



**COUNCIL of GOVERNMENTS
CENTRAL NAUGATUCK VALLEY**

49 Leavenworth Street, Suite 303, Waterbury, CT 06702 • 203-757-0535 • cogcnv.org

**MEETING MINUTES
Regional Planning Commission
of the Council of Governments of the Central Naugatuck Valley**

COGCV Conference Room
49 Leavenworth Street, Ste. 303
Waterbury, CT
7:00 p.m., Tuesday, September 2, 2014

Attendance: Ray Jurzynski, Beacon Falls; Ken Long, Middlebury; Nancy Clark, Southbury; Bob Flanagan, Thomaston; Jim Sequin, Dennis Casey, Waterbury; Ruth Mulcahy and Eric Markiewicz, Watertown; Robert Clarke, Woodbury.

Guests: Mark Nielsen, Valley COG; Chester Cornacchia, Westover Hills Homeowners Association; Raymond Pietrorazio; Steven Savarese.

Staff: Samuel Gold, Executive Director; Joanna Rogalski, Regional Planner; Aaron Budris, Regional Planner/GIS Specialist; Pat Gallagher, Senior Planner.

1. Pledge of Allegiance, Roll Call, Introductions, Public Participation

The meeting opened at 7:08 p.m. with the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance and roll call.

a. Public Participation

Chester Cornacchia, on behalf of the Westover Hills Homeowners Association, expressed concerns over the proposed natural gas power plant in Oxford near the Waterbury-Oxford Airport. Westover Hills is located 2.5 miles from the airport. Due to renewed news stories about the proposed power plant, the Homeowners' Association Board sent him to the RPC to get more information and voice concern over the inter-municipal impact of the power plant on residential areas, with regard to health and safety. They would like to begin a conversation and clarify the status of the power plant's application. They do not object to the economic development that would arise from the power plant, but question if the siting near the Waterbury-Oxford Airport is the best location.

There was a question about who was looking at the power plant application. Sam Gold had done some research on the issue at the request of Mr. Cornacchia. Gold found that in 1999 a proposal for a smaller sized plant on the same site was submitted to the Connecticut Siting Council, but COGCV had not been contacted regarding it. Other regional planning agencies, including Valley Council of Governments and Greater Bridgeport, were on the CSC contact list. Sam Gold understands that a new CSC docket has not been opened for the proposed larger power plant site, but hopes that COGCV would be included in any permits for the site.

Dennis Casey asked what type of fuel this power plant would use. Mr. Cornacchia stated that this was proposed as a dual fuel facility – natural gas with oil fuel backup of up to 2 million gallons. He said that the proposed power plant location sits atop a hill, higher than the airport, and thus areas would be downwind from the plant emissions.

Raymond Pietrorazio, a Middlebury resident, then spoke. He has been involved for 14 years with issue. His vocation specializes in commercial and industrial combustion of fossil fuels. After months of his own investigation, he concluded that thermal exhaust plumes from the plant would present unacceptable risk and multiple hazards to aviation. Mr. Pietrorazio cited several supporting studies.

Attorney Steven Savarese added to the historical account of the issue. He stated that The Triangle Hills neighborhood, located at the end of an Oxford airport runway, and Oxford airport were both constructed in 1967. Airport models at that time did not speak to safety but did speak to noise abatement. Seventy-one homes were in danger from airport traffic. The regional asset was considered to be the airport, so 71 Triangle Hills homes were demolished to make room for airport safety areas. In 2013 the state of CT created a 2 mile radius development zone around the Oxford airport as a means of economic development. Mr. Savarese stated that the proposed power plant would have a detrimental impact on the economic development zone, introducing harmful environmental impacts. He feels a Regional Planning Agency should evaluate priorities for industrial subdivision developments and the impacts to it. He stated that there is agreement on the need for a power plant, but that the best location is in question. He suggested that existing power plant locations be considered for power production increases in order to avoid the creation of new pollution zones.

Bob Flanagan stated that because of the transition to a new COG in the coming months that it was a bit presumptuous of the RPC body to issue a formal comment. Flanagan stated that the speakers' information had been taken into the record, and that the new Council of Governments should take up the issue.

