

**TOWN OF BROOKLYN
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING**

The Planning and Zoning Commission will hold a public hearing on Wednesday November 2, 2022, at 6:30 p.m. via Zoom and in-person at the Brooklyn Middle School Auditorium, 119 Gorman Road Brooklyn, CT on the following:

- **ZRC 22-007:** Revisions to the Residential-Agricultural Zone to allow Glamping as a Special Permit Use with specific standards, including Section 2.B Definitions, Section 3.C.2.4. Permitted Uses in the RA Zone, and Section 6.T Standards for Glamping.

A copy of this proposal is available for review on the Town of Brooklyn website, Town Clerk's office and at the Land Use office. All interested parties may attend the meeting, be heard and written correspondence received. Written correspondence may be submitted in advance of the meeting to the Town Planner at j.roberson@brooklynct.org or at 69 South Main Street Brooklyn, CT 06234.

Please publish October 19 and October 26



**TOWN OF BROOKLYN
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION**

**REQUEST FOR CHANGE
IN
ZONING REGULATIONS**

Date August 31, 2022 Check # 12313 Application #ZRC 22-007
Application Fee: \$250 State Fee: \$60 Publication Fee: ~~\$600~~ 150
Public Hearing Date _____ Commission Action _____ Effective Date _____
Name of Applicant The Little Dipper Farm LLC Phone 202-669-3018
Mailing Address 499 Wolf Den Road Brooklyn CT 06234

REQUEST TO AMEND ARTICLE(S) 2; 3; 6 SECTION(S) 2.B; 3.C.2.4 New 7; New 6.T

If more than one Article is requested please attach separate sheet for each one

Section 2. Words and Terms

PARAGRAPH TO CHANGE Subsection 2.B Definitions OF THE ZONING REGULATIONS

REQUEST TO CHANGE:

Please see attached

REASON FOR REQUEST:

It is proposed that the Definitions be amended to include terms associated with the use of Glamping. The Definitions seek to explain and limit the definition of Glamping as may be allowed under the Regulations.

Note: A petition may be filed at the Hearing by 20% or more of the area lots included in such a change within 500 ft of the property under Section 16.5 of the Zoning Regulations

**TOWN OF BROOKLYN
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION****REQUEST TO CHANGE:****I. Proposed Text Amendment - Glamping**

[This language in [brackets] shall not be included in the Zoning Regulations and is provided simply to offer context and understanding. All other language shall be included in the respective amendments.]

[The following definitions are proposed to be incorporated into Section 2. Words and Terms, Subsection 2.B. Definitions, of the Town of Brooklyn Zoning Regulations.]

Glamping: In general, Glamping is used to describe luxury camping in unique and well-designed lodging structures located in areas that offer outdoor camping experiences with amenities such as beds, electricity, heat/ac, indoor plumbing, or food and beverage service usually not used when camping traditionally.

Glamping Site: A site or small unit of land not less than 1,250 square feet that consists of one (1) to three (3) Glamping Units. Glamping Sites must be associated with and within an approved Glamp-ground.

Glamping Unit: A lodging structure designed to be occupied for transient and recreational lodging. Such structures may include, but are not limited to, safari tents, yurts, teepees, hard-sided structures, small cabins, and other similar structures. Such Glamping Units must be part of the Glamp-ground operation and located on approved Glamping Sites. Glamping Units, like hotels, are not included in the definition of a dwelling, as defined in these Regulations.

Glamp-grounds: An area or facility consisting of two or more Glamping Units, with customary and incidental accessory uses.

Glamp-grounds, Accessory Uses: Customary and incidental uses to Glamp-grounds include, but are not limited to, food and beverage service, events, retreats, classes, passive and active recreation and related facilities, bath houses, maintenance facilities, and staff accommodations.



