TOWN OF BLOOMFIELD, CT
TOWN PLAN & ZONING COMMISSION
QUARTERLY PLANNING MEETING
THURSDAY FEBRUARY 19, 2026 – 7:00PM
ZOOM MEETING PLATFORM AND
IN- PERSON MEETING – COUNCIL CHAMBERS
DRAFT

There was a quarterly Planning meeting for the Town of Bloomfield's Town Plan & Zoning Commission held on February 19, 2026 at 7:00pm in a hybrid meeting style. The in-person location was Bloomfield Town Hall – Council Chambers, 800 Bloomfield Avenue, Bloomfield, CT and the virtual location was via Zoom.

1. **Call to Order**

Chairman Lester called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

2. **Roll Call**

Present were: *in-person:* Kevin Gough (via Zoom), Renae James, Byron Lester, Chair; Leon Peters, Stephen Millette, Eunice Medwinter (Alternate) Roger O'Brien (Alternate);
Absent were: Ola Aina; Dwight Bolton; Jennifer-Marshall-Nealy

A quorum was established with 5 regular members and 2 alternate members present.

Also present were Jon Colman, Building and Land Use Directo; Lynda Laureano, Building and Land Use Assistant Director; Alex Samalot, Zoning Enforcement Officer; Nicholas Gabuzda, Environmental Planner; and Rebecca Jones, Recording Secretary.

3. **Approval of Minutes**
   a. **January 22, 2026**

Motion to approve the January 22, 2026 meeting minutes made by Commissioner James and seconded by Commissioner Millette with the following corrections:

-The header at the bottom of Page 3 should read "Comments from the Commission".

The motion was approved unanimously by a 7-0-0 vote.

   b. **January 29, 2026**

Motion to approve the January 29, 2026 meeting minutes made by Commissioner James and seconded by Commissioner Gough with the following corrections:

-Under Roll Call, the sentence should read 'A quorum was established with 4 regular members';
-The first sentence on Page 3 should read 'The applicant has fulfilled the Commission's request…'; and
-An additional sentence is to be added after the third sentence on Page 3 to read 'He also asked the applicant if they would be willing to extend the sidewalk an extra approximately 30 feet north to the Blue Hills Fire Department driveway and the applicant consented to this.'

The motion was approved unanimously by a 7-0-0 vote.

4. **New Business (Non-Public Hearing)**
   a. **TPZ Request for an Extension to Existing Moratorium related to Cannabis Establishments through May 1, 2026**

Commissioner James confirmed that a public hearing will be held regarding this matter.

Motion to approve an extension to the existing moratorium related to Cannabis Establishments through May 1, 2026 made by Commissioner Millette; seconded by Commissioner Peters and approved unanimously by a 7-0-0 vote.

b. POCD Commission Review and Discussion of Revised Chapters 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8

Mr. Colman noted that Chapter 3 is also to be reviewed this evening. Staff have incorporated comments from this Commission and from the Conservation, Energy and Environment Committee (referred to as CEEC hereafter) into the most recent draft. Comments from this meeting will be used to finalize these chapters, which will be available for final review at the March regular meeting.

Commissioner Gough submitted written comments and commended staff and citizens for their dedication to this process. Commissioner Millette will send his written comments to Town staff. He asked questions related to the Affordable Housing Trust Fund. Commissioner Peters shared his thoughts regarding pedestrian safety and walkability. Commissioner O'Brien made comments related to repetitive language and varying font sizes. He recommended adding information about Cigna in the Economic Development chapter. Commissioner James recommended adding percentages when describing the town's housing stock. She stated that there are conflicts between Strategy No. 1 and Strategy No. 4 in the housing goals. She shared concerns related to pedestrian safety. Commissioner Medwinter stated that several sections lack specificity, namely Chapter 7. She recommended adding specific and measurable goals. Commissioner O'Brien stated that there are no references to equitable and fair zoning enforcement. Chairman Lester thanked Town staff for their work on this document.

c. Zoning Regulation Amendments for Commission Review and Discussion

i. Proposed New Sections for Solar Regulations

Mr. Nicholas Gabuzda, Environmental Planner, was present for discussion. As energy demands continue to increase every year, renewable energy is a vital component of combatting climate change. As solar technology continues to become efficient and cheaper, it has emerged as a way to reach renewable energy goals. The State of Connecticut has set a goal of reaching net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. The Town of Bloomfield passed the Climate Emergency Resolution in 2021 with a goal to end greenhouse gas emissions by December 2030. Town staff have been working on solar regulations as early as 2020.

