Booklet #1
March 18, 2014

PLANNING PRIMER

Orange

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Overview

This booklet has been prepared for Orange residents and other persons interested in the formulation of the 2015 Plan of Conservation and Development for Orange, Connecticut. The following pages are intended to provide general background information and an overview of:

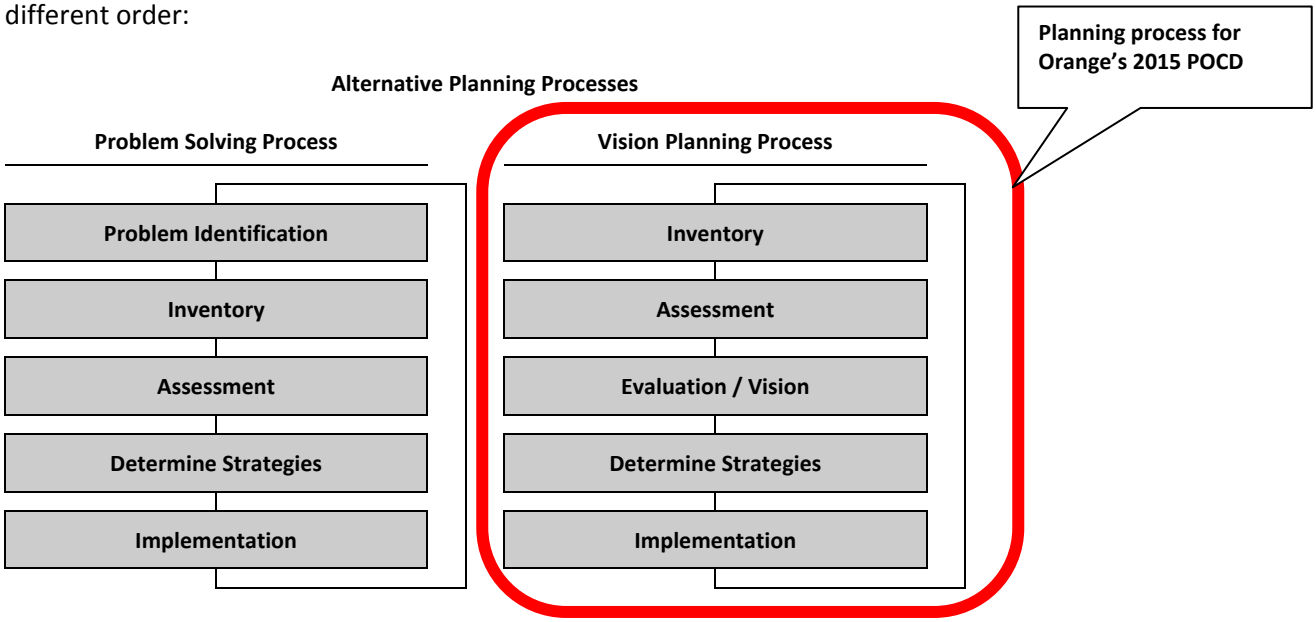
- planning and the planning process, and
- Plans of Conservation and Development.

"If you don't know where you're going, you'll wind up somewhere else."

Yogi Berra,
Baseball Legend
Renowned Punster

Introduction To Planning

At its most basic level, planning is a process for making informed decisions about the future. A planning process can be either *issue-based* (there is a specific problem or issue to be addressed) or *vision-based* (there may be opportunities to approach things in better ways). The processes contain similar steps, but in a different order:



It is anticipated that the preparation of the Orange Plan of Conservation & Development will proceed as a *vision planning* process.

Why Plan?

Orange is affected by events and trends in the region, the nation, and the world. Changes outside of our control in population, housing, the economy, transportation, utility, business and regulatory changes affect us.

In fact, we cannot stop change from happening.

In an increasingly hectic world, planning provides the opportunity to:

* focus on the 'bigger picture' and identify significant goals,
* promote overall values and achieve important purposes,
* coordinate efforts and produce consistent results, and
* achieve efficiency and economy in implementation.

From a land use perspective, the major issue facing Orange and other communities is how to address growth and change so that:

* the needs of the community and its residents - both present and future - are met in the most efficient and cost-effective manner,
* the character of Orange is maintained, and
* the overall quality of life is enhanced.

To provide these most basic things for Orange residents, we must plan.

The planning process will help us to make intelligent, informed decisions that help produce desired results.

About Plans Of Conservation & Development

A Plan of Conservation and Development is a document whose purpose is to establish a common vision for the future of a community and then determine policies that will help attain that vision. While it will often address issues related to the economic development and social development, its key purpose and function is to address the physical development of a community.

The goals and recommendations of the Plan are intended to reflect an overall consensus of what is considered desirable for Orange and its residents in the future.

A Plan of Conservation and Development becomes an official document after a public hearing and adoption by the Town Plan and Zoning Commission. Once adopted, the Plan is used to:

- coordinate conservation activities,
- guide land use decisions and regulations,
- program public projects, and
- meet identified public needs.

However, it is important to note that the Plan of Conservation and Development is primarily an advisory document. It is intended to guide local residents and to provide a framework for consistent decision-making with regard to conservation and development activities in Orange over the next decade or so.

While the statutory responsibility to adopt the Plan rests with the Town Plan and Zoning Commission, implementation will only occur with the diligent efforts of the residents and officials of the Town of Orange. The Plan will only be effective if it is understood and supported by the people of Orange, and implemented by local boards and commissions.

