

The Role of the Planning and Zoning Commission
and the Town Council in Planning and Community Development
Within the Town of Farmington

The functions of the Farmington Town Plan and Zoning Commission and the Farmington Town Council are quite diverse but both contribute significantly to the character of Farmington. In Farmington the establishment and maintenance of the Town's zoning regulations and map is solely reserved to the Town Plan and Zoning Commission (TPZC). In some communities, such as West Hartford, the zoning function is held by the Town Council. In addition to overseeing zoning in the Town of Farmington the TPZC also serves as the community's planning commission and the inland wetlands and watercourses agency. The specific powers of the TPZC are derived from the Connecticut General Statutes. This includes responsibility for the adoption of regulations, which govern the density of housing development and the extent and type of commercial and industrial building in our community. The Commission also regulates the subdivision of property for both residential and non-residential development. In addition, State law requires the Commission to prepare a Plan of Conservation and Development at least once every ten years. This planning document sets forth a blue print for how Farmington will develop or redevelop. In this plan you will find recommendations concerning many topics including how much preserved land Farmington should have, how parcels of property should be designated for development and how roadways are to be laid out or improved. Recently State law was changed to require the Town Council to directly participate in the adoption of the Plan of Conservation and Development. In 2003 Section 8-25 of the Connecticut General Statutes was modified to require that the Town Council review and endorse or reject the plan or parts thereof. In order for the recommendations contained in the Plan of Conservation and Development to be realized they generally must receive support from the Town's land use regulations and more importantly from Farmington's other boards and political bodies such as the Town Council. For example in order for the Town to obtain a grant for the improvement of a road recommended by the Plan of Conservation and Development it must be endorsed by the Town Council.

The most important way for the Town Council to bring about many of the recommendations contained in the Plan of Conservation and Development is through the Capital Budget. This document prioritizes the list of capital improvements such as roads, municipal buildings and other infrastructure improvements and provides the manner as to how they will be paid for.

Section 8-24 of the Connecticut General Statutes also guarantees that decisions governing a community's infrastructure are made with the input of the community's planning body. Specifically this law states that before a municipality can purchase or lease land, layout or abandon a road, construct or significantly improve a building or extend a utility line a report must be received as to the advisability of the project from the Town Plan and Zoning Commission. This law helps ensure a connection between the policies and plans

promulgated in the Plan of Conservation and Development and the actions of the legislative body (Town Council) of the town.

The following table summarizes the powers and duties of the Town Plan and Zoning Commission and the Town Council.

<u>ACTION</u>	<u>TPZC</u>	<u>TOWN COUNCIL</u>
Compose and adopt a Plan of Conservation and Development	X	X
Develop and adopt zoning and subdivision regulations.	X	
Hear and decide zoning and subdivision applications.	X	
Develop and adopt inland wetland and watercourse regulations.	X	
Hear and decide inland wetland and watercourse applications.	X	
Compose and adopt a capital budget		X
Oversee expenditures for community's infrastructure.		X*

* With a recommendation of the TPZC.