

## REPORT OF MEETING

**Date and Time:** Thursday, October 26, 2023, 12:00 PM – 1:30 PM

**Location:** New Haven City Hall, 165 Church Street, New Haven

**Subject:** Steering Committee Meeting #1

### 1. Attendees

NAME	ORGANIZATION	EMAIL ADDRESS
<b>STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS</b>		
Stephanie Camp	South Central Regional Council of Governments (SCRCOG)	
Benjamin Lovejoy	SCRCOG	
Mark Wilson	Livable City Initiative (LCI)	
Maritza Bond	Health and Human Services	
Luis Chavez-Brummell	New Haven Public Library (NHPL)	
Carlos Eyzaguirre	Economic Development Administration (EDA)	
Eliza Halsey	Community Services Administration (CSA)	
Dawn Henning	Engineering Department	
Gretchen Knauff	Services for Persons with Disabilities	
Dean Mack	Economic Development Administration (EDA)	
Annie Mixsell	Tree Systems Coordinator	
Kaelie Moran	City Plan Department	
Mark Wilson	Livable City Initiative LCI (LCI)	
<b>CITY OF NEW HAVEN</b>		
Laura Brown	City Plan Department	LEbrown@newhavenct.gov
Fatima Cecunjanin	City Plan Department	FCecunjanin@newhavenct.gov
Jacob Robison	City Plan Department	JRobison@newhavenct.gov
Esther Rose-Wilen	City Plan Department	ERoseWilen@newhavenct.gov
<b>CONSULTANT TEAM</b>		
Rory Jacobson	FHI Studio	rory.jacobson@fhistudio.com
Zainab Kazmi	FHI Studio	zkazmi@fhistudio.com
Marcy Miller	FHI Studio	mmiller@fhistudio.com

### 2. Presentation

Rory Jacobson, of FHI Studio, thanked everyone for attending the first Steering Committee meeting for the New Haven Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD). She reviewed the agenda which included the following items:

- 1) Welcome & Introductions
- 2) Comprehensive Plan Overview
- 3) Engagement Strategy
- 4) Project Branding
- 5) Project Schedule/Next Steps
- 6) Discussion

Attendees introduced themselves and their affiliation. Jacob Robinson, of New Haven City Plan, spoke to how the Plan contract was set up, under two separate contracts. He discussed early engagement,

particularly pop-ups that occurred over the summer. The City Plan Team received 200 email list signups from the pop-ups events. The goal of these events was to introduce the Plan to the public at an early stage.

Maritza Bond, of the Health and Human Services Department, asked where the pop-ups were held, and if other languages were accommodated. The five pop-up were conducted in diverse neighborhoods. A Spanish speaker attended all events, and an English/Spanish flyer that was distributed.

R. Jacobson discussed the consultant team, including the firms and their roles on both the outreach element of the Plan and the Plan Development process. She reviewed the staffing organizational chart and emphasized the roles of herself and Zainab Kazmi, FHI Studio's two project managers. R. Jacobson discussed FHI Studio's POCD experience and work. She reviewed the purpose of a POCD and the legislation that requires it. She discussed the previous Plan and noted the topics that are typically covered in a POCD.

There was a question about whether all Towns are on the same update cycle. POCDs across the State are required to be reviewed and updated every ten years, but this schedule varies across each municipality and they start and end on their own schedule.

There was a question about zoning in the POCD and whether it is discussed. Zoning and Land Use are categories that are discussed. Zoning recommendations are typically included in a POCD.

There was a question about what ER stands for in the POCD+ER title. R. Jacobson answered that it was an acronym for equity and resilience. Laura Brown, of New Haven City Plan, noted that the City found these topics important and wanted to ensure they were included in the Plan. Zainab Kazmi, of FHI Studio, discussed a visual representation of the planning process including the vision, goals, strategies, and actions that lead to the development of the POCD.

R. Jacobson discussed the Project Team's approach, role of the Steering Committee and Community Navigators. She discussed the project's subconsultant, Led By Us (LBU), who has strong connections across the City and was brought onto the Team due to their strategic engagement experience. Other components of the outreach approach including interviews with key stakeholders, public workshops, pop-up events, student outreach, and online engagement (website, videos, survey) were discussed in detail.

There was a question about how the number of community navigators (ten) was selected. Esther Rose-Wilen, of New Haven City Plan, answered that ten was the number that the project's budget would support. There was a question about languages spoken at events, Spanish speakers will be present at all events and the Project Team may bring additional language speakers if requested by the City.

