

2020 Plan of Conservation & Development Community Charrette Meeting Feedback



Arts, Culture & Community

ARTS, CULTURE & COMMUNITY CHARACTER

April 25, 2019

COMMENT	VOTES
Make arts and culture our identity as a city, create a destination	7
More historic preservation in a responsible manner	6
Downtown arts and culture venue (multipurpose)	5
Publicize arts and events, create a unified community calendar	4
Riverfront arts and events	4
More foot traffic downtown with more diverse retail	3
Emphasize unique cultural heritage	3
Education, kids, current event	2

April 27, 2019

COMMENT	VOTES
Youth Center- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentoring, non- “sports” kids, need transportation • Introduce kids/youth to arts fundamentals 	20
Multi-purpose arts venue- indoor/outdoor maybe on Riverfront, food trucks	18
More public arts- all over city, murals, mosaics, in the tunnel (bridge)	12
Food = culture <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restaurants, festivals • Local sourcing • Connect restaurants with arts community 	6
Pride in historic buildings- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standard plaques and signs • Better maintenance standards 	5
Library presence on Main Street	4
Maker space <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Print shop co-op • “pay to play” • Studio space, music recording space 	4
Annual arts festival and other annual events	3
Better coordination and publicity- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Between the city and Wesleyan, etc. • Community calendar 21 st century marketing methods	3
Celebrate our unique history and culture- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More diverse events, music • History = “warts and all” • Events that represent us all 	2
Adaptive reuse of vacant spaces (Remington Rand, camps, courtyards)	1



Economic Growth & Development

ECONOMIC GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT

April 25, 2019

COMMENT	VOTES
Beautify buildings standing empty as vacancies. Why build new when we can redevelop?	13
Really good schools needed	10
Need market rate housing Downtown	8
In need of more retail restaurants	6
Need to tap into Wesleyan more	5
Regionalism- how to we interact with our neighboring communities?	4
Co-working space needed	4
Live music venues and theatre	3
Independent stores vs. national chains	3
Riverfront commercial to be restricted to appropriate uses	3
Help landlords succeed- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City departments collaborate so regulations aren't arbitrary • Fair and consistent to all property owners • Code compliance, education and cooperation based • Districts limited to certain type of business cluster 	2
Downtown services closing, ea. pharmacy	2
In need of something experiential to do in all four seasons	2
Development without displacement	1
Store fronts-industrial	1
Central health care- build on	1
Downtown is fragile, looks robust	1
Diversity and independence	1
Small arts cinema	1
Sophisticated support for our businesses, NESC	1
What is the new economy? What can we do to attract a new group of younger investors? Niche?	1
Tourism destination	1
Supporting entrepreneurs - Wesleyan	1
Live and work space (arts)	1
Adult Education (+PD?) off Main Street	0
Manufacturer partnering with contracts, smaller suppliers	0
Tax abatements	0
Lacking evening activities for youth under 21	0
Retain what we have and build on strength of restaurants	0
Disconnect between our vision	0



ECONOMIC GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT

April 27, 2019

COMMENT	VOTES
Parking-do we need more? Consolidate to attract people and development	17
Too quick to demolition, look at adaptive re-use	12
More smaller music venues- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bars have to have restaurant use which discourage music venues • Music on top of parking garage 	11
Expanding tax base	9
Need good public transportation	9
Opportunity zones- educating investors and developers	6
More retail (Northampton vibe)	6
Accessible amenities and services in walkable areas, neighborhoods, and Downtown (grocery stores, pharmacies)	5
Developer unrealistic, education and engagement	4
Trader Joes	4
Brownfields-remediations	3
Creating jobs	3
Prudent use of tax abatement to best serve the city	3
Get industry off the river	3
Affordable apartments for millennials	3
Mixed use allowed beyond just the Downtown	3
Tax incremental financing	2
Apartments and senior housing by Downtown and Riverfront	2
Friendly environment	2
Clarity on transitional development zone	2
Need workforce and double income housing	2
More industrial (Fed Ex distribution center)	1
Have strong chamber central location- bring state and federal government uses	1
Outreach needed to younger generations	1
Market rate senior housing	0
Lego park on river	0

