

Committer Name	Date	Comment
Rem Bigosinski	15-Jul-19	<p>I would like to submit the following comments and observations below for the Public Comment Period for the 2029 POCD Draft that was issued on May 7, 2019. Due to the number of comments I would like to submit by email versus by public hearing on July 18th, 2019. Comments are provided by page numbers for ease of reference:</p> <p>Page 16: South Norwalk Reservoir mislabeled as City Lake Reservoir. Old South Norwalk Reservoir missing. Add page note on plans as to what the definition of impaired areas are and how to improve water quality. In this example, this is on Page 31 and 32. Or, move this plan to the "Natural and Historical Environment" section of the document.</p> <p>Page 17: Silvermine Historic Area missing from South Wilton. Wilton Historic District No. 6 and 7 is not known as Georgetown? Isn't Woodcock Nature Center a "scenic resource"?</p> <p>Page 19: Woodcock Nature Center and Ambler Farm missing as Community Facility. Are private schools a limited community facility?</p> <p>Page 21: Writing that a town will be an "incubator of land-use ideas" when earlier in the document it was written that land is scarce in town is concerning. Is the town interested in an "anything goes" approach to development? The "incubator" term is often used in this manner. Perhaps a re-write of this to "innovations of existing land-uses" is more conservative while allowing for future articulation of this terminology.</p> <p>Page 42: Objective 4.4. Add Wilton Playshop, Music on the Hill, Weir Farm, Cannon Grange. There are others, and it is not just the Library.</p> <p>Page 53: "Public survey responses indicate that 78% of respondents do not believe, to one degree or an-other, that Wilton's economic environment is thriving. This belief may be linked to the lack of recovery in residential property values over the last decade and larger regional and State eco-nomic and fiscal issues." Remove or reword "this belief may be" as it is based on speculation, not fact. Consider revising this sentence to include more identifying factors.</p> <p>Page 55: "Consider developing a co-working or "makerspace" (like in Danbury and New Milford) at a publicly accessible location, perhaps Comstock or the Wilton Public Library or other Town building, to support entrepreneurship and new locally-owned businesses." Great idea, except for the possibility of including a noisy co-working space at a quiet 75% publicly-funded Library. Let's be purposely vague here -- at a community center,</p>

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Kevin Czarnecki	18-Jun-19	The 2010 plan had a note to: "Ensure that Fire Station 2 continues to serve Western Wilton" Due to the importance of this Town Building (707 Ridgefield Road) providing fire and emergency medical service to Northern Wilton could a similar line be placed in the latest revised plan? Thank you for your consideration
Michael Foster	6-Jun-19	<p>I am the Treasurer of the Wilton Land Conservation Trust.</p> <p>We have recently finished an audit of all the open space properties the WLCT owns as fee title and also those that we manage under conservation easements.</p> <p>These numbers seem to differ from those in the Draft POCD.</p> <p>Here are the accurate numbers today:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - WLCT Fee Title= 93 parcels totaling 434 acres - Private parcels under WLCT conservation easement= 17 parcels totaling 285 acres - Town Owned parcels under joint WLCT and Town management of conservation= 5 parcels totaling 112 acres <p>This is a grand total for the WLCT of 115 parcels totaling 831 acres.</p> <p>I hope this is helpful as you finalize this POCD- Thank you for this great report.</p>
Brian McKay	9-May-19	I have a question about the Future Land Use Plan. Looking at the map on page 96 the east side of Horseshoe Road is designated as "Greater Wilton Center" and the West side is designated as "Residential Low Density". Why is that the case? Shouldn't all of Horseshoe Road be either "Greater Wilton Center" or "Residential Low Density"?
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Shirin Dorne	24-May-19	<p>Hi there,</p> <p>I have a thought regarding getting more non Wiltonians into town. Unfortunately I think we need a chain store to get more people here. When someone wants to go to the Apple Store they look up the locations and choose one to go to. Nobody outside of Wilton is looking up where the closest Scoops Ice Cream Shop is because nobody outside of Wilton even knows about it. We used to have the Gap in Wilton town center and it was disappointing to lose that. Some ideas: Clothing store, shoes, chain restaurant (sorry) Chipotle or Baja Fresh, we don't have anything like that. Another idea is a dog park which I know a lot of people have brought up before. Or, a bigger chain store on Danbury Rd but that of course would add traffic. Ideas are: Walgreens, Trader Joes, Target...</p> <p>This is a great restaurant that would be a welcome addition. It's a chain but still feels local https://www.firstwatch.com/</p> <p>If something big opens up in Wilton but not in town the Wilton Chamber of Commerce can offer a coupon at the new store (Target for example). The coupon says show your Target receipt and get 10% off at any (or a list of) shops in Wilton Town. Just to get people there, nobody even knows it there.</p> <p>Also a question- from the map on page 99 it looks like Saddle Ridge Rd has water service. Is this right or maybe I'm reading the map incorrectly.</p> <p>Thanks so much</p>
Nicola Davies	13-May-19	<p>Hello.</p> <p>Page 53 lists 'Town of Wilton Principal employers'. Why is the school district absent from this list?</p> <p>Regards</p>

