Minutes not yet approved
Approval and any edits to be made in succeeding minutes

Bloomfield Town Plan & Zoning Commission – May 28, 2026 Meeting Minutes

There was a meeting for the Town of Bloomfield's Town Plan & Zoning Commission (the Commission) held on May 28, 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**

   Chair Lester called the meeting to order at 7:02pm.

2. **Roll Call**

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

   Absent were: Leon Peters and Deserae Cotton (Alternate)

A quorum was established with 6 regular members, and 2 alternate members present. Chairman Lester seated Commissioner O'Brien as a voting member.

Also present were Jonathan Colman, Director of Building and Land Use; Lynda Laureano, Assistant Director of Building and Land Use; Nicholas Gabuzda, Environmental Planner; Alexander Samalot, Zoning Enforcement Officer; Lynn Weisel, Recording Secretary (left at 7:20pm) and Rebecca Jones, Recording Secretary (arrived at 7:15pm).

3. **Approval of Minutes**
   a. **May 21, 2026**

It was moved by Commissioner James and seconded by Commissioner Bolton to table the approval of the May 21, 2026 meeting minutes. The motion was approved unanimously by a 7-0-0 vote.

4. **Public Hearings**
   a. **95 Granby Street– Special Permit Application** per Section 4.3.C.4.r of the Zoning Regulations for a proposed eat-in establishment within a proposed retail pita bread outlet store. Applicant: Mohsen Youseff, Property Owner: 95 Granby LLC; I-1 District

Commissioner James read the legal notice into the record. No one was present on behalf of the applicant.

It was moved by Commissioner Marshall-Nealy and seconded by Commissioner James to open the public hearing. The motion was approved unanimously by a 7-0-0 vote.

It was moved by Commissioner O'Brien and seconded by Commissioner Gough to continue the public hearing to the June 25, 2026 regular meeting. The motion was approved unanimously by a 7-0-0 vote.

   b. **335 Cottage Grove Road aka 297 Cottage Grove Road– Special Permit Application** per Section 4.3.C.4.c, for a proposed Package Liquor Store. Applicant: Mukunda LLC, C/O Bhavin Patel Property Owner: SVAP IV

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BLOOMFIELD, CT

COPACO TRS A, LLC, I-1 District

Commissioner James read the legal notice into the record. Attorney Michael Barry was present on behalf of the applicant. The applicant is seeking to open a liquor store in the Copaco Shopping Center. There will be no physical changes to the existing building or surroundings, other than an exterior sign and installation of trade fixtures, new flooring and interior cosmetic improvements.

Mr. Colman stated that there is a prior approval for one liquor store at 289 Cottage Grove Road, within the same shopping center building. However, the unit is vacant, and the property owner intends to keep it as a liquor store. He reviewed the proposed Conditions of Approval.

Public Participation
There were no questions from the public.

Commission Questions and Comments
Commissioner Gough raised questions about the proximity and status of an existing liquor store at a different location within the same shopping center, which staff was asked to clarify.

Commissioners expressed concern about having multiple liquor stores in close proximity, particularly given the plaza's size and existing cleanliness issues.

Commissioner O'Brien recommended continuing this application to the next meeting to allow time to ask the property owner to abandon the other location known as 289 Cottage Grove Road, which is 2 units away from the proposed unit location.

The Commission discussed this matter in greater detail, including the addition of a condition requiring the abandonment of the existing vacant unit. Mr. Colman warned the Commissioners about imposing a condition on the applicant that is beyond their control. The Commissioners also considered limiting the number of liquor stores in this plaza.

It was moved by Commissioner Bolton and seconded by Commissioner James to close the public hearing. The motion was approved unanimously by a 7-0-0 vote.

It was moved by Commissioner Millette and seconded by Commissioner Gough to approve the special permit application by Mukunda LLC C/O Bhavin Patel to allow a liquor store establishment at 297 Cottage Grove Road aka 335 Cottage Grove Road Per Section 4.3.C.4.c of the Zoning regulations for the property located in the I-1 Zoning District with the conditions outlined in the staff memo dated May 28, 2026.

An amendment to the motion was made by Commissioner O'Brien to add a sentence stating that it is the sense of the Commission that there should only be one liquor store in the Copaco Shopping Center. The amendment was accepted by Commissioner Millette. The amendment passed by a 6-1-0 vote. Commissioners Lester, Millette, O'Brien, Marshall-Nealy, Gough and James voted in favor of the motion. Commissioner Bolton voted against the motion.

The original motion, with the amendment, was approved by a 6-1-0 vote.

c. **31 Tobey Rd, Unit 12-Special Permit Application** per Section 4.3.C.4.d, for a proposed car repairer shop. Applicant: Suzette Brown Property Owner: 31 Tobey Road LTD; I-1 Zone District

Mr. Colman stated that the applicant did not properly notice the abutters.