April 29, 2019

COMMENT
We live in this area that we don't want much development
Home based business is allowed—only opposed to ones that are not noisy, traffic, lots of equipment



Downtown & Riverfront

DOWNTOWN & RIVERFRONT

April 25, 2019

COMMENT	VOTES
Connect Riverfront to Downtown	10
Better biking and walkability	9
Complete streets	3
Arrigoni bridge improvements and beautification	2
Real estate development (commercial, residential, mixed-use)	2
Beautify Harbor Park	2
Increase public access	2

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COMMENT	VOTES
Create multiple connections between Harbor Park and Main Street for pedestrians and bikes, with handicap access, 1 block wide elevated crossing	20
Turn Downtown and Riverfront brownfields into public spaces	10
Rooftop dining and gardens	8
Multistory parking arcade near Main Street	8
Improve green spaces for children on Main Street (playgrounds)	7
Close Main Street at 6:00pm everyday	6
Improve connection between Wesleyan and Downtown	6
More cafes with music (night clubs)	3
Lighting up the bridge as a decorative attraction	3
Better lighting on Main Street	2
Improve downtown buildings (maintenance, signs)	1
Attract more small business to storefronts on Main	1
Communication- signage and promoting tourist and shopping destinations	0



DOWNTOWN & RIVERFRONT

April 29, 2019

COMMENT
We do go there
It's critical—tax paying businesses
Entertainment/Restaurants close by
Diversity has been pushed by individuals, but the City has reaped the benefits
We need to honor our history—buildings maintained/renovations—we're strict on the design review Board.
Good that we're tied in with Wesleyan
We are lacking clothes, basics, shoes—we could use a Target (not downtown)
Parking at Metro Square—deterrent to friendliness downtown—reputation that parking is difficult—it's not as easy as Welta parking <ul style="list-style-type: none">• We need a parking garage• Stamped crosswalks need to be continuous—look and feel all along Main Street (fosters belief that North siders “less than”)
Key is implementation—we have lots of plans but hope Common Council will act
Developers want to create access
Chicago moved highway to create parking along Lake Michigan—do that in Riverfront and connect it all the way from Hartford
Development along the river has to take being under water at least once a year
How do we get people to come to Middletown? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Food truck corner• Bike & eat out
Laws about what can be built along the river (flood plain) but attractive uses can be built further up



Infrastructure

INFRASTRUCTURE

April 25, 2019

COMMENT	VOTES
Sidewalks- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Snow removal enforced • More in downtown to shopping areas (Saybrook Road, Wash Street) • Zoned for all developments, especially if no other alternative to fossil fuel • In need of more crosswalk improvements and maintenance • Traffic law enforcement 	12
Plan for 100% renewable energy for the entire city	7
Route 9- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bury route 9 • Leave lights (transit problem is regional) • Take out lights 	4 7 4
Connections of neighborhoods- greenways for walking, bike paths	6
Bicycling infrastructure around town and to out of town destinations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • River Road to Airport Road • Fix 154 Saybrook Road • Portland Cheshire Bike Path) 	6
Improve transit- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Busses • Connecting Middletown • Modify on demand, need bus stops, shelters, signage • Downtown circulator bus • Smaller busses, electric buses • Change thinking (uber, zip cars, etc.) 	4 2 1 1 1
Shared solar or a community solar area	2
More city parks connected by walking and biking paths	1
Require new houses to utilize energy that is not just fossil fuels	1