Prior Orange Plans

Orange has a history of preparing and adopting Plans of Development. The most recent plan, which was adopted in 2000, was prepared with the assistance of O'Brien and Marmo Associates of Hamden, CT. The preceding Town Plan, which was adopted in 1985, was prepared with the assistance of Robert S. Bryan and Associates of Fairfield, CT. Other Town Plans were prepared in earlier years.

These plans influenced the current land use regulations and development patterns in Orange and helped guide the overall conservation and development of the community. Thus, it can be seen that Orange has prepared, adopted, and amended Plans to address the appropriate conservation and development of the community. It is in that spirit that this Plan will be prepared.

EXCERPTS FROM CONNECTICUT GENERAL STATUTES 8-23 – PLAN OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT

The Commission shall:

- prepare, adopt and amend a plan of conservation and development ...
- review the plan of conservation and development at least once every ten years ...
- adopt such amendments to the plan or parts of the plan ... as the commission deems necessary to update the plan.

The Plan shall:

- be a statement of policies, goals and standards for the physical and economic development of the municipality, ...
- show the commission's recommendation for the most desirable use of land within the municipality for residential, recreational, commercial, industrial and other purposes and for the most desirable density of population in the ... parts of the municipality.
- be designed to promote with the greatest efficiency and economy the coordinated development of the municipality and the general welfare and prosperity of its people.
- be made with reasonable consideration for restoration and protection of the ecosystem and habitat of Long Island Sound ...
- make provision for the development of housing opportunities, including opportunities for multifamily dwellings consistent with soil types, terrain and infrastructure capacity, for all residents of the municipality and the planning region ...
- promote housing choice and economic diversity in housing, including housing for both low and moderate income households, and encourage the development of housing which will meet the housing needs ...
- take into account the state plan of conservation and development ... and note any inconsistencies it may have with said state plan.
- consider the use of cluster development to the extent consistent with soil types, terrain, and infrastructure capacity.

The Plan may:

- show the commission's recommendation for a system of principal thoroughfares, parkways, bridges, streets and other public ways; for airports, parks, playgrounds and other public grounds; for general location, relocation and improvement of public buildings; for the general location and extent of public utilities and terminals, whether publicly or privately owned for water, sewerage, light, power, transit and other purposes; and for the extent and location of public housing projects.
- include recommended programs for the implementation of the plan ...
- (include) such other recommendations ... in the plan as will ... be beneficial to the municipality.

On Plans & Planning

"We must disabuse the public mind of the idea that a . . . plan means a fixed record upon paper of a desire by some group of individuals prescribing, out of their wisdom and authority, where and how the more important changes and improvements in the physical layout of the (community) are to be made - a plan to be completed and put on file and followed more or less faithfully and mechanically, much as a contractor follows the architect's drawing for a house.

We must cultivate in our own minds and in the mind of the people the conception of the . . . plan as a device or piece of administrative machinery for preparing, and keeping constantly up to date, a unified forecast and definition of important changes, additions, and extensions of the physical equipment and arrangement of the (community) which a sound judgment holds likely to become desirable and practicable in the course of time, so as to avoid so far as possible both ignorantly wasteful action and ignorantly wasteful inaction in the control of the (community's) physical growth.

It is a means by which those who become at any time responsible for decisions affecting the (community's) plan may be prevented from acting in ignorance of what their predecessors and their colleagues in other departments of (community) life have believed to be the reasonable contingencies."

Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr.
Distinguished City Planner (1911)

Community Involvement

"Land use is perhaps the most complex and pervasive environmental issue of all. Pollution levels, agricultural productivity, housing patterns, and recreation are a few of the manifestations of how we use our land. But unlike many of the other environmental issues, there is no common scale upon which to measure progress towards good land use.

Planners can suggest some better ways to design and locate development; economists can tell us which patterns are most efficient from the point of view of land consumption, energy use, industrial location, etc.; and lawyers can advise on what is legal and constitutional in the way of land use regulations.

Yet it is really the community itself - whether locality, region, or state - which must try to pull all these considerations together into coherent land use planning and regulatory policies in order to preserve those things that the community values and to foster the growth and change that the community wants."

Russell W. Peterson
Former Executive Director
Environmental Protection Agency

Planning Process For Orange

The process of preparing a the Plan of Conservation and Development will be overseen and coordinated by the Town Plan and Zoning Commission. However, the planning process has been designed to place emphasis on local input and involvement. Efforts will be made to encourage and consider input from Orange residents:

- Interviews will be held with different town agencies, department heads, and individuals, and
- Public meetings will be held to solicit input, generate discussion, and present recommendations.

Orange residents can participate in the planning process through providing input at public meetings. There is no better way to influence the Plan than to submit good insight and strategic recommendations to the Town Plan and Zoning Commission as the Plan is being prepared. Comments received during this process will be reviewed and included in the Plan of Conservation and Development, when appropriate.

Persons interested in participating in the process of assembling the Plan of Conservation & Development can review the booklets on different topics that will be presented to the Town Plan and Zoning Commission. These booklets will be placed in binders at the Town Hall and will be available through the Town's website.

The intended result is that the Plan will represent a consensus by Orange residents about the future of their community. Final adoption of the Plan is the responsibility of the Town Plan and Zoning Commission.

Following adoption of the Plan, attention will turn to implementation. While preparing a Plan of Conservation & Development may take one to two years, implementation may last for ten to twenty years. Implementation is the whole reason that we plan.