houses sell for in Newington at around \$120 to \$150 per square foot, you're talking about double the selling price per square foot, and they fill them. Forty-two units, when I visited they had 39 sold, not a single kid in the school system. They are small. These are small places. It's fine if they have single dads who have the kids on weekends, want to live close to where Mom is, where the school is, but not attractive to families at all. The other side of Quaker Green however is townhouses. Big beautiful townhouses. A lot of them three levels. This tells it all, they

recruited families. They have a swimming pool, they have a playground area, beautiful place, not what I would suggest that we need to build in Newington. We've got plenty of these already.

- * Any of you been up to Storrs Center near the UConn campus? So you know what this is. Notice wide sidewalks, narrow streets, this is the area they call the town green. This is from about a year and a half ago, when it was still under construction. There is a gathering area here, five story, very dense, all of the parking is in the back, or in a parking structure behind the building. Notice, no balconies here and the reason is, is because it is student housing. Student housing that costs \$1100 per bed per month.

Here is a, this is actually from out of state, this is another private student housing complex and it has, it is high density, it has a little bit different approach to it because it has room for amenities, makes it more attractive, but same deal, \$1100.00 per room, per bed per month. You have to have a twelve month lease. It has to be guaranteed by Mommy and Daddy. Very high, very high, but they are getting it because we're not talking about in-state students here, we are talking about out-of-state students primarily from the metropolitan or private student who come from all over the country, and the harsh truth is, they are spending twelve, thirteen thousand dollars per year, but.....

Commissioner Anest: Where is that?

Andy Brecher: This is a project for Campus Crest Communities, I don't remember the location.

Commissioner Anest: It could be North Carolina.

Andy Brecher: Yes, and they have a lot. They have a lot in North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia. So it could very well be. But what is interesting here is that these guys even own the furniture. So when you move in, they provide the beds, and the tables, the lamps, the bureaus, the mirrors, and the fifty inch flat screen TV's. They don't want you dragging in your roach infested couch, marking up the hallways, again, one bedroom, and one bath. So everybody has their own bathroom. So if there are three bedrooms, there's three bathrooms. Two bedrooms, two bathrooms, it's how they get \$1100 on a twelve month lease because they are giving you all this, everything is included, and again, granite countertops, stainless steel appliances, again, they are not big, but they make it work, and they make you sign on the dotted line, and they are professionally managed. These are, there are only a couple of companies in the country that actually manage these private student housing facilities. All the money that builds them is institutional. It's your IRA's, your 401K and the ownership will change over and over again as the asset gets sold, but because these assets are always sold, and that's how they refer to them, as assets, they make sure that the quality is kept up, because every time you are trying to sell them, somebody is going out to kick the tires and make sure it is in good shape.

All right, in summary, what do I do when I advocate what our community does when it comes to Economic Development? Well, first off, more than anything, take advantage of opportunity. We are a well positioned community in terms of convenience. Here in Newington you can get anywhere and anywhere can get to you. That is always going to be a strength of ours. We want to play to that, but we can't really direct it. This is more when something comes to us, do we jump on it and try to make it work if it's a good fit for us? I'm going to say these words again, hopefully the press will help me out here, I going to advocate that we do not emphasize low income housing, and I've got to tell you, I don't know where the rumors come from, I've been doing this in Newington now for almost three years, not a single developer has come to me with a proposal for low income housing. There is no money in it. The only way you can make low income housing work is with subsidies. I don't know how many of you paid attention to the newspaper article over the weekend, where the DoNo developers, the downtown north developers went into the Capital Region Development Authority with a preliminary proposal for twenty million dollars of subsidy. Give us twenty million dollars and we will build in our project, sixty-five of our units as affordable housing. That's \$307,000 subsidy per unit. Insanity. They are absolutely nuts! For \$307,000 just build a nice place, you don't need a subsidy of that. So what developers are telling you though, that if you, as a community want us to have lower cost housing in front of our project, then pay us, pay us to do it.

Because otherwise we want the return, we want to be able to get that two or three thousand dollars a month for an apartment, and make money doing that. So, I think this is actually compatible with what we want to do, and what the marketplace wants to do. So my biggest point is to advocate that we allow high density in the town. We've already had a lot of it, we're just talking about doing it in a different way. Yes, more dense, yes a different type, but what we need to focus on is those people who have that household income of \$118,000 and more who can afford the type of housing that we want, and if they come here we can reasonably expect it's going to help us subsidize the tax payers who are already here. That their cost of being here will not be more that the costs of services that they utilize.

Now remember, this was a presentation to the Town Council so what I was looking for was to get them to approve this. To give us the money, to give you guys the money so that in fact a consultant could be hired and they have agreed to do that. So if you folks are amenable to moving forward, to looking at high density housing and the types of regulations that would be required to steer it towards high income households, the money is on the table there for you to be able to do that.

So, my presentation tonight is concluded, I ask for your consideration as you move forward here, it's a big deal for Newington but if it fact we are going to be able to encourage any sort of development at all, the realities of the market place right now, this is what people are looking for. Thank you. Any questions, or comments?

Commissioner Sobieski: Andy, most of the residents of this town do not want high density housing, they don't want things over a certain height. Some of the areas that you are talking about, like Newington Junction, you remember back in May, people were upset about it. This is a town, we're not a city. People moved out here for a reason, they want area, they want lawns, granted some of the people are getting older and maybe they want to move into something, but I don't want to see neighborhoods devastated or as I've been told, we've got this area like Newington Junction, we want to develop here and develop there, and if somebody doesn't want to sell their house, they're not going to sell, and you certainly can't take it by eminent domain, so I think what you really need to do is to take a good hard look at what we want to do in these areas, not just fly into them.

Andy Brecher: Well, I guess I would argue with you Stanley, with your characterization of what people in this area want. Essentially what I am saying is yes, there are a lot of people who only want what we've always had. But my argument is, there are a lot of people who want something different, and five stories is not scary to them and, I'm not talking about rebuilding the whole town, we're just talking about certain areas, certain projects where it makes sense and it's something that the people want.

Commissioner Aieta: What areas are you talking about?

Andy Brecher: Town center, potentially Newington Junction near the transit stations, and over in the University area near CCSU.

Commissioner Aieta: What are you talking about there, student housing?

Andy Brecher: Could be a variety of housing. A lot of the interest that I have had is for general high end housing because of the proximity to the highway. You have to keep in mind, when you think about the university area, you're going up Fenn Road a little bit, you're going to Cedar Street east a little bit, the Stop and Shop property across from Beacon as an example.

Commissioner Aieta: Talking about National Welding, do you see that as a site for high end, high density housing?

Andy Brecher: My preference as you folks know, I'd love to see medical research labs, something tied to Jackson Labs go there, but the reality is, that would be a perfect location for student housing and developers are interested in it.