The first draft of these regulations were created by incorporating scientific literature, existing solar regulations in Connecticut and Massachusetts, the POCD and existing zoning regulations. Rooftop solar is currently allowed as of right. Small scale, large scale and carport arrays are allowed on a case-by-case basis. The Building Department is currently responsible for permitting any solar installations. There are only certain areas in Bloomfield where solar can be installed due to the utility connections. The draft regulations would establish small-scale solar arrays as an accessory use and large-scale solar arrays as a principal use.

Commissioners shared their comments. Commissioner Gough stated that the primary concern regarding solar development is that large-scale, ground-mounted arrays are commercial enterprises

and are not appropriate for residential zones He recommended expanding the language surrounding maintenance plans to prevent exposure to chemicals. Commissioner Millette recommended having flexibility in the regulations for small-scale arrays. He thanked Mr. Gabuzda for including information related to the decommission plan. Commissioner Peters asked about language related to battery storage. Commissioner James asked if the proposed regulations would make it more difficult for homeowners to add solar to their homes.

Mr. Colman stated that there are two issues driving these regulations. CEEC have long desired to have solar regulations in place as they feel it is an appropriate energy resource. The Town has also received inquiries from solar developers related to large-scale solar arrays and right now. This Commission has the authority to revise these regulations as they desire. The commissioners discussed allowing large-scale solar array projects in residential zones via special permit.

ii. Proposed Text Amendments to Sections 2.2 and 7.16 related to Cannabis Establishments

Mr. Alex Samalot, Zoning Enforcement Officer, shared a presentation which provided information from the abutting municipalities' Zoning Regulations regarding cannabis. He has proposed text that is in line with his research. Commissioners must determine whether cannabis establishments should be permitted in town and, if so, which zoning districts are most appropriate for them.

Commissioner Medwinter stated that there has been public opposition to cannabis establishments and the Commission must take that into consideration when making decisions as elected officials. Chairman Lester stated that the opposition was due to the location of the proposed establishment, which was in the BCD district. Commissioner James remarked that growth within Connecticut's cannabis industry has been relatively modest. She recommended restricting cannabis establishments to only industrial zones. The Commissioners discussed zoning requirements for liquor stores and vape shops and equitable treatment for similar businesses.

Commissioner Peters requested that the regulations be delineated between cultivation centers, retail centers and a hybrid of the two. He opined that a 500-foot buffer is not adequate and should be extended farther. Commissioner Gough made comments related to the buffer requirements in Section 716 and recommended that staff review subsection A, B and D. He stated that there had been previous discussions about capping the amount of cannabis establishments at two cultivation centers and one retail center. He asked if this language has been added to the draft regulations. Commissioner James requested that this be placed on next month's agenda for continued discussion.

iii. Proposed Text Amendments to Sections 5.5.D and 5.5.H related to Planned Elderly District (PEC)

Mr. Colman stated that this would be discussed at a future meeting.

d. HB 8002 – Brief Summary by Staff on new Act concerning Housing Growth

HB 8002, an Act Concerning Housing Growth, went into effect on January 1, 2026. Section 16 of HB 8002 requires Bloomfield to amend its zoning regulations to permit transit community middle housing and mixed-use development through a summary review process on commercial and mixed-use properties. The summary review is a streamlined approval process that relies on objective standards contained in the zoning regulations and does not require a special permit or public hearing.

Generally, transit community middle housing includes small-scale, multi-unit residential buildings such as duplexes and triplexes located in transit-served or qualifying areas. Mixed-use development combines residential uses with commercial or other permitted uses within the same building or site. The zoning regulation amendments required under Section 16 become effective on July 1, 2026. Accordingly, Bloomfield must ensure its zoning regulations are amended to comply with Section 16 no later than this date.

Ms. Laureano identified the next steps for the Commission and staff to take. Staff will coordinate with CRCOG regarding technical assistance. The Commission will receive draft compliance framework, recommended zoning text amendments for review and a proposed timeline to ensure compliance by July 1, 2026. This may require additional evening workshops or meetings. Commissioner James requested proposed dates be given at the next meeting. Commissioner Medwinter thanked the staff for their dedication.

5. **Old Business**
   None.
6. **Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn made by Commissioner Peters; seconded by Commissioner Millette and approved unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 10:16 pm.

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