Chairman Domenic Pane called the July 13, 2002 regular meeting of the Newington Town Plan and Zoning Commission to order at 7:00 p.m.

I. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

II. ROLL CALL AND SEATING OF ALTERNATES

Commissioners Present

Chairman Domenic Pane
Commissioner Bryan Haggerty
Commissioner Garret Havens
Commissioner David Lenares
Commissioner Jonathan Trister
Commissioner Stephen Woods
Commissioner Stuart Dzod-A
Commissioner Thomas Gill-A

Commissioners Absent

Commissioner Anthony Claffey
Commissioner Hyman Braverman-A

Staff Present

Renata Bertotti, Town Planner
Erik Hinckley, Asst. Town Planner/ZEO

Commissioner Gill was seated for Commissioner Claffey.

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

No changes

IV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (For items not listed on the agenda; speakers limited to two minutes.)

None

V. ZONING ENFORCEMENT OFFICER REPORT

Erik Hinckley: You guys have the report, banners and flags and whatnots were the main topics, and also I get a lot of calls sometimes from the same individual about cars parked on the lawn.
I go out and look and maybe the car is there and maybe it's not, it turns into an endless cycle, it's gone one day, I say it's fine, and the next week the car is back on the lawn. So, it's kind of chasing, so I send notices, and also one of these, Express Kitchens I worked with them on a banner, they took it down because it was oversized, so his next option, he was requested, and I can't regulate it, is he wants to paint the side of the building with a mural. Not an advertising mural, just an art work. That may be, he said he might bring in something that it might look like...

Chairman Pane: What place is this?

Erik Hinckley: Express Kitchens, it's right next to 3333, so I don't know going forward what is going to happen there but it might be a topic of discussion. It's just going to be an art mural. I told him it couldn't put Express Kitchens in there, but whatever but we'll see if this comes to fruition. Otherwise if you have any questions?

Chairman Pane: Any questions from the Commissioners? Thank you very much. I know it's difficult sometimes, some of these businesses, they only do things on the weekend, so I know it's difficult, thank you very much for all of your work.

Erik Hinckley: I do get pictures of like the carpet store that puts the waviers up on the weekend, and you know, residents send me pictures on Monday, but again, it's really something I can't go to court on necessarily, I don't know when and where the pictures were taken.

VI. REMARKS BY COMMISSIONERS

None

VII. PUBLIC HEARING

None.

VIII. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Trister: Move to accept the minutes, but on the June 8, 2022 agenda, it's listed me as absent, I was here. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Gill. The vote was unanimously in favor of the motion, with the correction of the June 8, 2022 minutes with seven voting YEA.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

Chairman Pane: We have the Greater Hartford Municipal Study Group.

Casey Hardin: Hello, thank you for having us. My name is Casey Harden and I'm the project manager for (inaudible) and we have Laura Piretti and the other folks you are seeing with their videos are not the result of my top secret program, they are other member of the study team,
and I'll have Kevin and Laura give a brief introduction and then we have a little presentation and will have a little conversation about it.

Kevin Burnham: Good evening, I'm Kevin Burnham, I'm the DOT project manager for the Greater Hartford Mobility Study.

Laura Piritti: Hi everybody, I'm Laura Piritti, I'm their community engagement lead for the Greater Hartford Mobility Study. Thank you for having us tonight.

Casey Harden: I have ten slides or so, not a long presentation, again, as an introduction and then we want to share with you a view of the project alternatives that we have identified as being particularly relevant to the town. We have been coordinating with Renata through the Municipality Working Group, we shared these alternatives and that is what I will be going through and she has this PDF, and it is something that she can circulate through the committee. We are interested in the town's feedback. As I get into this presentation, one of the things that I will mention again, but in terms of our process, we are about three quarters through our study, we began in early 2021, and have published a conditional report and I will ask Laura if she can put into the meeting chat the web site, in that way if anyone is interested, they can go on, we have a few different study reports, and looking at the conditions report which gives more technical information and late last year, after that first year of work we published a ratings for about a hundred twenty transportation ideas that emerged throughout the whole region.