Commissioner Anest: When we did this 2020 Plan in 2009, 2010, we spent countless hours with public hearings, listening to people, talking with the Council and once again I went over the Council minutes with those people who were on the Council at that time, and time and time again it came up that people do not want any more high density housing, no matter what kind. We had this discussion, thousand dollars to millions of dollars. I think that the housing survey that was just done, I haven't seen the whole thing, but I believe a good portion of those responses came back that people don't want any more housing in this town. There's got to be other ways that you, as the Economic Development Director, can develop this town economically without housing, or without the majority of it being housing. I mean, there are sports facilities that are going up in surrounding towns, that would be something perfect for the National Welding location. You're near the busway, people can take the busway, there's a lot of parking, its easy access to get to there. Something like that to me would make more sense as a fit than high end, high density housing. I think other people kind of concur with me that going through the 2020 Plan, I mean, our vision was to enhance by non-residential land uses that support the town's grand list. I mean, and that is, again and again and again reiterated in the 2020 Plan, and we spent, I won't even tell you how many public hearings on this, and I really think that you, as the Economic Development Director, us as TPZ really need to listen to what this town wants. I was out there, door to door from Tremont Street to Cherry Hill and that's what I heard over and over and over again. I think it's our responsibility that we provide this town with what they want and if it be that our taxes have to go up a couple of extra dollars a year because we don't have this, maybe this is what we want. But I really think we need to look at the whole picture and we're not here to make developers, to fill the developers projects, we're here to make sure this Town is, we're being responsible for this town.

Andy Brecher: I absolutely understand what you are saying, and I think I would agree with you that if with everything else being the same, we would like to not have any more development in this town, period. We are pretty much overdeveloped now. I am acutely aware that on page 32 of the Plan of Conservation and Development it says, maintain Newington as a predominately medium density, 12,000 square foot lots, single family owner occupied community. I know it's there folks, I'm not trying to do anything counter to what has been expressed here, but I'm the guy in the middle. I'm the guy who is hired by the Town to say, bring us growth. Bring us growth, yes we want jobs, absolutely want jobs, we want to have a community with vitality, give us things to do, make it fun to live here, give people a reason to be here, do something so that our young people will be here, do things to maintain our property values, so people who don't live here will want to come here and pay us lots of money for our property. Do all of that. The dilemma Carol is, that even though people want no development, the people who hire me realize that without development it's not going to be a few bucks that people are going to have to pay more in their taxes. It's going to be a whole lot of bucks, because they don't know how to stem the tide of the cost of government. When we sign three year contracts with teachers, for a three percent raise every year, and you layer onto that the cost of medical insurance, pension, and all of that, you know, like the Board of Ed came in this year with a 5.6 percent increase, got knocked down, the only way to pay that is five percent. If you're paying \$8,000 in taxes, next year it's \$8400, next year it's \$9,000, and it is, as some people have said, unsustainable. So, I agree with you, I would love as an Economic Development package, thirty years ago, when I did this, the focus was on jobs. We didn't look at housing at all. If everybody had a job, housing would take care of itself, and it just isn't the case anymore. Development has to look in a much more realistic way of everything, so I cannot disagree with you that the people have said they don't want this housing, but the people have also said, I don't want these high taxes. I want a way to stem the growth in taxes.

Commissioner Anest: And I think we can be creative, and I think we need to be creative and I think it's up to this board to figure out a way to be creative and to do it properly and not being pushed into making a decision. We need time to look at the whole picture, to look to see what is happening in these different areas, and to look to see how these areas are zoned before we're forced into something, and I think that is one of our problems. We feel like we are being forced into something, and I think we need a little bit of time to really absorb everything that is going on in this community, everything that is going on around the

Cedar Street station, and Newington Junction. We just need time, and I feel very pressured right now, and I don't appreciate it.

Andy Brecher: Pressure from me?

Commissioner Anest: Yes, pressure to look at this, and to say, okay, we need to make a decision, we need to right now edit, amend our regulations so this will happen, like pronto. I don't think that is the right way to handle it. We should be able to look at it as a body and decide how we want to develop these areas, and look at how they are currently zoned, and look to see, what kind of ridership is coming on around these two bus stations, as well as when the train comes in, and really absorb everything, and to see, what is the perfect fit, and not have some consultant who is not even in this area say, well, this is the best thing, and we need to put a bridge over this street, I don't think it's up to a consultant, I think it's up to this body to make the final decision of what is right for this town and for the neighborhoods.

Andy Brecher: I couldn't agree with you more. The only thing I disagree with you on is, I don't think you get any smarter waiting. Again, I go back to here and I say, you've got the money, get going now, get going, and do it.

Commissioner Anest: Right, we're going through regulations now, but I'm saying, we need to take some time, we really need to take time to absorb this. I for one, once the snow is gone would like to take a ride on the busway and to sit with like somebody with a map and say, okay, this is how these areas are zoned, so we know, so we can preserve the single family housing that, especially around the Newington Junction area, where there has been a lot of outcry saying no more housing, no high density housing, and I think we really have to be sensitive to that.

Commissioner Serra: Mr. Brecher, I don't know if you are aware that the Town Council not too long ago put together a housing needs study committee which I'm on. We had CCSU put together, send out mailers, put together a whole report on what the people in this town want. This was done by a directive from the Town Council. This report hasn't even been brought to them yet, but by this report I can tell you there are going to be a lot of contradictions as to what the people want, and part of the problem is that the people making the decisions aren't listening to what the people want. We heard it through these surveys that went out, we've heard it through the Commission, people coming in and talking, we have the 2020 Plan, which I have an extra copy of if you would like it, there is a lot that needs to be taken into consideration. I did watch your presentation last night by the way. I just want to let you know that considering a moratorium is not a "cop-out." It's doing the right thing for the residents. It's taking our time to make sure we are doing the right thing for the residents of this town, and I agree one hundred percent with Carol that we cannot and should not be pushed in a direction, or into something that somewhere down the road we are going to say, or somebody else sitting here is going to say, why did they do that? This has got to be about the betterment of the town, which I understand is what you are trying to put together, but it's also about what the residents want, what's best for the residents.

Andy Brecher: Fair enough, fair enough, and by the way, that housing needs survey, what's the maximum they asked people that they wanted to pay per month for housing?

Commissioner Serra: I would have to go through the report.....

Andy Brecher: It's a loaded question. There was no question in there, do you want high density housing at \$1,000 per month.

Commissioner Serra: Actually there were questions referring to...

Andy Brecher: Right, but they were looking at a much lower affordability rate. The target for that was looking much more of what we need to do for people who have fewer options in terms of their housing needs now and going into the future, which is very important, but not exactly precisely what I was talking

about here. I'm going to stick to my guns, my phraseology of it being a "cop-out" because I really believe it. I'm a guy who has been in business, I've been in industry, I've been in government, the fact that you delay doing something you've really got to think hard why I'm delaying. If I'm delaying because I want to wait for the snow to melt, okay, fine, I can go with that. But the fact is, in any decision, those of you who have been in corporations, and you turn to someone and you ask them, are we ready to go forward with this, and they say, I need more time. What does the boss turn to them and say, how much smarter are you going to be if I give you more time. You have to convince me how you are going to use that time wisely, as just getting going and doing it. Look at, if you started today, this is still going to take four months, minimum. Six months to get there. All I'm saying is don't put it off for a year, and then start a six month project.

