

PROPOSED
Sharon Town Plan 2016

Section 8-23 of the Connecticut General Statutes requires a local planning commission to prepare, adopt and amend a plan of development for the community, with recommendations for the most desirable land use and density within the town. In the language of the statute, the plan should be a statement of policies, goals, and standards for the physical conservation and economic development of the municipality, and should be “designed to promote with the greatest efficiency and economy the coordinated development of the municipality and the general welfare and prosperity of its people.”

In 2005 the Town of Sharon held a comprehensive town planning session, which included addresses by town officials and town planner Thomas McGowan; various discussion groups; and priority choices by town residents with regard to town planning substance. Fourteen months of effort by the Planning and Zoning Commission, Town officials, citizens, boards, and volunteer organizations resulted in the Sharon Town Plan of 2006. The Plan put forth two general goals and provided nine areas in which those goals could be implemented. These included Sharon Town Center; Commercial and Industrial Zones; Natural Resources Inventory 2005 and Open Space Goal; Historic Preservation and Scenic Road and Ridgeline Protection; Water Quality Protection and Sewer Avoidance; Land Preservation; Future Land Use and Density of Population; Housing; Recreation and Capital Improvement Needs.

The Plan also recommended means by which the Town goals in those nine areas could be implemented. These included amendments to Sharon’s Zoning Regulations to policy suggestions for various Town boards to consider.

In pursuance of Section 8-23 of the Connecticut General Statutes, the Sharon Planning and Zoning Commission held a planning session on June 29, 2016. Commission members agreed that many of the recommendations in the Town Plan of 2006 had been made effective, through amendment or other means. Examples include zone changes: the Light Industrial Zone changed to the Enterprise Zone; and re-zoning of the 215-foot-wide strip of land on the south side of Route 343 from the Sharon Playhouse to the Industrial District in the General Residence Zone as Rural Residential. Other examples include the adoption by the Town of an ordinance allowing for the establishment of an Open Space and Land Acquisition Fund.

In constructing a Town Plan for 2016, the Commission decided the following:

- A. That all recommendations in the adopted 2006 Town Plan be followed.
- B. That “cluster housing” in the Rural Residential Zones as well as living units above commercial buildings be considered.
- C. That work force housing be promoted.
- D. That creative use of barns be considered.
- E. That effort be put forth for establishment of a town fiber optic system.
- F. That the Planning and Zoning Commission continue to work on recommendations from the 2006 Town Plan that have not been accomplished.
- G. That joint efforts with Salisbury be continued and the Salisbury/Sharon Transfer Station be completed.