I'll show a couple slides later on study area maps, but I'll just kind of explain here, it includes Newington, it starts in Hartford and East Hartford and goes about two towns out. The intent is to study the general area that contributes traffic in and around the study core of Hartford and East Hartford, but also looking at ways to improve mobility across the broader region. Some of these ideas, slides, but right now we have been collecting feedback on the hundred twenty or so alternatives for the last several months, and we have been doing additional layers of analysis in terms of technical work, advancing the level of detail on our layout, all to benefit environmental impacts and ultimately will be doing some screening, limiting the alternatives that are positive benefits from a cost perspective, and grouping them into programs and doing some additional modeling and creating an implementation program. At the end of this year, that is what we will be publishing, potential projects with some ties to some funding sources, and there will be steps, all the way out to 2050, so there will be some recommendations moving forward now, and some of them maybe just certain patterns say of development trends, moving patterns, work from home comes back to being fully in the office, things like that. We're kind of intentionally building in circuit breakers to allow the department and the region to be able to react to the different scenarios between now and 205.

This project started really as the result of several planning initiatives that were going on separately in the Hartford area, including the department (inaudible) project, those interested in the I84, I91 interchange. You may have heard of Congressman Larson and his plan to tunnel both freeways through Hartford. I spoke with the Hartford 400 initiative and expressed some interest and then meanwhile we have the ongoing Hartford line improvements with service, the Greenway and other related active transportation planning and of course the Fastrack opening up and discussion of possible expansion of that service, so with all of that happening and with
some of these projects coming to a point where they really needed to be able to understand the kind of net impact that all of these transportation projects have, made a lot of sense for the Department to kind of step back and do this comprehensive holistic planning environment. The Lincoln study which is doing some of the analysis will be pulled forward into NEIPA and where I would like to describe it, would be with visuals so I think some of the planning that would be individual like, we've got a train station, we have to figure out how to make that literally, we need highway improvements, the transit system there is always a host of things that we would like to work on there, but instead of taking an individualistic approach, we can look at all that together for a combined benefit for a series of targeting transportation improvements to the region as a whole.

I will leave these on the screen for you to read, but we have kind of early on identified the vision in bold, again, this is mobility, but we also understand the effect that transportation has on a whole host of other aspects of life, the quality of life, the economy, and opportunities and equity and you know, we put that regular study goals, the need to prioritize social equity, and accommodate future needs. We understand it's really a dynamic time in transportation with the continued proliferation of electric vehicles, down the road for autonomous vehicles, and trying to understand how all these possible disruptions can be leveraged to improve and enhance mobility.

We went through a process, this is again about two towns outside of Hartford, and it has a weird little notch in the top that extends up to Bradley International. What I want to explain here is the process that we used and how we generated our need, and potentially we came into this as a result of all the other planning work that had been done, we borrowed heavily from that work, we did our technical work, understanding, looking into buses, looking into highways, and level of service, density and so we developed our kind of need based on our conditions assessment and we also factored our 2050 traffic forecasting and looking out to see how these different roadways and transportation systems will work under development, and then finally we opened this up to the public and saw their input over the course of three or four months, we got over 400 comments I believe about different needs. We investigated them and then incorporated many of them, and the result of all that is a, what we termed a universal alternative and we, here is just a smattering of them. The first is, the slide is really to outline different types, and many of them are what we are calling capitols, build a road, build a bridge, do something concrete, fix a rail line, you know, but we also include service and operational ideas. Many of these are transit related, we've had a lot of feedback about surveys, employment centers later in the evening to make it easier for people who don't work a nine to five schedule, or want the security of knowing if they have to stay late they will be able to get transit home. It also includes policy things, in particular in and around Hartford with the amount of surface parking lots that are kind of dedicated to commuting, looking at that as public policy, looking at the provision of free parking, within the region. That is a big issue that we hear frequently from both the Connecticut mode of transport and other freight operators who talk about the lack of places for them for overnight stops, so a couple examples of policy.

I'll walk through, we start off with a very high level data flow and we have passed that first tier, and right now we are in the detailed evaluation. This is where we are soliciting input from the member of the public, different officials and organizations and seeking what comes out of this stage and to make it part of the implementation program.
The next steps will be to advance projects into NEIPA for environmental review, and of course the whole purpose of this exercise is to expedite that. So with that, I believe Chris Neilsen is now logged on and is going to pull up our interactive alternative site and demonstrate some of the alternatives that we include in that packet of information that we sent to you.

Chris Neilsen: This is our collaboration and basic it is interactive way to share all of the grant alternatives throughout the capitol and policy side and allows user to kind of explore those alternatives and one of those alternatives is like, thumbs up, thumps down and giving us a consensus of what we like, what people are liking.

