

**JOINT SPECIAL MEETING - TOWN COUNCIL AND PLANNING BOARD  
WEDNESDAY EVENING - SEPTEMBER 3, 2008**

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: Marshall, Cordeiro, Parella,  
Barboza, and Herreshoff

PLANNING BOARD PRESENT: Squatrito, Millard, Murgo, Bilotti,  
Rossi (Alternate; seated), and Calouro (Alternate)

PANNING BOARD ABSENT: Marshall

ALSO PRESENT: Diane C. Mederos, Town Administrator  
Andrew Teitz, Assistant Town Solicitor  
Diane M. Williamson, Director of Community  
Development

The Council and the Planning Board met in special session on Wednesday Evening, September 3, 2008 in the Town Hall, Council Chambers beginning at 7:10 o'clock PM: Presiding for the Town Council, Council Chairman Marshall; Presiding for the Planning Board, Jerome A. Squatrito, Chairman:

The Clerk agreed to serve as Secretary Pro-tempore for the Planning Board for the purposes of recording these minutes.

Matters Discussed:

Public Hearing - Bristol Comprehensive Plan; second reading for adoption:

Council Chairman Marshall informed those present that the Comprehensive Plan before the Council and Planning Board was a group effort and that the purpose of the Plan was to guide the Town at present and into the future.

Council Chairman Marshall and Planning Board Chairman Squatrito opened the public hearing.

Director of Community Development Williamson informed the Council that she wished to thank those who participated in the preparation of the Plan and expressed satisfaction that the entire process was completed in only eight (8) months. She noted that the various volunteers who worked on the Plan "took ownership" and that it was only necessary for the professional staff and consultant to "polish" same.

Director of Community Development Williamson recognized the efforts of those volunteers present: Michael Byrnes,

**JOINT SPECIAL MEETING - TOWN COUNCIL AND PLANNING BOARD  
WEDNESDAY EVENING - SEPTEMBER 3, 2008**

Lindsay Green, Robert Aldrich, Lisa Traynor, Linda Arruda, Robert Arruda, Jennifer Astrella, Merritt Meyer, Patricia Woods, and Jeffrey Hirsh.

Director of Community Development Williamson also recognized the efforts of Principal Planner Ed Tanner for his work on the Plan's maps along with Paul Spina of the BETA group, and former Planning Board Chairman James W. Farley for his work on the overall coordination of the Plan's various study committees; noting that Mr. Farley was in attendance at nearly every meeting of each sub-group.

Director of Community Development Williamson recognized the efforts of June Speakman of Roger Williams University who guided student volunteers in the data collection survey.

She also noted the efforts of Sam Shamoan, the Committee's consultant, who was responsible for the editing and "keeping the Plan moving" and Paul Spina from the BETA Group who helped with the Plan's maps.

Mr. Shamoan noted that the Committee's time frame of eight (8) months was "record time" for such an endeavor and he credited the Committee for remaining "on track."

Mr. Shamoan also commented that the Town's volunteers displayed a certain "ownership" in the Town and further noted that the level of local pride and dedication was obvious from the initial meeting of the group.

Mr. Shamoan also explained that the committee members were responsible to complete the writing of the Plan and that his role was that of editor and assuring that the editing did not change the substance of the Plan.

He also recognized the efforts of Professor Speakman and her students, noting that their survey provided the opportunity to "look back and confirm that there were no surprises" with the Plan. He explained that the results of the survey are included in the report.

Mr. Shamoan recognized the contributions of Director of Community Development Williamson and her "outstanding professionalism" and informed the Council that he was not intending to present the Plan since it "speaks for itself."

**JOINT SPECIAL MEETING - TOWN COUNCIL AND PLANNING BOARD  
WEDNESDAY EVENING - SEPTEMBER 3, 2008**

Director of Community Development Williamson explained that she recommended the Council and Planning Board consider a series of editorial amendments prior to adoption of the Plan and presented same as follows:

**Map Edits: 2008 Comprehensive Plan**

Map #2

- Correction to the text box for RWU

Map #5

- Better identify area at west side of Hope Street at entrance to downtown as limited commercial area of future rezoning
- Correct word "shore" at environment text box
- Make word "turbine" plural
- Add Farmland Preservation under text box for Metacom Avenue
- Add agricultural zoning to text box
- Add increase recycling to text box
- Label Metacom Avenue mixed use zone as black hatching

