

# GOMAN+YORK

## PLANNING AND DESIGN

POCD Implementation - Zoning Regulations Updates

Commercial Zoning – Process Overview

Meeting 1. February 2020

# POCD Implementation – Commercial Zoning - POCD

## The POCD Update & Approach

- Planning & Zoning Commission
- 10-year plan (adopted 2019)
- Guide & manage growth and change
- Primarily how land developed, preserved
- State Statutes set requirements
- Strategic update with focus on housing & economic development
- Public input – workshops, surveys
- Planning & Zoning Commission working sessions



# POCD Implementation – Commercial Zoning – Scope of Work

## **D.1. Modify or re-adapt the approaches to the TVA and TCZ.**

- Review/Assessment: 2019 POCD recommendations TVA and TCZ zones and prior zoning...
- Community Engagement: with the PZC, TVA & TCZ property owners, (based on their availability and willingness to participate), and the residents of Tolland.
  - PZC Work-Session: facilitated review and discussion...aimed at determining ‘what the Commission wants’ regarding the future zoning designation and provisions for the TVA and TCZ.
  - TVA & TCZ Property Owner Sessions: facilitated meetings to discuss and determine ‘what the property owners want’ regarding the future zoning...
  - Public Session: A facilitated meeting with the residents of Tolland to discuss and determine ‘what the residents of Tolland want’ regarding the future zoning...
- Scenarios: Outreach insights will be developed into scenarios for potential zoning amendments and tested against market realities and capacity. Draft amendments for the TVA and TCZ and presented to the PZC at a public meeting for discussion and potential revisions.
- Proposed Amendments: Insights from the public meeting utilized for proposed amendments/public hearing.

# POCD Implementation – Commercial Zoning – Scope of Work

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- **D-9. Update Zoning Regulations to better encourage those business uses the Town wishes to see in Tolland.**
- Review, Present, and Discuss: Provide a review and presentation of the prior work/review of commercial uses by zoning district (2019 POCD update process). This will include engaging the PZC in further review and discussion of the uses permitted by zoning district and the permitting requirements for each use.
- Draft Amendments: Provide draft amendments for the use provisions by zoning district. This will include the conversions of uses in a table format aimed at simplifying the Zoning Regulations and creating a more user-friendly document. Engage the PZC in further discussion of the draft use amendments.
- Proposed Amendments: Utilizing the remarks and insights from discussions with the PZC to craft and prepare the proposed texted amendments regarding commercial uses by zoning district for consideration at a public hearing.

# POCD Implementation – Commercial Zoning – Scope of Work

- **D.5. Reduce unnecessary or unintentional permitting roadblocks for building updates and renovations.**
- **Review and Assessment:** Based on the audit provided by staff to highlight provisions that create challenges to re-tenanting space, conduct a comprehensive review and assessment of the permitting processes and requirements for existing sites/buildings, new tenants, and changes in use. Engage the PZC in a discussion about these permitting processes and requirements with the aim of creating more efficient and user-friendly permitting process that will further the objectives of economic development.
- **Draft Amendments:** Provide the PZC with draft amendments for the permitting processes and requirements related to existing sites/buildings, new tenants, and changes in use. Engage the PZC in further discussion of the draft permitting amendments.
- **Proposed Amendments:** Utilizing the remarks and insights from discussions with the PZC to craft and prepare the proposed text amendments regarding permitting processes and requirements related to existing sites/buildings, new tenants, and changes in use for consideration at a public hearing.