We have roadway one that is looking at reconstructive Route 175 to improve that roadway, having multiple opportunities there and generally improve the safety and efficiency as a connection between Wethersfield and New Britain, the size of the area. You can see on here what it looks like when you have a lot of interaction. These are all comments from members of the public, feeding off from one another, and then liking each other’s comments.

Casey Hardin: I might add a comment on this just having, it’s interesting how many people know it is used as a cut through and I will admit, in my previous life when I lived in Bristol, I have used this to skip around Hartford and I think this is where, looking at everything, it will be beneficial. We also are looking at I-84 through Hartford, the I-84, I91 interchange where we also believe improvement there at that bottleneck, there is hope that at least some of the folks that use Route 175 as a cut through or connection, maybe that can be reduced. So again, a plug for the benefits of looking at it more realistically.

Chris Neilson: Also, there is a rail station, there are a whole host of rail stations that we are looking at as part of the study along the Hartford line. This will provide a service to the communities, mainly south of Hartford where there is a big gap there right now so there is obviously a station in Berlin and a station in Hartford but some would look at co-locating a station with Fastrack that is there.

Casey Hardin: As many of you know, a station in Newington has been recommended as part of the New Haven-Hartford-Springfield program, so again with other advances with fixing the Berlin station, looking at some of the other stations up and down along the line, we just wanted to highlight this section.

There is another connection between Fenn Road and Alumni Road that is kind of interfaced with Route 175. It is kind of in a similar area where you are connecting across, it is probably used, if we are looking at ways to address Route 175, there is a pretty big gap between east/west connection that would cross over the busway and the railroad, and so we figured it was worth investigating, we have the traffic model, we have the ability to understand what a connection here would do, not saying this is necessarily the preferred solution, but it was, I think it was something that was suggested by the public and we wanted to, thought it was worth a look. You know, network is always good. I think the more travel options we give people around the region the better off we are.
Renata Bertotti: If I may, the point of what you are showing on the screen is for the Commission to know how to get this tool and how to comment on your alternatives, correct?

Casey Hardin: Yeah, there are a couple of different ways. You can do a follow up with a link or Renata if you would like, feel free to circulate that PDF and if you wanted to gather written comments from the Commission, that would be helpful as well. We have an interactive, and all of these alternatives that we have been talking about with an introductory write ups, and we can share that with the Commission.

Renata Bertotti: Sure, so we can talk about what is the desire of the Commission to get those reports to you, whether it is a focus where they comment on each alternative, as a Commission or whether they do this on line, one by one. They can decide as a Commission how they would like to do this.

Casey Hardin: I think using this PDF that we assembled that I sent over kind of puts all of the alternatives that physically are occurring within Newington and then also ones that Newington initiates or some of the alternatives are included there, and we are kind of using feedback from that as we are heading towards the next municipal working group meeting which is, we will be sending out in the next day or so to kind of target one in the next couple of weeks to kind of regroup as a whole team and kind of go over the alternatives that we have sent out and shared. We have been talking for a while and if you have any questions that you want to ask at this point? Are you happy to pause now and have questions or we can keep going because we have a few other things.....

Chairman Pane: Do any of the Commissioners have any questions?

Commissioner Gill: Is there a pedestrian module with this or......

Casey Hardin: We have both bicycle and pedestrian modules separately and I think in town, if you are interested we did have interest in a couple different greenways. We are trying to think how the provision of multi-use trails, not just in a recreational sense, but in a mobility and transportation sense and so we looked at a few different ideas around the region. This is essentially the idea of continuing the trail that is along the Fastrack, getting it all the way into Hartford. That will give folks a way to ride their bikes in from the southwest into Hartford, so that is one, and then I know we also have one that would connect Newington with Wethersfield, sort of in an east-west access, and then we also have pedestrian improvements, again, within this tool you can sort and then we have a whole host of things, including traffic calming with in the region, and kind of developing a regional traffic calming policy that is sort of a major issue that we have been having. We heard briefly, and I think some of this, the ramp, pedestrian crossings are often very outdated, the infrastructure could be improved, the crossings could be made safer, and probably shorter and we could do more to kind of slow vehicles down.

Commissioner Gill: As far as the Myra Cohen area, who would I talk to, I have some concerns over there with pedestrian traffic and also I see that they closed down that roadway between Cedar Street and Myra Cohen.
Erik Hinckley: That's private, that road is private.

Commissioner Gill: Okay, so my question is, when the hotel goes in there, they can shut that road down any time they want?

Erik Hinckley: I doubt that they would do that.

Commissioner Gill: It's been closed down for probably a month now.