Map #6

- Identify the locations for potential affordable housing developments (Affordable Housing Production Plan)
- More clearly delineate the open space and non residential areas.
- Add the conservation/open space area at the north central portion of Town.
- Add the line along Metacom Avenue for the Metacom Mixed Use zone
- Include cultural and historical areas as a trigger for density bonuses under Conservation development notation

Map #7

- Correction to change the word "united" to the word "limited" at Silver Creek in the legend
- Circle the area along west side of Hope Street at entrance to downtown as an area for future rezoning consideration
- Correct mapping for industrial park
- Change colors to differentiate between CBD and SLM areas
- Fix legend for area of "intensified commercial use"
- Delete area of "NC" on west side of Hope Street at Silver Creek

Map #8

- Change symbol for sewer treatment plant
- Add legend for decommissioned schools

**JOINT SPECIAL MEETING - TOWN COUNCIL AND PLANNING BOARD  
WEDNESDAY EVENING - SEPTEMBER 3, 2008**

- Add library and town hall
- Delete nursery schools

Map #9

- Correct typo on label "Route" to "Routes"
- Correct the text for the Scenic Roadway Legend
- Add roundabout at Franklin and Metacom per the Metacom Avenue Corridor Plan

Map #10

- Add existing access points at Poppasquash Road and Old Ferry Road that were inadvertently omitted.
- Correct type on word "Existing"

Map #11

- Change title for consistency with the element "Natural, Cultural, and Historical"
- Fix color of area along Silver Creek to reflect future local historic district
- Add candidates for National Register Historic District "North Hope Street" and "Back Road" per State plan of Historical Resources
- Identify Weetamoe Farm "Howe House" as a locally listed site for the Bristol Historic District.
- Delete areas shown as potential national register districts historic districts in error and labeled "Yacht Spartan", Weetamoe Farm and Gooding Avenue

Map #12

- Change title for consistency with the element "Natural, Cultural, and Historical"
- Make arrows larger
- Add arrows at views for RWU, Cove Cabin of Mount Hope Farm, Clipper Way, Poppasquash and at the Bike Path near North Farm
- Add Waypoyset as a cultural site
- Add court house as a cultural site

Map #14

- Define soil types by characteristics

**The Kickemuit River:**

**JOINT SPECIAL MEETING - TOWN COUNCIL AND PLANNING BOARD  
WEDNESDAY EVENING - SEPTEMBER 3, 2008**

NC 44	<p><i>The Kickemuit River is an asset to the community for its recreational and natural value. The preservation of this water as a SA water body, suitable for shell fishing and recreational water uses, is of utmost importance and a goal of the Town. The area surrounding the Kickemuit River and its tributaries will be maintained to preserve the high water quality of the river.</i></p>	<p><i>Town Council, Planning Board, and Community Development Department.</i></p>
-------	--	---

**The Introduction to the Plan:**

**Introduction**

The Bristol Comprehensive Plan - 2008 is the primary land use document for the Town. This plan provides for the protection, development, use and management of our land and natural resources. All Bristol land use regulations and decisions must be consistent with this comprehensive plan. As with all good plans, it is a living document subject to periodic amendment as conditions, resources and town preferences evolve.

By reference the technical information provided in the Comprehensive Plan of 1991 and the Comprehensive Plan Update of 2003 is included in the present comprehensive plan as it applies. The planning studies completed between 2003 and 2008 and incorporated by reference as noted above, were examined during the course of the update. It was this information in the form of hard data and subjective opinions together with citizen preferences, that guided the goals, policies and action items in this plan.

**Guide to the Plan:**

A GUIDE TO THE PLAN

The Bristol Comprehensive Plan, in its fullest form, is a long and detailed document. The following questions and answers are provided to assist both the first-time reader and long time user in understanding the purpose of the plan and in finding the information he or she needs from the plan.

