

MINUTES

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

COGCNV Conference Room
60 North Main Street – 3rd Floor
(Wachovia Bank Building – North Lobby)
Waterbury, CT
7:00 P.M. Tuesday, January 23, 2007

Attendance: Richard Minnick and Jeff Burkitt, Beacon Falls; Maria Hill, Bethlehem; Martin Cobern, Cheshire; Joseph McEvoy and Anthony Malone, Naugatuck; Harold Cosgrove, Oxford; Gil Gaveline, Prospect; Robert Flanagan, Thomaston; James Sequin, Waterbury; Linda Fercodini, Wolcott. **Guests:** Ed Jurzinski, Beacon Falls
Staff: Peter Dorpalen, Executive Director; Virginia Mason, Assistant Director; and Sam Gold, Senior Planner

1. Pledge of Allegiance, Roll Call, Introductions

Robert Flanagan called the meeting to order at 7:04 P.M. Those present introduced themselves and recited the pledge of allegiance. There was no public comment.

2. Administrative Items

- a. *Approval of September 12, 2006, Minutes* — On a motion by Anthony Malone, seconded by Richard Minnick, it was unanimously

VOTED: To approve the minutes of the September 12, 2006 meeting.

- b. *Approval of November 11, 2006, Minutes* — On a motion by Gil Gaveline, seconded by Maria Hill, it was unanimously

VOTED: To approve the minutes of the November 11, 2006 meeting.

- c. *Correspondence* — Peter Dorpalen summarized recent COGCNV correspondence

December 5, 2006 Letter to the Oxford Planning and Zoning Commission from Virginia Mason, transmitting COGCNV staff comments on the draft Oxford Plan of Conservation and Development.

January 9, 2007 Memorandum from Sam Gold on applying to DEP for National Recreational Trails funding.

January 12, 2007 Letters to mayors and first selectmen requesting a review of the top local transportation priorities for the update of the regional transportation plan.

- January 18, 2007 Letter from Virginia Mason to ConnDOT with staff comments on ConnDOT's detailed employment projections for the state traffic projection model.
- January 23, 2007 Legal opinion for Oxford's Town attorney, transmitted by Harold Cosgrove, regarding the power of the Board of Selectman and/or Planning and Zoning Commission to appoint a Zoning Enforcement Officer.

3. Transportation Planning

- a. *(Tabled) Proposed Multi-Modal Transportation Center* — Robert Flannigan suggested removing this item from the agenda. There has been no new information on the center since the September 2006 meeting. On a motion by Richard Minnick, seconded by Anthony Malone, it was unanimously

VOTED: To remove this item from the agenda until there is new information.

- b. *Waterbury Bus Stop Study* — Samuel Gold reported on a study of bus stops in the Waterbury area. This study recommends the locations of where new bus stops signs should be located in Waterbury, Watertown, Naugatuck, Wolcott, and Middlebury. Some stops are either completely unused or are in close proximity to another stop, and are recommended to be eliminated. The lack of bus stop signs in the Waterbury area has been identified as a public transit deficiency by the Connecticut Public Transportation Commission. The recommendations of this study have already been approved by the Waterbury Police Commission. On a motion by Martin Cobern, seconded by Gil Gaveline, it was unanimously

VOTED: To recommend the *Waterbury Bus Stop Study* to the Council of Governments of the Central Naugatuck Valley.

- c. *Regional Congestion Management Study* — Peter Dorpalen presented the Regional Congestion Management Study that senior planner Mike Flood prepared before leaving COGCNV. The study identifies the location of congestion on the region's eight most congested roadways (I-84, Rte 8, I-691, Rte 10, Rte 63, Rte 64, Rte 69, and Rte 70). Traffic speeds during morning and evening rush hours were recorded in both directions with a GPS receiver connected to a handheld computer. The GPS receiver recorded the speed and location of the vehicle being driven. The data for multiple runs were collected and analyzed to show the location and severity of congestion on the study corridors. The report identifies these locations, and a copy of this study will be given to ConnDOT. On a motion by Martin Cobern, seconded by Richard Minnick, it was unanimously

VOTED: To recommend the *Regional Congestion Management Study* to the Council of Governments of the Central Naugatuck Valley.