Chairman Pane: It might have been just because of construction.

Erik Hinckley: They paved it but I don't know if it is supposed to cure.

Commissioner Gill: The only thing that has happening over there is pedestrians are walking through that second property behind the car wash. There are two definite paths through there and they are pretty well worn, so there is a lot of traffic going through there. The way is very, it's not, it's steep and rocky area and as far as, there still is no sidewalk going from Myra Cohen over to the Stop and Shop, correct?

Erik Hinckley: As part of the car wash approvals they are going to put sidewalks in along Fenn along there, but not....

Commissioner Gill: On Fenn, but not on down on the east side? So as that concern, who would I talk to?

Chairman Pane: Just talk to Renata, and she'll take it from there. Any questions concerning the presentation from any of the other Commissioners?

Commissioner Woods: This is like looking at this very space, and should we comment individually or should we just look at this and come back and comment as a Commission.

Renata Bertotti: This study started in 2021. I did not know anything about this until a couple of months ago, and that was by accident. I was kind of invited because Gary wasn't able to attend, so when I saw this study I realized that this really needed to be something that you needed to hear because it was seeking public input and you were the public that this study needed to hear from. I have some documents from them, and I have links and I actually am going to ask them to update me and put everything on top of my inbox in an e-mail for this PDF, that would be really helpful. Then I will, we will have a conversation and you can tell me if you would prefer to comment one by one, on the web site and use these tools that they show you, or if you would like to do that in a formal meeting and comment as a group, and I can put together a letter and comment.

Chairman Pane: If you could have the information to us so we can review it in time.....
Renata Bertotti: We can take one or two meetings to discuss this.

Casey Harden: We would be happy to come back as well and have a discussion about your comments, they don’t necessarily have to just be formal. I agree that one formal letter would be best.

Chairman Pane: Very good, is there anything else?

Renata Bertotti: Do you have anything that you would like to add at this point.

Casey Harden: The only thing I was going to add would be from the discussion about the Cedar Street station. One of the things that we do have in here as an alternative is that we are looking at the pedestrian and bicycle facility around the transit facilities, so looking at, I heard some discussion about Fenn Road and where it is lacking sidewalks, and I also know in that particular area, I believe CRCOG was looking into doing a pedestrian safety analysis, in particular around the Cedar Street station and looking at connections over to Fenn Road as well. That is another thing that could be in the pipeline.

Commissioner Woods: DOT is in the process right now, up and down the Berlin Turnpike doing new signalization and cross walks. Is there any plan in the very near future to do something with those crosswalks, in other words, get connection points through them?

Casey Harden: So we have, as part of this study, we are looking at putting in public, we’re looking at putting in longitudinal along the Berlin Turnpike and I think what will happen is, their project will put in ramps and crosswalks but none of the properties will connect into any facility. That is always a challenge. I don’t know how far that goes from the public perspective and where they connection on private property needs to be made to be part of that as well. Maybe Renata, as Town Planner may know.

Commissioner Woods: I’ve heard from a lot of the people who live on the east side of the highway and they are excited about seeing this because now they do have a safe way to cross the turnpike, but again, I think we need to make sure there are connections to get to those crosswalks.

Erik Hinckley: I can say, from working in engineering for many years, DOT will come in and do the ADA ramps, but anything else in the right of way is, like okay, town, you can make all the connections.

Chairman Pane: Okay, any other questions? Thank you very much.

