



# Lower Connecticut River Valley Council of Governments

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## Regional Planning Committee

### LOWER CONNECTICUT RIVER VALLEY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMITTEE

#### MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING

Tuesday, April 14, 2020 – 5:00 pm

Virtual Zoom Meeting

#### Members:

Chester	Mike Sanders *
Clinton	Alan Kravitz *
	Martin Jaffe
Cromwell	Chris Cambrieri
	Anthony LaCava *
Deep River	Bruce Edgerton *
	Tony Bolduc
Durham	Frank DeFelice *
	Joe Pasquale
East Haddam	Crary Brownell
	Lou Salicrup
East Hampton	Michael Kowalczyk *
Essex	Sandra Childress *
Haddam	Raul deBrigard *
	Stasia DeMichele
Killingworth	Alec Martin *
	Stephanie Warren *
Lyme	Mary Stone *
Middlefield	Vacancy
Middletown	Beth Emery *
	Kellin Atherton
Old Lyme	Harold Thompson
Old Saybrook	Thomas Cox *
	Karen Jo Marcolini
Portland	Vacancy
Westbrook	Bill Neale *
	Marie Farrell

\*Members Present

#### Staff Present:

Sam Gold  
Torrance Downes  
Eliza LoPresti  
Megan Jouflas  
Margot Burns

## RiverRPC

**Guests:** Adam Tecza & Rory Fitzgerald, Fitzgerald & Halliday (FHI)

**1. Call to Order**

Chairman DeFelice called the meeting to order at 5:02 pm. The meeting was conducted via video and conference call due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

**2. Roll Call**

**3. Seating of Alternates**

Sandra Childress (Essex) and Anthony LaCava (Cromwell) were seated.

**4. Adoption of Agenda**

*Mr. Kravitz moved to adopt the agenda, Ms. Stone seconded. Vote was unanimous in favor.*

**5. Public Comments – None**

**6. RPOCD Presentation**

**a. Kickoff Presentation**

Adam Tecza of Fitzgerald & Halliday (FHI) gave a kickoff presentation for the Regional Plan of Conservation & Development (RPOCD - attached).

There was discussion on the role of the RPC members when the time comes to bring presentations to each town. Mr. Gold stated that the member is there as a liaison, to get the word out about the RPoCD, and to disseminate draft documents. There was also discussion on how this may happen while in-person meetings aren't occurring. The presentations may possibly be done remotely.

RPC members were asked to review this presentation and the following presentation and send comments to Ms. LoPresti by Friday, April 17.

**b. Review of Municipal Introduction Presentation for Approval**

Mr. Tecza presented the draft Powerpoint municipal introduction (attached).

There was discussion on whether there should be a preface about why we are doing another survey. Mr. Tecza noted that the results from the previous survey will be included in the final plan and it is worth mentioning that previous public engagement had been done. Mr. Kravitz noted that some of the survey questions represent a level of engagement that people may not have (i.e. questions on whether the respondents were on a municipal board, an elected official, etc.). There was discussion on the questions asking about the attractiveness of environments, with Mr. Kravitz suggesting using photos as visual preference questions.

Mr. Martin stated that the emphasis of the presentation should be on findings and how each town is integral to the region rather than the survey. Mr. Tecza explained that this presentation is meant more for an introduction though there is an opportunity for another presentation on findings at a point in the future.

Mr. deBrigard suggested that the spoken words during the presentation more closely match the wording on the slides and that initials are avoided (ex: some people might not know what the COG is). He also mentioned that there are two different levels of information; one for a resident and another for those more technically savvy about their town. For example, most residents probably don't know about existing cooperation within the region. He also suggested mentioning up front that there will be another presentation forthcoming. Ms. Stone also noted that the presentation was very good for RPC members but assumes too much knowledge for a member of the general public. The main purpose is to engage the public and get them involved and make them feel they've had the opportunity to voice their opinions but most people know nothing about regional cooperation.

Mr. Tecza noted that there seems to be a larger question of the audience the presentation is being given to. Mr. DeFelice read from the invitation letter that was sent to towns and noted that land use bodies of the towns were invited along with town officials. There may be some members of the public as well. Mr. deBrigard suggested using the audience noted in the invitation letter as part of the survey question options.

Mr. Gold suggested explaining what is meant by "regional" as it may have different meanings in each town or people may not know. He also added that there is a rough draft of an existing conditions report currently being worked on. There could be a recorded presentation on that report that gets distributed.

Ms. Emery suggested that the survey questions be written so that there is enough information that a person taking the survey will understand what is being talked about if they haven't read any other information. She asked if a different set of survey questions could be listed if the respondent checks that they are a municipal employee vs. a member of the public.

Mr. Sanders suggested that towns that have already done a survey when they updated their POCD could share those results. Questions could be reoriented about how towns fit within the region. Mr. Gold suggested a list of towns be included and respondents could include the towns they consider to be their "region". Mr. Sanders also discussed the idea of talking about a post-Covid world in the plan – how the region could change due to changes in retail, tourism, travel, etc.

Ms. Stone suggested reading the existing POCDs before going into a town so that the town has indication that homework has been done. She used the example of going into Lyme and talking about economic development (which the town does not want), and to know the values and priorities expressed in the town's plan. Mr. Tecza noted that Ms. Jouflas has put together a matrix of existing POCDs and it will be part of the existing conditions plan. Mr. Gold suggested mentioning in the introduction that each town's POCD has been read.

RPC members were asked to share regional photos that they have taken to be included in the plan. Every town will be represented photographically in the plan.

Mr. Gold asked that when members are reviewing the presentation they keep in mind the purpose is to introduce the concept of a regional plan, to think about who the audience is, and what the result we want to obtain from the presentation is.

## **7. Adjournment**

*At 6:36 P.M. Mr. Edgerton moved to adjourn the meeting; second by Ms. Emery. Vote was unanimous in favor.*

Respectfully submitted,  
Eliza Lopresti