

**SALISBURY PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION**

**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

**June 5th, 2023 6:30 PM**

Remote Meeting by Live Internet Video Stream and Telephone

1

**Members Present:**

Cathy Shyer (Vice Chair)  
Marty Whalen (Secretary)  
Allen Cockerline (Regular Member)  
Dr. Danella Schiffer (Alternate)  
Debra Allee (Alternate)

**Staff Present:**

Abby Conroy, Director of Land Use  
Miles Todaro, Land Use Technical Specialist  
Dr. Michael Klemens, Senior Land Use Consultant

**Members Absent:**

Bob Riva (Regular Member)

2

3 **Brief Items and Announcements**

4 1. Call to Order / Establish Quorum

5

6 Vice Chair Shyer called the meeting to order at 6:32PM. Dr. Klemens is present as staff, Vice  
7 Chair Shyer will be serving as acting chair. Alternates Schiffer and Allee were seated as voting  
8 members. Regional Manager of Planning Debbie Lawlor was also present, representing Collier  
9 Engineering & Design.

10

11 2. Approval of Agenda

12

13 Motion: To approve the agenda.

14 Made by Cockerline, seconded by Riva.

15 Vote: 4-0-0

16

17 **Public Comment**

18 3. Public Comment - *Public Comment is restricted to items that are neither on the agenda*  
19 *nor the subject of any pending Planning & Zoning application or action and are limited to three*  
20 *minutes per person*

21

22 Commissioner Whalen and Chairman of the Salisbury Economic Development Committee (EDC)  
23 Janet Graaff joined the meeting at 6:35PM. EDC Chair Graaff explained that she was asked by  
24 her committee to look for changes made since the last time they viewed the study. Vice Chair  
25 Shyer asked if she had any comments for the public comment section, since this topic will be  
26 covered under agenda item 4. EDC Chair Graaff had no other comments.

27

28 There were no other comments from the public.

29

30 **Other Business**

31 4. Village of Lakeville Planning Study/ Colliers / Discussion of Draft Report

32

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33 Vice Chair Shyer asked that LUA Conroy and Dr. Klemens run this section of the meeting, given  
34 their greater familiarity with the study. Dr. Klemens explained that they'll be going through the  
35 report page by page and keeping track of any comments the Commission has.

36  
37 Commissioner Cockerline asked LUA Conroy if it would be possible to provide the  
38 Commissioners with printed copies of the study, which LUA Conroy confirmed.

39  
40 The Commission began reviewing the document. Planner Lawlor explained that they didn't look  
41 beyond the originally proposed study area, and that their recommendations were divided into  
42 five parameters: pedestrian and bicycle access and safety, accessibility and utility of public  
43 greenspace, traffic circulation, parking, and stormwater management. She also explained that  
44 the information on Lakeville's existing conditions was gathered both in-person and from a focus  
45 group with local residents.

46  
47 Vice Chair Shyer asked if the figure saying Route 44 is 8.83 miles within the Town of Salisbury  
48 included everything from the New York border. It was confirmed that this figure includes  
49 everything from the New York border to the Canaan border. The Commission decided to skip to  
50 past the rest of the "Existing Conditions" section.

51  
52 Vice Chair Shyer asked Planner Lawlor to explain the traffic data regarding trucks. Planner  
53 Lawlor clarified that the traffic data specialist on her team would be better suited to answer  
54 questions in this section, and she could take any questions back to them. Commissioner  
55 Cockerline expressed surprise that trailer truck traffic was only 1-1.5% of traffic. Vice Chair  
56 Shyer was surprised by the speed of traffic on Sharon Road.

57  
58 Planner Lawlor explained the next section, "Public Engagement Process", which describes the  
59 ways in which the public was engaged throughout the entire study process. Vice Chair Shyer  
60 asked how many responses to the online survey were received. Planner Lawlor answered that it  
61 was less than 30 online, however others filled out paper copies of the survey at the Charrette  
62 event. Vice Chair Shyer also asked if there was any negative sentiment from the respondents.  
63 Planner Lawlor answered that nobody had any negative comments about the process, but there  
64 were a lot of differing opinions about the topics of the study.

65  
66 Planner Lawlor explained that the recommendations were organized into related categories.  
67 She added that the study recommendations emphasized the historic significance of Lakeville.