X. OLD BUSINESS

None
XI. PETITIONS FOR PUBLIC HEARING SCHEDULING

None

XII. TOWN PLANNER REPORT

A. Business Zone Regulations Review
B. Future Agenda Form

Renata Bertotti: For the next meeting we have two public hearings scheduled already and those are the only applications now. The next thing on the agenda will talk about our business zone regulation and I will start this and then I will hand it over to Mike D'Amato, who many of you know from before and who is helping me on a consulting basis in the office with this project and many other things right now. I want to talk about this is sort of like a work plan scheduling type of way so the objective right now is Mike will show you a spread sheet that we worked on. The spread sheet is essentially a list of uses in all of our business zones, so you will see what is allowed in B, Business Town Center, Business Berlin Turnpike, PD, I and the Commercial zone. He has put it in a spread sheet so that it is legible, easy to read and I personally really like it and I hope you do because I think this is a very user friendly way to treat access to information as to what is allowed. So he is going to show what is in our regulation right now, with some proposed changes. Those proposed changes are super preliminary, we haven't vetted anything yet. The idea is to give this to you, together with some proposed regulation changes, again, super high level preliminary stuff so that you can digest mainly the format and the direction that we are thinking of. Before we have any serious discussion about any of this, I intend to in full do an outreach, and I want to actually send out mailings or some kind of on line outreach and we will organize this to first reach out to business, business town center, and maybe the commercial district, and reach out to the property owners or business operators in those zoning districts and then we will ask you to hold a special meeting with them, get people in the room and ask them before we show them any of this, I want you to see this, but not necessarily them. Then we will say, okay, tell us, what do you think about, what are your challenges, what are your issues? Do you have a problem with parking, do you have a problem with landscaping, do you have a use that you would like to have but you can't get it, so we will see, if anything they would like to do and try to solicit some feedback. Then we will use that, and we will use this format if you like it to go from there and then hopefully finalize those three districts. Then we will use that approach to do PD, Industrial, and Berlin Turnpike zones.

Mike D'Amato: I see some familiar faces, some not, so as Renata mentioned some of the different things that we have been working on other than Planner views and some of the memos that you have seen relates to the business zone, so the table, backing up, the first thing that we did really was to figure out the structure. Don't look at the terms, don't get worried about some of the details because this is really just to get your feedback on how we are structuring the regs. The first thing that I did when working towards the tables, I went through and pulled everything out, so when you have about just under sixty different uses listed in your regulations. Many of them are essentially the same. So you call the same type of use, you may have something
called business and professional office and then you call office and financial uses and you have office uses and business and professional services as a separate use, so you have probably six or eight instances where the same inherent use of the property is called something different. So we want to be consistent in the terms that we use, we can regulate them differently by zone, but we don't want to say this is an office use but this is an office and financial use when it is apparently the same thing. So, of the fifty-seven, fifty-eight uses and then came up with a table which is the one that you are seeing here where I essentially broke them up by type, so you have retail and service type uses, food and drink establishment, motor vehicle type uses, office type uses, industrial assembly, etc., to kind of get a sense of how we are regulating these categories and be able to compare more easily.

We started boiling them down so we're not using three different terms for office, we're not using three different terms for, one that shows up all over the place is research, research laboratories and research headquarters. So to try to be consistent in the terminology so that we are not defining differently, but also you have different criteria for the same uses in different zones. So the next thing we did from here is I essentially took the existing B Zone reg and started moving it into a regulation that really gets at what is changing. I don't think it is a new idea to anybody that everybody that we should be less restrictive for all business in towns and try to make sure that successful businesses can expand and new businesses that profit is attainable so rather than saying just because you are a business use we are going to treat you in this way, without any real rational as to why, we're looking at creating categories based upon those service types in the previous table, those use types in the previous table so that we really start looking at what is happening when the building is going up or when the use is changing. So we started creating what I guess I will call triggers and again, this is just a structure, but if you look at those uses.....

Renata Bertotti: We talked about this before, those perimeters that, depending on what happens, like if you have some many cars that you draw to the site, then that should trigger a special permit. But if you are a restaurant that has so many patrons driving so many cars that you are a big restaurant, that may require a special permit, but if you are a full restaurant that has like twenty people come in with like four cars, you may just need a zoning permit. You don't need that, so that has kind of how this is tying into that philosophy that we talked about ....

Chairman Pane: To be more business friendly, easier for the businesses and easier for staff, easier to understand the businesses and what is allowed and what is not allowed.

Mike D'Amato: It may not seem like it, but in practice it isn't but the idea of someone who wants to open up a small coffee shop is, that having to go to a special permit and notices to abutters is just a monumental task for someone who has never done it before, so when you look at this, don't worry about all this stuff beneath the categories because this is kind of just to show you the structure, but the idea would be, for retail and service type uses, we may want to look at expansion of uses or specific amount of parking. For food and drink establishments, we may be concerned if you have more than 30 seats or if you have more than 2000 square feet of public area, or you are adding a large patio. But, if you have a small, three tables outside of your coffee shop, we don't need a special permit for that. So assembly type uses and large groups of people gathering on one site, we want to be concerned about distance to residential
structures, and not looking at specific zones, or if there is going to be events happening outside of the building. The idea is really that we categorize the uses so we take things that are similar and we start creating for these rational criteria for what we need to see and what we are comfortable with, so a lot this is very flexible and none of this is meant to be final. We are I think looking for some endorsement from you that you are comfortable with this approach.

Chairman Pane: I would like to see it in person, we obviously haven't received a copy.