- d. *Regional Transportation Plan Update* — Peter Dorpalen presented a rough initial draft of the Long Range Regional Transportation Plan that is being submitted to ConnDOT for analysis of major road projects with the state air quality model. The draft plan is an update of 2004 plan. The Long Range Regional Transportation Plan is a policy document that makes recommendations on major transportation projects and identifies the priority projects. The plan recommends maintaining the existing transportation system and generally only spot improvements due to limited funds. Major projects recommended include the widening of I-84 west of Waterbury and

east of Rte 8 and the replacement of the I-84/Rte 8 interchange. The Plan Update will come before the RPC at the May meeting. This meeting may also be a public meeting as well. Jim Sequin questioned the plan's recommendations on the multi-modal transportation center. Peter Dorpalen responded that the plan update reflects the current plan and the September 12, 2006, RPC position, recommending further study of the transportation center and the rail line and minimizing any adverse impact on transit users. The chair recommended that the discussion of the Regional Transportation Plan Update be carried over to the March RPC meeting.

4. Comprehensive Planning

- a. *Regional Land Development Build-out Analysis (pilot study)* — Virginia Mason reported that the OPM-sponsored build-out analysis will be done in three parts. The first part will be a strictly numerical analysis being done by CLEAR. COGCNV staff is conducting the second and third parts of the analysis. For all towns, COGCNV is identifying all the net developable land in each of the towns using GIS. Then the current zoning is applied to the identified available land to arrive at a build-out amount of development. The third part of the analysis will be conducted using Community Viz for the Town of Woodbury because of its excellent parcel data. COGCNV's GIS staff will receive assistance from Sandy Prisløe from UConn on conducting the Community Viz analysis. The completed build-out analysis is due by the end of February.
- b. *Regional Plan Update* — Peter Dorpalen reported that staff has been working on updating the Regional Plan of Conservation and Development. Drafts of all the chapters have been completed, and Glenda Prentiss is working on the layout. The update to the plan is due by 2008.
- c. *Profile 2006* — Peter Dorpalen reported that the profile has been e-mailed to all the RPC members. The profile is COGCNV's annual report on regional demographic, economic, and housing statistics. It was prepared by Selma Alves. Some highlights include: rapid population growth in Oxford, unemployment doubling since 2000, and the number of jobs has declining slightly. House values have also increased dramatically since 2000.

5. Emergency Planning

- a. *Regional Emergency Planning* — Virginia Mason reported that COGCNV voted to approve the Emergency Planning Committee as a formal subcommittee. New emergency planning money will all be administered on the regional level. All towns in the region, excluding Cheshire, are in DEHMS Region 5 and have decided to have COGCNV administer its emergency planning money and purchase equipment for towns. This cooperation resulted in a regional grant bonus of \$24,000, which will help pay for administering the project. An incentive of \$1,000 per town will be available to them for additional equipment.
- b. *Disaster Mitigation Planning* — Virginia Mason reported that Watertown, Oxford and Woodbury approved their disaster mitigation plans in the Fall. Public meetings have been held for Waterbury, Cheshire, Prospect, and Wolcott. Meetings were held with all the town officials, and Milone and MacBroom is working on draft plans for the four towns. Grants have been submitted for the remaining six towns: Naugatuck, Bethlehem, Beacon Falls, Southbury, Thomaston, and Middlebury. The remaining six towns, if funded, have agreed to continue on the contract that they had with Milone and MacBroom for the FY 05 grant for the FY 07 grant.

6. Points of Interest / Local Activities

Waterbury — Jim Sequin reported that:

- Two moratoriums are being proposed for Waterbury: a moratorium of special permits for multi-family housing and a moratorium of land subdivisions for multi-family uses.
- There are 2,200 housing units that are approved or pending.
- Hundreds of units are being proposed for Highland Avenue area, near Naugatuck.
- Commercial development is proceeding near the Cheshire line.
- Several hundred units are being proposed near Prospect on East Mountain Rd.
- Affordable housing cannot all be located in Waterbury and should be spread out in the region.

Wolcott — Linda Fercodini reported that:

- Wolcott enacted a moratorium on active adult 55 and older housing developments, four developments have been approved and only one has been built.
- Hired Harry S. Cole and Sons to do a feasibility study for the Wolcott Industrial Park.
- Revaluation has been completed for Wolcott. The revaluation was completed at the height of the market, and now the residents are upset.
- A neighborhood is upset with a house being bought for a group home.