**TOWN OF BROOKLYN
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION**

**REQUEST FOR CHANGE
IN
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Date August 31, 2022 Check # 12813 Application #ZRC 22-007
Application Fee: \$250 State Fee: \$60 Publication Fee: \$600/50
Public Hearing Date _____ Commission Action _____ Effective Date _____
Name of Applicant The Little Dipper Farm LLC Phone 202-669-3018
Mailing Address 499 Wolf Den Road Brooklyn CT 06234

REQUEST TO AMEND ARTICLE(S) 2; 3; 6 SECTION(S) 2.B; 3.C.2.4 New 7; New 6.T

If more than one Article is requested please attach separate sheet for each one

Section 3.C. RA Residential-Agricultural Zone,
Subsection 3.C.2.4
PARAGRAPH TO CHANGE _____ OF THE ZONING REGULATIONS

REQUEST TO CHANGE:

Please see attached

REASON FOR REQUEST:

It is proposed that Glamp-grounds and Glamping be included in the Table of Uses to be allowed by Special Permit (PZC)

Note: A petition may be filed at the Hearing by 20% or more of the area lots included in such a change within 500 ft of the property under Section 16.5 of the Zoning Regulations

[Section 3.C. RA Residential-Agricultural Zone, Subsection 3.C.2.4. shall be amended to establish the use by including the following in the table of uses:]

7. Glamp-grounds and Glamping	Special Permit (PZC)
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**TOWN OF BROOKLYN
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION**

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REQUEST TO AMEND ARTICLE(S) 2; 3; 6 SECTION(S) 2.B; 3.C.2.4 New 7; New 6.T

If more than one Article is requested please attach separate sheet for each one

Section 6. Use-Related
PARAGRAPH TO CHANGE Provisions OF THE ZONING REGULATIONS

REQUEST TO CHANGE:

Please see attached

REASON FOR REQUEST:

It is proposed that a Regulation be added defining standards for Glamp-grounds and Glamping as uses in the RA Zone.

Note: A petition may be filed at the Hearing by 20% or more of the area lots included in such a change within 500 ft of the property under Section 16.5 of the Zoning Regulations

[Amend Section 6. Use-Related Provisions to include a new subsection as follows:]

6.T. Glamping
6.T.1 Purposes
The intent of this regulation is to allow for Glamp-grounds and Glamping as principal uses in the RA Zone. The aim is to encourage tourism, agritourism, and economic development, while ensuring the Glamp-grounds and Glamping activities and accommodations are of such size and character to protect the public health, safety, and welfare of the community.
6.T.2 Standards
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The minimum lot size for a Glamp-ground is 125 acres.2. The Glamp-ground parcel shall have 400 feet of street frontage3. No Glamping Site/Unit shall be located within 300 feet of the fronting street that provides access to the Glamp-ground facility.4. No Glamping Site/Unit or Glamping related building shall be within 200 feet of a property line.5. The density of Glamping Sites shall be one site per suitable acre. A suitable acre is defined by the Connecticut Department of Public Health regulations for Family Campgrounds as dry land available for unit site development—dry land meaning land not designated as wetlands or watercourse.6. Glamping Sites shall be designed at a minimum of 1,250 square feet and Glamping Sites designed to accommodate two or three Glamping Units shall have an additional 250 square feet for each additional unit. No more than 50% of Glamping Sites shall be designed to accommodate more than one Glamping Unit and no Glamping Site shall be designed to accommodate more than 12 persons.7. Glamping Units shall not exceed 18 feet in height, including the raised permanent platform.8. All Glamping Units, at a minimum, shall be designed for three-season use and shall made of high-quality durable materials.9. All Glamping Units shall be installed on raised permanent platforms no less than 6 inches off the ground. Any Glamping Unit that is manufactured on wheels shall be installed on the raised platforms with the wheels removed.10. Glamp-grounds shall provide menu-style restaurant food service, including a commercial kitchen.11. The primary access driveway to the Glamp-ground shall be 22 feet wide for the first 100 feet to provide adequate turning for emergency vehicle access. Internal drives shall be a minimum 12 feet wide.12. Occupancy for Glamping Units shall be transient, and no Glamping Unit shall be rented to the same guest for more than 14-consecutive nights or a total of 60-nights in a 12-month period.13. Up to five structures may be provided for Glamp-ground staff accommodations on-site.14. Sufficient solid waste facilities shall be provided. All such solid waste facilities shall be screened and secured from wildlife access.15. Maximum occupancy for the Glamp-ground shall be a total 250 persons including both lodging and event guests.16. The parking requirements for a Glamp-ground shall total of 1.75 parking spaces per Glamping Unit. Parking shall be provided in designated areas within 500 feet of Glamping Sites. A minimum of five (5) parking spaces shall be provided at lobby/check-in facility.17. All lighting shall be dark sky compliant.