It was moved by Commissioner O'Brien and seconded by Commissioner Millette to table this application to the June 25, 2026 regular meeting. The motion was approved unanimously by a 7-0-0 vote.

d. **Proposed Text Amendments** – Application by the Town of Bloomfield Town Plan and Zoning Commission to amend various Sections of the Zoning Regulations related to Cannabis Establishments, Planned Elderly Congregate District, Definitions, and a new proposed Solar Energy Section, as filed with the Office of the Town Clerk in the Town of Bloomfield.

Commissioner James read the legal notice into the record. The Commission heard and voted upon each proposed amendment to the Zoning Regulations separately in the following order:

i. Proposed Text Amendments related to Cannabis Establishments as presented and made part of these meeting minutes as an exhibit:

Mr. Alexander Samalot, Zoning Enforcement Officer, gave a brief presentation on the proposed changes to the Zoning Regulations' existing sections related to Cannabis.

Public Participation

Members of the public commented on the proposed regulations: Franklin Merblum, 13 Butternut Drive, expressed concerns about potential penetrations of cannabis establishments in Bloomfield.

Commission Questions and Comments

Commissioner Gough asked where the Commercial District is included in the proposed regulations. He recommended adding this inclusion to Section 7.16.3d - Applicability. He asked why specific language prohibiting special permit and site plan approvals for more than 3 total cannabis retail establishments was not included in this draft.

Commissioner Medwinter asked questions about Section 7.176.9a – Conditional Approval.

Chair Lester recommended that the Commission consider the proposed text amendments at a later time, as he believes it is not in a position to vote on them.

Commissioner O'Brien expressed concern about references to a POCD that has not yet been adopted.

It was moved by Commissioner Marshall-Nealy and seconded by Commissioner Gough to continue this public hearing to the June 25, 2026 regular meeting. The motion was approved unanimously by a 7-0-0 vote.

Commissioner Gough noted that the moratorium must also be extended. Commissioner James urged staff to have draft regulations ready for a future meeting so that the Commission can vote on them.

It was moved by Commissioner O'Brien and seconded by Commissioner Marshall-Nealy to extend the Cannabis moratorium for sixty days. The motion was approved unanimously by a 7-0-0 vote.

ii. Proposed New Sections for Solar Regulations as presented to the Commission and made part of the record:

Mr. Nicholas Gabuzda, Environmental Planner, was present for discussion and gave a brief presentation on the proposed new Solar Regulations.

Public Participation
Margaret Donnelly, 10 Old Orchard Road, expressed concerns about the potential impact of the proposed regulations on open space and farmland.

Kevin Costello of CTEC Solar at 1 Griffin Road South criticized the proposed regulations as overly restrictive and reactive. He highlighted the challenges faced by solar developers and argued that large-scale solar projects would have already developed in Bloomfield if feasible. Costello urged the Commission to amend the regulations to permit large-scale solar projects as a principal use in all zones by special permit on parcels of at least 10 acres, with specific setback and residential area considerations.

Robert Dickinson, 400 Seabury Drive, stated that solar development should be allowed in more areas, provided it does not adversely affect neighboring developed areas. He stated that Connecticut needs to generate more solar energy to help lower energy bills.

Kimball Hunt of 205 Wintonbury Avenue said Mr. Costello's proposed amendment would impact nearby land, including town-owned open space near the Seabury development. He noted that endangered bluebirds nesting in Bloomfield could be threatened by large-scale solar projects.

Mr. Colman noted that the dedicated open space owned by the Town of Bloomfield, as referenced by Mr. Hunt, is not eligible for solar development.

Commission Questions and Comments
The Commissioners commended Mr. Gabuzda for a thorough presentation and well-thought-out regulations. Commissioner Marshall-Nealy thanked Mr. Colman for clarifying the Town-owned wetlands. Commissioner James noted that she appreciates the variety of solar uses, as it allows for creativity beyond large-scale solar projects.

It was moved by Commissioner O'Brien and seconded by Commissioner Bolton to close the public hearing as it relates to the solar energy regulations. The motion passed unanimously by a 7-0-0 vote.

It was moved by Commissioner Gough and seconded by Commissioner Bolton to approve the proposed new Solar Regulations as recommended in Staff's Report (Recommended Motion) enclosed herein, to Sections 6.14 and the additions and amendments to Sections 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 4.1, 4.2, 4.4, 4.5, 4.7, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5, and 5.6 of the Zoning Regulations as they relate to Solar Energy. The motion was approved unanimously by a 7-0-0 vote.

iii. Proposed Text Amendments to Planned Elderly District (PEC) as presented to the Commission and made part of the record:

Mr. Colman referenced Staff's Report and made it part of the record herein and reiterated that the proposed amendments aim to clarify and align the regulatory language with the PEC District's established intent and purpose, particularly regarding elderly housing opportunities and the development of age-restricted residential communities. The proposed amendments revise Sections 5.5D and 5.5H to clarify permitted residential uses within the PEC District and the administrative process for modifying adopted PEC Master Plans.

Public Participation

David Hager, 8 Duncaster Road, expressed concerns about the timing of the proposed change and why broader changes aren't being made at this time.