### 3. Open Discussion

Dawn Henning, of the New Haven Engineering Department, asked if this is the extent of the Steering Committee. Jacob answered no, the intent is to also include community organizations and members who are part of groups that are less organized, representing a cross section of the New Haven community. The Project Team's goal is to have additional Steering Committee members in place by next meeting which is to be held in four months.

M. Bond asked what data collection and baseline mapping has been conducted so far. R. Jacobson answered that this meeting is really the kickoff. R. Jacobson reviewed the project schedule.

Ben Lovejoy, of SCRCOG, asked if the Project Team was scrapping the old plan and completely starting over. R. Jacobson answered that we will review other plans that the City has completed as well as the previous POCD and its contents. She noted that while there may still be relevant content from the current Plan, many things have changed in the past ten years such as technology and the impacts of COVID-19. Z. Kazmi discussed the review of previous plans that the Project Team is completing, emphasizing that the new Plan will pull in content from the previous documents as needed, but will incorporate changes.

Gretchen Knauff, of Services for Persons with Disabilities, asked how we will include and engage people with disabilities. She asked if the Project Team would be willing to meet with the disabled community and how the Team will get input from members of the deaf community? She suggested reviewing universal design standards and ensuring that the project website is compliant. R. Jacobson answered that the Project Team will meet with that group and ensure that interpreters are provided for at workshops and events to the extent possible. G. Knauff is willing to meet with the consultant team to work through the accessibility of the Plan's outreach and engagement.

M. Bond asked about engagement and stressed the need to consider how information will be delivered, messaging is important. R. Jacobson answered that usually we don't even mention the term POCD because most people don't know what that is. We typically start with the question "what is important to you" and speak in laymen's terms. It's important to get into the issues and find out what's important and needed in the community.

M. Bond asked how does this Plan relate to all the other stuff that the City is doing. There are community and focus meetings happening all the time; how do we make sure we don't fatigue members of the community with all the meetings and overlap in topics discussed? It seems like City is collecting information, but the problems are not being resolved. Dean Mack, of the Economic Development Administration, suggested inviting Department heads to stakeholder meetings to ensure that the goals of the POCD align with their plans and initiatives. Carlos Eyzaguirre, of the Economic Development Administration, noted that the Board of Alders is guided by a legislative agenda and that Department Heads are always trying to tie back to those five legislative priority's. He suggested that those be guides for the POCD. Jacob asked how the five priorities were identified, and C. Eyzaguirre answered that they were formulated based on results from meetings and community surveys. There was a suggestion to also involve those who have done work already such as New Haven Rising which began as an ARPA grant but really turned into a community strategy. We need to be mindful of other plans and efforts and try to synergize with those efforts.

D. Henning asked for more information about the Co-Creation Teams. Rory explained that there will be six topic-based teams, that will meet three times for a total of up to 18 meetings.

B. Lovejoy asked if New Haven has adopted its Affordable Housing Plan. J. Robison replied that it was submitted to the State in January. B. Lovejoy suggested incorporating it into the POCD because it has teeth. He also noted that SCRCOG is in the process of updating the Regional POCD, and it would be great if the NHPOCD and Regional POCD were well aligned. He said that Connecticut is poorly positioned to go after federal funding because everything is on a micro level, he supports regional planning as much as possible.

M. Bond asked what the goals and limits of the Steering Committee members are. J. Robison answered that the main function of the Steering Committee will be to oversee the process and provide guidelines and feedback. D. Mack asked how many decisions will be made by Steering Committee? How are we identifying participants for Co-Creation Teams and other leadership opportunities—can Steering Committee provide input on this? Jacob answered that meetings will be infrequent, but City Plan will share resources with the Steering Committee and there will be opportunities to make decisions between now and next Steering Committee meeting.

R. Jacobson presented the draft branding for the Plan. General comments included:

- D. Mack pointed out color issue, noting that the City's style guide is rarely used
- B. Lovejoy noted that consistency in Plan names is important- suggested keeping Vision 2035 for consistency with previous Plan
- Overall thoughts are that "Master" Plan leaves a bad taste
- People seem to like "Forward Together" and "Vision 2035"
- Preference for the boxy, line drawing design with buildings and bikes; maybe make everything justified in alignment, people also liked the diamond with the four graphics
- Visual contrast important for accessibility

The meeting concluded and R. Jacobson noted that virtual meetings will be held moving forward. There were no comments on preferred days.