1. *What are the components of the Plan?* The Plan consists of the following documents: *1991 Comprehensive Plan* as amended in 1994 "Blueprint for Action" and "Planning Analyses" ; *Comprehensive Plan - 2003*; *Harbor Management Plan* (February 2, 2005); *Affordable Housing Production Plan* (June 2005); *Route 114 Scenic Roadway Stewardship Plan* (June 2005); *Metacom Avenue Corridor Management Plan* (June 2007) and the *Open Space Plan* (June 2008)

**JOINT SPECIAL MEETING - TOWN COUNCIL AND PLANNING BOARD  
WEDNESDAY EVENING - SEPTEMBER 3, 2008**

2. *What significance does this Plan have for Bristol?* The Bristol 2008 Comprehensive Plan was prepared under the authorizing legislation of Chapter 45-22.2, the Rhode Island Comprehensive Planning Act and Land Use Regulation Act of 1988. Under this Authority, the 2008 Comprehensive Plan is the primary land use document for the Town and all Bristol land use regulations, and decisions must be consistent with this Comprehensive Plan.
3. *Can the Plan be changed?* Yes. State Law allows a Town to amend the plan up to four times per year. The intention of this plan is not to set in stone requirements that the town must follow but rather to record policies and actions that make sense for Bristol today and to put in place a process of careful deliberation if those policies or actions are questioned or should be changed in the future. As with all good plans, it is a living document subject to periodic amendment as conditions, resources and town preferences evolve.
4. *How should the plan be used?* The Comprehensive Plan is intended to provide information and direction for decision making. It also defines the broad development and protection priorities for the town. The Plan should guide annual priorities for development actions and budgeting. It should also provide a framework for all future private or public development projects. The Plan should encourage the asking and answering of the following question: "How will this project or action affect the town in the long run".
5. *How should the Plan be interpreted if there are disagreements between readers?* As stated in the introduction, it is the policy of this Plan that in cases of varied interpretations of the Plan's text and / or maps, the text shall supersede all maps. This policy is chosen due to the ability of text to better convey the complexity inherent in such interpretations.

**A Vision for Bristol:**

**A Vision for Bristol**

Our vision for the future of our town is a personal statement by the people of Bristol about how we want to manage the changes that will shape Bristol in decades ahead. A comprehensive plan should be the extension of a clear, persuasive, vision of the future. A vision statement helps to provide a context to and clarity for goals as they are articulated. The vision must serve a clear guide for engaging the town to move in certain directions and for motivating people to action. The following statement is a vision of what Bristol intends to be in the future. Deliberately, our goals are set high. This statement is intended

**JOINT SPECIAL MEETING - TOWN COUNCIL AND PLANNING BOARD  
WEDNESDAY EVENING - SEPTEMBER 3, 2008**

to convey some of the emotion that we feel toward our town and what it can be in the future.

*Bristol shall become a model seaside community for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It shall become "the gem of the East Bay." Bristol will be exceptional in the degree to which it will offer a small town, historic character blended with varied living and working environments, all closely connected with the water.*

*Each Bristol resident will feel that they are part of a long history of careful and people-oriented town-building. Few towns will have the historic resources comparable to Bristol, ranging from one of the most sacred Native American sites - King Phillip's Chair on Mount Hope - to some of the state's most exceptional architecture to the only true colonial common in the state.*

*Bristol will be unmatched in the degree that it offers a range or open space environments in such close proximity to resident's homes. Bristol's schools will be rated among the best in the state. Bristol's government will provide innovative services within a fiscally responsible framework that gives taxpayers the most for their tax dollars.*

*Bristol will be the home of the small manufacturer as well as the home for a few larger, growing firms that began in Bristol and decided to stay rather than move elsewhere. Bristol will be a place that continues to provide people economic opportunity from the sea through fishing, boating, recreation, aquatic biotechnology and research.*

*Bristol will be a town that jointly embraces both the past and the future and brings the two together in a manner that will set the standard for decades to come.*

*Bristol shall be a model seaside community for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.*

**Defining features and a central goal**

Two features help to define Bristol's character, and those assets serve as a foundation for this plan:

- 1) Location on a peninsula surrounded by coastal waters forming part of Narragansett Bay and
- 2) Historic street layouts, sites, and buildings.

When one considers all the factors that make Bristol different from other towns or special, or that affect the way the town looks or how it operates, or that define its limitations and strengths, one keeps coming back to these two defining features. If this entire plan can be condensed into one broad goal statement, that statement might read as follows:

**JOINT SPECIAL MEETING - TOWN COUNCIL AND PLANNING BOARD  
WEDNESDAY EVENING - SEPTEMBER 3, 2008**

*The town of Bristol shall in all its planning efforts attempt to respect and reflect its historic character and its close association with the surrounding bays and harbor. These resources shall be protected and enhanced and used as the foundations upon which future change should be built.*

Director of Community Development Williamson also asked the Council and Planning Board to provide "blanket" approval for general edits to remove typographical errors with the Council and Planning Board agreeing by consensus to do so.