# POCD Implementation – Commercial Zoning – Scope of Work

## **Deliverables:**

- D.1. TVA and TCZ: all presentation documents, reports, and scenarios prepared as part of the public outreach program. The final deliverable will be two text amendment proposals (TVA and TCZ) to be considered by the PZC at a public hearing(s). Each text amendment will include a memo that summarizes the process, findings, and recommendations.
- D.9. Update Zoning Uses: all presentation documents, reports, and draft amendments prepared as part of the work-sessions with the PZC. The final deliverable will be a text amendment for the changes to allowable uses by zoning district for consideration by the PZC at a public hearing(s). The proposed text amendment will include a memo that summarizes the process, findings, and recommendations.
- D.5. Permitting of Changes in Use: all presentation documents, reports, and draft amendments. The final deliverable will be a formal text amendment proposal for changes to the permitting process and requirements related to existing sites/buildings, new tenants, and changes in use for consideration by the PZC at a public hearing(s). The text amendment will include a memo that summarizes the process, findings, and recommendations.

# POCD Implementation – Commercial Zoning – Work Plan

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## **Anticipated Schedule:**

- Month 1:
  - D.9. PZC Work-Session to discuss and review permitted uses by zoning district.
- Month 2:
  - D.9. Presentation/discussion of proposed amendments to commercial uses with PZC.
  - D.5. PZC Work-Session to discuss the permitting process and requirements related to existing sites/buildings, new tenants, and changes in use.
- Month 3:
  - D.1. TVA & TCZ Property Owners Work-Session
  - D.9. Delivery of the text amendment for the commercial uses to the PZC. Commission.
  - D.5. Presentation/discussion of the proposed amendments to the permitting process and requirements related to existing sites/buildings, new tenants, and changes in use with PZC.

# POCD Implementation – Commercial Zoning – Work Plan

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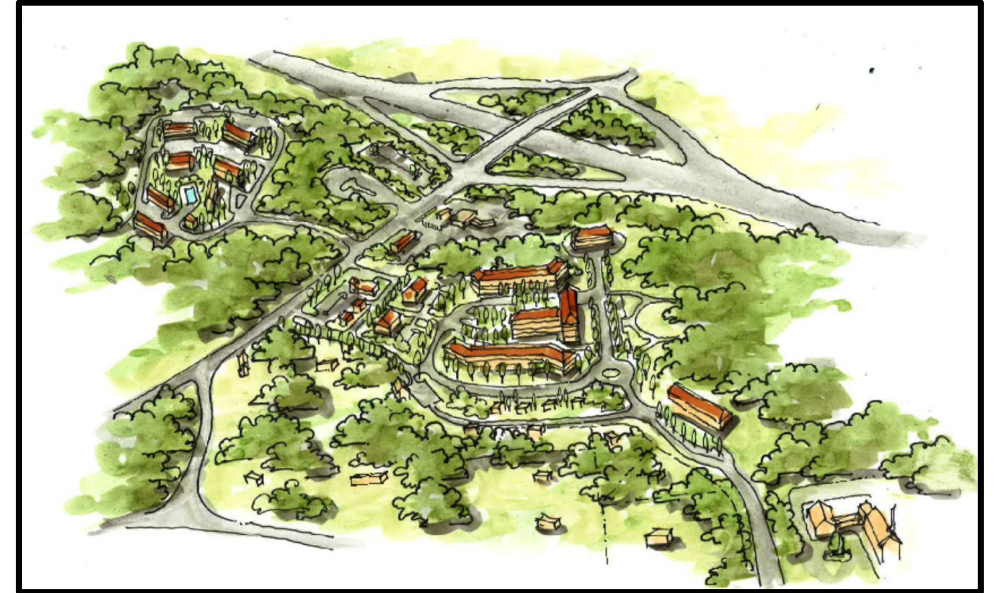
## **Anticipated Schedule:**

- Month 4:
  - D.1. Tolland Resident Work-Session for the TVA and TCZ.
  - D.5. Delivery of the text amendment for the permitting process and requirements related to existing sites/buildings, new tenants, and changes in use to the PZC.
  - D.1. PZC Work-Session to discuss the TVA and TCZ zoning districts with the PZC.
- Month 5:
  - D.1. PZC Work-Session to discuss TVA and TCZ scenarios and Tolland Resident Work-Session for the TVA and TCZ. This will include a presentation of the market realities related to the scenarios and possible draft amendments to the TVA and TCZ zones.
- Month 6:
  - D.1. PZC Work-Session to present/discuss proposed text amendments for TVA and TCZ.
- Month 7:
  - D.1. Delivery/presentation of the text amendments for the TVA and TCZ zoning to the PZC.