July 17, 2019

Town of Wilton Planning and Zoning Commission
C/o Robert J. Nerney, Director of Planning & Land Use Management
Wilton Town Annex Building
238 Danbury Road
Wilton, CT. 06897

Re: POCD Comments via email

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Introduction

I read the POCD with the idea to mark up every page for your use. This ambitious idea was thwarted when I found the ponderous and repetitive document really hard to convert into a word format anyone could use. I tried for a while. There are lots of fragments of good sections to be sure. There are also maddeningly repetitive sections. There are also some statements where I do not believe there is consensus. I do have this marked up tome available if anyone wants it. It is a very large file. Even when I put it back into a pdf, it is not easy to email.

As always, I want the overall vision first, second and third as an SWOT: What we want, what is in our way to achieve, what are our unique strengths? The POCD has a rigid format that requires repetition and re-stating. This may be the way it has always been done and Milone and MacBroome may have had no choice, However, it weakens its direct usability and impact.

Then, I went back and re-read the many memos I already sent you in May 2018 on the draft POCD and a later memo I co-wrote with Laura Parese on concepts for Cannondale station. There are still some great ideas for land use change in those memos not mentioned at all in the POCD. You all have them in your files. If you do not and anyone has any interest, I will re-send.

As is always, my message is intended to be positive: Wilton is an exquisite place with uncommon natural resources and a surprising balance of work places and great places to live. There is no question that P and Z is making many positive steps on historic resources in particular and in valuing and promulgating stronger design review. There are some big issues ahead: re-writing good chunks of text and revising the underlying maps. A good conversation about form-based zoning has begun, and this is a different paradigm to what we have. So good things are happening with the POCD not causative, but parallel.

One would hope, however, that a POCD should be an executable document. What I mean is we should have very specific takeaways based on new insights from the data. As we all know, a committee cannot edit. Just re-watch the film 1776 when Adams and Franklin had to back off Jefferson for a while so he could write the Declaration. It was a painful process. Perhaps, had they been able to get Abigail Adams down from Massachusetts, the declaration might have been drafted more quickly!

“New” Insights and Weaknesses:

1. The **“data” in the document** in many cases is not current and the reliability of small sampling makes me very nervous. I start marking this up, and then I just stopped. A lot has changed since 2016. This has to be fixed since we are publishing this late in 2019. It was truly raising my anxiety. This could be much more helpful and needs fixing on the economic data, on the grand list and trends,
2. I am very interested in peer town data. **Specific information-not anecdotal.** There are several places this would help a lot. We are a stone's throw from Weston, Redding, Ridgefield, Norwalk and Westport. How are we different from these? There is not enough here,
3. The **maps of resources** should be convincing. They are not. They should be centerpiece exhibits.

As I have also said many times and this language is in the POCD, we have not connected the land use dots.

Our zoning map really needs an overhaul. It does not say this anywhere I found.

Danbury Road needs to be comprehensively discussed. As I faithfully attend P and Z meetings, where Danbury Road occupies a fair bit of everyone's time, the zone's limitations are challenged again and again. Unless I have missed something, there have not been any applications at all within Wilton Center proper. What does that tell us? It is strangely invisible with no market visibility at the moment.

Specific takeaways:

1. Some recommendations with which I strongly disagree in the POCD:
The Town Hall is NOT the number one priority. The community is not going to support a giant capital outlay on this.

I have said and urge town offices to move off the castle on the hill and go into Wilton Center. **Wilton Center should be the number one priority.** If you want it to

span permanently over Route 7/Danbury Road, then change the zone and expand it. If you do not want to do this, then rezone Wilton Center in its entirety for different density if amenities are provided.