Commissioner Anest: What we're saying is, if we do it, it's going to give us time to put regulations together so in six months, if we have them, we can terminate the moratorium, or twelve months. We don't want somebody coming forward and saying, here's our plan, and now we are kind of under the gun to approve it, and now we have to retrofit if we decide to do an overlay or a TOD, now we have to retrofit that around something that has already come before us. You have to understand, we want to look at the whole picture, so if it takes us three months, somebody can't come before us in those three months and say, this is what we need to do, these are the amendments that we want you to make, before we want to make them on our own.

Andy Brecher: Are you comfortable with getting going now, with hiring a consultant?

Commissioner Anest: We will discuss that.

Andy Brecher: That's what I am looking for.

Commissioner Leggo: I want to thank you for your presentation. I think in a way we are in the same position that you are, because we want to make the right decision. It's been proven, just in recent history that we need to know what the people in the town want, because they are going to make the ultimate decision, that's been proven just recently. I think that, that time, if we do get started with this, but we still get that time together, I think everybody is getting what they want. Nobody wants it to be thrown down their throats to do this now, approve it now, because, I know everybody here, we all want to make the right decision for the town.

Andy Brecher: And you know, the concept of a moratorium is not awful if you are going to be doing something during that period of time. My concern is the signal that it sends to developers outside of our community, who don't know what you are talking about here. They only know what they read in the paper, and then they put Newington off the charts for however long the moratorium is.

Commissioner Leggo: A working moratorium would probably be a better term.

Andy Brecher: Is that good for us? Listen, I'm going to bet that there are people on this Commission, just like there are people in town, that don't want any development. They don't want any development, and what I'm concern about is, is this basically a ruse? Is this moratorium being used to placate certain vocal members of the public who don't want any development and to say, look, we're going along with you, we're going to push it off, and we're going to kick the can down the road? It isn't even a cop-out, because it's intentional. I'm not advocating that. I'm advocating that people step up. You're all Commissioners, you're on TPZ, you're sworn to do a job, so do your job. Get going on it. I'm not trying to scold anybody, but I really believe in the concept that you are all smart people now, and you're not going to get any smarter. Get going with somebody and take on those issues one by one, all those concerns, and turn it into language. Turn it into language that would guide the development that you want to see.

Commissioner Sobieski: Andy, what I'm concerned with here is that I want to get something that is going to be functional here. I don't care what happens in Atlanta, Georgia, or in California, or in Boston, we

want something that is going to be functional here. That's what we are really looking at. That's why we want to look at this and make the right decision. It is definitely not a cop-out. You may call it that, but it's not. You want to be able to understand what we need, what the town needs, what the people want, the residents want, and try to get something that works, not just ram something down the throats, and say, this is it. We've already tried that, we tried that once with Mill Pond and it didn't work. That's exactly what we are being forced to do right now, my opinion, my thought is rather, get a working moratorium and then see where we go. You want to hire this guy, there's going to be some certain regulations, it's certainly not going to look like the last presentation, what works down in Atlanta with a trolley running around the perimeter, or something up in Boston because you've got these big areas. Newington is 13.7 square miles. It's not a huge city, town rather. You've got to have something that is going to be functional. You can't just take a piece of the pie and drop it in the middle and hope that both ends work. That's my thought.

Commissioner Aieta: I know what the people in Newington want. I sat through a year and a half of a 2020 Plan. There were meetings where there was a minimum of 200 people, town people came in and voiced their opinions, exactly what they wanted, and it reflects in our town 2020 Plan. We are not looking for high density housing, that's the message that we got from town residents, that they don't want high density housing. They didn't preference whether it's high income or low income or whatever, you have to remember Andy, that you aren't going to fix the ills of the tax problems that have been created over the last fifteen years with both Democrats and Republicans on the Council. It's the different departments. You aren't going to fix it with Economic Development. There's not enough land left for us to make up the difference in the grand list, to make up the difference in the tax, with tax deficiencies that we are going to have. It's going to take more than Economic Development, you have to remember, 95% of the town is already developed, we're at the point where we are busting at the seams, what are we talking about, at the best it's not going to make up this big deficiency in the taxes. It's not. You said it, the schools are 500 students less in the last five years, well, the last five or ten years, look at the budget for the Board of Education. In my opinion, it should have been going down if you have 500 less students, and it's gone up three or four percent a year over the last fifteen years. That's why we are in the problems that we are. We're spending more than we have the capacity to collect. The people in the Town of Newington are at the point where right now they can't afford to live here. I talk to people all the time, I've been here for forty something years, they're telling me, I can't afford to live in this Town of Newington because of taxes. I'm on a fixed income, and my property taxes are \$9,000 a year. That's \$9,000 off the top, that's a lot of money when you are only making \$22,000 on Social Security. That's half of your Social Security, just paying taxes.

Andy Brecher: Listen, I'm not arguing that this is a panacea, but I am at least accepting that it is part of the solution. As a land use board, what other things can you do? You can't do anything to affect the Board of Education's budget, all these other things that you say are required, as a solution, as this body, you can only address things that have to do with land use. I'm not advocating rebuilding the whole town, I'm just suggesting that if somebody wants to propose a \$55 million dollar housing project that will produce two or three million dollars a year in tax revenue, it's worth thinking about, because we don't have other big ideas like that.

Commissioner Aieta: I don't see where the land is for that type of development. I know this town pretty well. Tell me the pieces, show me the pieces. Bring in the plans. I don't think we need a consultant to draft the regulations; we're right in the middle of drafting and going over our regulations right now. I don't need a consultant to come up with regulations to do this kind of thing, you've outlined it yourself. To bring in a consultant with a canned regulation that doesn't fit our needs as a town, it's a waste of money.

Andy Brecher: I think we're talking about custom regulations first off, so you're going to hire somebody that you haven't used before, and not somebody like CSS who is an old school type of planning firm that CRCOG hired. We didn't like what they said, didn't like the way that they said it, their work was really not very modern at all. But Frank, to get back to your question. We've got a development site at the top of East Cedar, we've got a couple other large sites on the Berlin Turnpike, people who are looking to sell

right now, we've got the area here near the university, both north and south of Cedar Street, and going up Fenn Road and onto Cedar Street itself. We've got the town center, over seventy acres of developable property that could be a whole new community, a Blue Back Square "lite", if we have the vision and the guts to do something with it. Now, you might say, the people who live here don't want it, but where do the kids want to live? What sort of community do they want to see? Is this a potential for Newington, so to answer your question, yes, we do have sites. Not the whole town, maybe it's scattered sites here and there, eight or nine of them. They aren't all going to be developed, but there's potential for the type of development that people in this town would like to see. Not everybody wants to still have the houses that they had before. That's all.