Lois Hager of 8 Duncaster Road, voiced concerns about the lack of a clear definition for residences. She reviewed the history of the PEC district, submitted a memo for the record, and hoped the Commission would take time to consider it. She warned that the proposed change could worsen an already flawed regulation. Hager reminded the Commission that these changes would affect not only Duncaster and Seabury but any planned elderly housing project in town. She emphasized the need to address issues such as density, building types, layout, impervious cover, and location to protect neighborhoods, open space, and farmland. She urged the Commission to delay voting until more thoughtful planning is done.

Laurie Julian, 43 Maple Avenue, asked how the Commission determined that this change was necessary.

Kathy Baldoumis, 17 Loeffler Road, questioned the necessity of this change. She asked for more detail regarding the reasoning.

Dr. Davida Foy Crabree of Seabury Drive expressed concern that the draft regulations could allow large areas of town to have single-family dwellings next to each other. She also worried about preserving Bloomfield's natural resources and reminded the Commission that these regulations are for congregate living.

Peter Grant, 20 Loeffler Road, served on the Planning Board in Old Saybrook. He recalled a consultant advising the Board that if they zone it, they will build it. He raised concerns about the impacts of increased impervious coverage.

Wendell Wallach, 7 Loeffler Road, submitted written testimony for the record. She expressed concerns about the intent of this change and believed it was written in the interest of one party's expansion.

Franklin Merblum, 13 Butternut Drive, spoke in support of the PEC District, Duncaster and their expansion.

Kathy Baldoumis, 17 Loeffler Road, stated that it is implied that this proposed zone change is related to the lawsuit involving Duncaster. She recommended that staff take more time to revise the regulations in response to public comments.

Margaret Donnelly, 10 Old Orchard Road, urged the Commission to focus on low-density development.

Laurie Julian of 43 Maple Avenue warned that altering the regulation is risky, as each TPZ decision impacts Bloomfield's limited open space, traffic, and density. She urged the Commission to carefully consider before changing the proposal.

Lori Brown, 3 Scott Drive, shared concerns about the environmental impacts of this change.

Peter Russell, of 60 Loeffler Road, expressed confidence that the Commission will make an impartial decision prioritizing the best interests of Bloomfield residents.

Commission Questions and Comments

Commissioner Gough questioned why the proposed PEC regulation amendment was the only option under consideration and asked about its potential impacts on density requirements. He stated that he was not in a rush to vote on the regulations because other issues needed to be addressed first. He also stated that the word 'residence' needed to be more clearly defined. He would rather see the Commission focus on the PLR regulations, as the Town receives more inquiries about that type of development.

Commissioner Medwinter questioned the rationale for this change, expressing concern about the vagueness of the term "residences" and its potential implications for future applications. She asked how this change will be affected by recent housing legislation passed by the State of Connecticut. She voiced concerns about the ambiguity in the definition of 'residence'. She opined that a homeless shelter could be considered a residence.

Commissioner Millette stated that this proposed change was prompted by conversations at previous TPZ meetings about the Commission's desire to amend the regulations for both the PEC and PLR districts. He stated that he is comfortable tabling this to give staff more time to revise the regulations in response to resident comments.

Commissioner O'Brien reviewed Ms. Hager's comments. He emphasized that strict regulations already govern stormwater management and building coverage requirements. He noted that the front-yard setback requirement should be revised from 0 feet to 20 feet. In response to concerns about the absence of a definition for the term "Residences" in the Zoning Regulations, Commissioner O'Brien provided the definition from Black's Law Dictionary, which he said is often used by courts, attorneys, and zoning officials when a zoning regulation does not define a term and a legal definition is needed. Commissioner O'Brien also voiced his concerns about the Commission's inaction on the previously presented proposed amendments to the Zoning Regulations.

Commissioner James concurred with Commissioner O'Brien's comments and stated that this revision has been discussed by the Commission for quite some time and that she would like to see a similar change made to the PLR District regulations.

Commissioner Marshall-Nealy thanked the public for sharing their thoughts with the Commission. She also stated that she is willing to continue this discussion to allow time for further review.

Commissioner Bolton thanked the public for sharing their opinions and noted that the regulations must be equitable for everyone.

Chair Lester mentioned that the Commission tasked staff with clarifying the purpose of the PEC district, particularly with respect to housing diversity. He appreciated Ms. Hager's comprehensive memo and noted that, aside from the front-yard setback, he felt her concerns had been addressed. He also thanked staff and expressed support for the regulation change.

Mr. Colman shared his final thoughts and thanked the public for their input. He alerted the Commission to a series of upcoming public hearings regarding the new housing regulations proposed by the State of Connecticut.

Commissioner O'Brien recommended that the Commission take action on the proposed amendments to continue moving forward with additional zoning regulation amendments.

Commissioner Gough emphasized that the Commission's responsibility is to carefully consider regulation amendments, acknowledging that urgent issues often take priority.

It was moved by Commissioner O'Brien and seconded by Commissioner James to close the public hearing. The motion was approved unanimously by a 7-0-0 vote.

