



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, March 25, 2024 – 7:00 pm

Virtual Zoom Meeting

Members:

Chester	Carlie Dailey *
Clinton	Lawrence Edwards *
	Eddie Alberino
Cromwell	Nick Demetriades
	Anthony LaCava
Deep River	Tony Bolduc *
Durham	Frank DeFelice *
East Haddam	Crary Brownell
	Debbie Langdon *
East Hampton	Michael Kowalczyk
Essex	Carey Duques *
Haddam	Raul deBrigard
Killingworth	Alec Martin *
	Stephanie Warren *
Lyme	Mary Stone *
	David Lahm
Middlefield	Paul Pizzo
Middletown	Beth Emery *
	Nathaniel Spencer
Old Lyme	Harold Thompson *
	Howard Margules *
Old Saybrook	Douglas McCracken *
	Michael Bender *
Portland	Chantal Foster *
	Bob Ellsworth
Westbrook	Bill Neale *
	Marie Farrell

*Members Present

Staff Present:

Sam Gold
Eliza LoPresti
Kevin Armstrong
Megan Jouflas

Others Present: Daniel Smith (Deep River)

RiverRPC

1. Call to Order

Chairman DeFelice called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm. The meeting was conducted via Zoom.

2. Roll Call - Eliza LoPresti called the roll.

3. Seating of Alternates – No alternates were seated (let it be noted that alternates may have arrived to the meeting after this agenda item).

4. Adoption of Agenda

Mr. Neale moved to adopt the agenda; second by Mr. McCracken. Vote was unanimous in favor.

5. Public Comment - None

6. Approval of the Minutes of Past Meetings

Mr. Thompson moved to approve the minutes of the February 26, 2024 meeting; second by Mr. Martin. Vote was unanimous in favor.

7. Referrals – None. Members were reminded that the referral tracker is on the websites at <https://www.rivercog.org/regionalservices/referrals/>

8. Discussion on State Plan of Conservation and Development

Ms. Jouflas presented points from the State’s POCD, which is now in draft form. The slides can be found [here](#). Members were asked to bring the plan before their municipal commissions. Some discussion occurred, which is summarized here: Lyme’s map appears to be incorrect in that they are showing an activity center where there is none; the plan represents a utopian view in that it’s trying to fit everybody and that it needs to be more feasible; the state has a lot of opportunity with data here, they should have an environmental justice mapping layer, and should have aggressive environmental goals, the public transportation subsidies should be transparent; the hopes and aspirations for statewide land should not be about specifics, if you start looking at subsidies it becomes specific, this is and should be a document of hopes and aspirations for the state; there was a question on if there was a geological reality aspect in the document, pertaining to drilling and sewer systems; rather than just using the phrase “avoid” new development for certain areas, they could use language such as adaptive technology, partner with shoreline communities on solutions, etc.; the infrastructure mentioned is not just about building, it could also be about culverts, drainage, etc. and the state needs to maintain what they already have and what they will create in the future, especially in light of flooding that is happening now due to climate change; all the plans (state, regional and local) should be on the same update frequency, as it is now the state is on a 5 year cycle while local and regional are on a 10 year cycle.

9. Discussion on Legislative Proposals

Mr. Gold described some current proposed bills and what RiverCOG’s testimony on them has been. That information is contained in the bill tracker, found [here](#).

10. Miscellaneous: State, Regional and/or Local Planning Issues

Ms. LoPresti highlighted a commissioner training on climate resilient zoning for municipal land use commissioners from UCONN, which can be found [here](#).

Mr. Gold updated that the Safe Streets for All (SS4A) project will be starting next month. Public outreach for the Air Line to Farmington Canal Connection study, now called the Central CT Loop Trail Study, will be beginning shortly. The Thrive grant is starting up; RiverCOG will be working directly with the towns involved, which are Clinton, Middletown, Old Saybrook, and Westbrook.

The Governor sent a letter approving of the economic development district application, so that can now move onto the federal level. We are the last region in the state to establish an EDD.

RiverCOG is a subrecipient to CRCOG's climate reduction plan grant and have been working on this project with them. Through this project RiverCOG has been part of grant applications for solar installation on housing authority properties and is working with WestCOG on model zoning regulations for climate friendly land use.

11. Adjournment

Mr. McCracken moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:43 pm; second by Mr. Neale. Vote was unanimous in favor.