

Windham Connecticut

2007

Plan of Conservation and Development



Acknowledgments

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Cover Photos:

Top Left: Willimantic, aerial photograph by G.Leslie Sweetnam
Top Right: Alex Caisse Park, photo by Mark Paquette
Bottom Left: Willimantic River behind ArtSpace, photo by Mark Paquette
Bottom Right: Windham Center, aerial photograph by G.Leslie Sweetnam

Interior photos:

All aerial photographs are courtesy of G. Leslie Sweetman, visit his site at www.glsweetnam.com
All FrogFest photographs are courtesy of Peter Polomski of the Lily Pad, FrogFest was a cooperative event by WAAC and United Way. Section 12 identifies each Frog and its artist.
Historic photographs are either courtesy of Windham Textile Museum or Thread City.com

Table of Contents

	Section #
Executive Summary	1
Overview of Past Plans and Role of the 2007 POCD	2
Business and Economic Development	3
Gateways and Main Thoroughfares	4
Business Centers: City Center & North Windham Area	5
Neighborhoods and New Housing Development	6
Natural Resources and Open Space	7
History and Cultural Resources	8
Community Spaces	9
Municipal Infrastructure	10
Implementation Plan	11
Future Land Use	12
Appendix	
Maps	
Natural Resource Inventory Maps	A1
Cultural Resource Inventory Maps	A1
Other Information	
Build-Out Analysis and Cost of Community Services Study	A2-i
Windham Public School Data	A2-ii
Windham Town Profile, CERC	A2-iii
CT State Statute C. 126, Section 8-23(c)	A2-iv
WINCOG's April 5, 2007 letter of Public Comment on the Proposed Windham Town Plan	A2-v
Town of Windham Priority Resource Analysis, adopted 4/23/07 by Windham Conservation and Open Space Commission	A2-vi



Town of Windham

Planning Commission
979 Main Street Willimantic CT 06226

August 24, 2007

To all Windham Residents,

The Planning Commission has worked over the past two years to develop this Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) for Windham. Our goals were to encourage smart growth, develop and promote business, and protect our resources while fiscally benefiting our town. We focused on ways to improve and maintain the overall quality of life in Windham, and to preserve the unique urban and rural resources and assets of the town. We also considered the State and Regional plans of Conservation and Development while writing this document.

The Planning Commission sought public input throughout the process, and once a draft POCD was completed, schedule a public hearing. Members of all Windham boards and commissions were provided with a copy of the proposed POCD, copies were also available in the Town Hall and in all 4 libraries, as well as on the Town website. On May 31, 2007 the Planning Commission held a public hearing which was continued to June 28, 2007 when the hearing was closed. The Commission then discussed all the comment that were received and incorporated many of those comments and recommendations into the final plan.

Windham Area Council of Government's advised the Planning Commission that the proposed POCD was not consistent with the Regional Plan of Development (see A2-v). To address those concerns the Commission revised the Plan to include transit oriented development (see 6-6) and illustrated how overlay districts could be used to guide development along our major waterways (see 12-2).

With these revisions, we feel that The Windham Plan of Conservation and Development is consistent with both the State Plan of Conservation and Development and the Regional Plan of Development.

On August 23, 2007 the Planning Commission adopted this plan as the Windham Plan of Conservation and Development.

Sincerely,

Matthew Vertefeuille, Chairman
Windham Planning Commission

Glossary

Aquifer: A water-bearing layer of sand, gravel or permeable rock beneath the ground surface. Significant aquifers: Deep aquifer areas capable of containing substantial water for use as public water supply.

B-1 District: The Windham zoning district for downtown Willimantic. Primarily the rectangle formed by Main and Valley Streets and High and Jackson Streets

BMP-Best Management Practices: A method of storm water management that has a lower impact on the environment than a traditional system

ConnDOT: Connecticut Department of Transportation: The state agency that regulates and controls activity on state roadways. In Windham, Rtes 6, 14, 32, 66, 195, 203 and 289 are state roads.

CTI-Connecticut Transportation Institute: A project of the University of Connecticut's Engineering Department that provides research, information and guidance on transportation and parking issues

A **Design Review** Committee or Board is an advisory board that makes recommendations to the Zoning Commission on commercial architecture and signs. Generally one or more members are architects, landscape architects or from a related design field, as well as other townspeople.

ECSU: Eastern Connecticut State University: One of the four Connecticut state universities, located in Windham, offering 31 undergraduate degree programs, and 3 graduate degree programs; student body exceeds 5,000

Gateways: Visual breaks that indicate an entry into a new area. Gateways into a more developed area send cues for a motorist to slow down. Generally the roadway is visually pinched with trees, or buildings with curbside parking that tells the driver there is change ahead.

Housing Types:

Affordable housing is a dwelling where the total housing costs are affordable to those living in that housing unit. In the United States and Canada, a commonly accepted guideline for housing affordability is a housing cost that does not exceed 30% of a household's gross income

Market rate housing is a dwelling where the price is set by the demand for that dwelling.

Supportive housing is a form of co-housing designed to support individuals, not just socially but with basic life skills. Housing is coupled with social services such as job training, alcohol and drug abuse programs and case management. Often targeted at low-income workers and populations in need of assistance such as the homeless, those suffering from mental illness or substance abuse problems, and the elderly or medically frail.

In-fill Development: Development that ‘fills in’ between other development

LEED - Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design. LEED promotes a whole-building approach to sustainability by recognizing performance in five key areas of human and environmental health: sustainable site development, water savings, energy efficiency, materials selection, and indoor environmental quality.

National Main Street Program is a service of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. For 25 years it has honed its pioneering Main Street Approach to downtown revitalization: an innovative methodology to revitalize downtowns and create economic growth. It has created a network of more than 1,200 active Main Street programs nationally.

National Register of Historic Places is the Nation’s official list of cultural resources worthy of preservation. Authorized under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the National Register is part of a national program to coordinate and support public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect our historic and archeological resources. Properties listed in the Register include districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that are significant in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture. The National Park Service administers the National Register.

Overlay Districts are a way to simplify zoning regulations for unique situations that cross multiple zoning districts. The base zoning district regulations still apply, but areas that fall within the overlay zone could have additional development or use restrictions

PILOP- Payment in Lieu of Parking: A system of that would permit commercial development in an area with municipal parking to make a payment to the town instead of providing on-site parking

POCD- Plan of Conservation and Development: Connecticut State Statutes requires that each municipality adopt a plan of conservation and development at least every 10 years

Smart Growth: Planned pattern of development that balances development opportunities with community needs and the demand for future services

Thoroughfares: Main highways and byways that form impression and image of town.

Traffic Calming: Combining visual and physical techniques to slow traffic for a safer environment

Viewshed: An area that is viewed from a public area, generally a roadway

WRTD: Windham Regional Transit District