Jim Sequin stated that the power plant facilities are needed and asked where in the region would be a better location. He congratulated Mr. Savarese for suggesting other locations, but wasn't sure if plants in those proposed areas would lessen pollution. Jim Sequin felt the COG, whether in its current or future state, should not take a position on the matter until a study or evaluation had been made for the best location of power plants.

Ken Long then proposed a motion to amend the agenda to reflect the discussion about the proposed power plant, and to present a letter or comments to be written to the state by the COGCNV RPC that the RPC wants all sides of the issue be heard because the proposed power plant issue is a true regional issue, and NVCOG should be part of the regional discussions.

On a motion by Robert Clarke, seconded by Nancy Clark, it was unanimously

VOTED: To amend the agenda to allow for further discussion of the proposed power plant by RPC members.

Nancy Clark asked if there was enough water to support the power plant and the residents. She also mentioned the need to consider the storage of the oil supply for the power plant. RPC needs to be a party to every action and public hearing at the state level and organization. She also stated the need to list the RPC's concerns as broad subjects so that if the subject ever comes up in any discussion, the RPC will be a party to it.

Sam Gold felt the best course of action is to stay involved and ask to be involved in this process. The Town of Oxford was not represented at this meeting and they might have different opinions on

this issue. He stated that it may be premature for the RPC to make recommendations but it was not premature to request the Siting Council keep the RPC informed on this issue. At the moment, there is nothing before the Siting Council relating to the power plant issue. Ken Long agreed.

On a motion by Robert Clarke, seconded by Nancy Clark, it was unanimously

VOTED: To send a letter to the Siting Council requesting that the RPC be included on correspondence and the docket for the proposed Towantic Power Plant.

2. Administrative Items

a. *Approval of July 1, 2014 Meeting Minutes* — Robert Clarke offered a grammatical correction under Item 7. Nancy Clark offered a correction under Item 6, Points of Interest. The proposed 8 screen movie theater in Southbury is still at inland wetlands. It has not passed as indicated by the draft minutes.

On a motion by Robert Clarke, seconded by Nancy Clark, it was unanimously

VOTED: To approve the July 1, 2014 Meeting Minutes as amended.

b. *Correspondence* — Samuel Gold summarized recent correspondence:

August 20, 2014	Letter of resignation from Senior Planner Joe Perrelli stating he has accepted another job offer.
	Email from Clare Falcha from Valley COG indicating that new Tax ID numbers have been set up for the Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments
July 24, 2014	Letter from Secretary Barnes from OPM Certifying the Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments

3. CT DEEP MS4 – New Proposed Storm Water Permit Requirements

Aaron Budris presented a brief PowerPoint on the Connecticut DEEP’s proposed Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit regulations. Budris stated that the proposed permit has several new requirements such as targeted public outreach, illicit discharge detection and elimination programs, construction runoff programs, maintenance programs, GIS data requirements, mandatory leaf collection, and more stringent street sweeping, testing, and catch basin maintenance standards. The new regulations would apply to all 169 municipalities.

Mr. Budris indicated that compliance with the new regulations will place an additional financial burden on municipalities and may result in non-compliance. Budris described methods that out of state regions and municipalities are using to comply with more stringent regulations, such as

establishing regional stormwater authorities. DEEP is accepting comments on their draft regulations until September 7, 2014. COGCNV staff will be submitting a formal letter with their comments.

On a motion by Ken Long, seconded by Nancy Clark, it was unanimously

VOTED: To forward COGCNV staff comments on proposed MS4 regulations to Christopher Stone at DEEP

4. Waterbury Regional Bus Operations and Needs Study

Pat Gallagher gave a brief update on the Waterbury Bus Operations and Needs Study. He stated that Waterbury has the fastest growing ridership in the state over the last 10 years thanks to service improvements on Sundays and evenings. He explained the study will examine alternative transfer points downtown, passenger amenities, new or modified routes, intermodal connections, and alternative scheduling structures. A consultant should be selected by September 12, 2014.

5. Formation of the Connecticut Resource Conservation and Development Area

Sam Gold explained that in the 1970s COGCNV and member towns helped create the King's Mark Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) Area, which ran programs such as environmental review teams. A decrease in funding over the last four years has led to staffing challenges for King's Mark RC&D. There had been discussion over the last few months to combine the two RC&Ds in Connecticut into a single statewide area. It is proposed that Aaron Budris represent COGCNV in the new RC&D area.