68  
69 Regarding Community Field, Planner Lawlor explained that with some investment, it could be  
70 turned from just a field into more of a recreational asset for the town. She added that many  
71 comments were received expressing the need for bathrooms. Recommendations included a  
72 walking path, a multipurpose pavilion, and ties to Cannon Park. The principal recommendation  
73 was the addition of a municipal parking lot. Commissioner Cockerline asked if it would be  
74 possible to have pedestrian access to the Rail Trail from Farnum Road. Planner Lawlor answered

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75 that the high grade was a challenge but that there was a long-term recommendation for an  
76 overpass over Sharon Road, connecting it with the Train Station area. Commissioner Cockerline  
77 followed up asking whether the railroad facilities were historic and not able to be altered.  
78 Planner Lawlor responded that in general you can make changes as long as it's well  
79 documented. LUA Conroy added that these would be the mostly likely areas the town will be  
80 implementing short term projects. Commissioner Cockerline elaborated that it would be nice if  
81 there was Rail Trail access near the crosswalk on Farnum Road, to direct pedestrian traffic away  
82 from the vehicle traffic north of the gas station. Vice Chair Shyer asked how feasible an  
83 overpass would be. Planner Lawlor responded that it's an expensive project that would depend  
84 on funding sources, which is why they listed it as a long-term option. Dr. Klemens added that  
85 short term solutions may be completely within the Town's purview, whereas long term  
86 solutions may rely on permits from the State.

87  
88 Referring back to the Community Field parking lot, Planner Lawlor pointed out that a guard rail  
89 is also recommended to prevent people from driving onto the field itself. A gate could be  
90 included to accommodate necessary field driving for maintenance or other Town business. Dr.  
91 Klemens asked if she could elaborate on the recommended Rail Trail access in Community  
92 Field. Planner Lawlor pointed to the Community Field access from Pettee Street, which would  
93 direct traffic away from the Aquarion Property. She also pointed to the Rail Trail access near the  
94 tennis courts. There is currently a steep unofficial path to the Rail Trail in this location which  
95 Colliers recommends grading into an accessible and official access. A walking path around  
96 Community Field was also suggested, in part based on comments received from the public. An  
97 accessible playground area was also recommended near the proposed parking area. Vice Chair  
98 Shyer asked for clarification on what "par course" exercise equipment is. Planner Lawlor  
99 described them as exercise equipment stations along a path with information regarding how to  
100 use them.

101  
102 Alternate Schiffer asked for clarification on the restroom recommendation, and if similar  
103 facilities are common in Towns like Salisbury. Planner Lawlor responded that they're common  
104 in parks, and otherwise it depends on a number of factors like proximity to existing public  
105 restrooms.

106  
107 Planner Lawlor stated that many comments were received regarding the Rail Trail's surface.  
108 Many would like it to stay the way it is, and many others considered it too dangerous for  
109 bicycles. She added that their recommendation is topdressing it with a porous material. This  
110 would preserve the natural feeling while improving safety and meeting ADA standards. They  
111 also recommended signage and lighting. These amenities should be branded and implemented  
112 in a consistent way. Educational interpretive signage was also suggested.

113  
114 Planner Lawlor acknowledged the recent improvements to Cannon Park, but recommends that  
115 it be connected with the proposed Community Field path. This would provide a pedestrian  
116 connection from the field to Main Street. She also pointed out the recommendation that a

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117 striped walkway/bike lane be added along Sharon Road. This would provide a visual separation  
118 between vehicles and pedestrians. She added that there are a number of recommendations  
119 regarding this area surrounding Patco.

120  
121 The study concurred with the Railroad Study in recommending that the Railroad Station  
122 Building be moved back and turned around. This would allow for the creation of a pedestrian  
123 plaza in this area. They also recommended railroad themed design elements in the nearby  
124 intersection that would also serve to slow traffic.

125  
126 Various traffic improvements were recommended in the vicinity of the train station. These  
127 included more signage, directing traffic away from lower Ethan Allen Street, and a mini-  
128 roundabout. A designated trail along Factory Pond was also recommended, to separate  
129 pedestrian traffic to the Grove from the vehicle travel lanes. This could connect to walkways in  
130 Bauer Park, to make that area more inviting. Improving the edge of Factory Pond with native  
131 plantings would help filter stormwater runoff. This was one of the few areas where Colliers  
132 received any comments about stormwater runoff.