Renata Bertotti: No, nobody has received any of this because again, this is mainly like......

Chairman Pane: I like the idea, I like the concept, I think it's great.

Renata Bertotti: For you, seeing this and now you will have like two months to look at it.

Mike D'Amato: I think it is worth mentioning while the case that is going to decide it is still pending, they are going to decide, they are assuming that it is going to be decided imminently, really what you can't do any more is put time limits on permits. A lot of times you say, we are going to give you this permit and you have to come back in a year, or you are going to come back in five years, or whatever,

Chairman Pane: We don't usually do that, but yes, I know what you are talking about.

Mike D'Amato: A lot of towns, yes we'll give you the permit but you have to come back in a year, and a business owners spends a million dollars investing into a business to not know if in a year something is going to happen, so you have to move away from that, towns are going to have to do that. So if we create these criteria then we are in a position where we are very defined in what is going to come before us and it doesn't really matter what was previously approved. If you are changing the use and you are checking one of these boxes, then we want to look at it. We have flexibility in whether it is a zoning permit, a site plan, or a special permit, so I think what we can do if you are comfortable is, I can flesh out a little bit more so you have something to say, we really hate this or we really like this rather than just a couple of lines. Then we can send it, if you want, or whatever you are comfortable with.

Renata Bertotti: Ultimately I really don't want this document to be finished before we hear from business owners as well. I want this to be sort of high level without.....

Chairman Pane: So what is the time table, maybe you could give us a time table on it.

Renata Bertotti: We will have a special meeting in late September, that is the plan, late September or perhaps early October for a special meeting.

Chairman Pane: So is it your goal to go through just the business zone or.....
Renata Bertotti: No, so he is going to create a rough draft of this for each one of the zoning districts. So we will have kind of what is here for the business zone will be for each one of the zoning districts.

Chairman Pane: Using the same theory if it is allowed in this zone then it is going to be allowed in the following zones like our regulations are set up?

Renata Bertotti: No, we are not going to do, go back and look at the section, we are going to list categories, I mean we are going to clean up the language. There will be no references to language before. However, if a retail use is allowed in PD Zone because it is allowed as a reference in B Zone, like reference Section 3.10, it will continue to be allowed. We are not going to change uses.

Mike D'Amato: I have read through this at least three times because that is just how my luck is, I put one special permit where it is a permitted use, then someone will pull it out and say, wait a minute, but I think that the consistency is important in just the regulation of terms, particularly when you have all these uses in different areas and where we are regulating the same use differently in different places because we have one term, or one word that is missing. I can flesh this out a little bit more substantially just so that you have something, I'm trying to look through, here is one; corporate headquarters research and development uses permitted in the B-Tc. Then you have research laboratories, one use, research and development uses, a separate use only permitted in the CD. It is inherently the same use which is separate from office, business and professional office, all that other stuff, so it's the same use but they are not allowed in the same zone, so we want to just streamline it. I don't think we need .......

Chairman Pane: I think all of the Commissioners are in agreement that it would be very valuable to streamline it and get it so it is more understanding for people when they read the regulations.

Mike D'Amato: Also get rid of some of the archaic stuff, there is a lot of references to like coin operated facilities like an arcade, kind of dated.

Chairman Pane: Any Commissioners have any recommendations for, or comments for Mike?

Renata Bertotti: So essentially the plan is to start with the six zoning districts and then we will turn into other districts and we will eventually and we will eventually go through the zoning regulation book together like this is to kind of chip at this until we are done with the whole book. This is a living document, we are supposed to work on it as we go, but this work now......

Commissioner Woods: I'm glad this is being done, I think it now is very confusing, not only to the Commissioners, to you as administrator and the staffers as well as the applicants. So this is, I applaud you and your team for taking this on. It's definitely needed.
Renata Bertotti: And while we are at the subject of zoning regulations, one thing that came to our attention recently was that you know, we get these requests for temporary events, and it is, for example, the fireworks require a special permit, special permit requires filing with the land records, every time somebody comes here for a fireworks approval that lasts like five days, they file a deed, they file like on the land records something that carries with the property forever.

Chairman Pane: That should just be approved by staff.

Renata Bertotti: That is what we were thinking. There are other events......

Chairman Pane: If there are other problems that you want to being to our attention, otherwise staff just could handle it.

