

MEETING SUMMARY
Regional Planning Commission
of the Council of Governments of the Central Naugatuck Valley

COGCNV Conference Room
49 Leavenworth Street, Ste. 303
Waterbury, CT
7:00 p.m. Tuesday, May 7, 2013

Attendance: Richard Minnick, David Chadderton, Beacon Falls; Ken Long, Middlebury; Joseph McEvoy, Naugatuck; Leslie Kane, Southbury; James Sequin, Waterbury; Ruth Mulcahy, Watertown. **Staff:** Peter Dorpalen, Executive Director; Samuel Gold, Assistant Director; Joe Perrelli, Senior Planner; and Patrick Gallagher, Regional Planner.

1. Pledge of Allegiance, Roll Call, Introductions

The meeting opened at 7:04 P.M. with the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance. RPC representatives and COGCNV staff introduced themselves. The group was short a quorum.

2. Administrative Items

a. *Approval of March 5, 2013 Meeting Minutes* —Chair Rich Minnick, tabled approval of the minutes until the next RPC meeting.

b. *Correspondence* — Peter Dorpalen summarized recent correspondence:

March 14, 2013	Letter of support for HB 6542: an Act Concerning the Preservation of Farmland at the Southbury Training School
March 15, 2013	Letters to DECD in support of Small Cities grant applications in Beacon Falls, Bethlehem, and Southbury.
March 15, 2013	Email to CCM transmitting COGCNV's RPO boundary evaluation report in connection with OPM's RPO boundary study
March 16, 2013	Testimony presented by Peter Dorpalen to the Legislature's Planning and Development Committee in opposition to House Bill 6629 - An Act Concerning Regionalism in Connecticut (would have converted planning regions to counties)
March 20, 2013	Letter to CTDOT with comments on CTDOT's CTfasttrak draft service plan
March 25, 2013	Memorandum to municipalities from Joe Perrelli requesting project proposals for the local road accident reduction program. Deadline is June 6.
March 21-26, 2013	Letters of support for Recreational Trails projects in Cheshire, Naugatuck, Waterbury, Watertown, and Thomaston
March 26, 2013	Email to the legislature's Municipal Opportunities & Regional Efficiencies (MORE) Commission on the types of services COGCNV has provided (as examples of regional efficiency)

- April 2, 2013 Email from Pat Gallagher to CTDOT transmitting the 2012 memorandum on commuter parking lot use and recommendations
- April 19, 2013 Letter to U.S. Representative Elizabeth Esty with information on the Naugatuck River Greenway in advance of a presentation by Esty
- April 26, 2013 Email to City of Waterbury on the status of the City's STP-Urban application for a Waterbury bus study – the study is being placed on hold until funding is available, and the state has developed new study guidelines

c. *RPC Nominating Committee* — Rich Minnick asked RPC members for volunteers for the nominating committee, which will nominate new officers to be elected at the September 2013 meeting. Rich Minnick and Ken Long volunteered to be on the nominating committee.

3. **COGCNV Website Update** – Sam Gold presented the new COGCNV logo to the RPC and stated that the work will now begin on the new website.
4. **Revising regional bicycle & pedestrian project priority list** – Sam Gold said CTDOT notified COGCNV that only the top ranked transportation enhancement bicycle and pedestrian project from the January 2012 rankings will be funded, and that the region will be receiving significantly less funding than had been previously estimated. In January 2012, COGCNV selected three projects for full or partial funding. Later in 2012, Congress approved a new transportation bill, MAP-21, changing the transportation enhancement program into the transportation alternatives program. The top priority project in the 2012 COGCNV ranking of transportation enhancement projects is a relatively small project for new bus shelters, bike racks, and trash cans, followed by a cantilevered section of the Waterbury Naugatuck River Greenway and the partial funding of the Farmington Canal Trail in Cheshire. With the current ranking, the region will not spend its full allocation under the transportation alternatives program because the highest ranked project is so small, and the remaining funds would be spent in another region in Connecticut. He recommends making the Waterbury Naugatuck River Greenway project the top ranked project.