Commissioner James pointed out a typo in the date of the Staff's Report and corrected the date for the record to May 28, 2026, for clarification purposes.

Commissioner O'Brien moved to adopt Staff Report's Recommended Motion with one change to the Bulk Requirements Front Yard Setback in the PEC from zero (0) to twenty (20); it was seconded by Commissioner James.

Discussion ensued regarding the specifics of the motion.

The motion was approved by a 4-3-0 vote. Commissioners Lester, O'Brien, Marshall-Nealy and James voted in favor of the motion. Commissioners Bolton, Gough and Millette voted against the motion.

New Business
None.

Old Business
None.

Motion to adjourn made by Commissioner O'Brien; seconded by Commissioner Millette and approved unanimously by a 7-0-0 vote. The meeting was adjourned at 10:19pm.

Enclosures (4)

Amendments to Articles 3, 4, and 5 as they relate to the proposed Section 6.14

Amendments to Section 3.1 R-80, R-40 AND R-30 RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS **(in bold)**

3.1.B. Bulk Requirements.

NOTES:

ADD: 3. Coverage from ground mounted solar systems and solar parking lot canopies shall be considered in calculations related to total lot area and "building coverage."

3.1.D Accessory Uses and Structures

2. Authorized by Zoning Signoff. The following uses and structures may be authorized upon the issuance of a Zoning Signoff in accordance with Section 9.1:

ADD: f. The following solar energy systems (in accordance with Section 6.14): ground mounted solar (small scale), roof mounted solar, and solar parking lot canopy.

Amendments to Section 3.2 R-20 RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT **(in bold)**

3.2.B. Bulk Requirements.

NOTES:

ADD: 3. Coverage from ground mounted solar systems and solar parking lot canopies shall be considered in calculations related to total lot area and "building coverage."

3.2.D Accessory Uses and Structures

2. Authorized by Zoning Signoff. The following uses and structures may be authorized upon the issuance of a Zoning Signoff in accordance with Section 9.1:

ADD: f. The following solar energy systems (in accordance with Section 6.14): ground mounted solar (small scale), roof mounted solar, and solar parking lot canopy.

Amendments to Section 3.3 R-15 AND R-10 RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS **(in bold)**

3.3.B. Bulk Requirements.

NOTES:

ADD: 3. Coverage from ground mounted solar systems and solar parking lot canopies shall be considered in calculations related to total lot area and "building coverage."

3.3.D Accessory Uses and Structures

2. Authorized by Zoning Signoff. The following uses and structures may be authorized upon the issuance of a Zoning Signoff in accordance with Section 9.1:

ADD: e. The following solar energy systems (in accordance with Section 6.14): ground mounted solar (small scale), roof mounted solar, and solar parking lot canopy.

Amendments to Section 4.1 BLOOMFIELD CENTER DISTRICT (BCD) **(in bold)**

4.1.C Bulk Requirements.

NOTES:

ADD: 2. Coverage from ground mounted solar systems shall be considered in calculations related to total lot area and "building coverage."

4.1.D Principal Uses and Structures.

Accessory Uses and Structures

2. Authorized by Zoning Signoff. The following uses and structures may be authorized upon the issuance of a Zoning Signoff in accordance with Section 9.1:

ADD: a. ~~None~~ The following solar energy systems (in accordance with Section 6.14): ground mounted solar (small scale) and roof mounted solar.

Amendments to Section 4.2 PROFESSIONAL OFFICE DISTRICT (POD) **(in bold)**

4.2.B Bulk Requirements.

NOTES:

ADD: 3. Coverage from ground mounted solar systems and solar parking lot canopies shall be considered in calculations related to total lot area and "building coverage."

4.2.C Principal Uses and Structures

Accessory Uses and Structures.

2. Authorized by Zoning Signoff. The following uses and structures may be authorized upon the issuance of a Zoning Signoff in accordance with Section 9.1:

ADD: a. ~~None.~~ The following solar energy systems (in accordance with Section 6.14): ground mounted solar (small scale), roof mounted solar, and solar parking lot canopy.

Amendments to Section 4.3 I-1 GENERAL INDUSTRY DISTRICT (I-1) **(in bold)**

4.3.B Bulk Requirements.

NOTES:

ADD: 5. Coverage from ground mounted solar systems and solar parking lot canopies shall be considered in calculations related to total lot area and "building coverage."

4.3.C Principal Uses and Structures

4. Authorized by Special Permit. The following uses and structures may be authorized upon the issuance of a Special Permit in accordance with Section 9.5:

ADD: x. Ground mounted solar (large scale) (in accordance with Section 6.14).

4.3.D Accessory Uses and Structures.

2. Authorized by Zoning Signoff. The following uses and structures may be authorized upon the issuance of a Zoning Signoff in accordance with Section 9.1:

ADD: b. The following solar energy systems (in accordance with Section 6.14): ground mounted solar (small scale), roof mounted solar, and solar parking lot canopy.