Renata Bertotti: We can change the regulation because it is really inconsistent, again how some of these things are dealt with, there are certain events that are approved by zoning permit, I don’t know how that happened, and how it should be handled, but I don’t know why that is the case. So I think we are going to propose that all of these temporary, anything that is less than five days, you know, we’ll probably put that in soon.

Chairman Pane: Very good, thank you Mike. Any other questions? Okay, we’re going to move on......

Renata Bertotti: Before you move on, it is not on the agenda, so the cannabis regulation, is scheduled for public hearing next meeting, however the way it was proposed, first of all the reason why I proposed that regulation amendment was because when we originally proposed to allow uses such as retail and micro-brewing and cultivation as a special permit uses that are allowed, as we now allow them, I explained to you as a Commission that there was a state statute that said that you could only as of now get one of those, one retailer and one micro-cultivator for 25,000 people. Then the state removed that recently, two weeks ago, maybe like three, four weeks ago. When they removed that there were a number of towns, including Berlin which is adjacent to us, that had a moratorium and I was worried that the towns that do have a moratorium then would prohibit cannabis, and then somehow that would make us becoming a pressure point, we become a target for this kind of use. So I proposed a cap by number. Talking to some attorneys, we learned that perhaps, there are some attorneys that say, regulating by number may not be okay. There are some attorneys that say it may be okay. Our town attorney today told me that he did not think it was advisable. He actually said that, after thinking about it and talking about it with some other attorneys he thought the permitting of zoning would not allow such a limit. So I think in lieu of this I should either withdraw, actually rewrite this proposal, I should withdraw, sit on it and see what happens or I can leave this as a public hearing and then you can discuss it and then tell me how you would like to proceed with this. Do you want to regulate this by distance, and now this is a discussion sort of off the agenda and in public hearing, so I don’t want to go too, too far with this but I think if you want me to withdraw it, it’s appropriate for you to tell me. If that is something that I should do.
Chairman Pane: So we could withdraw it and could continue regulating it the way that we have which we regulate by distance……

Renata Bertotti: Our current regulation is five hundred feet between each establishment. We can propose this at like any time, that is another option.

Chairman Pane: I'll open it up to the Commission to see what they think.

Commissioner Haggarty: Did Berlin actually pass this moratorium that they are stopping adult use?

Renata Bertotti: No, I think they are still under the moratorium.

Commissioner Haggarty: For what period of time?

Renata Bertotti: They are analyzing, they are waiting to see what they are going to do?

Commissioner Haggarty: Why do you think setting a hard cap on the number of retailers would eliminate that pressure point potentially.

Renata Bertotti: Our cap is only until 2024, like I only put it for a certain amount of time until I see what happens around us.

Chairman Pane: But our legal consul is saying that he wouldn't recommend it, right?

Renata Bertotti: Right.

Chairman Pane: So one other option is to leave it the way that it is instead of having a moratorium ourselves, is that an option?

Renata Bertotti: We can wait a couple of months to see what happens

Chairman Pane: Maybe one other store comes in…..

Commissioner Woods: We have 1000 feet to a residential area, basically we are (inaudible) the majority of the town. Basically we need to be consistent on where that measurement is from. I think it needs to be like front door of the building……

Renata Bertotti: These are like 500 feet from one unit of retail to another unit of retail.

Commissioner Woods: So not property line?

Renata Bertotti: Not property line and it has nothing to do with concentration of cannabis retail establishments, one to another, not from residential.
Commissioner Woods: I don't think personally that we are going to be over run in the next 18 months. I just don't think it is going to happen. From what I understand the town will benefit from it greatly, tax wise if the business is successful, so I'm not sure you want to discourage....

Chairman Pane: It's three percent

Commissioner Woods: Not for the medical, just the recreational.

Commissioner Havens: Are there any other towns in the area that have a moratorium now?

Renata Bertotti: There are a number of towns that do have a moratorium but I don't know of any that are bordering us. Hartford allows it, West Hartford allows it, we allow it, I'm not sure about Wethersfield.

Commissioner Gill: According to CRCOG, Bolton and Windsor both have.......

Renata Bertotti: Not adjacent to us, so I think the only town adjacent to us that currently has a moratorium is Berlin.

Chairman Pane: I think we should withdraw what you were going to present and we should sit on this and wait six, seven, eight months and see what happens. Is everyone okay with that?

Renata Bertotti: The licenses is to be issued this month, within the next several weeks I expect, and I believe that they said they would need until maybe like Decemberish. That is the best information that I have.

Commissioner Woods: I believe once they get their license, they have like fourteen months to become operational.

