

Commission Members:

At your Public Hearing on September 4 for citizen input, I submitted a statement calling for changes to our Town Charter that would facilitate a more **formalized** and **transparent long range planning process** that covers the full scope of our Town government's responsibilities.

My statement concluded by saying:

The current Charter language **has not enabled a visible and effective multi-year planning process** for our Town. If this Charter Commission believes that Southbury citizens deserve and can benefit from a more formal, effective, and transparent longer range planning process, then I urge you to consider and **adopt more explicit enabling language** including specific deliverables and due dates.

To implement this recommendation please consider the following specific revisions:

1. Regarding stated First Selectman Duties, replace Section 402 paragraph 5(b) with the following:

Consolidate input from Town employees, Commissions, Boards, and Committees and the Public to identify the critical issues and opportunities to be addressed by Town Government over the next five years and present to the Board of Selectman an updated multi-year plan of proposed priorities for doing so by August 31 of each year.

2. Regarding the Board of Selectmen's responsibility for Town strategy and policy , add to Section 302 the following:

By September 30 of each year The Board of Selectmen shall review and approve an updated multi-year plan for the Town that identifies critical issues and opportunities and the key programs that Town Government will focus on to address them.

The Benefits

It is critical that Town Government **proactively engage key community stakeholders** in shaping the future of our Town. A formal and transparent multi-year planning process will help accomplish this objective by:

- Encouraging and acknowledging input from the citizens volunteering for Town Boards and Committees.
- Identifying critical issues and important opportunities.
- Informing and educating the citizens about these matters.
- Building consensus community support for important longer-term initiatives.
- Informing the annual budgeting process so that limited financial and staffing resources are allocated to support multi-year objectives.
- Tracking progress and ensuring accomplishment of key objectives.

Thank you for considering these revisions,

Fred Sell

9/20/24