Commissioner Anest: I think if you could put a bubble over Newington and keep it at 75 degrees, I think people are going to stay. You know, the kids want to go down where it's a little bit warmer, and that's one of the problems in the northeast right now.

Commissioner Camillo: In 1987 they came to us with the bus route, in '91 we had our first town meeting, and then it went away. Twenty years later it came back, we knew it was coming, and they started construction five years ago. And now, in the eleventh hour we are talking about a moratorium. Like, halt, I'm not ready for this. Well, we've had five years to get ready for this, so if there is going to be a moratorium, yes, we have to work and we have to work on it not when we are good and ready, but now. It's going to pass us. You have property owners in the area that are going to say, the hell with Newington, and then sell it to the State and then we have no say in the matter. The state can come in and do whatever they want. A lot of us don't want housing in town, but we need to do something, and yes, we can't control the Board of Ed unfortunately, we could do a lot there, but something has to be done there, because that's our biggest problem. Seventy-five percent of every dollar is spent on the Board of Ed and we're not pushing out geniuses, they aren't staying in this town. I can't even hire a kid to swing a wrench because they don't have any industrial arts in the schools anymore. That's why we pay guys 30, 40 dollars an hour that are 55 and 60 years old that want to leave, because we have to keep them, because there is nobody else to do the job. I've said it before, it starts in our school system. That's why we have all these empty industrial buildings. There's a whole bunch of places where you can look, this is great, but we have to sit back, and it has to be done now. Putting it off a year, no. If this consultant comes in, who's not going to be emotional about it, because we all are, we're going with our feelings, not just our brains, and I understand that. We do have feelings, because this is where we live. Hey, it's coming, whether we like it or not. If we are going to have a moratorium, we have to work on it now, and we need to have a consultant in here working with us. Please.

Chairman Hall: First, I want to see that housing study, I think we all do. That's going to be a very important part of our decision making as well, and I know that they have been working on it for months, but hopefully within a very short period of time we will get to see it because none of us have seen it yet. The other thing is, how is it that other towns, Rocky Hill, West Hartford, Windsor, are able to get these medical centers, like Hartford Hospital, St. Francis Care? Those are wonderful situations. There's not a lot of impact, yet they have equipment that can be taxable. If you get a manufacturer in here, that's not going to do us any good, because their equipment has been exempted by the State. So we don't really want that. We want something that is going to generate some tax dollars. Equipment can do that. Now, have you had any luck at all talking with medical facilities to come here? Is there a reason why they are avoiding Newington?

Andy Brecher: Okay, lots of questions there. Let me try to answer them in reverse order. We still want manufacturing because of the high quality, high paying jobs, even though we do not have a town collect revenue on personal property. Absolutely right, but I wouldn't turn my back on manufacturing, just because they are high paying jobs. The problem with the medical arts facilities, and we want it, not only because of tax revenue but because it is a great service to our residents to be able to have these facilities, have them locally. Every community around Hartford has an HMG. They have a Hartford medical group, a Hartford hospital facility, except Newington. The reason for this, yes, I have had conversations with them, is because they can't decide what they want to do with this Newington campus.

Every time they think they know what they are doing, they change the head of facilities, or the Chief Financial Officer or somebody else with a better idea. So, I continue to be in touch with their Director of Facilities, to try to figure out what direction they have, and what's going to happen with the Newington campus. They were planning on coming to us with two proposals for two building projects, and they were this close to submitting, and then the plug got pulled on it, so if they could decide that they want to put such a facility in Newington, if they knew what they were doing, I think it absolutely will happen. Interestingly enough, even though they have this big campus, they don't want to put those HMG buildings on campus. They want them on major thoroughfares. High traffic, I don't understand it, but that's why they have two on the Silas Deane and South Main Street, North Main Street in West Hartford, so they are basically looking at the Berlin Turnpike, and then they say, how does that make any sense, we own all this acreage in Newington, why would we go and lease, and then they don't make a decision at all, but it's definitely on the drawing board. St. Francis has not been able to get the recent update because obviously they like to go where ever Hartford is going, and compete. But, Newington is clearly under served in that area, and they know with the proximity of CCSU that they would pick up a lot of clients or patients.

Chairman Hall: And that property east of Fenn Road? North of CCSU, west of Fenn Road. That whole area, from Ella Grasso Blvd essentially all the way up to, I believe Fennwood, the apartments.

Andy Brecher: You say, what is the potential there? Well, first of all, there is a small residential area, then you have that little strip shopping area, and I think you have Elmwood Welding, and there is a steep slope there. It's a touch area for development, potentially, not necessarily what you people want to hear, but potential for high rise there because there is a depth to the property. There is actually more potential on the other side of the road. You know, Holly Drive, where Curtis 1000 was, that building has been purchased by someone who owns the company and also does real estate speculating and they purchased the Grody Building next door, so now they own both parcels, right across from a highway exit. So one can guess what they might be thinking of. I knew their former broker very well, the person they have now is more tight lipped, so it's hard to get a reading but I can tell you from the number of people regarding things associated with the university, including a recreation center, because they recognize the potential to do things there. Those take a lot of parking and a lot of space, which a lot of traffic is not necessarily great for that particular area of town, but they are definitely thinking like Carol is.

Chairman Hall: One last thing. Last night at the Council meeting, one of the Councilors just plopped on the table that our state representative Gary Byron had said a night earlier that low income housing was a given in Newington.

Andy Brecher: A done deal.

Chairman Hall: So I called him, and he said he never, never, ever said that. He may have given an anecdotal story when he was going around town about how people would say to him, oh well, the state is going to put low income housing there, but he never said it, it never came from him, and it also isn't true. So anybody who listened to the Council meeting last night, or was at the Council meeting last night, please get off that idea that the State has already decided that Newington is going to have low income housing. It is not, on any level, true.

Andy Brecher: I have not spoken to Gary, and he's on my list of people to call, but it is fair to say that as part of his orientation, he has no doubt been exposed to a number of organizations and agencies within state government who are advocates for it.

Chairman Hall: Oh without a doubt. I served on committees, there is no question, but it doesn't mean that we are getting it.

