

MINUTES

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

COGCNV Conference Room
60 North Main Street – 3rd Floor
(Waterbury Savings Bank Building – North Lobby)
Waterbury, CT
7:00 P.M. Tuesday, January 8, 2008

Attendance: Maria Hill, Bethlehem; Martin Cobern, Cheshire; Joseph McEvoy, Anthony Malone, Naugatuck; Herman Schuler, Oxford; Nancy van Norden, Harmon Andrews, Southbury; Robert Flanagan, Thomaston; Ruth Mulcahy, Watertown; Sam Zotto, Wolcott. **Guests:** Ed Jurzinski, Beacon Falls **Staff:** Peter Dorpalen, Executive Director; Virginia Mason, Assistant Director; Sam Gold, Senior Planner; Joseph Perrelli, Regional Planner.

1. **Pledge of Allegiance, Roll Call, Introductions**

Martin Cobern called the meeting to order at 7 P.M. Those present introduced themselves and recited the pledge of allegiance. There was no public comment. Sam Zotto was introduced as the new RPC representative from Wolcott.

2. **Administrative Items**

- a. *Approval of September 11, 2007 Minutes* — On a motion by Robert Flanagan, seconded by Harmon Andrews, it was unanimously

VOTED: To approve the minutes of the September 11, 2007 meeting.

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

October 3, 2007	Letters to planning and zoning commissions requesting time at an upcoming meeting to present the draft regional plan of conservation and development.
September 24, 2007	Email message to municipal planners announcing COGCNV's 2008 schedule of Land Use Education Seminars.
September 25, 2007	Testimony of Peter Dorpalen before the State Legislative Program Review and Investigations Committee on its study of Regional Planning Organizations.
November 13, 2007	Letter from Tom Gormley resigning from the RPC effective November 30 when he becomes Middlebury's First Selectman.
November 30, 2007	Letter to OPM transmitting COGCNV's application for a municipal training academy under the regional performance incentive grant program.
December 4, 2007	Letter to Tom Gormley thanking him for his years of service as a Middlebury representative to the RPC.
December 20, 2007	Letter to Cheshire Town Manager notifying the town that ConnDOT will begin to de-obligate funding for the extension of the Farmington Canal linear park because of a long-standing, unresolved ROW acquisition issue.
December 21, 2007	Letter to Governor Rell on COGCNV's vote to convey the need to address the rising incidence of Lyme disease in CT.
December 27, 2007	Letter from Wolcott Planning and Zoning Commission appointing Sam Zotto to the RPC.
January 8, 2008	Letter to Sam Zotto welcoming him to the RPC

- c. *Meeting Schedule 2008* — Meetings of the RPC are scheduled for the first Tuesday in alternate months at 7:00 p.m. at the COGCNV office. There will be no August meeting. On Tuesday holidays, the regular meeting is held on the following Tuesday or following Wednesday .

3. **Regional Plan Update**

Virginia Mason gave an update on the draft Regional Plan of Conservation and Development 2008. COGCNV staff has presented the report to Planning and Planning & Zoning Commissions in 11 of the 13 municipalities. Comments from these presentations have been incorporated into the plan. The public meeting is scheduled for March 4 at the Middlebury Library at 7 p.m. The revised plan is available for download at www.cogcnv.org.

4. **Profile of the CNVR: 2007**

Peter Dorpalen distributed copies of the profile to all of the RPC members. The profile is COGCNV's annual report on regional demographic, economic, and housing statistics. The update was prepared by Selma Alves. The data shows a shortage of young adults in the region, economic improvements since the last recession, and a stable population in Waterbury.

5. **Transportation Planning**

- a. *Congestion Management Study* — Joe Perrelli stated that COGCNV staff will continue monitoring the region's most congested roadways after a pause during the holiday season. The congestion management study is an important tool in identifying problem areas and potential locations for future highway projects. Perrelli distributed a map of congested state roads in the CNVR based on volume/capacity ratios published in ConnDOT's Congestion Screening & Monitoring Report 2007.
- b. *Bus route count survey* — Sam Gold reported on the progress of the passenger count software request. The FTA requires local bus systems to report ridership figures on a regular basis. North East Transportation Company has been conducting passenger counts using paper surveys. In order to improve the data collection, COGCNV has issued an RFP to purchase software designed for use on a laptop or handheld device. Counts will still be conducted by NET staff. Three interested parties have responded to the RFP by the February 1 deadline.
- c. *Pedestrian Safety Study* — Joe Perrelli distributed data showing the breakdown of motor vehicle accidents involving pedestrians and bicycles in the region. The data showed the highest concentration of accidents in Waterbury and Naugatuck. Future analysis will identify high hazard locations, corridors, and roads.
- d. *GIS Parcel Mapping Project* — Virginia Mason reported that the committee for the six-town parcel mapping project is conducting interviews in the RFQ process. The COGCNV is also working out an agreement with Geomatica to use their digital parcel maps for the town of Oxford.
- e. *Naugatuck River Greenway* — Sam Gold reported that COGCNV received word from Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro's office that \$147,000 in earmark funding will be set aside for a regional engineering and routing study for the greenway trail. The town of Thomaston has been receiving technical assistance for their portion of the trail from the National Parks Service. Greenway projects in Beacon Falls and Naugatuck have both entered the design phase.

