



Lower Connecticut River Valley Council of Governments

145 Dennison Road Essex, CT 06426 | +1 860 581 8554 | www.rivercog.org

Regional Planning Committee

LOWER CONNECTICUT RIVER VALLEY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING

Monday, June 24, 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
Margot Burns
Susie Beckman
Megan Jouflas

RiverRPC

1. Call to Order

Chairman DeFelice called the meeting to order at 7:03 pm. The meeting was conducted via Zoom.

2. Roll Call - Eliza LoPresti called the roll.

3. Seating of Alternates – Nathaniel Spencer (Middletown) was seated.

4. Adoption of Agenda

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

5. Public Comment - None

6. Approval of the Minutes of Past Meetings

Mr. Neale moved to approve the minutes of the May 20, 2024 meeting; second by Ms. Stone. Vote was unanimous in favor with Mr. Kowalczyk, Mr. Demetriades, and Mr. Spencer abstaining.

7. Referrals

- a. [Deep River – Gateway Overlay Zone](#): Mr. deBrigard gave an overview of the referral from Gateway’s perspective as he is the COG’s representative to the Gateway Commission. Mr. Bolduc provided an overview and shared maps of the area. The proposal is to take an industrial area of the Gateway zone out of Gateway review because it cannot be seen from the river; the zone is .82 miles away from the river, is not within a flood zone, and no residential building is allowed there. Deep River and Gateway have jointly drafted language that will be put forth for a public hearing to the rest of the Gateway towns, which once agreed upon, can be put into regulation. A draft letter had previously been circulated to the RPC; the consensus was that the letter is appropriate to send and the RPC supports Gateway.

Mr. Neale moved to approve the letter as written; seconded by Mr. Alberino. Vote was unanimously approved with Mr. deBrigard abstaining.

- b. [Westbrook Petition for Height and Floor Area Ration in the TIC District](#): This referral is for a regulation change to from 50’ to 60’ allowable building height for buildings in the turnpike interchange district. This is due to a possible future proposal for a hotel in the area of a larger possible development in the Westbrook outlet mall. The request is due to septic limitations, so in an effort to reduce the footprint, they would like to add one story onto the building instead. There was discussion about the fact that this potential building will be viewable from Rt. 95 and if and how that changes things in the state. RiverCOG staff feels that this proposed change is in conformance with local and regional plans. There was a suggestion to add in language to the referral letter proposing a landscaping buffer between the building and the highway and making clear where the wetlands are located in Old Saybrook.

Mr. Neale moved, with Mr. Edwards’ second, that the draft response letter be sent, with the additions of the comments above from the RPC. Vote was unanimously approved.

8. Comments to OPM on State Plan of Conservation & Development

A draft letter with RPC comments on this third draft of the state POCD was circulated to the group; the consensus was to send it. There will most likely be another chance for commenting in the fall.

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

Mr. Gold gave an overview of passed legislation, including the large housing bill, HB 5474.

10. Adjournment

Mr. Alberino moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:38 pm; second by Mr. Neale. Vote was unanimous in favor.