

**PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
SPECIAL MEETING – AGENDA
WEDNESDAY, October 29, 2014 – 7:00PM
NEW HARTFORD TOWN HALL – 530 MAIN STREET
MINUTES**

PRESENT: Chairman James Steadman (7:10PM), Ted Stoutenberg, David Krimmel, Dan LaPlante, Gil Pratt, Alternates Martin Post and Bob Moore; Land Use staff Steven Sadlowski and Glen Chalder, Planimetrics.

ABSENT: Alternate Peter Ventre.

OTHERS: Mrs. Donna LaPlante, New Hartford Town Clerk.

Vice Chairman Ted Stoutenberg called the meeting to order at 7:00PM. Mr. James Steadman assumed chairman duties upon his arrival. All regular members present were seated for the meeting. The proceedings were recorded digitally and copies are available in the Land Use Office.

1. Planimetrics – Plan of Conservation and Development Update – Demographics.

Mr. Stoutenberg welcomed Glen Chalder of Planimetrics. Mr. Chalder presented his recent work on Chapter 2 of the Plan of Conservation and Development, “*Conditions and Trends*”.

Mr. Chalder explained that the first section of this chapter, *Then and Now*, is a brief history of New Hartford and that not much has changed in this regard from the last time the Plan was updated.

Mr. Chalder identified the second section of the second chapter, *People*, as the area where he began to get into the census information and to detail population projections for the community. He recalled the unique situation that occurred in New Hartford in the 2000 census, where there appeared to be an undercount. He explained that the challenge from this is to determine how it affects the 2010 numbers. He opined that the 2010 census figures are in fact reliable. He explained to the commission that when he is preparing population projections, he assesses demographic trends that are affecting a community and what will happen if the trends continue. He stressed that his figures are projections and not predictions. The projections presented were based on review of forty years of trends, according to Mr. Chalder.

Cohort-Survival Projections were presented with estimates for 2020, 2030, and 2040. Mr. Chalder indicated that the projection numbers of the Connecticut State Data Center Projections were similar to the ones he calculated which lends confidence that Planimetrics is using the same methodology and same assumptions.

Mr. Chalder indicated that the birthrate since the recession hit in 2006, both in New Hartford and around the rest of Connecticut, has dropped off significantly.

Mr. Dave Krimmel commented that the information presented in this form is clearer, in his opinion, than how it was done previously and commended the work of Mr. Chalder.

Mr. Chalder then explained a bar graph he included entitled "New Hartford Population Change (1900-2020)". He suggested to the commission that they may want to narrow the range on this chart in the plan's final version. He pointed out that the Cohort Survival model that is used for the projections is weighted. He explained that this means that most weight is placed on the last ten years, less weight on the previous ten years, and even less weight on the ten years prior to that.

Mr. Chalder then addressed the section, *Natural Change*, which includes births and deaths, information from the Department of Public Health which is reported based on place of residence. He pointed out that over the last forty years births have exceeded deaths, resulting in a 48% of the growth during this span, a result of natural increase. The other significant point according to Mr. Chalder is that since 2005, the birth rate dropped off sharply.

Mr. Chalder explained the next section, *Net Migration*, which reflected that New Hartford tends to attract younger families with school age children. This section details net changes in age groups of who is moving in and who is moving out.

Mr. Chalder continued with *Age Composition* with what he described as population pyramids, using five year age groups that the census uses and details the number of people in these five year age groups by utilizing a horizontal bar. He described the baby boomers of New Hartford, (those born between 1945 and 1965), as the "golf ball going through our demographic snake", in terms of the overall impact, as this age group accounted for the largest population group. He pointed out that he finds this interesting as a planner because often communities are concerned with providing ball fields, recreational complexes and schools for children. He explained that community planning involves looking at how the age composition of the community has changed and will change and what that means in terms of community services.

Mr. Chalder directed commission members to charts reflecting the largest demographic group projected in 2020 will be residents aged 55 and over. Mr. Chalder reported that the demographic composition of the country as a whole are going to be so different than ever before and that it's important to consider as this group of baby boomers will be the largest group.

Mr. Ted Stoutenberg pointed out that there is no major industry in New Hartford and wonders where the employment is going to be for the migrants moving into town. Mr. Chalder responded that any time there is a flex point in the economy, as is the case with 2008, it is almost impossible to see it at the time and will only see it in hindsight. He agreed that there are some wildcards with New Hartford that could affect it significantly, such as gas prices. Mr. Chalder agreed that economic factors could indeed fundamentally change the projections and that maybe a sidebar in the Plan could be included.

Mr. Dave Krimmel opined that the older cohort of people is a demographic that the town should aim to keep as its residents and encourage them to stay in town.

Mr. Chalder mentioned that he always encourages municipalities to have at least one school site in reserve. He stated that it could be used for park land or a dog park but that a town should always have one. If one is not kept in reserve, it could be a very risky strategy to take as it could prove very expensive to obtain a site if one is ever needed, according to Mr. Chalder.

Discussion ensued over industry and growth and how assumptions made could drastically affect planning decisions.

Mr. Krimmel and Mr. Stoutenberg opined that the average growth population projections of 1.36% and 0.95% should not be included under the section *People*.

Mr. Chalder reviewed the *Housing* section. He pointed out what was deemed an obvious error in the census data in the 2000 Units Added figure of 49. Mr. Chalder also highlighted the small percentage of multi-family housing units in New Hartford.

Mr. Chalder noted that there have not been increases in employment since 1980 and also discussed median household incomes reflected in the section, *Economy*. He noted that the source of the data contained in "Median Household Income" should not be reflected as American Community Survey.

Mr. Chalder noted that the information that will be reflected under *Land Use, Zoning, and Development Potential* is being gathered by Mr. Steven Sadlowski through New England GeoSystems.

As Mr. Chalder and the commission discussed the *Fiscal Overview* section, the Business Tax Base figures were contemplated as Connecticut Economic Resource Center's (CERC) figure was lower than one Mr. Krimmel had gathered from the Assessor's office. Mr. Chalder opined that to be consistent, the data used should be from CERC.

Mr. Chalder indicated that the *Conclusion* section will be updated as all the information is obtained, including the data pending from New England GeoSystems.

2. Other Business Proper to Come Before the Commission:

No business was discussed.

MOTION: Mr. Stoutenberg, Mr. Post second, **to adjourn at 8:24PM; unanimously approved.**

Respectfully submitted,

Pamela A. Colombie
Recording Clerk