



RECORD OF MEETING

WORKSHOP MEETING

Regional Planning Commission (RPC)
of the Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments (NVCOG)
49 Leavenworth Street – Suite 303, Waterbury, CT
7:00 p.m. Tuesday, May 5, 2015

Attendance: Marie Chasse, Bristol; Bill Paecht, Seymour; Ruth Parkins, Shelton; Nancy G. Clark, Southbury
Jim Sequin, Waterbury; Robert Clarke, Woodbury; Bob Travers, Woodbury.

Staff: Joanna Rogalski, Regional Planner NVCOG; Aaron Budris, Regional Planner NVCOG.

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

The meeting opened at 7:05 PM. Joanna Rogalski, Regional Planner for NVCOG, opened the meeting with a welcome to all representatives and members of the public. The pledge of allegiance was recited. RPC members and NVCOG staff introduced themselves and roll call was taken. Six (6) RPC members and one (1) alternate member were present at the meeting. Since a quorum of ten (10) RPC members was not present, the meeting would be conducted as a workshop to discuss agenda items and share planning information.

The public was invited to make comments. Mr. Shawn Ruest, a resident of Bristol, made comments about recent state legislation regarding the role of Regional Planning Organizations in the state's governmental structure, "bottom-up planning," lack of good local representation with new urbanist planning efforts, affordable housing mandates and transportation costs, lack of transparency of public-private development partnerships, and not enough public outreach and participation in Bristol plans. Mr. Ruest also voiced concern about municipal control over local planning, and asked the RPC to consider making a statement of support for municipal control over town planning.

2. Administrative Items

a. Approval of January 6, 2015 Meeting Minutes (Motion)

The meeting minutes were reviewed and suggestions made to correct typos to the agenda regarding meeting date. No action was taken.

b. Correspondence

Ms. Rogalski discussed the referrals which have been sent to the NVCOG. An RPC representative requested a copy of correspondence be included in future agenda packets. In the future, all RPC members will be copied on referral responses.

c. RPC Manual

The contents of the manual was described by Ms. Rogalski. There are five NVCOG members who have not appointed RPC representatives. Mr. Ruest asked if Bristol was being included in the NVCOG transportation plans. A short discussion about MPO structure and transportation funding followed. There was concern voiced by one RPC member about the municipalities which have not



yet appointed representatives to the RPC. Ms. Rogalski has recently followed up with the CEO's of those members offering assistance with the RPC representative appointment process.

3. Mission Statement review and adoption – (Motion)

There was discussion of the use of the word “policy” in the mission statement. Some representatives felt the word “policy” was too rigid a description for a document that is a guide and framework for a working document. In CGS 8-35a the Regional POCD is not referred to as a “policy.” Discussion on this topic will continue at the next RPC meeting. Question was posed regarding the timeline for Regional POCD. The Regional NVCOG POCD writing is expected to be started next year, 2016.

4. RPC Officer Nominating Committee Report and Elections – Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary (Motion)

A short discussion about possible nominees followed. Two of the three members of the Nominating Committee were not present. There was consensus among the RPC members present that further discussion should continue once the full nominating committee makes its report to the RPC.

5. Consolidation Update

NVCOG By-laws have been adopted by the Council in February, 2015. The draft RPC mission statement was not included in the NVCOG By-laws. Ms. Rogalski discussed office locations and computer server consolidation, and the 4 job positions open at NVCOG.

6. Procedures for Referrals

Ms. Rogalski described the current referral response process. In the future a draft copy of the referral response may be sent to the RPC representatives for comment. A final response would then be sent to the municipality. An RPC member commented that if there is a substantive comment in the referral response, an NVCOG staff member should attend the public hearing and present that comment; otherwise the referral response is usually not considered.

7. Roundtable - Points of Interest/Local Activities

Waterbury – Planning Commission activity is low. Currently not many permit applications; most are for decks and pools. There is legislation being considered regarding non-conforming uses. Recent excavation permit for 80,000 cubic yards of earth was granted; because of legal non-conforming issues, this fill will be transported to a Shelton processing facility which has permitted this use.