Amendments to Section 4.4 I-2 RESTRICTED INDUSTRY DISTRICT (I-2) **(in bold)**

4.4.B Bulk Requirements.

NOTES:

ADD: 5. Coverage from ground mounted solar systems and solar parking lot canopies shall be considered in calculations related to total lot area and "building coverage."

4.4.C Principal Uses and Structures.

4. Authorized by Special Permit. The following uses and structures may be authorized upon the issuance of a Special Permit in accordance with Section 9.5:

ADD: cc. Ground mounted solar (large scale) (in accordance with Section 6.14).

4.4.D Accessory Uses and Structures.

2. Authorized by Zoning Signoff. The following uses and structures may be authorized upon the issuance of a Zoning Signoff in accordance with Section 9.1:

ADD: e. The following solar energy systems (in accordance with Section 6.14): ground mounted solar (small scale), roof mounted solar, and solar parking lot canopy.

Amendments to Section 4.5 BLUE HILLS GATEWAY DISTRICT (GWD) **(in bold)**

4.5.C Bulk Requirements.

NOTES:

ADD: 4. Coverage from ground mounted solar systems and solar parking lot canopies shall be considered in calculations related to total lot area and "building coverage."

4.5.E Accessory Uses and Structures.

2. Authorized by Zoning Signoff. The following uses and structures may be authorized upon the issuance of a Zoning Signoff in accordance with Section 9.1:

ADD: e. The following solar energy systems (in accordance with Section 6.14): ground mounted solar (small scale), roof mounted solar, and solar parking lot canopy.

Amendments to Section 4.7 COMMERCIAL DISTRICT (C) **(in bold)**

4.7.B Bulk Requirements

NOTES:

ADD: 4. Coverage from ground mounted solar systems and solar parking lot canopies shall be considered in calculations related to total lot area and "building coverage."

4.7.D Accessory Uses and Structures.

2. Authorized by Zoning Signoff. The following uses and structures may be authorized upon the issuance of a Zoning Signoff in accordance with Section 9.1:

ADD: d. The following solar energy systems (in accordance with Section 6.14): ground mounted solar (small scale), roof mounted solar, and solar parking lot canopy.

Amendments to Section 5.2 TALCOTT MOUNTAIN OVERLAY DISTRICT (TMOD) **(in bold)**

5.2.D Permitted Uses.

ADD: 3. Authorized by Zoning Signoff. The following uses and structures may be authorized upon the issuance of a Zoning Signoff in accordance with Section 9.1:

ADD: a. The following solar energy systems (in accordance with Section 6.14): ground mounted solar (small scale), roof mounted solar, and solar parking lot canopy.

Amendments to Section 5.3 MULTI-FAMILY ELDERLY RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT (MFER) **(in bold)**

5.3.C Bulk Requirements.

NOTES:

ADD: 4. Coverage from ground mounted solar systems and solar parking lot canopies shall be considered in calculations related to total lot area and "building coverage."

5.3.E Accessory Uses and Structures.

2. Authorized by Zoning Signoff. The following uses and structures may be authorized upon the issuance of a Zoning Signoff in accordance with Section 9.1:

ADD: c. The following solar energy systems (in accordance with Section 6.14): ground mounted solar (small scale), roof mounted solar, and solar parking lot canopy.

Amendments to Section 5.4 PLANNED LUXURY RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT (PLR) **(in bold)**

5.4.C Bulk Requirements.

NOTES:

ADD: 3. Coverage from ground mounted solar systems and solar parking lot canopies shall be considered in calculations related to total lot area and "building coverage."

5.4.E Accessory Uses and Structures.

2. Accessory Uses and Structures Authorized By Permit. The following accessory uses and structures may be authorized upon the issuance of a Zoning Signoff in accordance with Section 9.1.

ADD: f. The following solar energy systems (in accordance with Section 6.14): roof mounted solar, ground mounted solar (small scale) and solar parking lot canopy.

Amendments to Section 5.5 PLANNED ELDERLY CONGREGATE DISTRICT (PEC) **(in bold)**

5.5.C Bulk Requirements.

NOTES:

ADD: 3. Coverage from ground mounted solar systems and solar parking lot canopies shall be considered in calculations related to total lot area and "building coverage."

5.5.E Accessory Uses and Structures

2. Authorized by Zoning Signoff. The following uses and structures may be authorized upon the issuance of a Zoning Signoff in accordance with Section 9.1:

ADD: d. The following solar energy systems (in accordance with Section 6.14): ground mounted solar (small scale), roof mounted solar, and solar parking lot canopy.

Amendments to Section 5.6 DESIGN DEVELOPMENT ZONE (DDZ) and (DDZ-II) **(in bold)**

5.6.B Bulk Requirements.

NOTES:

ADD: 4. Coverage from ground mounted solar systems and solar parking lot canopies shall be considered in calculations related to total lot area and "building coverage."

5.6.D Accessory Uses and Structures.