18. As part of food and beverage service, the service of alcohol is permitted in accordance with permitting and service requirements of the Connecticut Department of Consumer Protection, Liquor Control Division.
19. As part of any application for Site Plan (Section 9.C) and Special Permit (Section 9.D), the applicant shall submit architectural information, elevations/renderings (or photographs of similar building) of proposed building, including the identification of texture, color, and type of building materials to be used.
20. The application for Site Plan (Section 9.C) and Special Permit (Section 9.D) shall locate each Glamping Site, noting the size of the Site in square feet, the number of Glamping Units on each Site, and total occupancy for each site. In addition, the height of each Glamping Unit shall be provided on the plans.
21. The design of the Glamp-ground facilities shall comply with ADA requirements.
22. The design and operation of the Glamp-ground shall comply with the Connecticut Department of Public Health regulations for Family Campgrounds (Section 19a-2a-29 of the *Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies*).
23. Wastewater systems shall comply with the Connecticut Public Health Code.
24. Potable Water Systems shall comply with the Connecticut Public Health Code
25. All construction of buildings, structures, and Glamping Units shall comply with the Connecticut State Building Code and Connecticut State Fire Prevention Code.

The Little Dipper Farm LLC
499 Wolf Den Road
Brooklyn CT 06234



September 1, 2022

Town of Brooklyn
Planning and Zoning Commission
4 Wolf Den Road
PO Box 356
Brooklyn CT 06234

Re: Request for Change in Zoning Regulations
The Little Dipper Farm LLC

To the Town of Brooklyn Planning and Zoning Commission:

I am the Managing Member of The Little Dipper Farm LLC. The Little Dipper Farm LLC is the owner of parcels in the Town of Brooklyn and supports the application.

I am authorized to sign the acknowledgement and support of the application on behalf of The Little Dipper Farm LLC.

Very truly yours,

Venus Corriveau

Venus Corriveau, Authorized
Managing Member
The Little Dipper Farm LLC



Little Dipper Farm

Proposed Zoning Text Amendment:
Glamp-grounds and Glamping in the RA (Residential- Agricultural) Zone

September 1, 2022

Prepared for:
Little Dipper Farm, LLC

GOMAN+YORK

Prepared by:
Donald J. Poland, PhD, AICP
SVP & Managing Director, Urban Planning & Strategy
Goman + York Property Advisors, LLC
1137 Main Street
East Hartford, CT 06108
dpoland@gomanyork.com
www.gomanyork.com

**Proposed Zoning Text Amendment:
Glamp-ground and Glamping in the RA (Residential-Agricultural) Zone**

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September 1, 2022

Michelle Sigfridson, Chair
Town of Brooklyn
Planning & Zoning Commission
4 Wolf Den Road
P.O. Box 356
Brooklyn, CT 06234

RE: Little Dipper Farm – Text Amendment

Dear Chairman Sigfridson:

I submit this report as expert testimony for the proposed zoning text amendment application to allow Glampgrounds and Glamping in the RA Zone. The application is aimed at enhancing and diversifying the allowable uses associated with Little Dipper Farm. Tourism, hospitality, and outdoor recreation have been growth industries for decades. While tourism and hospitality suffered during the peak of the pandemic, they are rebounding and anticipated grow at similar rates as pre-pandemic. Outdoor recreation experienced accelerated growth because of the pandemic—we, as a society, are seeking out and engaging in more outdoor activities than ever before. Furthermore, tourism, hospitality, and outdoor recreation are being transformed by social-cultural changes in consumer behaviors. Most notably, the rise of the experiential economy. Today's consumers don't simply seek out products and services, they seek out and want experiences that engage their passions and enthusiasm. It is the experiential economy that has given rise to agritourism and the Little Dipper Farm, as a place "where sustainable farming meets outdoor adventure."