April 27, 2019

COMMENT	VOTES
Improve connectivity, multi-modal- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bikes, trolleys, bus, sidewalks • Additional infrastructure, maintenance • Education, websites, social media 	24
Renewable energy 100%, zone for home insulation, energy efficiency, funds for upgrading	13
Route 9- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bike and pedestrian access to river • More lights • No lights 	8 4
Sewers-provide proper maintenance and repair old before new	4
Open reviews when trees/tree canopy effected	1
Improving connectivity to Downtown and shopping- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools (2 miles walkable) • Downtown, on all connectors, major roads (5 miles out) • Trails, greenways, neighborhoods 	1 1



INFRASTRUCTURE

April 29, 2019

COMMENT
How do we travel? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Willing to bicycle but afraid to (lack of sidewalks, lack of ROW, etc.)• How do you do it with small, narrow roads?
Complete Streets effort—sign/stripe/dedicated lane for all major pathways
When new developments go up, we need sidewalks on both sides of the road—too many exceptions made
As the City looks at open space, consider pedestrian accessibility to connect neighborhoods—look in subdivision phase—require that ROW be decided to Town and merged with open space
Turning open space into greenways—bike/hike circuit to avoid major streets <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Who will maintain it?• Require it upfront to make it clear
Bike bath that runs through Westlake—no place to park—think about parking when planning trails



Open Space & Conservation

OPEN SPACE & CONSERVATION

April 25, 2019

COMMENT	VOTES
Care for the land we have ecologically, no pesticides, no artificial turf, no invasive species	14
Acquire more land-once an opportunity is missed, it is gone-green spaces	7
Encourage better marketing opportunities- permanent farmers market	5
Large ecological systems protections (example: maromas)	5
Sidewalks, bike trails, walking and biking	4
Safe walking and biking corridors, specifically around the schools and downtown	4
Need parks with playgrounds, specifically around the North End and near the hospital	3
Safe walking for seniors, children, etc.	3
Citywide invasive species removal and management plan	3
Downtown playgrounds and green parks accessible to minority neighborhoods	2
Wildlife corridors	2
Protection of CVH reservoirs	2
Corridors and connections of green space	1
Connect schools, libraries, minority neighborhoods, etc.	1
Keep livestock zoning and farms	1

April 27, 2019

COMMENT	VOTES
More walkways, bikeways, and complete streets	17
Linking open spaces, woodlands, habitat, and wildlife	10
Resiliency and planning for climate change	9
Preserve and develop Riverfront area	8
Increased preservation and access along all rivers	7
Re-evaluating zoning in Maromas and increased preservation	6
Add organized efforts for clean-ups for parks and Riverfronts	6
Bond referendum to acquire additional open space	5
Lawrence School Park and Red Maple Swamp preserve land and strategic optimization to land	5
Increased parks and playgrounds and connections to existing parks and land	3
Add benches and bathrooms to Guida's Preserve	1
Increased active open spaces	1



OPEN SPACE & CONSERVATION

April 29, 2019

COMMENT
How do you get open space? Buy it – it's expensive <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Middletown has more than State-level currently• Same as affordable housing
Should we set budget funds aside to buy more?
Maromas counts as open space but no one is out there. Open space/Parks need to be near the people. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• More parks in Westfield—especially for little kids—active play• I wouldn't take my 5-year-old to any parks in Westfield—safety, usable equipment, haven't been updated—no accessible by any means except by car
What "counts" as open space is questionable—bramble bushes or gated soccer fields—mismatch
Grass that we can use that isn't used by a sports team
Concerned about active farms – TOF example is Krell Farm
Need to purchase quality land
How do we want to connect open spaces with each other or on sidewalks or through a trail system
Downtown playgrounds and green parks accessible to minority neighborhoods



Housing

HOUSING

April 25, 2019

COMMENT	VOTES
Connections between housing development and transportation infrastructure for walking and biking	13
Housing and transportation need to be planned together; car ownership should not be required	13
Housing should be higher density (in-fill) not single-family homes on large lots	13
Programs to support quality, energy efficiency, and safety (ea. lead) for affordable housing (CHEER)	9
Mixed population is desirable, especially in city center (age, income, ethnicity)	7
Market rate housing in Downtown	2