# POCD Implementation – Commercial Zoning - Recommendations

## **Economic Development & Commercial Zoning**

- Route 195 Corridor & Tolland Village Area TVA
- Site Design Standards
- Reinvestment in Older Buildings
- Modernize Allowable Businesses (Zoning Use)
- Economic Development (Short & Long Term)



# POCD Implementation – Commercial Zoning - Recommendations

## **Route 195 Corridor & Tolland Village Area TVA :**

- Route 195 corridor is the logical and most likely location of future commercial and multi-family development.”
- modify / re-adapt its approaches to the TVA and TCZ...
- determine if the TCZ might be ripe for mixed uses...Commission could...allow a flexible Master Plan approach...commercial/industrial, and mixed-use development.
- the TVA regulations...not resulting in the development initially envisioned...not likely to change.
- Consideration should be given to reverting this area to its previous zoning designation (Gateway Design District) or a similar designation...keeping open the opportunity for a mixture of residential and business uses in the form of a revised / simplified version of the TVA...
- TVA area is well-suited for a mix of small-scale retail/restaurant along the frontage and hotel, community scale office, and residential on the interior of the sites.
- Commission should consider the Gateway Design District (GDD) along with TVA in the form a flexible Master Plan floating zone.

# POCD Implementation – Commercial Zoning - Recommendations

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## **Site Design Standard:**

- Site design is not simply about parking, stormwater management, landscaping, and lighting. It also encompasses the aesthetic qualities and visual appeal of development and contributes to community character and the image of a community. Quality site design conveys a message of community pride, confidence, and investment.
- update the site development and design provisions in the Zoning Regulations to provide modern site design standards that follow best practices.
  - Commission should seek to provide flexibility in standards that allows for better design...
  - provisions should focus on sustainable practices such as low impact design, shared parking, energy efficient lighting, consolidated parcels, access management, and high-quality landscaping.
  - seek to raise the standards and expectations for the quality of design—both site design and architectural design...insist...that...applications incorporate higher quality designs and materials.

# POCD Implementation – Commercial Zoning - Recommendations

## **Reinvestment in Older Buildings:**

- buildings are built at specific moments in time to serve the specific consumer needs...of that moment...buildings become obsolete the moment the...building is constructed—because of new materials, technologies... Updates and renovations will be necessary to ensure that properties remain competitive and can attract owners, tenants, and investors.
- The following recommendations can reduce unnecessary or unintentional permitting roadblocks for building updates and renovations and help provide resources to building owners.
- Changes in use...should be allowed by staff approval (zoning permits)...
- Changes in use should be exempt from parking requirements including having to meet the parking requirements for the new use (unless...a substantial increase in traffic).
- Site Plan requirements...should be limited to expansions of the building footprint and new construction...limited to...the portion of the site being improved..
- For...Special Permit when first approved...provide a provision for the Commission to [determine] the potential impact of the...changes to the...Special Permit...and [the Special Permit Process].

# POCD Implementation – Commercial Zoning - Recommendations

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## **Economic Development:**

- **Encourage What Tolland Most Wants:**

- Investment flows to the location of least resistance.
- If Tolland wants certain kinds of economic development and investment, it should encourage such uses and investments.
- This can be accomplished by conducting a comprehensive review of the permitted and special permitted uses in the Zoning Regulations.
- The review can build upon the initial review the Commission conducted as part of this Plan update.
- This review was done with the aim of allowing the economic development activities and uses the Town most wants by staff approvals and Commission Site Plan, not the more subjective, time consuming, and costly Special Permit process.



# Tolland Commercial Zoning Update