



Lower Connecticut River Valley Council of Governments

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Regional Planning Committee

LOWER CONNECTICUT RIVER VALLEY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING

Monday, August 24, 2020 – 7:00 pm

Virtual Zoom Meeting

Members:

Chester	Mike Sanders *
	Cindy Lignar *
Clinton	Alan Kravitz *
	Martin Jaffe
Cromwell	Nick Demetriades *
	Anthony LaCava *
Deep River	Bruce Edgerton *
	Tony Bolduc
Durham	Frank DeFelice *
	Joe Pasquale
East Haddam	Crary Brownell
	Lou Salicrup
East Hampton	Michael Kowalczyk *(at 7:40)
Essex	Sandra Childress
Haddam	Raul deBrigard *
	Stasia DeMichele
Killingworth	Alec Martin *
	Stephanie Warren
Lyme	Mary Stone *
	Humphrey Tyler *
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

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Margot Burns

Guests: None

1. Call to Order

Chairman DeFelice called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm. The meeting was conducted via Zoom.

2. Roll Call

3. Seating of Alternates

None

4. Adoption of Agenda

Mr. Neale moved to adopt the agenda, Mr. Martin seconded. Vote was unanimous in favor.

5. Public Comments – None

6. Approval of Minutes of Past Meetings

Ms. Stone moved to approve the July 27, 2020 meeting minutes; second by Mr. Neale. Vote was unanimous in favor. Abstaining members: Mr. Cox, Mr. Edgerton, & Mr. Demetriades

7. Referrals – None

8. RPOCD Update

a. Municipal Meeting Update

All but two of the municipal meetings have occurred. The meetings will be reviewed and comments and feedback will be compiled into a draft summary.

There was discussion on some of the topics discussed during the meetings with Mr. Martin raising a discussion about transportation, housing, and garbage as a fast-emerging issue for the region. Mr. Tyler asked about research and solutions on relevant topics; Mr. Gold mentioned that subcommittees could be formed to research existing best practices.

General goals, policy implementation and regionalization as a result of plan recommendations were discussed.

b. Draft Documents

The goal is to have the existing conditions report in draft form after the municipal meetings are complete. The contract with FHI is on hold right now, Mr. Gold discussed that OPM will most likely let us use carry-over money to do more work in-house and to hire new staff.

9. Storm Recovery/Electrical Grid Resiliency

Storm Isaias and the length of recovery was discussed. A lot of work and lessons learned because of prior storms seems to have been lost, possibly because of the purchase of Eversource and subsequent movement of headquarters to Massachusetts. Senator Needleman has called on the CEO of Eversource to step down. A possible recommendation for the RPOCD may be to endeavor to create a local electrical utility or discuss hardening of infrastructure. Mr. Gold will work on writing

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testimony that address these issues and include in the RPOCD recommendations, input from stakeholders in municipalities and will focus on the plans and communication systems.

10. Affordable Housing Proposed Legislation

Mr. Gold's feeling is that this proposed legislation needs to be discussed during a long session with public input rather than having it get pushed through in a short session as this is a change to the way P&Z commissions work. The stated intent of the bill is to lower the cost of housing therefore allowing for more desegregation in the state. RPC members received the full proposed bill. There was a suggestion that we hold a special meeting only on this topic. Mr. Gold will forward an executive summary of the bill to the RPC.

11. Miscellaneous: State, Regional or Local Planning Issues

Ms. Burns reported that the individual town annexes for the multi-jurisdictional natural hazard plan update are complete and awaiting comment from each town. A full draft of the document should be ready by the third week in September.

A letter recognizing former RPC member Chris Cambrieri, of Cromwell, will be created.

Ms. Stone discussed short-term rentals in Lyme. As other towns have dealt with this topic recently, it was discussed that some sort of listserve could be set up for pertinent issues.

Mr. Martin asked for an update on the Transit Integration Study; Mr. Gold reported that there was an underwhelming response to the survey and more public input is needed.

Mr. Gold reported that some of the RSG funding is being held hostage by OPM until RiverCOG creates a plan to regionalize PSAPs, though most of our towns belong to regionalized PSAPs already. Discussion on regionalization of this and other services was briefly discussed.

Mr. Edgerton brought up food trucks in Deep River and is looking for information on how other towns have dealt with this. If any towns have information that can be disseminated through Mr. Downes or Mr. Gold.

12. Adjournment

AT 9:02 P.M. Mr. Neale moved to adjourn the meeting; second by Mr. Martin. Vote was unanimous in favor.

Respectfully submitted,
Eliza LoPresti