Andy Brecher: Correct, that's correct, and as I said to the Council last night, low income housing is an industry in this State. There are a lot of people who spend a lot of time on it, including folks who got us to

do that survey. So, you will hear a lot about it, but none of those people actually build these things, and none of them do it, as I said before, without heavy, heavy subsidies. Oh, and as I mentioned to the Council last night, folks don't normally know this, but those subsidies cannot be received by a developer unless you get signoff from the town that the subsidy meets the town's Plan of Development, that this is consistent with what the town wants to see. I get these letters from certain financing entities when companies want to refinance, and if they are using any sort of public money to do so. Healthtrax, for example, is being sold and it's a little bit different organization, and they are eligible for funding from the government and so they want a statement from the town that this is consistent, this is a regular course of business, and I can look in the Plan of Conservation and Development, and I can look at what the zone is, I call Craig if I need to, and these things are usually pretty pro forma. But, it's a great check for us. It's a great roadblock if somebody wants to come in and get a subsidy and they have to get our approval that this is in our community's best interest.

Commissioner Sobieski: Carol had asked if maybe we could get a ride on that new busway? To see what the property looks like. Could that be done?

Commissioner Leggo: Another field trip?

Chairman Hall: Hey, it's free for the first nine days. We can all jump on it for the first nine days.

Commissioner Anest: We might want to stop, I mean, not when it's running, but we may want to stop before it starts. I think it would be very advantageous for us to be able to take that and kind of trip, and talk about what the zones are surrounding it. I think that would definitely help us in the working moratorium.

Andy Brecher: Just for the 1.75 miles in Newington, or the whole thing?

Commissioner Anest: I'm more concerned about Newington.

Andy Brecher: If we just got permission for everybody to get on a school bus, and do it, would that be okay, or do you actually want the real bus?

Commissioner Anest: It doesn't matter.

Andy Brecher: You just want permission to get on and.....

Commissioner Anest: Maybe we can get one of the Dial-A-Rides to take us, just so we can talk amongst ourselves. I think that would really help us understand.

Andy Brecher: Okay, I'll see what I can do. It's a little more difficult right now because they are doing so much training, running 80 buses a day.

Commissioner Anest: Unless they want to take us on one of the training rides.

Andy Brecher: Yes, well that's why I say, if we just do our own thing. I'll talk to them.

Chairman Hall: Yeah, they can just drive, we'll do our own thing. Thank you very much for coming in tonight.

Andy Brecher: Okay, thank you all.

V. REMARKS BY COMMISSIONERS

Chairman Hall: Please save it till the end, unless someone has anything important now.

VI. MINUTES

A. Special Meeting February 11, 2015

Commissioner Sobieski moved to accept the minutes of the February 11, 2015 Special Meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Serra. The vote was unanimously in favor of the motion, with six voting YEA.

B. Regular Meeting February 11, 2015

Commissioner Leggo moved to accept the minutes of the February 11, 2015 Regular Meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Serra. The vote was unanimously in favor of the motion, with six voting YEA.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

A. Possible Moratorium on Higher Density Residential Development in the CTfastrack Station Neighborhoods.

Craig Minor: Since our last meeting I really haven't done much work on this, other than having Mike D'Amato work on the chart of the existing high density residential developments in Newington, which is in front of you, and your Chairman just gave me four more properties that she wants Mike to get the data on.

Chairman Hall: Okay, so let's discuss this.

Commissioner Anest: I know that we are still in the discussion stages, but is there a way you could put together some draft language for a moratorium that we could start to review and get the ball rolling?

Craig Minor: I was waiting to get a sense of what it was that you wanted, but I think I have that at this point.

Commissioner Anest: So we can start having a discussion, and if we go with the recommendation of having a professional come in and help us with the regulations, is there a way that we can maybe bring in a couple different consultants so we can interview them so we can see if they kind of fit in?.

Craig Minor: And then decide which one to hire?

Commissioner Anest: Yes, is there a way to do that?

Chairman Hall: Do we have to put that out for an RFP?

Craig Minor: Yes.

Chairman Hall: Then we can choose several.....

Commissioner Anest: But can we be part of the process, because it's up to us.

Commissioner Camillo: In choosing that, and we are also talking about the moratorium, do we choose them first, and then they could help us with the moratorium?

Chairman Hall: I don't know, would that be in their purview?

Craig Minor: Yes, you can certainly do that. You have now gotten to the point where you think you know what you want, so now, maybe put the moratorium on hold and hire a consultant to help figure out the moratorium and figure out the new zoning regulations you want.

Commissioner Aieta: Who would hire the consultant?

Craig Minor: You would.

Commissioner Aieta: We would?

Craig Minor: You would be the interview committee.

Commissioner Aieta: How would we go about that, would we interview people or companies that do that, or is it going to be handed to us from the Council or some special interest group?

Craig Minor: No, it would be you. We'll put out an RFP, and we'll probably get a dozen or so applicant. I'll sit down with the Chairman and maybe one or two of you members to develop a short list of three or four groups, firms, then have those firms come for special TPZ meeting to be interviewed by all of you.

Chairman Hall: And are we assured the money is there. I didn't look at the whole thing, I stopped after his presentation.

Commissioner Aieta: Well, they said it, and he said it.

Chairman Hall: But did they actually take action on it?

Commissioner Anest: No.

Chairman Hall: We have to make sure how much we've got, and then how that can be translated.

Commissioner Aieta: At the next meeting you should have a report from the Council how, what the procedure is for us to get the money and if we are actually the ones that do the hiring of the consultant.

Craig Minor: Yes.

Commissioner Anest: With the moratorium, though, I'm looking at the LID moratorium draft, and we're saying we just want the twelve month moratorium. I think if we get that going, the clock is running on the twelve month, we're not pushing it off even more, so we can start having more conversations. I'm concerned, I don't know if anyone else is, that someone is going to come in with an application while we are in the interview process or whatever, and now our hands are kind of tied, what do we do? So I would really like to see the draft moratorium, and have a discussion on that at the next meeting, with a motion, so we can get working on that.

Craig Minor: You could do it either way; either way would be legal.

Commissioner Camillo: The Newington Junction committee, you mentioned that there was maybe still some CRCOG money, some funding for that.

Craig Minor: Okay, that would be good.

Chairman Hall: I don't know if it's transferable.

Commissioner Aieta: I think Carol is right on this, we have to have a moratorium in place in case someone comes in, and then we have nothing, I mean, we're putting ourselves in a bad position. I'd

rather we look at how the regulation should be structured than have someone come in and say, we want to propose a regulation for high density housing. I say a moratorium is the way to go to give us the time to look at a regulations, if we are even inclined to do that. My first blush is, I look at the 2020 Plan, and I remember the people who came in, the public outcry, the year and a half of hearings, maybe we stretched it out to the point where it was agonizing, and we said that we agreed with the public that we didn't want high density housing, and we didn't say whether that was high or low income. We said we didn't want any high density housing, and we reflected that in several areas of the Plan. One of them in particular, housing growth in the Town of Newington, we're saying that housing growth slowed and that we said that the Plan should discourage any change from Industrial and Commercial zoned land to residential. Vacant residential land should stay as currently zoned, and not changed to high density. There are a couple of other areas where we said it in different words, but we said the same thing, and all of this wording, and all of this input came from the public.

