



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS

Department of Administration
DIVISION OF PLANNING
One Capitol Hill
Providence, RI 02908-5870

March 10, 2016

Ms. Jane Weidman, AICP
Town Planner
4540 South County Trail
Charlestown, RI 02813

Subject: Draft Comprehensive Plan Review – Economic Opportunity Chapter

Dear Ms. Weidman,

Our office greatly appreciates the opportunity to work with our municipal partners in the drafting of community comprehensive plans and we are pleased to notify you that our office has completed its review of the draft Economic Opportunity chapter of the Charlestown Comprehensive Plan. The following constitutes our evaluation of the draft material that you provided to our office. Please be advised that this is a preliminary evaluation and does not constitute official findings.

The remainder of this letter is divided into two sections. Section I sets forth concerns with the draft material that relate to approvability issues as they relate to the requirements found in RIGL 45-22.2, the Comprehensive Planning Act (the Act). Additional guidance on fulfilling these requirements can be found in the Comprehensive Planning Guidance Handbook Series, which can be accessed at www.planning.ri.gov/statewideplanning/compplanning/handbook.php. Section II presents other suggestions that, although not directly related to approvability standards, could improve the plan's overall accuracy, readability, and usability if addressed.

I. State Approval Concerns

Comment 1 – The draft Economic Opportunity chapter does not appear to contain any concerns relating to meeting the requirements of the Act. However, please keep in mind that the last portion of the chapter, titled Goals, Policies, and Actions, will need to be reflected in a separate Implementation Program. Within the Implementation Program each action will need to be assigned a timeframe. Additionally, we strongly recommend that each action be assigned one or more responsible parties to further its implementation.

II. Comments and Suggestions to Enhance Accuracy, Readability, and Usability

Comment 2 - The draft plan notes that “The Town of Charlestown’s website (see agricultural preservation commission page), contains a list of 34 local farms...” We recommend the Town

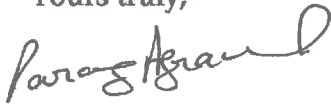
consider identifying the locations of the farms and which farm lands have been protected from development. An inventory of significant agricultural operations may be presented in narrative, list, table, or map form. As noted in *Guidance Handbook #7: Planning for Agriculture*, while not required, it is recommended that the inventory be presented as an "agriculture" map.

Comment 3 - Aside from agricultural investments, this chapter does not address additional investments in sustainable infrastructure or innovative technology. If there are relevant policies in the remainder of the plan, consider providing cross-references within this chapter.

Comment 4 - Consider adding a discussion to address the issue of education and workforce development.

As previously mentioned, this is a preliminary review. We have attempted to identify any approvability issues regarding the material provided but there are some items, such as requirements related to the plan's internal consistency and completeness, which cannot be fully evaluated until a full draft is furnished. At the appropriate time, we encourage the Town to provide us the final draft, incorporating revisions made to the current draft. As always, please feel free to contact Kevin Nelson, Supervising Planner with any questions, concerns, or requests that you may have at 222-2093 or at kevin.nelson@doa.ri.gov.

Yours truly,



Parag Agrawal, AICP
Associate Director

cc: Jared Rhodes
Kevin Nelson

