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Chester, Clinton, Cromwell,
Deep River, Durham, East Haddam,
East Hampton, Essex, Haddam,
Killingworth, Lyme, Middlefield,
Middletown, Old Lyme,
Old Saybrook, Portland, Westbrook

LOWER CONNECTICUT RIVER VALLEY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMITTEE

APPROVED MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING

Monday, February 26, 2018 – 7:00 p.m.

Lower Connecticut River Valley Council of Governments Conference Room
145 Dennison Road

Members:

Chester:	Vacancy
Clinton:	Alan Kravitz *
	Vacancy
Cromwell:	Alice Kelly
	Chris Cambareri
Deep River:	Bruce Edgerton *
	Tony Bolduc *
Durham:	Frank DeFelice *
	Joe Pasquale
East Haddam:	Crary Brownell
	Lou Salicrup
East Hampton:	Michael Kowalczyk *
	Vacancy
Essex:	Alan Kerr *
	Sandra Childress *(7:20)
Haddam:	Stasia DeMichele
	Raul deBrigard * (7:32)
Killingworth:	Stephanie Warren *
	Alec Martin *
Lyme:	Vacancy
Middlefield:	Vacancy
Middletown:	Beth Emery *
	Vacancy
Old Lyme:	Harold Thompson
	Vacancy
Old Saybrook:	Kenneth Soudan
	Karen Jo Marcolini
Portland:	Dan Bourret *
	Elwin Guild
Westbrook:	Bill Neale *
	Marie Farrell

* Members Present

Others Present:

Mary Stone

Staff Present:

Sam Gold, AICP
Judy Snyder
Torrance Downes
Dan Bourret

1. CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL / SEATING OF ALTERNATES

Chairman Frank DeFelice called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The members introduced themselves and attendance was taken.

2. AMENDMENTS TO AGENDA / APPROVAL OF AGENDA

There were no amendments to the agenda.

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Frank DeFelice asked if anyone from the public wished to speak. There was no one at this time.

4. REFERRAL – NONE

5. PRESENTATION: WETLAND MAPPING PROJECT DESCRIPTION, DAN BOURRET

Dan Bourret spoke about the RPIP grant the RiverCOG was awarded for doing a wetland mapping project. This grant was funded through a portion of the hotel and car tax. A RPIP technical committee was formed with people throughout the region and Malone and MacBroom were chosen as the consultants for this project. The main idea of this mapping project is to assist land use offices and give the region a better overall wetland mapping data set. What is being created will not be a seamless universal wetlands layer for the whole region, but will be better than what the towns have today. Vernal pools will be identified separately and will be mapped where the wetlands areas of the vernal pool are, as well as, provide a point layer indicating there is a vernal pool there. Every year the identification of wetlands should become more complete because new surveys are submitted to the towns for parcel updates.

**6. LEGISLATION DISCUSSION: SAM GOLD, AICP
GOVERNOR'S TOLL PROPOSAL**

Sam Gold said he submitted testimony regarding Raised House Bill 5172 "An Act Concerning State Agency Data Management and Processes, the Transmittal of Town Property Assessment Information and the Suspension of Certain Regulatory Requirements" (see attachment #1).

Mr. Gold said that the COG's regional parcel project that we did in addition to creating a digital parcel map for all the towns and for some towns that didn't have anything we also did a survey to actually line up all the towns. Prior to this project the towns may have had a digital parcel map, but they overlapped

each other or there were gaps. This bill does a number of things but we commented on the provision in the raised bill that would require municipalities to submit digital parcel map data with updated assessor's data on an annual basis to the regional council of governments and then for the COGs to annually create and submit a report regarding their compliance. The bill does not make any additional funds available to the municipalities, the COGs or OPM.

Sam Gold spoke on the proposed Governor's Bill #5046 "An Act Concerning the Sustainability of Transportation Projects" (see Attachment #2) regarding tolling in the state. Mr. Gold also distributed copies of CTDOT's Special Transportation Fund (STF) presentation (see attachment #3). This fund is funded by the gas tax. He said that the DOT is coming to the COG meeting on Wednesday to present this plan. The DOT's fix for this are tolls and a higher gas tax. The tolls are a longer term fix because it will take time to establish the tolls in the state. Environmental studies need to be done, impacts need to be figured out, and a lot of decisions need to be made. An increase in the gas tax could be done immediately and would bring money into the state immediately.

Due to the problems with the special transportation fund the Governor has announced an indefinite postponement of approximately \$4 billion of projects. Probably the most noticeable project cut in our region is the elimination of the lights on Route 9 in Middletown. Other projects that would be cut are the Clinton train station, the Route 81 bus route, and the \$30 million town road aid road money that towns get to repair their roads would also be withheld. Mr. Gold stated that to his knowledge a public hearing date has not been set. This bill would authorize the DOT to have electronic tolling, there would be no tolling commission or any body that would oversee the DOT. According to this there is no limitation to what roads would be tolled, that's not been decided yet. The question is how this would affect our federal highway revenue. In our neighboring states they receive about \$90/capita in federal highway money, we receive about \$147/capita. Also not addressed is how the rates would be set, whether there would be any sunset period. Originally when the toll roads were set up the tolls were meant to pay off the bonds with the assumption that when the bonds are paid off the tolls would go away. Usually that doesn't happen. He said he has not seen anything in writing but there is something called congestion charging. That means the state can charge higher fees when traffic is at its heaviest and keep the federal money.

The DOT is currently doing a series of public hearings on services cuts and fare increases for the rail line, Shore Line East and their proposal is to eliminate weekend service and eliminate off peak rail service on weekdays. They are also proposing a 15% cut in funding to our transit districts statewide, but not the state CTTransit bus companies.

7. APPROVAL OF JANUARY 22, 2018 MINUTES

Upon motion of Bill Neale, seconded by Alan Kravitz, it was unanimously voted to approve the LCRVRPC minutes of the January 22, 2018 meeting.

8. MISCELLANEOUS

Frank DeFelice discussed where we are in completing the plan. Sam Gold said that Jon Curtis is having some health issues and the progress in writing the plan has slowed. He will be reassigning some of the sections to other staff members.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Upon motion of Bill Neale, seconded by Beth Emery, it was unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 9:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Judith Snyder
Recording Secretary

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