133  
134 Regarding Holley Street, Planner Lawlor pointed out the recommendation that a sidewalk be  
135 added. The Study identified a number of areas that had gaps in sidewalks. She also emphasized  
136 the recommendation that sidewalks be physically separated from the road in the form of a  
137 guardrail or grass. This gives pedestrians a greater sense of security and tends to slow traffic.  
138 Many of Lakeville's existing sidewalks, including on Millerton Road, do not have any separation  
139 from the road.

140  
141 Planner Lawlor explained that there was a lot of discussion in the Charette regarding traffic.  
142 There it became clear that the main issue was traffic speed. She explained that there are a  
143 number of ways to slow traffic. These include more signage, cars parked along the road, and  
144 narrowing the driving area. At the Charette it was also clear that crosswalks tend to be  
145 sufficient in Lakeville, however traffic speed can make them feel unsafe. Alternate Allee  
146 commented that she would like to see the lower speed limit areas extended. Planner Lawlor  
147 explained that in Lakeville this would be more involved than other towns, since the State sets  
148 the speed limits on state roads. Additionally, she believes someone has already begun the  
149 process of working with the State to change the speed limits.

150  
151 Commissioner Cockerline brought up the new state legislation allowing for automatic speed  
152 ticketing. He explained that it's only intended for certain areas like school zones, and has  
153 maximum ticket prices of \$50 and \$75. He believes it to be a first step and will change driver  
154 behavior. Alternate Schiffer and Commissioner Cockerline commented that Salisbury's State  
155 Trooper doesn't have time to monitor speed violations. Commissioner Cockerline added that it  
156 would help to be able to monitor remotely.

157

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158 At the intersection of 41 and 44, either an all-way stop, a roundabout, or full traffic signal  
159 control was recommended. She emphasized that the roundabout is the safest alternative and is  
160 designed in a way that forces speeds to be greatly lowered. Commissioners Cockerline and  
161 Whalen commented that they've never seen a roundabout on slope. Alternate Schiffer  
162 commented that she frequently drives through the roundabout in Great Barrington, and doesn't  
163 like it. She added that in her research she found that roundabouts reduce the potential for  
164 head-on collisions, but rear-end and side collisions are possible. She and many of her  
165 acquaintances look for ways to get through Great Barrington while avoiding the roundabout.  
166 Alternate Schiffer asked if Colliers has really looked broadly at the efficacy of roundabouts.  
167 Planner Lawlor responded that Colliers has absolutely looked broadly at the efficacy of  
168 roundabouts. Instances like Alternate Schiffer describe can be the result of people violating  
169 traffic rules. She added that modern roundabouts have new markings on the pavement that tell  
170 drivers who has the right-of-way. Some drivers haven't learned what the markings mean yet  
171 and ignore them.

172

173 Commissioner Cockerline made the observation that the Department of Transportation  
174 statistics for this intersection are very low, so what they feel is a large problem may not be  
175 reflected in the data. Planner Lawlor confirmed that in terms of volume and accidents that is  
176 what they see. She clarified that the data only accounts for recorded accidents. Many accidents  
177 go unreported, and the data also doesn't account for close calls.

178

179 Dr. Klemens referred back to Commissioner Cockerline's comments about the roundabout  
180 being on a slope. He feels that traffic should be calmed before the site of the potential  
181 roundabout. Planner Lawlor referred to the listed recommendation that traffic is calmed with a  
182 physical impediment west of the roundabout. She pointed out there is currently a sign  
183 requesting drivers to slow down, which is largely ignored. A "choker island" would narrow the  
184 lanes and force drivers to slow down in order to maneuver it. Secretary Whalen expressed  
185 concern that truck drivers will have difficulty with it. Planner Lawlor explained that it's meant to  
186 slow down the truck drivers. Secretary Whalen explained that truck drivers dislike the Great  
187 Barrington Roundabout because it's not big enough. He added that the curbs are angled so  
188 trucks can easily go over them if they don't go through the roundabout exactly right. Secretary  
189 Whalen emphasized his concern for a putting a roundabout on a slope. LUA Conroy commented  
190 that the roundabout in New Milford on Grove Street is designed flush to the road so trucks  
191 have the extra room to navigate. This configuration greatly improved the intersection which  
192 used to be a four-way stop, even for truck drivers. Commissioner Cockerline concurred, and  
193 cited another example in Northampton Massachusetts. He feels this roundabout works very  
194 well and greatly improved the intersection. Planner Lawlor emphasized that their traffic expert  
195 used turning templates and verified that there would be enough room for trucks. She also  
196 reminded the Commission that the roundabout is one of three recommended possible ways to  
197 improve the intersection.