2. Authorized by Zoning Signoff. The following uses and structures may be authorized upon the issuance of a Zoning Signoff in accordance with Section 9.1:

ADD: a. ~~None~~. The following solar energy systems (in accordance with Section 6.14): ground mounted solar (small scale), roof mounted solar, and solar parking lot canopy.

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Planning & Zoning
TOWN OF BLOOMFIELD
800 BLOOMFIELD AVENUE
BLOOMFIELD, CT 06002-0337
860-769-3515

Staff Report
Town Plan and Zoning Commission

Meeting Date:	May 28, 2026
Prepared By:	Nicholas Gabuzda, Environmental Planner
Application Type:	Proposed Zoning Regulation Addition and Related Amendments to Existing Sections for Solar Energy Systems
Applicant:	Town of Bloomfield, Town Plan and Zoning Commission
Request:	Proposed zoning regulation regarding Solar Energy Systems to "Basics Standards" (proposed Section 6.14 within Article 6), and proposed text additions regarding solar energy systems to Sections 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.7, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5, and 5.6.

I. Proposal Summary

The Town Plan and Zoning Commission proposes adding a new section to the Zoning Regulations related to solar energy systems, as well as amendments to Sections 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.7, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5, and 5.6 of the Zoning Regulations (also relating to solar energy systems).

Proposed Section 6.14 – Solar Energy Systems

The purpose of the proposed Section 6.14 is to regulate the construction, operation, and maintenance of solar energy systems which have a generating capacity of 1 megawatt (MW) or less and are not within the scope of regulation of the Connecticut Siting Council.

The proposed section provides definitions related to solar energy systems, outlines the purpose of the proposed section, provides regulations for ground mounted small scale solar, ground mounted large scale solar, roof mounted solar, and solar parking lot canopies.

Amendments to Sections 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.7, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5, and 5.6

The purpose of the proposed amendments to Sections 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.7, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5, and 5.6 are to maintain consistency with the proposed Section 6.14, to clarify permitted principal and accessory uses as they relate to solar in applicable zones, and to outline related zoning sign-offs.

II. CONSISTENCY WITH THE PLAN OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT (POCD)

The proposed section and text amendments are generally consistent with the goals and recommendations contained within the Town of Bloomfield Plan of Conservation and Development. The development of zoning regulations which guide responsible implementation of solar energy systems is in line with strategies in the draft POCD:

- Implementing and expanding policies which promote sustainability and combat climate change.
- Crafting and amending zoning regulations to direct development towards areas that can support development without adversely impacting the Town's environmental resources.
- Reviewing the Town's land use regulations including zoning regulations, streamlining those regulations and ensure that the regulations adequately protect environmental resources and encourage sustainable development.
- Amending zoning regulations as necessary, and expanding protections as needed, in favor of environmental protection that is fully supportive of the goals of this plan.

III. SECTION 9.6 – TEXT AMENDMENT PROCEDURE

Pursuant to Section 9.6 of the Town of Bloomfield Zoning Regulations, the Town Plan and Zoning Commission may amend the text of the Zoning Regulations following a duly noticed public hearing in accordance with Connecticut General Statutes.

Section 9.6 authorizes the Commission to approve amendments to the Zoning Regulations when the Commission determines that the proposed amendment:

- Promotes the public health, safety, and welfare;
- Is consistent with the purpose and intent of the Zoning Regulations;
- Advances sound planning principles;
- Is consistent with the Town's Plan of Conservation and Development; and
- Serves the best interests of the Town of Bloomfield.

Staff finds that the proposed section regarding Solar Energy Systems and related amendments to existing sections satisfy the standards established under Section 9.6 for the following reasons:

1. Consistency with the Purpose and Intent of the Regulations

The proposed revisions clarify permitted principal and accessory uses related to solar energy systems in the different zones throughout Town. They also offer guidance for environmental best practices and how solar energy systems should be maintained and decommissioned.

There are many existing solar energy projects within Town; however, no Zoning Regulations or Town Ordinances directly mention solar facilities. As interest in solar increases, regulations are needed to give guidance to meet demand and answer questions.

2. Advancement of Goals Related to Combating Climate Change

The use of solar energy systems offer a pathway to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from non-renewable energy sources that contribute to global climate change.

The Town of Bloomfield passed a Climate Emergency Resolution in 2021, with the directive to "...achieve an end to GHG emissions by or before December 31,2030".

The State of Connecticut has set a goal of reaching net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.

3. Promotion of Sound Planning Principles

The proposed additions and amendments maintain existing review procedures and regulatory oversight while also outlining the need for additional planning for certain projects that may require a maintenance and/or decommissioning plan. The proposed section maintains Commission oversight through the Special Permit process for large scale solar, and staff oversight via zoning signoffs for other uses related to solar energy systems.

4. Consistency with the POCD

The proposal aligns with the POCD's recommendations related to combating climate change, sustainable development, mitigating negative impacts to natural resources, and supportingcommercial enterprises or efforts which indirectly support commercial enterprises (i.e. electricity generation offsetting the cost of a business's utility bill).