Chairman Hall: And we will also have a public hearing on this. It's not the end of it. It may be a different group, and it may not; maybe the same group that came before. It's not as if we're going to be doing this by ourselves without public input, so we will certainly hear their input again.

Commissioner Serra: Also, I think Mike had a great idea, calling it "working moratorium", to let people know that it is not stagnant, we are looking at this, and we're doing something.

Chairman Hall: I think we're all in agreement that we don't want to scare developers away, I mean, we do need some kind of development at this point in order to help with the taxes; it's not as if we're totally anti-development. We're very much concerned about making it the right development, not just any development, and not just somebody dangling a whole bunch of money in our face that we grab either, I mean, there is a lot to consider. It's the future of Newington, so we have to be careful of what we do, but at the same time not scare people away. We don't want to get a reputation of oh, Newington, forget it, don't even try. And there are towns around here, I can name them for you, where that's exactly what happened, where developers go, nope, not even going to spend a dime on them because we're not going to get anywhere. We don't want to get that reputation.

Commissioner Sobieski: I agree, it should be a working moratorium, so we get what's a right fit for the Town of Newington. That's our concern.

Commissioner Anest: By no means, when we say twelve months, is it because we want to put this on the back burner for twelve months, and then in 2016 start looking at it. This whole thing is just like the LID amendment: we want some time to figure out what is best, and the only way we are going to get that is by saying, don't bring any applications in front of us until we can figure out. Maybe six months, or eight months, or three months, from now we will have it all figured out. Just to buy us time, and it's not a cop-out. That kind of disturbed me, because it's not a cop-out. It's just trying to figure out what is best for the town.

Chairman Hall: And also, I think we need to make it apparent that if our work is done in three or four months, it's got to be written so that we can dissolve it. We're not going to hold it, come hell or high water for twelve months. It's going to be over when our work is completed.

Craig Minor: Okay.

Chairman Hall: Anything else on this? At the next meeting let's have a whole lot more information so we actually do something.

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

**A. Petition 49-14:
Moratorium on LID Regulations (Section 6.15.2: Residential Lots)
Town-Wide
Newington TPZ, applicant/contact.**

Commissioner Camillo moved to approve Petition 49-14: Amendment to Section 6.15 (Stormwater Management) to implement a partial moratorium on the LID Zoning Regulations. Newington TPZ applicant, Effective upon publication.

FINDINGS:

1. Section 6.15 (Stormwater Management) of the zoning regulations was amended by TPZ on March 12, 2014 to implement the mandatory use of low impact development (LID) construction techniques for all future development projects that create 600 s.f. or more of new impervious ground cover. This requirement applies to all new development, including additions to existing single family houses.
2. Since the effective date of that amendment, the Town staff has found that homeowners have considerable difficulty complying with this regulation. Compliance with the regulation requires the applicant become familiar with the Town of Newington Low Impact Development and Stormwater Manual and to have an understanding of soil characteristics, site design, engineering and surveying which is beyond the capability of the average homeowner. Hiring a consultant to prepare plans which comply with the LID and Stormwater Manual can add to the cost of a small project by as much as several thousand dollars.
3. Adopting a twelve month moratorium on the LID regulations for existing single family houses will only minimally reduce the benefits of the LID regulation, since all commercial and multifamily projects will still have to comply.
4. Adopting a twelve-month moratorium on the LID regulation for existing single family houses will give the TPZ the opportunity to reconsider the extent of the regulation, and either affirm it or revise it to provide permanent relief to homeowners. If affirmed, the moratorium will give the TPZ time to develop technical assistance information to give to homeowners.

CONDITIONS:

None.

Chairman Hall: Do you think we should read it?

Craig Minor: What this amendment does is just to add a brand new paragraph, which I will read:

“Section 6.15.4 Temporary Moratorium

A. Intent and Purpose: The Town Plan and Zoning Commission has found that choosing the appropriate LID technique in strict compliance with the Low Impact Development and Storm Water Manual puts a significant burden on the owner of an existing single-family house, often imposing a financial cost that outweighs the environmental benefits. A temporary, limited moratorium is needed in order to properly develop appropriate amendments to the Manual and/or Section 6.15 of the Zoning Regulations.

B. Activities Subject to this Moratorium:

- i. Additions to an existing single-family house;
- ii. Construction of a detached garage or other residential accessory building

C. Application: The owner of an existing single family house who wishes to conduct an activity described in Section 6.15.4.B shall not be required to comply with the requirements of Section 6.15

D. Effective Date and Expiration: This moratorium shall take effect upon publication of notice of adoption by the Town Plan and Zoning Commission. This moratorium shall expire 365 days from the effective date.”

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Anest.

Commissioner Aieta: Item D, effective date and expiration date: I don't want this thing to go 365 days if we can get it done in three months or six months.

Chairman Hall: Can we say the moratorium shall expire no later than 365 days from the effective date?

Commissioner Aieta: And then by an act of this Commission we could suspend the moratorium.

Craig Minor: You would have to go through a public hearing to undo the moratorium in less than 12 months, but I think it's good to put something in here to show the world that you are willing to undo it in less than 12 months, if you are able to.

Commissioner Sobieski: Cathy, can we put the word "working" in there?

Craig Minor: I think it's good that you use the word "working" in your discussion, but if you put that word in amendment, lawyers are going to say, what do they mean by that? We know what a moratorium is, moratoriums are always working moratoriums, so why did the Commission add that word? What do they mean by that? You know it's a working moratorium, the public knows it's a working moratorium. Go ahead and use that phrase in your discussions, but I wouldn't use that phrase in the actual moratorium.

Chairman Hall: So it has been moved and seconded and actually also modified, so if the maker would agree to the modified, if you could move it as amended.

Commissioner Camillo: Moved as amended.

Commissioner Anest: Seconded as amended.

The vote was unanimously in favor of the motion, with six voting YEA.

IX. PETITIONS FOR PUBLIC HEARING SCHEDULING

- A. Petition 05-15: Special Exception (Section 6.2.4: Free Standing Sign) at 3300 Berlin Turnpike ("AutoZone") ARNCO sign company, Inc., applicant, AutoZone Inc., owner Marc Cohen 1133 S. Broad Street, Wallingford, CT, contact

Craig Minor: The first one is for a free standing sign at what will become the AutoZone building at the corner of the Berlin Turnpike and Budney Road, and I recommend that the hearing be scheduled for your next meeting.

- B. Petition 07-15: Text Amendment (Section 3.2.5: Hospitals, Sanatoria, Rest Homes, Senior Independent Living Facilities, Convalescent or Nursing Homes and Section 9.2 Definitions.) Michael Frisbie, applicant.

Craig Minor: The next item is an application for a text amendment to Section 3.2.5: Hospitals, Sanatoria, Rest Homes, Senior Independent Living Facilities, Convalescent or Nursing Homes, and an amendment to Section 9.2: Definitions. This would insert additional words and change some of the requirements in this existing category, and because it is a text amendment it has to be referred to the Regional Planning Agency a month before the hearing, so the earliest you can hold the public hearing is at your meeting on March 25th.