2. I disagree about the market “buckets” for different types of housing. There is NO equivalency between young professional housing and senior housing. It is just not true. I can assure you these “groups” which are as diverse internally as one could imagine have very little in common. Another misconception is that “assisted living” is housing. It is in some jurisdictions an institutional use. Even NYC changed its zoning in 2016 to reclassify assisted living with institutional uses.
3. I just do not agree that we can ever manage the numbers cited to be required for affordable housing. Other towns are in the very same situation. The mandate in our economically deteriorating state is really out of touch with our reality in Fairfield County. There is a much larger issue here way outside our control. I also strongly disagree that housing which is affordable all has to be rentals. I think this is wrong for Wilton.
4. The average commute of something like 38 minute is really not good at all. Who knows how the tolls will affect this? I think more employers within Wilton would be fantastic. The commute is pretty terrible south no matter where you go. The commute east and north is fine. The train commute has become longer too. Metro North admitted the obvious: the trains today from out here are slower than they have been in the last decade.
5. I think that we should understand the enforcement differences between a National Historic District (we have two in Wilton Center and Cannondale) and a National Register Building like the Tavern. The boundaries should be cleared up. The role of local P and Z should be understood and the role of State SHPO. As I found recently in Bridgeport on a register property, National designation has no protection nor any review if no public funds are being sought. This is important if the town sought to create another historic district locally even where it failed a few years ago.
6. I am very much in favor of making scenic road designation streamlined and desirable. Having explored it last year, at the moment, it is daunting and protracted. The POCD notes this in one small observation. P and Z should be aware of this. It is a very helpful land use tool.
7. The term incentivizing is growing in use within P and Z. This deserves more attention in the POCD. I think this is a wide and deep area of innovation:

- Including the river walk ideas
- Including outdoor dining near the river
- Including connecting to the NRVT
- Including historic re-use
- Including train station walkability.
- Including crossing Danbury Road
- Including bikeways not in the road

Missing Concepts Based on our town's strengths:

Home Ownership: I do agree that Home ownership is our major asset. Home ownership in different kinds of smaller homes - not apartments – has some unique potential.

Our high number of work from home people could be turned into one of our major assets. One of our son's works for a Greenwich company that just took we-work space in Manhattan. I like the idea of **we-work space** in Wilton Center.

I also like the idea of small homes or larger **homes that permit office space as of right** in certain zones too.

I do like the idea of different kinds of condo owned homes that might be created around historic assets. I think there is a market for **unique homes near the train stations. Not apartment rentals with ground floor retail.** Near my office in Southport Village, after a disastrous start and the real estate crash, the attached homes at Southport Green are now beginning to thrive and invigorating adjacent uses at long last including Equinox, Artisan and Gray Goose restaurants. Professional offices have moved in to local historic buildings too. The prices dropped precipitously, and some big home people have small homes, and some second generation commuters live here too. There is an active pre-dawn crowd and an active late night crowd.

If people are interested in our mill town history and the NYC Chelsea and Ladies Mile residential loft conversions, see if any we work ideas could include live and work combinations.

The River: As I have said so many times, we need incentives for a Riverfront zoning. As I wrote to you before, "Follow the river, map it and celebrate it as an asset. Provide zoning incentives for river's side and river edge developments." It is not just about the wonderful NRVT. The brilliant Schoolhouse restaurant tries to seat patrons on a little edge of the river on better nights. I have tried to walk the river edge north a few times starting near the 33 bridge.

Ground floor retail with housing above is only one mode of mixed use and not really that relevant in Connecticut in 2019 plus.

At the same time, though there are a theatre and several decent restaurants, there is very little street life at night in Wilton Center. Three or four decent restaurants are basically in the Stop and Shop parking lot. That parking lot is our "downtown." That can be improved a lot.

The Green: As a New Englander, our town "green" is maddeningly tiny and not bounded by any historical, civic or booming economic neighbors. I will say again why cannot some town offices be located in the town green building? The Town green is not even listed as one of our green spaces. Yet we faithfully stage many successful events here. Someone must want to steward its enhancement.

Danbury Road, as said before, is a mega division of the town. We have to deal with this land use policy proactively. This is hardly mentioned except for the non funded pedestrian bridge over 33. It is a tremendous difficulty for land use. We have to fix this. I have the sense some do not care as long as it goes on Danbury Road and does not bother anyone else. Nothing could be further from the truth.

There is so much potential for good in Wilton, but I want more specific direct and achievable goals. We could use in the POCD a summary of no more than five (5) major actions we could truly achieve within 2-5 years, which would be transformative.

Best,



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