5. Protection of Public Health, Safety, and Welfare

Providing guidelines regarding solar energy systems will enhance the ability for residents and business owners to meet their growing energy demands while still maintaining principals of responsible development that considers community members, natural resources, and property values. On-site solar energy systems enable property owners to generate their own electricity, potentially reducing (or in some cases, eliminating) monthly utility costs.

IV. STAFF ANALYSIS

Staff finds that the proposed additions and amendments offer guidance for best practices related to responsible development and implementation of energy infrastructure and provide clarity to those interested in the utilization of solar energy systems.

The additions:

- Provide clarity related to where certain types of solar systems are permitted, the processes behind their implementation, and what zones may host solar systems as a principal use vs accessory use;
- Continue to require Commission review through the Special Permit process; and
- Support the Town's broader objectives related to sustainable development, mitigating negative impacts to natural resources, and combating climate change.

V. RECOMMENDED MOTION

Based upon the foregoing, should the Town Plan and Zoning Commission find that proposed Section 6.14 of the Zoning Regulations related to solar energy systems, as well as additions/amendments to Sections 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.7, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5, and 5.6 of the Zoning Regulations also relating to solar energy systems:

- Promote the ability of Bloomfield residents and businesses to produce renewable electricity to offset utility costs;
- Align with goals in the Town's draft Plan of Conservation and Development related to combating climate change, promoting sustainable development, mitigating negative impacts to natural resources, and supporting commercial enterprises;
- Promote sound planning and regulatory clarity;
- Maintain appropriate Commission oversight and public review procedures; and
- Satisfy the standards for approval under Section 9.6 of the Town of Bloomfield Zoning Regulations.

Staff recommends APPROVAL of the proposed text additions and amendments.

ATTACHMENTS

- Proposed Section 6.14 – Solar Energy Systems
- Amendments to Articles 3, 4, and 5 as They Relate to the Proposed Section 6.14

Text Amendment to the Bloomfield Zoning Regulations
for the Planned Elderly Congregate District (PEC)

May __, 2026

1. Section 5.5.D, Principal Uses and Structures is amended as follows:

"3. Authorized by Special Permit. The following uses and structures may be authorized upon the issuance of a Special Permit in accordance with Section 9.5:

a. ~~Multi-family dwelling units as r~~ **Residences** for ~~single person~~ occupants over age 62 ~~or multiple occupants~~ where **at least** one person is over age 62. Some age restrictions may be considered at the time of purchase.

2. Section 5.5.H, Master Plan is amended as follows:

"1. The purpose of the Master Plan submission is to determine whether the proposed uses ~~a~~ **and** layout conform to Section 5.5.C and to the Plan of Conservation and Development. The Master Plan, once adopted, shall establish the dimensional characteristics of the PEC and its uses.

2. Changes to the Master Plan.

a. Any modifications to dimensional elements in the Master Plan shall follow the Special Permit Application Procedures in Section 9.5. **For purposes of this section, the term "modifications to dimensional elements" shall include the construction of residences in compliance with Section 5.5.D on property already zoned PEC.**

b. Any modifications to the use elements in the Master Plan shall follow the Zoning Map Amendment Procedures in Section 9.7."

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Planning & Zoning
TOWN OF BLOOMFIELD
800 BLOOMFIELD AVENUE
BLOOMFIELD, CT 06002-0337
860-769-3515

Staff Report
Town Plan and Zoning Commission

Meeting Date:	May 28, 2026
Prepared By:	Lynda Laureano, Assistant Director of Building and Land Use
Application Type:	Zoning Regulation Amendment to Planned Elderly Congregate (PEC) Zone
Applicant:	Town of Bloomfield, Town Plan and Zoning Commission
Request:	Proposed Text Amendments to Section 5.5 of the Bloomfield Zoning Regulations pertaining to the Planned Elderly Congregate (PEC) District

I. Proposal Summary

The Town Plan and Zoning Commission proposes amendments to Section 5.5 of the Zoning Regulations relating to the Planned Elderly Congregate (PEC) District. The purpose of the proposed amendments is to clarify and align the regulatory language with the PEC District's established intent and purpose, particularly regarding elderly housing opportunities and the development of age-restricted residential communities.

The proposed amendments revise Sections 5.5.D and 5.5.H to provide greater clarity on permitted residential uses within the PEC District and the administrative process for modifications to adopted PEC Master Plans.

The proposed amendment language includes the following key revisions:

Section 5.5.D – Principal Uses and Structures

The amendment revises the residential use language to clarify that residences may be authorized by Special Permit for:

- Single-person occupants over the age of 62; or
- Multiple occupants where at least one resident is over the age of 62.

The amendment also states that certain age restrictions may be considered at the time of purchase.

This revision modernizes and clarifies the language while maintaining the district's underlying purpose as housing for elderly residents.