Bethlehem — Maria Hill reported that:

- Nothing has been pending before the planning commission.
- Sidewalk has not yet been built.
- There has been some interest in gravel mining in the town, and the town will be looking at its mining regulations.

Oxford — Harold Cosgrove reported that:

- Inland wetlands commission has rejected the manufactured housing development being proposed near the airport.
- Twin Brooks is now looking for a Home Depot for its commercial development.
- 80,000 square feet of industrial space is being proposed near the airport.

Cheshire — Martin Cobern reported that:

- Approved expansion of Lexicon Pharmaceuticals, Napoli Produce, and Pennsylvania Steel.
- Mrs. Ives left 94 acres of land to the Cheshire Land Trust.
- Town Council approved a study to renovate Main Street near the rail trail.
- Town Council is debating the senior citizen tax break.
- Application is pending to allow multi-lot consolidation for industrial-commercial development
- Plans for a lifestyle center like "Blueback Square" has been proposed for the northwest corner of I-691 and Rte 10. It would be mixed use residential-commercial development. Zoning text changes will be needed to allow this type of development in the interchange zone.

Prospect — Gil Gaveline reported that:

- A new subdivision application is pending on Summer Road towards Cheshire.
- The Toll Brothers development on the Waterbury line is progressing.
- 12,000 square foot professional building will be built in the center of Prospect.

Beacon Falls — Rich Minnick reported that:

- Chatfield Farms two age-restricted housing developments are in various stages with the land use boards.
- Rte 67 - Rte 42 connector project is progressing. The Valley COGCNV will conduct a RFQ process to find a consultant for the project.
- O&G is completing the dredging of the river and it will result in a nice piece of land for the town. The site has been tested for hazardous wastes.
- Additional building is going on in the industrial park.
- There is a proposal on Pond Spring for age-restricted housing.

Naugatuck — Anthony Malone reported that:

- A new hotel will be built in Naugatuck, on Rte 63, next to the Naugatuck Motor Lodge.
- Work on the replacement of the Rte 68 bridge in Union City will begin this year. It will take four years to complete.
- Work on the Maple St. bridge will start in two years.

- Two other bridges will be worked on, one near River Ave and the Parks Department and one on River Ave. Ext.
- Many houses are being built in Naugatuck. There are 330 houses pending before the planning and zoning commission.
- Continued residential development will require an expansion in the schools, a new fire sub-station, and more policemen.
- The owner of Mountain View Plaza is considering selling the plaza, potentially for federal housing, section 8.

Joseph McEvoy reported that:

- Conroy Renaissance project is going to referendum in May. The project's future is less certain with the departure of Mayor SanAngelo.
- Naugatuck would fight excavation traffic generated by development in the Waterbury _ Naugatuck Industrial Park.

Thomaston — Robert Flanagan reported that:

- Eleven of 22 units of senior housing has been completed. Construction of the second building is starting.
- Fifty-seven units of age-restricted housing has been approved by the planning and zoning commission. The builder will break ground in the spring.
- The Black Roack Tavern in the new local hot spot. The Town made a low interest loan of \$75,000 to get the restaurant off the ground.
- Re-valuation will be taking place within a few months.
- The WPCA have raised its fees 25% mainly due to energy costs. Senior citizens have been having trouble making their payments.

7. Other

Virginia Mason reported that 1,000 Friends of Connecticut will be holding a regional forum in April, addressing many of the issues regarding housing and taxes. Also Virginia mentioned that the land use seminar with Attorney Dwight Merriam is closed, but Dwight said that if there is any interest in holding a second seminar, he would come back in April.

Peter Dorpalen reported that COG will have a significant surplus in transportation planning funds. Staff has proposed using the money for a design study for a Naugatuck River Greenway, digitizing parcel maps for the towns that do not have GIS, and/or conducting a regionally broader congestion management study.

8. Adjournment

At 8:17 pm, On a motion by Martin Cobern, seconded by Anthony Malone, it was unanimously

VOTED: To adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted by
Samuel Gold, Senior Planner

for

Linda Fercodini, RPC Secretary