6. **Emergency Planning**

- a. *Pre-disaster Mitigation Planning* — Virginia Mason reported that plans for Oxford, Watertown, and Woodbury are complete. Plans for Cheshire, Wolcott, Waterbury, and Prospect are in the final stages. Waterbury's plan has been approved by the Board of Aldermen. The remaining six towns could begin the process of developing a plan as early as January or February.
- b. *FY 2007 Process* — Virginia Mason reported that COGCNV sent out an RFP to hire a consultant to perform SWOT analysis and develop a regional spending plan as part of DEMHS Region 5 FY 2007 funding process. COGCNV and other RPOs in the region will interview consultants. As coordinating RPO, COGCNV will function as fiduciary agent, and staff will perform resource typing for public works, police, fire, and EMS for CNVR towns in Region 5.

7. Points of Interest/Local Activities

Watertown — Ruth Mulcahy announced that:

- A new municipal regulation will allow windmills in residential districts with certain restrictions. The first special permit site walk was recently performed. Residential wind turbines could become an issue in other towns as well in the near future.
- Final maps on subdivisions will bring another 62 single family housing lots in town.
- Tamarack's wood-burning power plant will be moving forward. A three-way signalized intersection will be needed in order to meet sight line requirements at one of the plant's access points.
- Three large school renovation projects are on the agenda for the town.

Beacon Falls — Richard Minnick reported that:

- The town is on the short list for a park at Pines Bridge that would create an access point to the Naugatuck River. Funding would come under the Housatonic Restoration Project.
- A developer has requested a zone change to allow for a 67-unit active adult community on 17 acres in town.

Southbury — Nancy van Norten and Harmon Andrews reported that:

- The town remembers former First Selectman Alfie Candido, who recently passed away.
- The town approved the purchase of a 38-acre parcel on North George's Hill, which will create a continuous linkage of open space in the area.
- The Planning Commission approved a site plan application to add 73,500 square feet of new floor area for South Village.
- City Seed of New Haven will provide the town with a report on the Feasibility of a Farmer's Market by the end of February.
- The town has received two letters of support from the COGCNV for proposals submitted to the Housatonic Restoration Project.
- The Southbury Plaza has been renovating, and a new Borders will open in April or May.

Oxford — Herman Schuler reported on the three industrial parks opened last year.

- Specter Energy is developing a new energy plant at Woodruff Hill. It should be operational in November of 2008.
- At Fox Hollow Industrial Park, 5 of the 9 lots are sold.
- Technology Park is still in the permitting process with the Army Corp of Engineers, DEP, and State Traffic Commission.
- A CEPA study is underway to qualify the industrial area for DECD grants to fund road improvements.
- Age-restricted homes have picked up. This has added approximately \$2.5 million annually to the tax base.
- The new hangar project at the airport will add hangar space, office space, and supportive services. A new restaurant has also opened at the airport.

Thomaston — Robert Flanagan reported that:

- The town's new website is up and running with an impressive new layout.
- The town will be reconstituting their Conservation Commission in order to work on open space initiatives.

Wolcott — Sam Zotto reported that:

- Senior developments have come into town, and a new restaurant is opening up. Otherwise, there is very little activity in town.

Naugatuck — Joseph McEvoy and Anthony Malone reported that:

- A new subdivision has been approved near the Laurel Park landfill. With the new development, water service will be brought over Andrews Mountain and Hunter's Mountain.
- Loew's is coming to Naugatuck.
- The borough is developing a 5-year sidewalk program to begin replacing old sidewalks.
- The Peter Paul property may receive their requested zone change from an Industrial to a Commercial District.

- The recycling center on Rubber Avenue will be moved behind the Police Department.
- A new traffic signal will be installed at the intersection of Andrew Avenue and Rubber Avenue.
- A new professional park will be developed on New Haven Road.
- Wendy's is coming into Naugatuck on New Haven Road near the Bethany town line.
- Schools will be reconfigured so that Hillside will become an Intermediate School (Grades 5 & 6), leaving the borough with one middle school.

Cheshire — Martin Cobern reported that:

- *Lights of Hope* was held in memory of the Petit family. 150,000 candles lit up the town, raising \$100,000 for Hayley's Hope & Michaela's Miracle Fund.
- There have been four public hearings on the proposed Lifestyle Center. The Inland Wetlands and WPCA have approved the proposal. Fiscal impact studies show approximately \$2 million net of all services required from the town.
- 146 town houses will be aimed at bringing young professionals into the region.

8. **Other**

Virginia Mason reminded everyone about the upcoming seminar, *Land Use: Roles and Responsibilities* on January 24 at Middlebury Library.

9. **Adjournment**

At 8:06 P.M., on a motion by Anthony Malone, seconded by Ruth Mulcahy, it was unanimously

VOTED: To adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted by
Joe Perrelli
Regional Planner

for

Robert Flanagan
RPC Secretary