



145 Dennison Road
Essex, CT 06426
860/581-8554 FAX: 860/581-8543
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, December 19, 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 * (7:10)
Killingworth: Stephanie Warren *
Alec Martin *
Lyme: Vacancy
Middlefield: Robert Johnson *
Middletown: Beth Emery *
Vacancy
Old Lyme: Harold Thompson
Old Saybrook: Kenneth Soudan *
Karen Jo Marcolini
Portland: Vacancy
Westbrook: Bill Neale *
Marie Farrell

* Members Present

Staff Present:

Sam Gold, AICP
Judy Snyder
Torrance Downes
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.

2. AMENDMENTS TO AGENDA / APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Upon motion of Bill Neale, seconded by Alan Kerr, 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 NOVEMBER 28, 2016 MINUTES

Upon motion of Stephanie Warren, seconded by Bruce Edgerton, it was unanimously voted to approve the minutes of the November 28, 2016 meeting.

5. REFERRAL

There were no referrals at this time.

6. REGIONAL POCD: PRESENTATION OF PLAN FORMAT TEMPLATES FOR MEMBER CONSIDERATION

Frank DeFelice introduced Jon Curtis. Mr. Curtis showed the members two versions of templates that could be used for the plan. He explained Version 1 as being more detailed in each chapter starting with: 1. Introduction; 2. The Regional Character; 3. Infrastructure - Built Environment; 4. Natural Environment; 5. Economic Development; 6. Land Use, Growth Patterns and Zoning; 7. Housing; 8. Municipal Focus Areas; 9. Best Management Practices in Planning; 10. Major Recommendations for Implementation; and, Appendix. Within these chapters there would be existing conditions, trends, goals, and objectives for each topic including recommendations.

In Version 2 the chapters would be 1. Introduction; 2, History, Existing Conditions, and Trends; 3. Analysis; 4. Vision, Goals and Objectives; 5. The Future of the Lower CT River Valley; 6. Implementation; 7. Evaluation; and, 8. Appendix. Mr. Curtis explained that instead of each topic

being handled in its own chapter these topics would be handled in subsections. As an example, Chapter 2 would include only the history, existing conditions, and trends. The goals and recommendations would not be in that section. Chapter 3 would analysis the region, such as what the strengths are, weaknesses are, what opportunities we have in this region. Chapter 4 would be one uniformed vision for the region. He feels that when completed there will be 5-7 goals identified, and then develop specific objectives for each one. Chapter 5 would envision the future of the region. Chapter 6, the Implementation, would be a breakdown of what was in the previous chapter. Chapter 7 Evaluation, would show how well the suggestions line up with the goals and objectives in Chapter 4. Sam Gold asked Mr. Curtis to elaborate. Mr. Curtis stated that to diversify the housing stock there would be specific objectives that would insure every town has accessory dwelling units addressed in their zoning code. Chapter 5 would address going to meet with each town's planner and review the plan with them, then determine if this plan meets these goals and objectives. Chapter 8, the Appendix, will include more detailed data by town.

Mr. Curtis said that with Version 2 there is more of a "bigger picture" to understanding the regional ideas and Version 1 gets into more of the "nitty gritty" by town. He said that he still wants to include all the numbers from the towns but in Version 2 that information would be in the appendix. He said that Version 1 could have 25 goals where version 2 may have 5-7.

