
Re: POCD September 3 Draft Comments

From fenbois@aol.com <fenbois@aol.com>

Date Sun 9/22/2024 9:59 PM

To David Bright <davidevanbright@gmail.com>; Land Use <landuse@salisburyct.us>; Miles Todaro <mtodaro@salisburyct.us>

Hello David:

We are holding the meeting on the 30th to see what people view as important or not. While you have strong feelings about certain issues and ideas, who is to determine "not within how people want to live in Salisbury". For example, from your perspective, you may wish to see the rail trail not change a bit—but for people (there is a waiting list of over 100 families) wishing to find an affordable house in Salisbury, some would consider that building a community of affordable houses (on the Pope Property for instance) a higher priority than leaving the rail trail as it is now. The POCD is about ideas and seeking a balance. From my perspective this meeting on the 30th is not about discarding ideas but adding additional ideas and perspectives. I hope I am making myself clear here. Michael

On Sunday, September 22, 2024 at 06:35:11 PM EDT, David Bright <davidevanbright@gmail.com> wrote:

Michael:

Thanks for your note, below. As stated, in our view, paving between the Library and Lakeville should not be done — and new vehicle bridge—yikes.

I find the Rail Trail just fine as is — I still enjoy walking our dog there. Yes. The brush should be cut back a bit and the path mowed better; not my fight. I appreciate the paving exception for Dresser Woods way north on a less frequented stretch of the Trail — not for access to Pope the most heavily used portion of the Trail.

I agree. Discussion of alternatives is good. I see the Commission's role to listen and make hard decisions for the POCD, ruling out approaches that are not within how people want live in Salisbury.

Thanks again for all of your work.

David

David E. Bright
davidevanbright@gmail.com
646 344-0791

On Sep 22, 2024, at 6:10 PM, fenbois@aol.com wrote:

Dear Joan and David:

Thank you for your thoughtful comments. I appreciate that you took the time to write this out. Your comments will be posted on the POCD comment page and will be discussed at the meeting. We welcome you via Zoom. Concerning the Rail Trail a portion will be paved to get to Dresser Woods--this was already approved by Town meeting. Likewise, a small portion could serve dual purpose entering the Pope Property from Library Street. No one is advocating paving huge stretches of the Rail Trail despite rumors to the contrary. The Rail Trail could use some pedestrian improvements. The POCD is not a dictatorial document, but a catalog of ideas that could be useful in the future. Some may well never be implemented. But at least they need to be thoughtfully discussed and not eliminated out of hand?

Michael

On Sunday, September 22, 2024 at 05:30:22 PM EDT, David Bright <davidevanbright@gmail.com> wrote:

Thanks for the opportunity to comment on the September 3 POCD Draft, and the work that has gone into this effort.

We regret that we are unable to join the September 30 meeting in person and hope to attend via Zoom.

Joan and David Bright

David E. Bright

davidevanbright@gmail.com

646 344-0791

<POCD Comments_September_21.pdf>

Joan H. and David E. Bright

September 21, 2024 To: Planning & Zoning Commission, Town of Salisbury, CT

Purpose

We are writing to encourage the Commission to revise two strategies/recommendations detailed in the September 3 draft POCD, “Sustainable Salisbury.” (We regret that we are unable to attend the September 30 hearing in person.)

POCD Draft Strategy/Recommendation 1: Paving the Rail Trail, Page 24

For 30 years, we enjoyed our Salmon Kill Road home located one house east of the Rail Trail. We walked south on the Rail Trail and relished the protected views over 27 acres of Salmon Kill watershed land to the subsequently preserved Dark Hollow Forest. We bicycled north on the Rail Trail to town for the morning papers; our kids bicycled to the Pharmacy for ice cream. On the Rail Trail between the Library and Lakeville, we met neighbors strolling; others walking their dogs. We even put our Nordic skis to good use on the Rail Trail.

Point of View. The mere suggestion in the draft POCD of a paved road on this beautiful recreational pathway is anathema to the idea of Salisbury village life conceived by a prior generation (albeit by chance resulting from the obsolescence of the railroad) in the same way that paving the Grantchester Heath foot path in Cambridge England would be immediately disallowed.

While we respect the professional responsibility of Collins Engineering and *Design to suggest(!)* POCD planning *alternatives* in general, it is inconceivable to us that any consultant with any appreciation for *good Design* who embraces sustainability precepts would recommend paving an area so loved by our citizens. Has Collins really studied the culture of our town?

Recommendation. We request respectfully that the Commission reject explicitly the Collins alternative detailed in draft POCD to pave the Rail Trail and eliminate this idea of paving the Rail Trail from the POCD document. A prior generation has already repurposed the Rail Trail from industrial use to defacto protection and peaceful recreational use. We should respect their good judgement.

Commission endorsement of any strategy that allows for the paving the Rail Trail, including as a requirement for the development of the Pope Property, is a strategic misstep. Paving is forever.

POCD Strategy 2/Recommendation: Village Design/Streetscape, Page 38

The POCD draft states: “Establish a cohesive, harmonious aesthetic within the village centers. Consider adopting design standards to promote a unified appearance of signage, seating, lighting, and other street furnishings.”

Point of View. Good design for Salisbury and Lakeville (hereafter, “Salisbury”) villages does not depend on a “cohesive harmonious aesthetic.” Again, have our consultants reflected on the culture of our town before recommending boilerplate language more appropriate to Cambridge, MA or Austin, TX?

In fact, the eclectic local character of our landmark residences, churches and library as well as local eateries, shops and municipal buildings—many of which are in the historic district, all of which reflect a vernacular New England sensibility—are *essential* to Salisbury’s “sense of place.” Point of fact: This eclecticism has evolved and endured, driven, for the most part, by *restraint* and practicality. Why, for example, “update” the classic Salisbury Post Office facade dimensional letters. Eclecticism contributes to Salisbury’s vibrancy and appeal.

Salisbury *does not* need to “define its brand” with “a unified appearance” (including graphic standards) grounded in seemingly clever design-of-the-moment syllogisms. Really? Generalized design idioms hidden behind an ill-conceived consultant-friendly marketing strategy have no place in Salisbury and will drive our town to the lowest common denominator for design. Do we really want Salisbury to become a Sturbridge Village-like environment? In response, we suggest that the POCD recommend prohibiting back lit and digital signage; up lighting of buildings and trees; and “temporary” car dealership-like “feather flag” pole signage. Of course, we *do need* to retain the tradition of event signage on the White Hart Green.

Recommendation. Include 2024 POCD language that calls explicitly for restraint. The Commission has a responsibility to move the POCD draft beyond generalizations for design standards. We recommend that the Commission embrace the following POCD “Village Design/Streetscape” strategy:

“Celebrate and preserve Salisbury’s eclectic architectural presence and public space. Implement design standards to enhance existing streetscapes that focus on natural materials and sustainable fabrication for sidewalks, curbs, signage, seating and dark sky appropriate lighting. *Prohibit over lighting streets; backlit lightbox signage; digital display signage; the up lighting of buildings and trees; and “temporary” “feather flag” pole signage.* Respectfully.