X. TOWN PLANNER REPORT

Craig Minor: Again, like last month, not a big report. No zoning enforcement issues to talk about; I don't have any performance bond items to bring forward; the Newington Junction committee has not met since the last time; but there is a new item on here as you can see. The Central Connecticut Health District, of which Newington is a member, has a committee called the ACHIEVE Committee whose function is to work on public health issues. They've done several projects over the last couple of years. This year a project that they have taken on is encouraging the member towns to follow through on their respective POCD's and implement items that are in each POCD that speak to physical activity. I'm on that subcommittee, being a planner, and as far as the Town of Newington is concerned I identified some six items in our POCD that speak to physical activity that may or may not have actually been implemented since they were adopted by the Town back in 2010 when we did the 2020 Plan. So, what I'm going to do, if you wish, at the next meeting is come to you with a detailed report identifying what recommendations need to be implemented, how they can be implemented, and who would be involved in the implementation of it. This would be an on-going project for all of us.

Commissioner Sobieski: Craig, are there any examples from other towns that you may be able to attach to this for our next meeting?

Craig Minor: We have already put in our Plan that we should do certain things; we just haven't gotten around to it, which is common with many towns and their Plan of Development. So what the Health District is suggesting, respectfully, Newington do is follow through and implement the physical activity recommendations in our Plan. I will come back to you next time with a little more information on what we said we would do, and what we need to do to do it.

Commissioner Sobieski: Will you have any costs associated with this?

Craig Minor: Some of them might. Some of them might have a cost associated. I'll have all that in my report. That's all I have.

XI. COMMUNICATIONS

None.

XII. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (for items not listed on the Agenda, speakers limited to two minutes.)

Gail Budrejko, Isabelle Terrace: I just want to thank this body for recognizing the impact that development along the busway is going to have on this town, whether it is positive or negative. I've always found the members of this Commission to be knowledgeable, ethical, to know the regs inside and out, and most importantly have the history of this town, how it got to where it is. I've never known this body to have fear, or take any action simply to mollify a few vocal members of the public and frankly, I found that insulting. Did you have questions about why a consultant needs to be hired, because again,

I've always felt that this body in particular of all the Commissions are very skilled, you know the local regulations, and you know the state regs. You have knowledge, expertise and history and most important, you live here. A consultant is coming from outside, and someone is going to make a recommendation to hire the consultant, obviously there's a reason they feel an outside consultant has to come in, probably have addition, or some guidance or some goals, and their salary is going to be paid for an outcome. I'm concerned, because yes, there is pressure and it just seems to be a pattern lately, like last night, there was an approval for another grant for CRCOG to do another study for transit oriented development around the busway. We keep being told that there is going to be local control, local control, local control, but yet the powers that be keep going outside to get ideas, work done, and expertise. The things that the public and Commissions have come up with here in town, such as the housing study, such as the 2020 Plan, where we speak loud and clear, obviously it's not to somebody's liking and those documents are just disregarded and you will have to go out to CRCOG, you have to go out to consultants. There's an agenda here, and it's getting to be not very hidden. Finally, someone did mention tonight that a consultant is needed because you are too emotional. Well, I say, great, if emotion means passion about this town, passion about living here, passion about doing, and a deep desire to do what is in the best interest, for the people of this town. You have an investment, and that's great. That's the type of people I want making decisions about this town, not somebody who is paid to come in and then they go off to the next job. People with passion and desire and emotion will do what is best, physically, visually, socially, and for quality of life as well as take care of the fiscal responsibilities. No one is going to make, from what I've seen of this body, you're not going to make a decision that will drive this town into bankruptcy. You are going to take everything into account, and I really do think that the expertise is here. Thank you.

Chairman Hall: Thank you Gail. Anyone else wishing to speak?

Rose Lyons, 46 Elton Drive: Just a quick question, and I know there is no dialogue, but maybe during remarks. I think the Town Planner referred to "POCD". When you use terms like that, could you just explain to the public what you are talking about? The studies, I can't say any more than what Gail has said, I don't know how many studies I've seen in this town over the last seven years and all these people who come in and tell us what we should do. When former Mayor Wright was here, we had a big town meeting and his vision for the center of town, his theory was "build it, they will come; talk about it, and nothing will get done". Well, \$1.8 million on a parking lot, \$1.2 million on Market Square and I still don't see anything any different, other than the bump-outs in the road. Harder to park on and more inconvenient for the residents. Thank you.

Chairman Hall: Thank you Rose.

John Bachand, 56 Maple Hill: I just wanted to echo what Gail said also. I think you did the right thing, standing up the way you did, to this presentation. I've sure his facts and everything was done correctly, it's just that the conjecture is all doomsday and I do agree that it seems like you are being pressured. I don't think there should be a one year moratorium, I think there should be a two year moratorium with that clause that you could end it at any time, close it at any time. I see no reason to rush into it. It's a crossroad, I'm not sure how it should look. From a medical laboratory to a high rise housing complex, no one knows what it would look like there. I'm glad that at least two of you picked up on the cop-out thing because I said that last night at the meeting. You wouldn't find in any dictionary that a moratorium is a cop out. It's going to be a safety valve, or an evaluation period or something like that. You're never going to find cop-out under the definition of moratorium.

One other thing, and it's probably not the right place to bring it up, you have no purview over it anyway, but the Conservation Commission had something before them regarding the shooting range at the town garage. I just wondered the logic of having a shooting range there, in a direct line with the busway. They want to put a wall up just so nobody, it's true, I'm not making this up, I mean, this is not anti-police, they do need a place to shoot, they need a place to practice, but they shoot submachine guns there, they

shoot automatic weapons, and there's a little berm there, a couple of pine trees on the top, and right beyond that is a direct route to the busway. At the closest place, it's less than 100 feet.

Commissioner Aieta: I'm not going on that field trip.

John Bachand: So they want to put a wall up, and I'm sure that has two purposes: one is safety, but also they say that they don't want people on the bus to get alarmed seeing officers in shooting positions. Well again, they do need a place to shoot, but I'm thinking maybe Balf Quarry or something with a big background. Most shooting ranges have a much bigger background, and I know you have no purview or control over that, I just thought I would bring it up, in some public forum. I was going to mention it at the Town Council meeting. I don't know who has control over that, I just wonder how wide it is. At its closest it's ninety feet from where the buses drive, and it's actually in a direct line, so if a round went up over the berm, it's going right in the direction of the buses, so, just something that I wanted to throw out there.

Michael Fox 1901 Main Street: Actually Gail and Rose kind of stole my thunder. I just wanted to say, in the past I have served on this body along with the current Chairman and Vice-Chairman, two people who I respect highly. This body has never relinquished its, not authority, but its knowledge of Newington to any developer. Any developer who came in front of this body knew that the TPZ was going to make a decision for Newington, and only for Newington, not just for a developer to make some money. Anyway, congratulations, you are doing a good job. Thank you.