Councilwoman Parella asked if the current draft of the Plan contained the edited maps with Director of Community Development Williamson responding affirmatively.

A discussion ensued regarding the Robin Rug complex (Economic Development item #20) with Director of Community Development Williamson noting the request of the property owner that the Comprehensive Plan should reflect the Council's earlier approval and no longer reference a desire to demolish a portion of the factory building in order to open 'view corridors.' Director of Community Development Williamson recommended that the Council and Planning Board remove the section as requested.

Councilwoman Parella stated that she was of the opinion that further consideration of this matter may be appropriate and that the language might remain in the Plan for this purpose.

Mr. Bilotti asked if the change to the plan was per request of the Historic District Commission with Director of Community Development Williamson responding that the ruling was per the Rhode Island Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission (RIHPHC).

Councilwoman Parella noted that she appreciated that the RIHPHC considered the uniqueness of the Robin Rug building but further stated that as time passes tastes may change and successor authorities at the State might rethink the matter and prefer 'view corridors.' She theorized that allowing the language to remain would provide more options for the Town.

Councilman Herreshoff arrived at this point in the meeting (7:34 o'clock PM).

**JOINT SPECIAL MEETING - TOWN COUNCIL AND PLANNING BOARD  
WEDNESDAY EVENING - SEPTEMBER 3, 2008**

Council Chairman Marshall explained his concern that the opening of 'view corridors' might negatively impact the future of the historic armory building on the waterfront. He also noted that 'view corridors' might not be advisable since the building is between streets and unlike the former Premier Thread building that sits at the foot of Bradford Street, there are no streets intersecting the Robin Rug property; making a view corridor of little value.

Councilman Herreshoff referred to item #21 on page 31 and asked if this was a "breakwater," with Director of Community Development Williamson responding affirmatively but further clarifying that this project is not on the Army Corps of Engineers "list."

Director of Community Development Williamson also noted that she recommends the Council and Planning Board should rename the Comprehensive Plan as "Comprehensive Plan 2008" with the parties agreeing by consensus to do so.

Director of Community Development Williamson explained that the State planning office must approve the Comprehensive Plan once the Council and Planning Board approve same with Council Chairman Marshall asking when this might happen. Assistant Solicitor Teitz explained that the Council and Planning Board approval "binds" the Town immediately upon approval by the Town parties and the State is "bound" by the plan immediately upon State approval of same.

Councilman Herreshoff asked when the Plan will be next reviewed with Director of Community Development Williamson responding that the next required review will be in five (5) years. She also noted that a full rewrite will be required in ten (10) years.

Councilman Herreshoff stated that he found the current draft Plan to be more "readable" than past Plans.

Councilman Cordeiro asked if the section appearing on page 66 was in consideration of Franklin Street improvements with Director of Community Development Williamson responding affirmatively.

Mr. Bilotti asked for a clarification of the wording of the Robin Rug provision with Mr. Squatrito noting that he would prefer if the language were to be eliminated completely

**JOINT SPECIAL MEETING - TOWN COUNCIL AND PLANNING BOARD  
WEDNESDAY EVENING - SEPTEMBER 3, 2008**

since making it "wishy-washy" would only add to the confusion.

Dr. Rossi suggested that amendment to the language might include the statement "opening as allowed by State and Federal authorities."

Director of Community Development Williamson informed those present that the developer will "drive" the project and that the Town should assure that the Plan is not in conflict with what has been already approved.

Councilman Cordeiro complemented the various parties for the completion of the Plan.

Council Chairman Marshall opened the Public Hearing:

Speaking in favor of the Plan's adoption was Michael Byrnes a member of the Committee. Mr. Byrnes suggested that the Town may wish to have an independent agency or board 'monitor' the implementation of the Plan and cautioned that otherwise there will be inadequate results.

Town Administrator Mederos suggested that the Council might establish the requirement for an 'annual report' on the status of the Plan's provisions.

Councilwoman Parella agreed; noting that priorities, capital plans, etc., might be reviewed as part of the annual report.