Traditional agricultural, as you are aware, suffered for decades with the shift from the small family farm to the large commercial farm. For most Connecticut farms and communities, this shift was devastating. Today, changes in social-cultural behaviors and perspectives—our growing passions for sustainability, traditional practices, outdoor activities, fresh and local foods, and our want of interactive experiences has unfolded new opportunities in agriculture, tourism, hospitality, and outdoor recreation. The rise of agritourism is the direct result of these changes in our wants, passions, and enthusiasms. Most important, agritourism has carved out a new and economically viable space for small-scale, family owned and operated, sustainable local farms—a great opportunity for rural community to maintain their agricultural heritage while creating economic development.

The Little Dipper Farm offers an interactive experience the combines sustainable agriculture with outdoor activity, hospitality, wellness, education, and an escape from everyday life. While agritourism has prospered in Connecticut, most agritourism is focused on the day-tripper—the two or three hours visit to the farm to engage in various activities. The Little Dipper Farm, while embracing the day-tripper, has designed a model of agritourism focused on immersion. Glamping, is an integral component of this agritourism model, allowing guests to immerse themselves in the daily life of farm, to enjoy the passive recreation of walking trails, stargazing, and other activities to fulfill their passions and enthusiasm. Glamping makes this immersion possible, allowing guests to experiencing the joys and wonders of camping in the outdoors and under the stars, while

lodging in the luxurious comforts of custom-built safari tents and similar structures that provide modern comforts.

The Glamp-ground and Glamping use is integral to providing the immersive experience, ensuring vibrancy (or critical mass), and the economic vitality that will assist in sustaining the Little Dipper Farm. However, allowing the Glamp-ground and Glamping use will not only benefit the Little Dipper Farm, the Glamp-ground and Glamping use will benefit the community and the Town of Brooklyn. At nearly 600 acres, the economic prosperity of the Little Dipper Farm will ensure the land remains primarily in agricultural use continuing the tradition of local agriculture. In addition, the Little Dipper Farm, including the Glamp-ground and Glamping use, will provide economic development activity that is consistent with rural-agricultural character of Brooklyn.

This report presents the proposed text amendment and provides an analysis of the text amendment application considerations—the Comprehensive Plan of Zoning and the Plan of Conservation and Development that the Commission must consider when reviewing a text amendment application. I look forward to discussing this report further with you and the Commission, as I will be available at the public hearing(s) to present this report and to answer any questions you or the Commission may have. I thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully submitted,



Donald J. Poland, PhD, AICP
SVP/Managing Director, Planning & Strategy

I. Proposed Text Amendment - Glamping

[This language in [brackets] shall not be included in the Zoning Regulations and is provided simply to offer context and understanding. All other language shall be included in the respective amendments.]

[The following definitions are proposed to be incorporated into Section 2. Words and Terms, Subsection 2.B. Definitions, of the Town of Brooklyn Zoning Regulations.]

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[Section 3.C. RA Residential-Agricultural Zone, Subsection 3.C.2.4. shall be amended to establish the use by including the following in the table of uses:]

7. Glamp-grounds and Glamping	Special Permit (PZC)
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[Amend Section 6. Use-Related Provisions to include a new subsection as follows:]

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25. All construction of buildings, structures, and Glamping Units shall comply with the Connecticut State Building Code and Connecticut State Fire Prevention Code.

II. The Zoning Text Amendment Application Considerations

The Town of Brooklyn Zoning Regulations, in Section 9.E. Text Amendment Application, subsection 9.E.4. Decision Considerations, states in item 3, In making its decision the Commission shall:

- a. consider whether the text amendment will be in accordance with a comprehensive plan (the overall scheme of the zoning map and these Regulations), and
- b. take into consideration the Plan of Conservation and Development, prepared pursuant to CGS Section 8-23.

The following is a discussion, analysis, and findings related to the proposed text amendment to allow Glamp-grounds and Glamping in the RA Zone with due consideration for the comprehensive plan of zoning and the plan of conservation and development.