MAP-21 will expire in September 2014. The next transportation bill or continuing resolutions may make additional funds available for bike and pedestrian projects. If new money becomes available, staff recommends that the Waterbury Naugatuck River Greenway project be made whole, up to the requested total, and to fund the previously ranked improvements to the Waterbury Green and Farmington Canal Trail. Chair Rich Minnick recommended that – in the absence of a quorum – those present conduct a consensus vote. It was unanimously

VOTED: To recommend to COGCNV that the January 2013 Transportation Enhancement Project Rankings be modified to rank the Waterbury Naugatuck River Greenway as the first project priority, followed by the Waterbury Green bus shelter, bike rack, and trash can project as second priority, and Cheshire Farmington Canal as third priority. To recommend that federal bicycle and pedestrian transportation funds allocated for fiscal years 2015 and 2016 will be prioritized towards completing funding for the Waterbury Naugatuck River Greenway (up to a total of \$880,000) and then funding the region's second and third ranked priorities.

5. **Regional Planning Organization Legislation** – Peter Dorpalen presented on HB 6629: An Act Concerning Regionalism in Connecticut. The bill provides additional funding for COGs based on

population. Staff came up with several regional consolidation scenarios and showed the funding levels under each scenario. Under the proposed bill, consolidated regions with larger populations would receive greater per capita funding from the state. Mr. Dorpalen explained that the bill would expand the services that COGs provide and would include functions such as engineering and social services. In addition, CTDOT wants to hand some of its administrative functions over to metropolitan planning organizations. Mr. Dorpalen stated that the Executive Committee passed a resolution, authorizing COGCNV to explore merging with the Valley Council of Governments, as well as the neighboring towns of Newtown, and Plymouth. OPM is conducting a study of regional boundaries that will be completed by January 2014.

Sam Gold explained that COGCNV is both a regional planning organization (RPO) and a federally-designated metropolitan planning organization (MPO). COGCNV's MPO designation provides most of the agency's funding. Mr. Gold stated that CTDOT wants to consolidate MPOs, but not necessarily RPOs. Because MPOs are federally-designated, elected officials representing 75 percent of the region's population would have to agree to the redesignation.

- 6. Congested intersection analysis update** – Joe Perrelli presented on the identification and analysis of congested intersections in the region. Staff is reviewing signals that can be retimed to improve traffic flow as a cost-effective means of reducing congestion and improving air quality. The end product is a technical memorandum for each location, including an assessment of safety and traffic operations. Joe and Pat Gallagher discussed the analysis of the Route 64 & 63 intersection in Middlebury, which was conducted by Mr. Gallagher. Additional assessments will be performed for intersections along Route 10 in Cheshire and Route 63 in Naugatuck. If anyone has ideas for intersections that can benefit from retiming, they can contact the COGCNV office to request a review.

7. Points of Interest / Local Activities

Beacon Falls – Rich Minnick and David Chadderton reported that

- Two senior-housing projects were delayed, but are now restarting.
- Larger 50-unit single-family home development will be coming through soon.
- There has been an overall increase in activity in town.
- Tomorrow is a NRG committee meeting with John Monroe. He will be conducting field visits to towns along the river.

Middlebury – Ken Long reported that

- Library renovation project is underway.
- Two more homes were torn down in the Triangle Blvd. neighborhood.
- The CT DOT is working on scheduled to pave Route 188 from Route 64 to Route 63.
- The Plan of C & D is reaching completion.
- Home sales in town are up.

Southbury – Leslie Kane reported that

- Home sales are up in town.
- The HHW collection event in April was a great success. Many thanks to Pat Gallagher for organizing the event.
- The Audubon Center will be running a recycling and awareness event on Earth Day in Southbury at the Town Hall. This will become an annual event.
- The First Selectman has been working on a big agenda for Trails Day on the first weekend of June.

