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

**TOWN OF BLOOMFIELD, CT**
**TOWN PLAN & ZONING COMMISSION QUARTERLY PLANNING MEETING**
**August 20, 2026**

There was a meeting for the Town of Bloomfield's Town Plan & Zoning Commission held on August 20, 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 7:00pm.

2. **Roll Call**

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

A quorum was established with 6 regular members, and 2 alternate members present.
Also present were Jonathan Colman, Director of Building and Land Use; Lynda Laureano, Assistant Director of Building and Land Use; Nicholas Gabuzda, Environmental Planner; and Lynn Weisel, Recording Secretary.

3. **Old Business**

**a. POCD Review and Discussion**

Mr. Colman stated that the POCD is not ready for review and will be discussed at a future meeting.

**b. Future Land Use Map Continued Discussion**

Mr. Gabuzda presented revised land use groups and definitions, splitting mixed-use and open space categories into two subgroups each to provide more distinction. The proposed land use breakdown includes approximately 36.2% open space, 42.2% residential, 7.4% mixed-use, and 14.1% industrial areas, with additional conservation objectives and recreation easements being mapped. Mr. Gabuzda stated that based on research and advisement from Goman + York, staff believes at this time that listing a future land use group as "agricultural" may have regulatory obstacles. Agricultural resources are discussed within other sections of the draft POCD. He noted other changes including the removal of
mixed-use nodes and the Bloomfield Center District boundary from the previous draft to reduce confusion. The Farmington River was labeled on the current map.

Mr. Gabuzda presented information about two neighborhoods in Bloomfield: the Granby/Cottage Grove neighborhood in the southeastern quadrant op the map and what he called the Western Bloomfield neighborhood. He discussed land use proposals, conservation priorities, and natural resource restrictions in both areas.

Commissioner O'Brien corrected a previous statement made at a prior meeting about the relationship between land use maps and zoning, explaining that the future land use map informs zoning rather than the other way around. He also noted that land use maps normally do not have zoning lines. He also asked questions about the goals for the Park River area and asked why it was not put on the map. Mr. Gabuzda explained that the goal was to acknowledge natural resource constraints rather than making it a park per se.

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Commissioner O'Brien challenged this by pointing out that the area contains 57 properties, with only 12 owned by the Town, and questioned whether residential uses would be established in a park. He also highlighted existing environmental controls in the area, including stormwater management regulations, wetland protections, FEMA flood maps, and Army Corps of Engineers requirements, arguing that designating the land as a park would not provide additional environmental protection beyond what already exists through these regulations.

Mr. Gabuzda clarified that while the North Branch Park River has drainage through the area, the actual park is not located in the neighborhood in question and emphasized that labeling something as "open space" does not necessarily mean it will become a park. Ms. Laureano discussed the lack of specific park zoning districts in the town and noted that while the 2012 Plan of Conservation and Development included proposed zoning updates that weren't fully implemented, the current discussion aims to preserve areas as open space. Commissioner Gough recommended labeling tributaries. He also stated that the future land use map should reflect the town's vision without creating barriers to future zone changes.

Commissioner Peters raised concerns about the lack of clear commercial zones, particularly when transitioning from residential to mixed-use areas. Mr. Colman explained that the current approach reflects state legislation allowing housing in commercial and industrial zones, making it difficult to maintain pure commercial zones. Commissioner Marshall-Nealy expressed disagreement, citing specific areas like Cottage Grove Road and Blue Hills Avenue as clearly commercial, questioning how these could be incorporated into the current mixed-use categories.

Residential development proposals on Cottage Grove Road and Blue Hills Avenue were discussed, with Commissioner Marshall-Nealy noting significant residential developments in those areas. Commissioner Millette raised concerns about utilities and infrastructure limitations in the Duncaster/Western neighborhood area, particularly regarding septic systems and water/sewer availability. Lynda explained that the I-1 district allows for more commercial flexibility than the I-2 district, which is more restrictive.

Commissioner O'Brien spoke on zoning and land use planning for Park River and recommended focusing on how to handle environmental protections and development opportunities. Commissioner O'Brien argued against designating a green area as open space, stating it would be illegal and would prevent proper development. He suggested incorporating the Park River into the zoning map with appropriate controls. Mr. Colman urged the Commission to act on this item as it needs to be approved to move forward with the POCD.

Chair Lester raised concerns about potential legal implications of designating open space that contains residential units. Commissioner O'Brien clarified that while the map represents future development suggestions rather than immediate rezoning, appropriate zoning changes would follow the adoption of the POCD. Commissioner Peters requested that previous maps be displayed at the same scale to better understand changes and transitions between different land use designations, particularly regarding the placement of mixed-use areas and their gradient transitions between residential and industrial zones.

Commissioner Gough referenced the 2012 map and discussed density classifications and specific areas like Duncaster Road. He also remarked that an area Wintonbury Avenue and Woodland Avenue has changed from medium density to high density. He expressed concern about the approval process and highlighted the need for thoughtful discussion. Commissioner James addressed density requirements and thanked staff for creating different categories. Commissioner Millette recommended modifying the open space areas with residential properties. Mr. Gabuzda emphasized the need for Commission feedback.

**It was moved by Commissioner O'Brien and seconded by Commissioner Millette to adopt the Land Use map as presented without the proposed revision to the western side of the town and with the following change: revise the green area around the Park River to pink.** Further discussion ensued. **Commissioner Gough proposed a friendly amendment to change the low-density and rural density located on Duncaster Road back to the 2012 map. Commissioner O'Brien rejected the amendment. The original motion passed by a 7-1-0 vote. Yes: Commissioners Lester, Cotton, James, Marshall-Nealy, Millette, O'Brien, Peters No: Commissioner Gough Abstention: None.**

Staff confirmed they are working on regulations regarding data centers, including potential moratoriums, which Commissioner James requested be incorporated into zoning regulations.

**Adjournment**

**Motion to adjourn made by Commissioner O'Brien; seconded by Commissioner Marshall-Nealy and voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 8:35pm.**