Comprehensive Plan of Zoning

In Connecticut, the zoning regulations and zoning map, as a collective document, are recognized as the Comprehensive Plan of Zoning. The Comprehensive Plan of Zoning sets forth the community's future development plan and provides property owners with a *reasonable expectation* for the present and future use of land within the specified zoning districts. This is important to understand when considering an application for zone change (or text amendment) because such changes to a zoning district should be *reasonable in nature* and should not *drastically change the character of the district or area*, nor should the changes be contrary to the *reasonable expectations of property owners*. That said, it is also recognized that communities evolve and change over time, and the Planning and Zoning Commissions must have the ability to accommodate change through amendments to the Comprehensive Plan of Zoning.

Our analysis finds that the proposed zoning text amendment to allow Glamp-grounds and Glamping in RA – Residential-Agricultural is consistent with Brooklyn's Comprehensive Plan of Zoning. The primary reason for this finding is that "the RA Residential-Agricultural Zone is intended primarily for agricultural uses and for low

density residential use” (Zoning Regulations, Sec. 3.C.1. Purpose, p. 44). The RA Zone allows a variety of agricultural, residential, institutional, and other uses—many of which uses are inherently (or could be) of greater density and intensity than the proposed Glamping use. For example, multi-family developments allow approximately 4 dwelling units per acre where there is no public water or sewer, a density and intensity of use that is far greater than the proposed Glamp-ground use at one unit per two acres. In addition, the Glamping use is like residential uses, as the Glamping Sites/Units provide shelter, accommodations, and domestic activities—as do residential dwellings. Furthermore, in the context of the Little Dipper Farm and agritourism, the symbiotic relationship between the Glamping and the immersive experience of the farm, makes the Glamping use consistent with the agricultural aim of the RA Zone. Therefore, it is my professional opinion, the proposed application for a text amendment to allow Glamp-grounds and Glamping in the RA zone meets the intent and purpose of the RA Zone and requirements for approving a zone change (text amendment) application. Based on the review and findings, *I find that the proposed zoning text amendment application is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan of Zoning.*

Plan of Conservation and Development

When considering a zoning text amendment application, in addition to reviewing the application for consistency with the Comprehensive Plan of Zoning, the Commission must also consider the Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD). The POCD is a policy document that is advisory, and the Planning and Zoning Commission is not *bound to the policies and recommendations of the Plan*. However, the Commission should *review and consider* the recommendations and policies contained within the POCD that relate to the zone change (text amendment) and how the proposed change relates (or not) to the POCD.

The POCD, first and foremost, is a land use plan. That means the primary objective of the POCD is to plan for the spatial organization, density, and intensity of existing and future land use. In doing this, the POCD considers the demographic, social, economic, and environmental characteristics of the community to inform the land use policies. Planning for the future land use allows the community to further plan for the secondary objective of the POCD, planning for the public infrastructure and community facilities needed to support future land uses.

This understanding of the POCD, as a land use plan and public infrastructure plan, reveals the big picture nature of the POCD and exposes the limits of the POCD to conceptualize the specifics and nuances of any given development or zone change application. Unfortunately, the big picture nature of the POCD also makes it easy to cherry-pick specific POCD policies and recommendations that are either consistent or inconsistent with a specific application. Therefore, when reviewing a specific land use application against the POCD, I typically seek to frame the review with two general questions. First, did the POCD planning process and/or does the POCD as adopted conceptualize this kind of development in this general area of the community? Second, does the application and development generally forward the goals and objectives of the Plan?

Based on my review of the Town of Brooklyn 2011 Plan of Conservation and Development, the RA Zone, and the location where the applicant intends to utilize the proposed amendment for a Glamp-ground and Glamping use, it is evident the POCD did not conceptualize such as use in any locations. That said, it is my professional opinion that the proposed text amendment is consistent with the general objectives and policies of the Plan of Conservation and Development. While the POCD did not conceptualize this specific use or the location, the review of the POCD did not reveal any direct conflicts with the thematic areas of consideration or the policy recommendations of the POCD. In fact, the review revealed the proposed text amendment is consistent with the

general sentiment of the POCD and specific objectives and recommendations. For example, the following are statements from POCD that related to the efforts of the Little Dipper Farm and the text amendment to allow the Glamp-grounds and Glamping use:

- A vibrant, viable agricultural industry is needed to maintain Brooklyn’s farming heritage... (p. 8)
- Promote economic and environmental sustainability of agriculture... (p. 18)
- Identify future innovative opportunities for farming additional lands... (p. 19)
- Brooklyn Residents rate Tourism/Heritage businesses as important (27.6%) and very important (30.0%) (p. 8-14 Resident Survey).
- Generate maximum growth of the Grand List (p. 22).