XIII. REMARKS BY COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Anest: I just want to respond to Gail about the consultant. That's why we asked if we could interview the consultant to make sure that they have the agenda of the Town of Newington and not their personal agenda. That's why I brought that up, and I agree, we do have the knowledge to put the regulations together, but we'll interview them and see what they have to say.

Commissioner Aieta: The more I think about it, I'm in favor of a consultant if we are going to make a change in the regulations. I think we should have a discussion to make sure we are all on board to make a change in that direction before we hire a consultant because I see the consultant as someone we hire that is basically here to write what we want him to write. It takes the burden off the Town Planner who is doing fifty other things with the regulations at the same time. So if we're inclined to go the route of looking at high density/high income housing as part of our regulations, then I would suggest that after a discussion and we come to an agreement that that's the direction that we want to go, then we should hire a consultant. We shouldn't hire a consultant if we're not going to go in that direction, just to have someone come in here and spend money just to spend it. I think we have to, as a Commission, put it on the agenda and have a discussion and fight it out and see if we're going to go in that direction.

Craig Minor: I think it's okay not to know now what direction you want to go in, as long as you agree that you need to go somewhere, and you need someone to help you get to a place that maybe today you don't know, but you know that you need to be there at the end of the day.

Commissioner Aieta: But we don't want to write regulations if we're not in favor of high density/high income housing in the Town of Newington. I mean, that's a direct conflict with what we said in the 2020 Plan. I mean, we're changing horses now, we'd be going in a different direction and we should have a discussion about that, and if we hire a consultant then we should be prepared to go forward with the regulations that we're going to approve. Not to have him write something just for the purpose of writing it, and then say, well, we don't want to do it. Why would you do that? Why would you have a consultant come in, write a regulation, and then we come back and say, well, we really didn't want to do that. So I would propose that we put it on the agenda for discussion by this body, and make a decision right away whether we're going to go forward with this type of development, and if we are, then we should consider hiring a consultant.

Craig Minor: You need to decide if you think something is broken, but you don't have to decide now how to fix it. Hire the consultant to help you fix it, once you have decided that it's definitely broken.

Commissioner Aieta: Do we want high density housing or don't we? If we don't, then we shouldn't hire a consultant.

Craig Minor: It's more complicated than that.

Commissioner Aieta: How is it more complicated?

Chairman Hall: Because that I think that is too focused. The consultant would let us see the whole picture, and that maybe by tweaking it a little here we can get what we want, what everybody wants. I don't think we should go in with a preconceived notion. Let's see where we end up. Let's take that journey and see where we end up.

Commissioner Claffey: It's like maintenance on your car, I mean, you do it at 30,000, 60,000, and 100,000. We have the opportunity now to take this group in and have them help us drive the bus, but know that we can steer the wheel the way we want to, and if you don't like it, then get off the bus, but we need some help. Just repair what we have, just guide us. Yes, we don't want certain high density housing, but what other options are out there under the terminology of high density; what are other communities doing?

Commissioner Sobieski: It's going to be interesting what John said about shooting because there is a shooting detector right over there on Cedar Street right by the railroad bridge, or the busway bridge. Want to see how that works?

Commissioner Anest: I think it's more than having a consultant coming in to discuss high density. I think you might want to have a consultant come in and look at the two areas and help us with transit oriented development as to retail, commercial, and other ideas that we might have around the two bus stations. Not keep it all industrial. Maybe they can help us without the use of high density housing, but other options to bring in.

Commissioner Aieta: I think the council has a different opinion.

Chairman Hall: We've got to worry about us.

Commissioner Anest: That's how I'm looking at the consultant. I'm not looking at it as high density housing, I'm looking at, what's the best use of those two areas without using high density housing.

Commissioner Aieta: He was talking about parcels throughout the whole town. He wasn't just taking about the busway.

Commissioner Leggo: I've got to go back to the cop-out. I've go to add my two cents to it. I took offense as other people did. I can understand why people might have thought that way, but knowing everybody on this Commission, that was probably the furthest thing from the truth, that we were copping out by going twelve months. Everybody does have passion here, they're here for the right reasons, here for the Town, for the townspeople, and it's the right thing, but again, that cop-out thing bothered me. I didn't say anything when everybody else did, but I had to come out with it. If anybody wants to know what we are thinking, or what we mean by something, ask us, and don't assume.

Chairman Hall: Right.

Commissioner Serra: Commissioner Camillo brought up a good point earlier, that property owners who own large parcels, at some point they could sell to the State, but this consultant may help us come to a

compromise that is going to help everybody, help the property owner, it's going to be okay with the residents, and it's going to help with the tax base. I just think, while we all know from talking to residents, from the 2020 Plan, from the Mill Pond debacle, what the residents of this town want. What we also have to do is what is best for them, for the tax base, and for the town, so as passionate as we are, we still have to keep an open mind through this whole procedure.

Commissioner Aieta: You need a consultant that's not going to come in just to write a regulation on high density housing. You need a consultant that is going to come in and talk to us about our vision of what we want to see in those areas, specifically the station areas.

Commissioner Serra: That's why we want to interview, we want to talk to these people, because they are going to work for us, they're not going to work for the Council. The Council put out the money, but they are going to work for us.

Commissioner Aieta: Under those conditions you should hire a consultant that would look at what our vision is, what would happen around the two bus stations.

Commissioner Andrzejewski: Going off of what Caro said about hiring a consultant to take a look at transit oriented development, we have analytical data from the housing survey, and not to state the obvious, but I think the next logical step would be take a look at what the survey says, and find other alternatives to high density housing. Plain and simple.

Commissioner Serra: We, we being the Housing Needs Study Committee, we have a meeting tomorrow night. We are hoping that that will be the final meeting, where everything will get finalized and then presented to the Council. You can't predict what happens in meetings, but as of our last meeting, that was the plan. That was why I didn't want to go too much into this with Mr. Brecher, because it has not been released yet.

Craig Minor: Well, it has been released, it's on the Planning Department website, but the committee hasn't made its final report on it to the Town Council yet.

Chairman Hall: But you think in March you will be doing that?

Commissioner Serra: Yes.

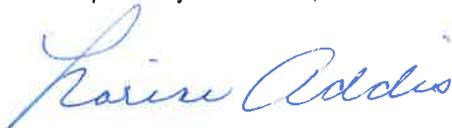
Commissioner Anest: I have one more thing because I have spent countless hours going through this Plan of Development. I noticed in here in the town plan, reviewing and commenting on (Machine failure.)

XIV. CLOSING REMARKS BY THE CHAIRMAN

XIV. ADJOURN

Commissioner Leggo moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Sobieski. The meeting was adjourned at 9:27 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Norine Addis
Recording Secretary