April 27, 2019

COMMENT	VOTES
Limit housing in environmentally sensitive areas, retain areas now naturally wooded	12
Mixed-use distribution	11
Disperse low income housing and provide services to enable it	4
Housing balanced with all development	3
Sewer lines installed on Saybrook Road	3
Usable open space in subdivisions	3
Integration of housing, low income, senior, etc.	3
Sustainable population "right size"	2
More walkable housing	2
Neighborhood safety	2
Encourage home ownership via subsidies	2
Look at Long River Village area for redevelopment	2
All multifamily in more or all zones	2
Affordable vs market rate	1
Address streetscape	1
Neighborhood connectivity	1
Encourage home ownership open space	1
Neighborhood accessibility	0
Density increase? Where?	0
Plans driving transitions to new areas and types of housing	0



HOUSING

April 29, 2019

COMMENT
In-law apartment needed—flexibility with zoning <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Age in place within a single-family home/disabled child
Elderly housing for a community that is close to downtown—access to restaurants and entertainment/active adults at a moderate level
Workforce housing is important—difficult for low wage people to rent an apartment downtown
Balancing open space with needed housing—how dense will we go?
Westfield has several large lots that could be developed—traditionally this asset has been opposed to retail, gas stations, etc.—what do we want in those spaces? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Multifamily?• Leave as open space?• Retail?• Or does it become urban sprawl if neighborhoods do this development?
Downtown—great opportunities for housing with walkability
We “have it all”—open spaces, downtown, middle lots, boonies—let’s not make all the neighborhoods the same.
As a Westfield resident, I don’t shop in downtown area—it’s easier to go up to the Berlin Turnpike
NJ style development being proposed in for corner - we prefer the open space because we have no city parking



Social Justice & Community Services

SOCIAL JUSTICE & COMMUNITY SERVICES

April 25, 2019

COMMENT	VOTES
Community policing, civilian review board	8
Diversify city work force	7
Be more open about city decision making process	4
Better integration of neighborhoods	4
College ID should be used as bus pass	4
Lower barriers to participation in public decisions	4

April 27, 2019

COMMENT	VOTES
Reliable public transit (late night, better weekend services)	22
More parks with better access for all that are centrally located. To include playgrounds, playscapes, splash pads, pools, Crystal Lake access and activities	12
Reform police	9
Need a walkable and bikeable city	7
Grocery stores downtown, North End, pharmacies, etc.	5
Better and greater emotional support and support services for youth with better access especially to Downtown	5
Access to better (more nutritional) food and options	5
Support more and better-quality food, marketing and “food desert” prevention, satellite locations	4
Training for police on interactions with teens/youth and POC (mentorships) as soon as possible	4
Education and recruitment of POC, underrepresented groups in city, BOE	3
Trolleys for Downtown	3
Greater support for Public Health Services, nutrition education, existing services, providers (emergency medical needs, mental health)	3
Willingness by the public and business to coexist with residents (benches, better activities, access, etc.)	3
Government transparency on social services	2
Civilian review board	2
More areas for youth to play and hangout	2
Changes in Planning and Zoning for farm stands, growing farmers market	2
City support of kayaks/boats for community use (boat house for MHS)	2
Routes and connection to trains	2
Smaller buses, better routes to MXCC, seniors, high school	1
More support for social safety nets	1
Homeless support and services	1
More downtown indoor recreational services such as basketball, racket sports, weight	1
Better public input on economic development	1
Use data and feedback on youth services	0
Letting the public know what services are available	0
Consolidate and reduce fire administration	0



SOCIAL JUSTICE & COMMUNITY SERVICES

April 29, 2019

COMMENT
Ensuring development plans don't displace lower income citizens in Westfield, not enough transportation to access services downtown. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maybe vans instead of buses – so much time needed to access services.
Highlands
Westlake/Westfield
Do we do enough to meet needs of lower income citizens?
If we had good transportation, all social economic citizens would/could use it
Lower barriers to participation in public decisions