- The bill to preserve a portion the Southbury Training School property is on the House floor for a vote.
- The Urban Forest Council and the CT Forest Forum are looking at “green” infrastructure for their joint annual conference. They want to have part of the conference focused on the condition of forests and what has happened since the 1955 Flood. Around 300 people attend the annual conference to be held at AquaTurf on October 30. Sam Gold proposed that they show the Naugatuck River Greenway video, which was created during the “Explore the Naugatuck” event last September. The group is open to other ideas anyone has on the topic of urban forests.

Waterbury – James Sequin reported that

- The proposal for an indoor firing range fell apart due to issues with lease negotiations.
- A proposed day care center in the historic building that was formerly the House on the Hill B & B (92 Woodlawn Terrace) was denied by the Zoning Commission. The owners may need \$150,000 for drainage improvements.
- The City is interested in re-subdividing the Waterbury Industrial Commons property (formerly Chase Brass), altering the railroad alignment and street pattern in the area.
- The City sent referrals to COGCNV regarding the loosening of regulations for campers and strengthening of regulations for commercial vehicles on residential properties.

Naugatuck –Joe McEvoy reported that

- The borough will soon begin an \$85 million renovation of the high school.
- The Board of Education will be moving in to the new high school. The Historical Society to occupy the Tuttle House on Church Street, which currently houses the BoE offices. The Historical Society had planned to move into Building 25, the only remaining building from the UniRoyal plant that used to be downtown. Once the Historical Society moves out of the train station, the Borough is hoping to attract a new business, like a restaurant, to move in.

Watertown – Ruth Mulcahy reported that

- There are four new commercial buildings in town with permits out: CVS, Litchfield Bank, Autozone, and a dollar store.
- New Restaurants are being proposed and the town is seeing Industrial activity, including Koster Keunen, which is seeking to expand its facility.
- Buick dealership on Straits Tpke. is looking to renovate.
- A Mitsubishi dealership is interested in taking over the old Dodge dealership on Straits Tpke.
- Shaker has a temporary CO for their new building.
- A new dental lab is looking to come to town.

8. Other

- *Household Hazardous Waste Collection* – Pat Gallagher reported that the HHW event held on April 27 was the largest ever, with 556 vehicles disposing of 7,320 gallons or pounds of hazardous waste. The event was the first with MXI, COGCNV’s new HHW vendor. A new waste counting and billing system streamlined the collection and improved customer service. The cost of this event was approximately 13% higher than events under the previous vendor. The new vendor was selected by the HHW committee and COGCNV due to their record of service and commitment to the statewide PaintCare program, set to begin on July 1. The PaintCare program will provide free recycling of architectural paints, diverting material from the municipal waste stream and reducing costs for local governments. The program will be funded through a small recycling fee added to all architectural paint sold in the state. Non-hazardous latex paint is also eligible under the program. The new vendor was selected as one of two statewide PaintCare

transporters, which provides the ability to collect and dispose of paint products at future HHW events at no cost to the towns. PaintCare is also partnering with municipal transfer stations and select paint retailers to establish a network of drop-off locations. Because of the high volume of paint received at HHW events, program costs are expected to drop beginning in July.

- *Regional Animal Shelter Study* – Peter Dorpalen stated that Silver & Petrucelli, based out of Hamden, was recommended by Regional Animal Shelter Committee to conduct the Regional Animal Shelter Study. The seven towns participating in the study are looking to build one or two regional facilities to shelter animals. Dorpalen estimates that the study will take 4 to 6 months to complete.
- *5310 Minibus Program* – Sam Gold explained that funding for the 5310 minibus program has been delayed because of new MAP-21 regulations. Mr. Gold expects funding to be available later this year.
- *Peter Dorpalen Retirement* – Peter Dorpalen announced that he will be retiring at the end of August after more than 40 years at COGCNV.

9. Adjournment

At 8:28 p.m., the meeting was adjourned.

Submitted by
Patrick Gallagher
Regional Planner
for
Nancy Clark
RPC Secretary