198

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199 Chair Klemens asked if the roundabout itself would be on a slope. Planner Lawlor replied that  
200 the roundabout would not be on a slope, but the road to the west would have cars coming  
201 down a slope. Vice Chair Shyer expressed that she is in favor of the roundabout, but is not in  
202 favor of the choker island to the west on Route 44. She feels this area is already lacking in terms  
203 of shoulders for pedestrians and cyclists to safely use. She added that she would support the  
204 introduction of speed cameras, and her interpretation of the recent Lakeville Journal article  
205 about them indicated that they would be feasible.

206  
207 Vice Chair Shyer asked about the feasibility of conducting a traffic volume study in the summer,  
208 during peak traffic volumes. Planner Lawlor clarified that they were able to get traffic volume  
209 data from the state, since routes 44 and 41 are state roads. She directed Vice Chair Shyer to the  
210 appendix to view the raw data.

211  
212 In terms of parking, Planner Lawlor explained that they found the perception of parking was  
213 highly varied. The primary issue the study uncovered was the parking areas not being paved or  
214 striped. This can create the perception that there is not enough parking when in reality there is.  
215 One recommendation is that Zoning require parking be paved and striped, with few exceptions.  
216 Signage indicating public parking is also recommended. Maintaining paved and striped parking  
217 areas is also important for ADA compliance.

218  
219 Alternate Schiffer asked for clarification the statement about parking lost as a result of the  
220 Holley Street affordable housing project in the study. Planner Lawlor clarified that this was a  
221 concern brought up by some participants of the Charrette. Alternate Schiffer asked roughly how  
222 many participants had this concern. Planner Lawlor explained that it was a small group, mainly  
223 concerned with the distance between restaurants and parking. She explained that many did not  
224 know there would still be some public parking in that location after the project is completed. In  
225 addition, parking at Community Field would make a significant difference. Alternate Schiffer  
226 and Chair Klemens suggested this statement in the Study be qualified with that information, to  
227 prevent confusion.

228  
229 Planner Lawlor commented that quite a few residents at the Charette were in favor of parking  
230 at Community Field. Vice Chair Shyer asked if they could quantify how many spaces would be  
231 gained if the train station building were moved back and the area properly striped. Planner  
232 Lawlor clarified that the diagrams are visual, and not intended to show the exact number of  
233 spaces, but that figure could be calculated. Vice Chair Shyer asked why 36 spaces in Community  
234 Field was chosen. Planner Lawlor responded that their team felt that was the idea lot size when  
235 laid out. Secretary Whalen expressed concern that parking would take up too much of the field.  
236 Vice Chair Shyer concurred, and expressed that she is not in favor of parking in Community  
237 Field at this stage. Commissioner Cockerline expressed that he is highly in favor of parking in  
238 Community Field. Planner Lawlor explained that at the Charette and Focus Groups, the majority  
239 supported Community Field parking.

240

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241 Planner Lawlor reviewed the short-term traffic recommendations. These included reactivating a  
242 flashing speed limit sign on Millerton Road, moving the speed radar sign on Millerton Road,  
243 formalizing Main Street parking with striping, extending the 30MPH speed limit on Millerton  
244 Road, and consistent and recognizable enforcement. She commented that many residents  
245 supported the idea of more recognizable traffic enforcement, and asked if that enforcement is  
246 being done by the municipality in addition to the State. Commissioner Cockerline answered  
247 that it's the Resident State Trooper, who doesn't necessarily have the time. Secretary Whalen  
248 expressed that he believes the Trooper should have the time. Commissioner Cockerline asked if  
249 traffic is slowed near Town Hall where his car is often parked. Secretary Whalen confirmed, and  
250 Planner Lawlor added that residents expressed the same notion during the study.

251  
252 Planner Lawlor reviewed the "Intermediate Recommendations". These included a median  
253 island along Millerton Road, modifying the Ethan Allen Street/Holley Street intersection, and  
254 potential Ethan Allen Street/Holley Street one-way circulation. Long-term recommendations  
255 included modifying the route 44/route 41 intersection and modifying the Route 41/Ethan Allen  
256 Street/Farnum Road intersection. Planner Lawlor emphasized the pedestrian danger of the  
257 existing conditions at the latter intersection.