Chairman Pane: They will be ready to go.

XIII. COMMUNICATIONS

A. CRCOG Letters

XVI. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (for items not listed on the agenda; speaker limited to two minutes.)

Gail Budrejko: I have a general question, I thought the presentation by the Mobility Commission was quite reasonable. I was expecting a little bit more dramatic. I am just curious though when they were showing like the pictures of the different alternatives, they had numbers on the bottom and it said the number of views, the number of comments, the number of likes. Some of the views, I think were like ninety eight people, thirty eight people, whatever so there was a random
number and I'm just curious as to where these comments came from because some were quite
honest and candid and I thought, like 175 this is a death trap, you know another one I think was
under Fenn Road/Alumni Road, building more roads doesn't decrease traffic, so it sounded not
necessarily from a formal commission member of work group member, but it did sound like the
public and I'm just curious where, who was allowed to comment on this, and who was
representing Newington since you just basically found out about it.

Renata Bertotti: Once I get the information tomorrow, I will get the information to you, and if
you want, you can share it with the whole council. They have had this open for several months
already and people supposedly they are commenting on this, so I think this is people that
somehow knew about this, I mean, I learned about this several months ago actually so I knew
about it but I don't know who else knew because this is neither Mike nor I were aware and this is
a regional study that was done on somewhat not very publicly like announceable. You can and
everyone on the council can comment since it is on their web site.

Chairman Pane: So there were probably comments from other communities, who knows?

Gail Budrejko: When he mentioned 175 as a cut through, that's fine, but how about the people
who are living, and I guess that is my second part. He said by the end of 2022 they are going to
have a report. Now are the results of this going to be directed or encouraged.

Renata Bertotti: This is a study, that is going to provide study results, and probably
recommendations. I don't know what kind of results they are going to provide.

Gail Budrejko: Okay, then I would assume, or I guess we can comment on that, that anything
that directly, or even indirectly affects the town, for example, the I84 reconstruction, I mean DOT
has already said that is going to impact Newington for several year, through detours and what
ever. I would assume at the end of this study that the town will have input on the finalization of
the, we would be included in yea, or nay.

Renata Bertotti: I don't know, that is why I put this here because I don't know if there will be
another opportunity for the town to comment.

Erik Hinckley: It could be a comment on some of the projects where the town would like to have
a say.

Chairman Pane: Anybody else from the public?

XIV. REMARKS BY COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Gill: What I will call the town campus, who is in charge of all of the parking
around the town buildings. I mean, there are issues happening with the library.

Chairman Pane: Well, that's their private property.
Commissioner Gill: Well that private property is maintained by the town of Newington. The snow is removed by the Town of Newington, the grass is mowed by the Town of Newington, the library goes to Parks and Recreation and tells them that they can’t have people parking at their corn hold tournaments, in the library parking lot, and they requested Parks and Recreation personnel to police it. They went to the Police Chief and that’s just a little piece of this. Like tonight, going out there so that we would have places to park, and we need, there needs to be more parking, it’s underserved right now and it’s going to get worse, as things get better in the Parks and Recreation programs, in the town.

Chairman Pane: I think Keith and the Council is aware of it, and they were working on some plans with the Superintendent, so hopefully something will come out of that, but I think they are all aware of it. It is a problem, I agree with you.

Commissioner Gill: Now the town vehicles, they are parked in the Board of Education parking lot?

Erik Hinckley: The facilities program has the end of the garage over there, is where they have their shop, so to speak, so they do park some vehicles over there.

Commissioner Gill: Okay, so was there any change in use in that building?

Erik Hinckley: No, because it was always a bus garage so they just, I mean it was a commercial, mechanical use so they have a bay and when we moved over here they moved the facilities over to that building with an agreement with the Board of Ed.

Commissioner Gill: What about the bus garage that was torn down?

Renata Bertotti: These are really town questions, they are not really things for the Planning Department. The Planning Commission has no oversight. You can bring your grievances to us, but the person that you should be speaking with is the Town Manager. He oversees the department heads, operations, and if you want to put something in writing to have presented to him, but I don’t think that we can solve that problem here tonight.

Chairman Pane: Thank you for bringing that to our attention, I appreciate it. Any other concerns, questions from the Commissioners?

XV. CLOSING REMARKS BY THE COMMISSIONERS

Chairman Pane: Thank you all very much for coming everybody.
XVI. ADJOURN

Commissioner Haggarty moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Woods. The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Norine Addis,
Recording Secretary