Mark Nielsen, who acts as the VCOG representative to King's Mark, stated that by merging the RC&D areas they can continue to support important programs such as environmental review teams.

6. COG Consolidation Update

Sam Gold stated that the Naugatuck Valley COG met on August 22nd and elected officers. Kurt Miller and Ed Edelson will serve as co-chairmen, Ed Mone will serve as treasurer, and Ken Cockayne will serve as secretary. Officers will serve until January 1, 2015.

Gold presented several updates to the NVCOG formation. An RFP is out for a health insurance broker. An Executive Director Search consultant has been hired. NVCOG subcommittees have been present drafts of the Bylaws and Code of Ethics. Other items will be finalized over the next few months. NVCOG will be located at COGCNV's current office. The office will be expanded to include the entire floor to accommodate additional staff and larger meetings.

Sam Gold stated that Regional Planning Commissions (RPCs) are included in the state statutes for new Councils of Governments. By January, the RPCs of the NVCOG towns will be merged, although the final structure of the RPC still needs to be discussed. COGCNV RPC members will need to be reappointed to the NVCOG RPC. Jim Sequin requested that a mission statement be drafted for the new RPC.

Mr. Gold stated that existing MPO boundaries will remain in effect after January 1, 2015, but that efforts are being made to consolidate all NVCOG towns into a single MPO.

7. Points of Interest / Local Activities

Beacon Falls – Ray Jurzynski reported that

- There is a new veterinary hospital.
- A commercial site is being developed.
- Several new homes are under construction.
- The local girl scout troop has completed their monthly trail maintenance.
- The recreation fields were vandalized.
- The town is in litigation with a group of homeowners on a private road. Residents want the town to take over ownership of the private road, as the previous owner passed away.

Middlebury – Ken Long reported that

- Congregational Church approved a Verizon cell tower in the steeple. It will go to the Siting Council for approval.
- Proposal for new commercial building on Route 64 which will go before zoning on September 3rd.
- 15 houses remain in the Triangle Boulevard neighborhood and four homes were recently disconnected from sewer service.
- A new draft of the Plan of Conservation and Development will be presented to the zoning board.
- The town is awaiting comments from the state about the future use of the Middlebury portion of the Oxford Airport Zone.

Southbury – Nancy Clark reported that

- There is a proposal for a senior housing complex on the Southbury Training School property.
- The 8-screen movie theater is still at the wetlands commission.
- Streetscape Plan revisions are in final draft form.
- Farmers Market is open until October 18.

Thomaston – Bob Flanagan reported that

- A new 2.9 million dollar emergency communication system is now online.
- The town received a \$500,000 STEEP grant for a new track at Nystrom's Pond.
- The town is working on downtown parking issues.
- September 14 is Thomaston's annual Classic Car Show.

Waterbury – Jim Sequin reported that

- A zone change for a new development has been withdrawn.

Watertown – Ruth Mulcahy and Eric Markiewicz reported that

- A Dollar General on Main Street has been completed.
- There is a proposed 9-lot subdivision near Bunker Hill in Waterbury.
- A developer is interested in building a senior housing complex.

Woodbury – Bob Clarke reported that

- The proposal to acquire the Woodbury Reservoir from Aquarion has stalled.

- The planning, zoning, and inland wetlands commissions are working on revisions to their regulations.
- The town is working on a charter revision.
- The town has \$21,000 in excess diesel fuel.
- The town is in litigation with several C&Ds with zoning and inland wetlands.

Valley COG – Mark Nielsen reported that

- Derby, Ansonia, and Seymour are in the process of updating their town Plans of Conservation and Development.
- Valley COG is working on an alignment for the Naugatuck River Greenway.
- TOD Pilot Program is wrapping up.

8. Other

- a. Dam Inspection Planner's Lunch

Aaron Budris stated that COGCNV will be hosting a Planners Lunch on DEEP's new Dam Safety Program. Art Christian from DEEP will present and is available to answer questions. Budris showed a website page that he created showing information on the new regulations, a list of engineering firms, and an interactive map with dam locations in the region.

9. Adjournment

On a motion by Robert Clarke, seconded by Bob Flanagan it was unanimously

VOTED: To adjourn the meeting at 9:06 pm.

Submitted by
Pat Gallagher
Senior Planner
for
Gil Graveline
RPC Secretary