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[www.rivercog.org](http://www.rivercog.org)

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, September 26, 2016

7:00 p.m.

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

#### Members:

Chester: Vacancy  
Clinton: Alan Kravitz \*  
Jack Scherban \*  
Cromwell: Alice Kelly  
Enzo Faienza  
Deep River: Bruce Edgerton \*  
Durham: Frank DeFelice \*  
Joe Pasquale  
East Haddam: Crary Brownell  
Lou Salicrup  
East Hampton: Meg Wright \*  
Michael Kowalczyk \*  
Essex: Alan Kerr \*  
Haddam: Stasia DeMichele  
Raul deBrigard \* (7:02)  
Killingworth: Stephanie Warren \*  
Alec Martin  
Lyme: Vacancy  
Middlefield: Robert Johnson  
Middletown: Beth Emery \*  
Vacancy  
Old Lyme: Harold Thompson  
Old Saybrook: Kenneth Soudan \* (7:05)  
Karen Jo Marcolini \*  
Portland: Vacancy  
Westbrook: Bill Neale  
Marie Farrell \*

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\* Members Present

**Staff Present:**

Sam Gold, AICP  
Judy Snyder  
Torrance Downes  
Nate Hougrand  
Jon Curtis

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

Chairman DeFelice called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The members introduced themselves and attendance was taken. Westbrook alternate Marie Farrell was seated for Bill Neale and Karen Jo Marcolini was seated for Ken Soudan. Ms. Marcolini was unseated when Ken Soudan arrived at 7:05 p.m.

**2. AMENDMENTS TO AGENDA / APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

*Upon motion of Marie Farrell, seconded by Jack Scherban, it was unanimously voted to approve the agenda.*

**3. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

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

**4. APPROVAL OF JULY 25, 2016 MINUTES**

*Upon motion of Bruce Edgerton, seconded by Stephanie Warren, it was voted to approve the minutes of the July 25th, 2016 meeting.*

**5. REFERRAL - Middletown Zoning Code Reorganization**

Torrance Downes stated that he initially felt that this referral was a reorganization of sections of the Middletown Zoning Code and not a proposed text amendment. After speaking with Beth Emery, Mr. Downes will discuss this issue with the town planner Michiel Wackers. Bruce Edgerton stated that if the changes are not of inter-municipal impact the members do not have to review the regulations.

Alan Kravitz made a motion, seconded by Bruce Edgerton to request the redraft of the original document with the proposed text side by side for review. Discussion continued.

Frank DeFelice asked Beth Emery to send each member a link to the old plan and the proposed new plan. Bruce Edgerton said that when Mr. Downes receives a copy of the plan he can make a determination of whether or not the Committee needs to review it. Mr. Downes will request an extension if necessary, and if there is a substantial change he will send the link to the members

for their review and discussion at a future meeting. Raul deBrigard asked Ms. Emery if a public presentation is planned. Ms. Emery believes there will be.

*Upon motion of Alan Kravitz, seconded by Bruce Edgerton, it was unanimously voted to approve the amended motion to have Torrance Downes send a letter for the hearing to be held open and to request additional information from Middletown and if the staff finds there is possible inter-municipal effects then to inform the RPC members.*

## **6. UPDATE ON STATUS OF REGIONAL PoCD, DISCUSSION OF HOUSING CHAPTER**

Jon Curtis said that he and the staff are working on different sections of the plan and a chapter will be reviewed at each meeting. He will e-mail the chapter to the members before the meeting for their review and comments. He suggested that a list of possible stakeholders for each section be included in the review. Sam Gold mentioned that realtors and bankers for the housing section may provide needed expertise in the area of mortgages and diverse alternatives for types of housing available. Raul deBrigard suggested that the RiverCOG town planners meet to discuss what is happening in their towns. Mr. Gold said that meetings with the town planners could be scheduled for the start, middle and completion of the plan for their reviews. Ken Soudan said to check with other regions that have already been through this process.

Frank DeFelice said that an outline of the chapters has been revised and he will e-mail that to the members. He commented that goals should be stated at the end of every chapter and to have alternatives to affordable housing such as trailers, smaller dwellings, detached accessory apartments, and granny pods. Jon Curtis stated that Dan Bourret will make a templet to make all the maps uniformed. He said every chapter will include a paragraph devoted to resiliency such as in the Housing section “Defining a Resilient Housing Market”.

Stephanie Warren asked for a timeline of when to expect draft sections. Jon Curtis stated he will send that information to the members shortly.

Jon Curtis stated that the cost of affordable housing depends on where you live. In Connecticut the medium income is much higher than other places in the country making the threshold for affordable housing much higher.

Jon Curtis stated his definition of resilience is: “Resilience is the capacity to successfully adjust, adapt, and flourish in response to current and future challenges. This entails not only the ability to bounce back after a crisis but also to "bounce forward" to a more successful condition. Building resilience requires leveraging existing strengths, addressing deficiencies and implementing preventative and positive strategies. A resilient region is one that proactively recognizes and works to address the external threats and internal stressors that it currently faces, as well as those it is likely to experience in the future.”

## **7. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Sam Gold updated the Committee on the USDOT proposed rule effective MPOs and turning over the definition of the region from the Town's CEOs to the US Census Bureau. The Census Bureau's methodology of how they define an urbanized area and how they attribute that urbanized area to a central city could change every 10 years. He stated that the RiverCOG/MPO was created two years ago and this rule would now divide our MPO three ways.

Mr. Gold stated that the comment period closed August 26<sup>th</sup> with comments overwhelmingly against this rule from 43 states, over 200 MPOs, congressmen, senators, state legislators, and towns. He said that weeks went by and then he heard from the National Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations that the USDOT was going to go ahead and implement this without any changes. Then last week it was learned that the public comment period is reopening for 30 days. The RiverCOG had requested 180 days to allow for a needs study to be conducted on this regulation and this would also move into the next administration. Mr. Gold stated that the USDOT, in particular, is looking for comments regarding the cost for the implementation of this regulation. The RiverCOG having gone through this have estimates, which are quite significant. The amount of staff time spent on bringing Midstate and the CT River Estuary together into one agency was very costly. He said that he would e-mail a templet letter to the members for them to submit to USDOT since the comment period was open again.

Mr. Gold stated that last week he received an invitation to speak at the National Transportation Summit and the invitation came from the Secretary of Transportation. He and the RiverCOG Chairman Bonnie Reemsnyder are going to Washington and hopefully will be able to meet Secretary Fox. They are also hopeful to speak to Representative Joe Courtney.

## **8. MISCELLANEOUS**

There were no items at this time.

## **9. ADJOURNMENT**

*Upon motion of Bruce Edgerton, seconded by Stephanie Warren, it was unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 p.m.*

Respectfully submitted,

Judith Snyder  
Recording Secretary