258  
259 The final category of recommendations was "Stormwater Management". Planner Lawlor  
260 explained that residents generally did not view this as a concern. The area between Factory  
261 Pond and Farnum Road was one area that was discussed. The study found that it could be  
262 improved with maintenance. She explained that overall, the recommendations in this category  
263 pertain to Low Impact Development and maintenance. She added that planting of native  
264 species along water edges can help by reducing erosion and slow stormwater flow. Rain  
265 gardens could also be added in low areas. Uncategorized general recommendations included  
266 shade trees and landscaping along major roadways, consistent village center branding, and  
267 amending the zoning code to make residential not permitted on the first floor in the  
268 commercial zone.

269  
270 Planner Lawlor explained the next steps and implementation. She explained that they'll be  
271 working on a smaller study of the Salisbury Village Center. A Recreation and Open Space  
272 Inventory study is currently underway. Additionally, Planner Lawlor explained the  
273 implementation process of recommendations from a plan like this one. Dr. Klemens asked if  
274 Colliers would be interested in bidding on part two of the RFP. Planner Lawlor confirmed, and  
275 added that the implementation work is a lot of what her company does. She went on to  
276 describe the process necessary to implement phase two of the plans. Vice Chair Shyer asked if  
277 the study could be approved by the Commission tonight. Commissioner Cockerline commented  
278 that he's in favor of voting to accept the report tonight, but would not endorse everything in it  
279 at the moment. He would first want to prioritize the recommendations together as a  
280 Commission. Planner Lawlor confirmed that that would be the next step. Vice Chair Shyer asked  
281 when the Recreation and Open Space Inventory would be complete. Planner Lawlor clarified

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282 that that study is a needs assessment, which has a different purpose. She explained that  
283 priorities could be set using the two studies together.

284 Chair Klemens summarized that the Commission can accept but not endorse the study tonight,  
285 and authorize Land Use Staff to work with Colliers on finalizing the report.

286

287 **Motion:** To accept the Collier's report of May 2023.

288 Made by Cockerline, seconded by Schiffer.

289 Vote: 5-0-0

290

291 Planner Lawlor expressed gratitude to the Land Use Staff for their assistance through the study  
292 process. Alternate Schiffer expressed her appreciation for the work the Collier's did on the  
293 study.

294

295 **Minutes**

296 5. Minutes of September 7, 2022

297 LUA Conroy clarified that the minutes are actually of September 6, 2022.

298 Line 44 – Change “matter to” to “matter at”

299 Line 64 – Change “roof, the” to “roof. The”

300 Line 114 – add “and noted that” before “the northern access”

301 Line 231 – Change “Whalen, they” to “Whalen. They”

302 Line 61 – Change “omitted” to “deleted”

303 Line 81 – Change “a continuation” to “the remainder”

304 Line 100 – add “a” after “including”

305 Line 101 – Delete “engineer” and “submitted”

306 Line 104 – Add “building” after “three”

307 Throughout – Ensure “lot one” is written consistently.

308 Line 155 – Change “conscientious” to “concerned”

309 Line 206 – Change “non-confirming” to “non-conforming”

310 Line 235 – Change “non-conforming” to “non-conforming”

311

312 **Motion:** To approve the minutes of September 6, 2022 as amended.

313 Made by Cockerline, seconded by Allee

314 Vote: 5-0-0

315

316 6. Minutes of September 19, 2022

317 Line 145 – Add “uses” after “residential”

318 Line 163 – Change “performed” to “conducted”

319 Line 102 – Add “Rock” after “Lime”

320 Line 116 – Change “confirming” to “conforming”

321



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322 Motion: To approve the minutes of September 19, 2022 as amended.

323 Made by Cockerline, seconded by Schiffer

324 Vote: 5-0-0

325

326 Agenda items 7-21 were skipped.

327

328 **Adjournment**

329 **Motion:** To Adjourn the meeting at 8:57pm.

330 Made by Cockerline, seconded by Schiffer

331 Vote: 5-0-0

332

333 Respectfully Submitted,

334 Miles Todaro

335 Land Use Technical Specialist