

STONINGTON ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT
COMMISSION
FEBRUARY 3, 2020

**DOWNTOWN PAWCATUCK
COMMUNITY
CONVERSATION
MEETING REPORT**

DOWNTOWN PAWCATUCK COMMUNITY CONVERSATION

The Stonington Economic Development Commission hosted a Community Conversation on January 14, 2020.


The forum was attended by about 75 engaged and enthusiastic residents and business owners – a great turnout!

Many great ideas were collected. This Meeting Report serves as a record of the meeting – and a way to continue the conversation.

Themes emerged that validate the ideas

The EDC thanks the Community for their engagement and looks forward to future ideas and input.

**Stonington
Community
Conversations**



Economic
Development
Commission

A Vision for Pawcatuck

DATE: **Tuesday, January 14, 2020**
LOCATION: **SPS District Administration Building, 40 Field St (former PMS)**
TIME: **6:00 p.m.**


Please join us in a Community Conversation to develop a Vision for Downtown Pawcatuck

Been through Downtown Pawcatuck lately? ***Things are looking UP!!***
The Town's 2015 Plan of Conservation & Development (POCD) enumerates goals to encourage and support vibrant villages (Chapter 8).
At this Community Conversation you will:

- **Participate in the EDC's primary area of focus:** Downtown Pawcatuck Revitalization Effort. What do we want Downtown Pawcatuck to look like?
- **Contribute Ideas:** Generate IDEAS that will lead to a VISION the Community is excited about. Community Input Needed!!

The interactive forum will focus on four areas: riverfront access, development of vacant properties, redevelopment of historic and other buildings, and the streetscape.

To develop a Vision for a future Pawcatuck, we must engage the community to understand **WHAT THE COMMUNITY WANTS** – that's where **YOU** come in!



This event is sponsored by the Stonington Economic Development Commission and is not a formal public hearing. Contact Dave Hammond at davehammond0203@gmail.com or 860-501-3727 (c) if you have any questions about this program.

COMMUNITY INPUT EXERCISE

- Attendees were asked “*What are Downtown Pawcatuck Strengths and Opportunities?*”
 - **COMMUNITY:** “*Gateway to CT*”, “*Pawcatuck Neighborhood Center*”
 - **LOCAL ECONOMY:** “*shopping and dining*”
 - **PLACEMAKING:** “*Pawcatuck River access*”, “*proximity to Westerly*”, “*highly walkable*”, “*historic buildings*”

- Attendees were asked: “*What are Downtown Pawcatuck’s Weaknesses and Areas for Improvement?*”
 - **PLACEMAKING:** “*create a distinct downtown that feels like a downtown*”, “*make Donahue Park more accessible*”, “*collaborate with Westerly*”
 - **COMMUNITY:** “*safety*”, “*more downtown activities and community events*”, “*address Elm Tree Inn issues*”
 - **INFRASTRUCTURE:** “*accommodate bicycles*”, “*better lighting*”, “*improve public transportation*”

GROUP DISCUSSION

DOWNTOWN PAWCATUCK “DESIGN PRINCIPLES”

Create a Sense of Community

Attractive
wayfinding
signage

Vibrancy

Walkability

Gathering places

Playground /
dog park

Cleanliness – trash
receptacles, weed
control

Attract New Development

People – increase
residential

Attractive storefronts

More housing:
smaller,
affordable

Blend Commercial
and residential

Lower carbon
footprint

Culture – art,
boutiques

Improve the Infrastructure

River access, boat landings

Public restrooms

Bicycle safety

Pedestrian bridge
over river

Adequate parking

Buried utilities

RIVER ACCESS IDEAS



- **PEDESTRIAN FRIENDLY:** *“riverfront boardwalk / link to Stillman / link to Mechanic St mills”, “pedestrian bridge at the end of Coggswell”, “benches”, “overlook points”, “fitness trail”, “visibility (safety)”, “adequate lighting (safety)”*
- **RIVERFRONT RELATED ACTIVITIES:** *“waterfire”, “kid’s activities”, “wildlife appreciation – information kiosks”, “food truck events”, “fun reasons to gather, e.g. giant chess set”, “river / downtown history kiosks”*
- **WATER ACCESS:** *“transient moorings”, “water taxi”, “kayak rentals / launch”, “Skeeter boat pavilion”*
- **INFRASTRUCTURE:** *“public restrooms”, “consider coastal resiliency”, “anticipate sea level rise”*

VACANT LAND IDEAS



- **RESIDENTIAL:** Grain: “apartments”, “new building reflects local character”; Jameson Ct: “multi-family micro-apartments”
- **COMMERCIAL:** Dahl: “mixed use / convenience store”, “food truck pod / farmers market”, “downtown parking”; Grain: “retail / services (less driving)”
- **CULTURAL:** Circus: “cultural events”, “performance amphitheater”, “children’s museum”;
- **PUBLIC SPACE:** Circus: “park / arboretum”, “preserve coastal resiliency”, “public restrooms”, “well-lit (safety)”; Jameson Ct: “playground / dog park”

REDEVELOP EXISTING BUILDING IDEAS



- **COMMERCIAL:** “conference space”, “shared office space”, “small market / convenience store”, “retail (Mechanic St mills)”
- **CULTURAL:** “museum”, “art studio”, “dance / theater”
- **LEASURE:** “restaurant / outdoor cafe”, “make bicycle-friendly”
- **RESIDENTIAL:** “mixed-age apartments”
- **SERVICES:** “human services provider”

DOWNTOWN STREETScape IDEAS



- **COMMUNITY:** *“community pride / property upkeep”, “address Elm Tree Inn issues”*
- **INFRASTRUCTURE:** *“whimsical crosswalks”, “waste management”, “bicycle station / rack”, “improve lighting, add benches, maintain sidewalks”, “wayfinding and signage”, “adequate business district parking”, “linkage to river access”*
- **PLACEMAKING:** *“encourage façade improvements”, “Liberty St beautification”, “more public art”, “more seasonal color, e.g. flags”, “Gateway to CT at CT-RI border on bridge”*
- **WALKABILITY / SAFETY:** *“better lighting – Donahue Park, crosswalks, Amtrak bridge”, “extend sidewalks to the west”, “dog facilities”, “public benches”*

DOWNTOWN PAWCATUCK REVITALIZATION

- Ideas have been collated and shared in this Meeting Report
- Watch for future Community Conversations!
- *THANK YOU FOR YOUR INTEREST, SUPPORT, AND PARTICIPATION !!*