Council Chairman Marshall reminded those present that "everything is a priority" set by financial constraints.

Councilwoman Parella stated that the Council must weigh the cost/benefit of each initiative and reflect upon same when reviewing the capital budget each year.

Robert I. Stolzman, Esq., an attorney representing Russell Karian informed the Council and Planning Board that he found the Plan to be "thoughtful and easy to understand."

He expressed concern, however, about the continued use of language that might indicate an inconsistency between the Plan for Robin Rug as approved by the Council in its previous action and the Comprehensive Plan. He indicated that his client is moving forward as per the Plan

**JOINT SPECIAL MEETING - TOWN COUNCIL AND PLANNING BOARD  
WEDNESDAY EVENING - SEPTEMBER 3, 2008**

previously approved by the Council and that this Plan does not include the opening of 'view corridors.'

He further suggested that should the Plan remain silent on this issue it would not lead anyone to believe that the development plan was in conflict with the Comprehensive Plan. He cautioned also about what might be considered as the "illusion of inconsistency."

Mr. Stolzman "strongly recommended" that the provision be eliminated totally and that this action would allow his client to "proceed with the project as approved on July 31, 2008."

Mr. Squatrito agreed with Mr. Stolzman and stated that he was of the opinion that the Town should not attempt to "handcuff" Mr. Karian on this provision.

Councilwoman Parella stated that she did not wish to belabor the issue and further stated that she understood the rationale of the preservation of the full-scale of the buildings as noted by the RIHPHC.

Councilman Herreshoff asked if the development plan for Robin Rug would include stores opened to the boardwalk with Mr. Stolzman responding that this would be done if the marketing plan would support the feature.

Bilotti/Millard - Voted  
unanimously to close the Public  
Hearing for the Planning Board.

Cordeiro/Barboza - Voted  
unanimously to close the Public  
Hearing for the Council.

Bilotti/Rossi - Voted unanimously  
to approve the amendments as  
proposed by Director of Community  
Development Williamson and  
outlined above.

Millard/Murgo - Voted unanimously  
to amend item #20 as provided  
below.

**JOINT SPECIAL MEETING - TOWN COUNCIL AND PLANNING BOARD  
WEDNESDAY EVENING - SEPTEMBER 3, 2008**

20	<p>In any redevelopment of the current Robin Rug building on Thames Street, the Town should encourage a mixed use development with retail and/or parking on the first floor and office and/or residential on the upper floors, with an emphasis on water-related uses. Any residential use on the first floor should be prohibited due to FEMA floodplain regulations as they apply to the V-zone. Commercial uses on the Thames Street side are appropriate to keep commercial vitality on Thames Street. Redevelopment of this building shall include a continuation of the public downtown harbor boardwalk. Public dockage and slips should also be provided. First floor uses could also be located on the water side with access from the boardwalk. In conjunction with the re-development, the boardwalk will connect to an access point at the southern terminus of the boardwalk as well as to the Town owned land adjacent on the north.</p>	<p>Town Council, Planning Board, and Community Development Department.</p>
----	---	--

Murgo/Bilotti - Voted unanimously to adopt the Comprehensive Plan 2008 as amended.

Barboza/Cordeiro - Voted unanimously to approve the amendments as proposed by Director of Community Development Williamson.

Cordeiro/Barboza - Voted to amend item #20 as provided in the box above. Voting in favor of this amendment were Councilmen Marshall, Cordeiro, Barboza, and Herreshoff. Voting opposed was Councilwoman Parella.

Barboza/Herreshoff - Voted unanimously to adopt the Comprehensive Plan 2008 as amended.

**JOINT SPECIAL MEETING - TOWN COUNCIL AND PLANNING BOARD  
WEDNESDAY EVENING - SEPTEMBER 3, 2008**

There being no further business, upon a motion by Dr. Rossi, seconded by Mr. Bilotti and voted unanimously, Chairman Squatrito declared this special meeting of the Planning Board to be adjourned at 8:14 o'clock PM.

There being no further business, upon a motion by Councilman Cordeiro, seconded by Councilman Barboza and voted unanimously, Council Chairman Marshall declared this special meeting to be adjourned at 8:15 o'clock PM.

---

Louis P. Cirillo, CMC, Council Clerk and Secretary Pro-tempore of the Planning Board.