Therefore, I *find that the proposed text amendment forwards the sentiment and objectives of the Brooklyn Plan of Conservation and Development.*

Statement of Qualifications – Expert Witness

Donald J. Poland, PhD, AICP: I am an urban geographer and professional planner with over twenty-seven years' experience in land use planning, community and economic development, and market and development feasibility. I have worked in public, private, non-profit, and academic sectors as a municipal planning director, zoning enforcement official, planning consultant, executive director/CEO, and as a university lecturer and visiting professor in human geography, urban planning, urban studies, and tourism.

I earned my PhD in the Department of Geography, *Cities and Urbanization* program at UCL, London, England. My doctoral dissertation explored the remaking of urban space through the utilization of urban-ecological theory and metaphors to better understand how places change. I also earned a Master of Science in Geography, concentrating in planning, from Central Connecticut State University (CCSU) and a Bachelor of Arts degree, majoring in both Psychology and Geography, from CCSU.

As a planning professional, I am a member of the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP) and was a Certified Zoning Enforcement Official (CZEO). I have been accepted as an *expert witness* in the areas of *land use planning, neighborhood redevelopment, and community development* in the United States District Court, Eastern District of Louisiana. I have also been accepted as an expert witness in the Circuit Court of St. Louis County, State of Missouri. Over the course of my career, I have held the positions of Zoning Enforcement Official for the Town of East Hartford (1996-1998), Director of Planning and Development for the Town of East Windsor (2000-2004), and Executive Director/CEO for the Neighborhoods of Hartford, Inc. (2004-2008).

Since 2008, I have operated a boutique planning consulting practice and have worked on assignments in 19 states and approximately 150 local and regional jurisdictions. This work includes post-Katrina planning, zoning, and redevelopment strategies in St. Bernard Parish, Louisiana; an HUD NSP-2 application and reinvestment strategy for Venango County, Pennsylvania; zoning regulation modernization and updates as part of the 2016 Comprehensive Plan for Canton, Ohio, Canton, Ohio; a downtown economic investment strategy for Oswego, New York, and countless municipal planning and zoning assignments in Connecticut. In addition, I have also represented dozens of real estate developers before public agencies for commercial, residential, industrial, and mixed-use development projects—including market research, financial feasibility, project viability, and municipal fiscal impact analysis.

I am a Past-President of the Connecticut Chapter of the American Planning Association (CCAPA) and Past Chairman of the CCAPA Government Relations Committee. I have also served on APA's Chapter Presidents Council, the Executive Committee for the CT Association of Zoning Enforcement Officials, the Board of Trustees for the CT Trust for Historic Preservation, the Board of Trustees for the Bushnell Park Foundation, and was a public member of the State Board of Examiners for Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors. In addition, I have assisted the CT General Assembly's Planning and Development Committee with bill screening and drafting legislation. I also participated in the creation of the American Planning Association's development of a *smart growth policy guide* and was a member of the National Delegates Assembly (for the *Smart Growth Policy Guide*).

As an academic, I have taught over a dozen courses in human geography, urban planning, and tourism at Saint Joseph University, Manchester Community College, Central Connecticut State University, the University of Connecticut, Sacred Heart University, and Trinity College. I held the position of *Visiting Lecturer in Public Policy, Graduate Studies Program* at Trinity College, Hartford, CT and *Associate Professor, Tourism and Hospitality*, at CCSU. I hold the position of *Visiting Associate Professor in Urban Studies, Graduate Studies Program* at Trinity College, Hartford, CT. I was awarded the CT Homebuilders 2003 Outstanding Land Use Official Award and am a 2004 alumnus of the Hartford Business Journal's Forty Under Forty leaders.
