

# Mixed-use Village Plan Is A First

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**North Stonington —** The proposal before the Planning and Zoning Commission to create a floating, mixed-use village district is unlike other applications the commission has seen.

For some, like commission Chairman G. Russell Stewart III, Milltown Commons LLC's proposal to create a New England Village Special Design District was a compromise.

"We're starting to see a lot of things that we haven't seen before," Stewart said Thursday at the commission meeting.

He said that if the developer's mixed-use village plan didn't happen in North Stonington, something else would take its place.

"I think when you look at the alternative, it's scary," Stewart said.

The overlay zone would be implemented within a one-mile radius of the Route 2 rotary.

The Milltown Commons village that developer Alan Pesch is hoping to create with brothers Robert and "Skip" Hayward would be on 187 acres of land by the rotary.

For commission Vice Chairwoman Vilma Gregoropoulos, the application was "full of holes" and, if approved, would add "a ridiculous amount of density which (the applicants) have done nothing to deserve."

She said the commission had duties beyond simply ensuring that the text-amendment proposal was correctly written.

"There are major planning issues," Gregoropoulos said. "We are a Planning and Zoning commission. Let's look at those."

Commission member Elaine Boissevain highlighted some of the benefits having the Milltown Commons village would have on the town, including adding diversity to the types of housing offered in town.

Conceptual plans for the Milltown Commons village show two village areas, each centered around a village green. Proposed uses are apartments, single-family homes and multifamily units, a medical center, retail shops, grocery stores and hotels. The project has been debated in public hearing.

Deliberations by the commission continued late Thursday.

The applicant's attorney has said the commission would review first a master plan and then special permits for specific development proposals. Boissevain said the multistep review process would ensure that the commission had control of what was developed in the village district.

"The commission can demand high quality," Boissevain said.

*North Stonington*