Bill Neale stated that he likes the State's plan layout. Sam Gold said when finished the RiverCOG's Regional POCD should be a policy document in the vicinity of 100 pages with links to websites for additional information. Mr. Gold also stated that a separate document could be produced for the appendix. Ken Soudan asked who is going to read this. Mr. Gold said that land use commissions and developers are the most important audience. Jon Curtis said that the aim is to make it reader friendly so anyone could read it. Raul deBrigard stated he wants the plan to have relevant information. Frank DeFelice asked the members for a decision to which version was preferred. Beth Emery asked if the goals would be in version 2 and if the members should rank the topics. Mr. Gold stated that the goals will be in both versions, but where the goals are located will be different in both. The organization of the information will be different in each version. Mr. Neale asked if people reading this document will be looking for data or information. Stephanie Warren agreed, what type of information is the reader looking for. Mr. Gold stated that the plan when completed in 2017 will not be rewritten again until 2027. He said that most people when viewing this document on line will click on the line to look at the tables. Mr. DeFelice stated that he would like to see interesting tables with the text. Mr. deBrigard said he is looking for answers in the document. An example would be affordable housing in Haddam. Mr. Soudan thought the plan should state which towns and areas can accommodate affordable housing. An idea would be to group areas together where certain uses are best suited. Mr. Gold said that the goal tonight is to make a choice between the versions and Mr. Curtis can begin on the template. Ms. Warren likes version 2 if more details can be added, but not as many details as version 1. She said she is not 100% committed to version 2 and the members agreed. Mr. Soudan likes the consistency but feels that goals need to be developed. Mr. DeFelice said that the goals that will be stated in the plan will be the goals the members think are most importation to the region. Alec Martin said this is one region but the towns are all a little different from each

other so it cannot be a blanket goal. Mr. Gold said there are really three sub-regions included in the RiverCOG, the shoreline, green forestry areas, and the city or urban areas and each will be addressed in the plan. Mr. Curtis stated that this plan will not be a one size fits all that the aim is to keep the audience interested.

7. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Sam Gold stated that he has some good news. First, the USDOT's rulemaking decision on MPO reform came out last Friday. It was only changed in two areas. The first is a waiver provision has been added where if all the MPOs and the Governors agrees the region can get a waiver from this rule. However in the State of Connecticut it would be difficult because of the small size of the state and MPOs cross state lines. Secondly this does not go into effect until after the 2020 census is completed, which will be 2022 and then there is a two-year grace period making this rule effective in 2024. There are several issues that other states also have a problem accepting. Mr. Gold feels that possibly within the next eight years this will be repealed.

Mr. Gold spoke about the proposal from the State Department of Public Health to consolidate the existing public health offices and create eight county public health departments. The RiverCOG held a joint meeting with the health directors in the region to discuss this issue. If approved this would have a huge impact on each of the town's budget and taxpayers.

Mr. Gold told the members that the State of Connecticut has not had a county form of government since 1957. However, if new language was adopted by the legislators it would permit the COGs to apply for grants not available to them without county status.

Mr. Gold said that the Tier 1 Environmental Impact Study report for a high speed rail line from Washington to Boston came out on Friday. The study showed the high speed rail line going from Old Saybrook to Old Lyme to Rhode Island. This is a concern to many towns particularly Old Lyme because it would go thru the Old Lyme Historical District. Mr. Gold said there is a possibility that this may be tunneled from Old Saybrook to Four Mile Road in Old Lyme. Raul deBrigard asked for a website to look at this report. Mr. Gold said it is www.necfuture.com.

Mr. Gold said that CCM will be releasing a report looking at the different regional efficiencies and municipal efficiencies and getting ahead of the state in its ideas and shared services. The three areas in the report are: recommendations, revenue diversification, and cost control measures.

8. MISCELLANEOUS

Raul deBrigard asked if a monthly schedule of topics and section completion dates on the POCD were available. Jon Curtis will be working on that shortly and will send it out to the members.

Sam Gold announced that there will be public outreach workshops which will be scheduled soon. He said that the COG is also doing a resiliency and recovery project which includes modeling of inland flooding. He said they looked at doing public outreach for part of that project and use that public outreach to assist in the public outreach for the Regional POCD. When the proposals were received it was realized that the consultant that was best for the modeling wasn't necessarily the best for the outreach. So now two contracts are being done, one with FHI for a series of workshops and the other with Ninigret for the modeling.

Ken Soudan commented on something that was said about affordable housing in the small towns. He felt the committee has an opportunity here to say one town may not be the best for increased housing, but it may be better suited for industrial use.

Frank DeFelice wished everyone a happy holiday season.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Upon motion of Bill Neale, seconded by Bruce Edgerton, it was unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Judith Snyder
Recording Secretary