Section 5.5.H – Master Plan

The amendment revises the Master Plan provisions to clarify that:

- The purpose of the Master Plan submission is to determine whether proposed uses and layout conform to Section 5.5.C and the Town's Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD).
- Modifications to dimensional elements within an approved PEC Master Plan, including the construction of residences compliant with Section 5.5.D on property already zoned PEC, may proceed through the Special Permit process under Section 9.5.
- Modifications to use elements would continue to require a Zoning Map Amendment process under Section 9.7.

The proposed language is intended to create a clearer distinction between dimensional modifications and changes involving land use classifications.

II. PURPOSE OF THE PEC DISTRICT

Section 5.5 of the Town of Bloomfield Zoning Regulations establishes the Planned Elderly Congregate (PEC) District to encourage and accommodate housing opportunities specifically designed for elderly residents in an integrated and planned residential setting.

The PEC District is intended to:

- Provide housing opportunities that meet the needs of an aging population;
- Encourage coordinated residential development designed for elderly occupancy;
- Promote safe, accessible, and appropriately designed residential environments;
- Allow flexibility in site planning and development standards through a Master Plan and Special Permit process; and
- Support housing diversity within the Town of Bloomfield.

The proposed amendments further these objectives by clarifying residential occupancy standards and streamlining procedures for development on existing PEC-zoned properties.

III. CONSISTENCY WITH THE PLAN OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT (POCD)

The proposed text amendments are generally consistent with the goals and recommendations contained within the Town of Bloomfield Plan of Conservation and Development.

The Town's POCD supports:

- Expanding and preserving a diverse housing stock;
- Providing housing opportunities for aging residents wishing to remain in the community;
- Encouraging housing options that allow residents to age in place;
- Promoting residential development that is compatible with surrounding neighborhoods and community services; and
- Supporting thoughtfully planned multifamily and congregate housing developments.

The proposed amendments align with these goals by reinforcing the PEC District's intended function as an elderly-oriented residential zone and ensuring that the regulatory language accurately reflects the district's purpose.

IV. SECTION 9.6 – TEXT AMENDMENT PROCEDURE

Pursuant to Section 9.6 of the Town of Bloomfield Zoning Regulations, the Town Plan and Zoning Commission may amend the text of the Zoning Regulations following a duly noticed public hearing in accordance with Connecticut General Statutes.

Section 9.6 authorizes the Commission to approve amendments to the Zoning Regulations when the Commission determines that the proposed amendment:

- Promotes the public health, safety, and welfare;
- Is consistent with the purpose and intent of the Zoning Regulations;
- Advances sound planning principles;
- Is consistent with the Town's Plan of Conservation and Development; and
- Serves the best interests of the Town of Bloomfield.

Staff finds that the proposed PEC amendments satisfy the standards established under Section 9.6 for the following reasons:

1. Consistency with the Purpose and Intent of the Regulations

The amendments reinforce the original intent of the PEC District as a residential district specifically intended to accommodate elderly housing opportunities. The proposed revisions clarify the permitted occupancy standards and procedural framework without altering the underlying purpose of the district.

2. Advancement of Housing Goals

The amendments support the Town's housing objectives by encouraging elderly-oriented housing opportunities and promoting aging-in-place options for residents. The revisions also support housing diversity within the community.

3. Promotion of Sound Planning Principles

The amendments provide additional regulatory clarity and improve administrative efficiency regarding Master Plan modifications within existing PEC-zoned properties while maintaining Commission oversight through the Special Permit process.

4. Consistency with the POCD

The proposal aligns with the POCD's recommendations related to senior housing, housing diversity, and appropriately planned residential development designed to meet the evolving demographic needs of the community.

5. Protection of Public Health, Safety, and Welfare

The proposed amendments maintain existing review procedures and regulatory oversight while allowing flexibility for elderly housing developments that are compatible with the purpose of the PEC District.

V. STAFF ANALYSIS

Staff finds that the proposed amendments are primarily clarifying in nature and are intended to better align the zoning text with the original purpose and intent of the Planned Elderly Congregate District.

The amendments:

- Maintain the age-oriented focus of the PEC District;
- Clarify occupancy eligibility standards;
- Provide additional procedural clarity regarding Master Plan modifications;
- Continue to require Commission review through the Special Permit process; and
- Support the Town's broader housing and aging-in-place objectives.

Furthermore, Staff finds that the proposed amendments do not substantially alter the underlying purpose of the district, but rather improve the functionality and interpretation of the regulations.

VI. RECOMMENDED MOTION

Based upon the foregoing, should the Town Plan and Zoning Commission find that proposed text amendments to Section 5.5 of the Zoning Regulations related to the Planned Elderly Congregate (PEC) District:

- Are consistent with the purpose and intent of the PEC District;
- Align with the housing and aging-in-place goals of the Town's Plan of Conservation and Development;
- Promote sound planning and regulatory clarity;
- Maintain appropriate Commission oversight and public review procedures; and
- Satisfy the standards for approval under Section 9.6 of the Town of Bloomfield Zoning Regulations.

Staff recommends APPROVAL of the proposed text amendments.

ATTACHMENTS

- Proposed Text Amendments – Planned Elderly Congregate (PEC) District