Seymour – Ongoing planning issue regarding relocation of the train station to a larger parcel on the western side of the Naugatuck River. Route 67 is being widened, and the 188 rotary is being reconfigured with a wall. Many permit applications regarding decks, pools, generators and roofs have been recently received.

Southbury – Construction has begun for an eight plex film theater is scheduled to open in Fall 2016; location is off I-84 at exit 14. A 40,000 SF medical facility is being planned off I-84 at exit 15; a second such facility exists and is occupied. Farmers Market is opening on June 18th; it will be open weekly on Thursdays from 2 PM to 6 PM. A recent zoning change to allow crematoriums has passed. A state of



Connecticut agricultural conservation easement for a Southbury Training School 900 acre parcel that is to be administered by the Southbury Land Trust has not yet been transferred; transfer has been approved by the State. The Southbury Board of Selectman did not take a position on the proposed 805 MW Towantic power plant. Towantic power plant application is being reviewed for vote by the Connecticut Siting Council. Public comment period is closed. Among other issues regarding farming and air quality, Southbury is concerned that its water usage will increase and aquifer replenishment will be compromised if the Towantic is built.

Woodbury – Generally slow on the planning and zoning front for the past six years. Compared to years past, more recent subdivision applications have been for smaller sized developments. In light of the fact that the Planning Commission also serves as the Water Pollution Control Authority, Woodbury asked for feedback on a pollution control issue it is addressing regarding the community septic system of a certain subdivision bifurcated by the Woodbury-Middlebury town boundary. There was discussion among the RPC members about water pollution controls for a community septic system which services a subdivision with parcels in two adjacent towns, and which town is responsible for repair and maintenance of such a septic system if one town was not consulted in the original septic system approval process.

Shelton – Planning Commission has been extremely busy. Apartment development, particularly of the high-end variety, is moving at a fast pace, especially in the downtown area. The downtown is being redeveloped. A chromium plant has been approved to be demolished. Cluster housing projects are being built. Planned development districts are being considered as a means of more control over what is being built. Town would like to have more reliable train service.

Bristol – The Plan of Conservation and Development has been updated; public hearing is scheduled for June 3rd. Subdivision applications are being submitted at a slower rate. City has received a few applications for add-ons for companies which are expanding. The downtown redevelopment is proceeding slowly. Transportation is a hot topic; connections to Waterbury via public transit are desired.

8. Other

Mr. Budris discussed the River Smart Program. Pomperaug Watershed Coalition developed a free program to help municipalities in their service area meet current and anticipated DEEP stormwater permit requirements for public outreach and education. NVCOG gave a grant to expand the program to all NVCOG municipalities. Information packets were handed out to NVCOG RPC reps present at the meeting. More information can be accessed online at www.riversmartct.org. Housatonic Valley Association is conducting a similar program.

Mr. Budris then described an opportunity for land use professionals to learn about low impact development (LID). Part of the proposed general stormwater permit, municipalities will be required to adopt LID ordinances. An LID Workshop is scheduled for Tuesday, June 16, 2015 at 7 PM. Workshop is free, will be one evening duration and taught by University of Connecticut (UConn) Center for Land Use Education and Research (CLEAR) staff. Location TBD. RPC representatives suggested the UConn Waterbury campus may be a good class site due to its central NVCOG location and ample parking availability. LID best practices will be discussed, and curriculum may be modified



to the RPC needs. Anyone involved in land use decisions is invited to attend. NVCOG is open to suggestions from RPC members for other guest speakers or UCONN CLEAR classes.

Mr. Budris then discussed the NVCOG Greenway Study. The Greenway Study will address the economic impact of the existing trails, with the hope of providing data to apply for funding further trailway development along the Naugatuck River.

An RPC member asked about the possibility of the RPC meeting before the August 4th, 2015 regular meeting in order to discuss and possibly elect a Chairperson, Vice-chairperson and Secretary for the RPC. Ms. Rogalski will investigate this possibility.

9. Adjournment

Ms. Rogalski adjourned the meeting at 8:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted by

Joanna B. Rogalski

Regional Planner, NVCOG