

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, November 18, 2008

Attendance: Maria Hill, Bethlehem; Martin Cobern, Cheshire; Ken Long, Middlebury; Herman Schuler, Oxford; Gil Graveline, Prospect; Harmon Andrews, Southbury; Robert Flanagan, Thomaston; James Sequin, Waterbury; Martin Overton and Mary Connolly, Woodbury. **Guests:** Carol Haskins, PRWC. **Staff:** Peter Dorpalen, Executive Director; Virginia Mason, Assistant Director; Glenda Prentiss, GIS Coordinator; Joseph Perrelli, Regional Planner.

1. Pledge of Allegiance, Roll Call, Introductions

Vice-Chairman Martin Cobern 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 16, 2008 Minutes* — On a motion by James Sequin, seconded by Bob Flanagan, it was unanimously

VOTED: To approve the minutes of the September 16, 2008 meeting.

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

October 10, 2008	Letter to Southbury in support of its farmers' market application
October 17, 2008	Letter from Cheshire Town Manager Michael Milone thanking COGCNV for assistance with implementing the CodeRed Emergency Notification System
November 12, 2008	Letter to Naugatuck EDC in support of an EPA brownfields assessment funding within the Renaissance Place development area
November 17, 2008	Letter to OPM in support of Oxford's Christian Street Phase III project
November 18, 2008	Email received from Pamela Casagrande, stating that she will be resigning from the RPC.

3. Groundwater Modeling as a Tool for Municipal Land Use Commissions

Virginia Mason presented groundwater modeling as a tool that land use commissions can use when making a decision on a subdivision or zone change to give them more insight into which parcels are important for groundwater recharge.

Carol Haskins and Glenda Prentiss discussed the model using geospatial data from Southbury, including surficial geology, soil type, and percent of impervious area. These attributes were mapped and analyzed to determine their effect on groundwater recharge. COGCNV will be visiting the towns in the region to talk about how they can use this data in conjunction with parcel data that will be made available in the future. Mrs. Mason distributed copies of the report, *A Manual for Assessing Hydrologic Value of Land Parcels based on Physical Attributes*, prepared by the Pomperaug River Watershed Coalition and Southbury Land Trust.

4. Transportation Planning

- a. *Congestion Management Study* — Peter Dorpalen explained that COGCNV approved the report last week subject to the review and recommendation of the RPC. Joe Perrelli gave a brief summary of his presentation from the previous meeting. Jim Sequin asked if there were any recommendations included in this report. Mr. Perrelli said that the objective of the report is to identify major bottlenecks for further study. On a motion by Bob Flanagan, seconded by James Sequin, it was unanimously

VOTED: To recommend the *Congestion Management Report:2008* for approval by the COGCNV.

- b. *GIS Parcel Mapping Project* — Virginia Mason reported that the parcel mapping project should be completed by June 2009. GIS parcel maps have so far been completed for Beacon Falls, Bethlehem, and Thomaston. Issues with the data in Naugatuck and Oxford have caused a delay in preparing their digital parcels. The consultant will begin working on Middlebury, Wolcott, and Cheshire.

Bob Flanagan asked about the date of the aerial photographs and the total cost. The earliest were captured by AT&T in 2005. The cost of the parcel mapping for the eight towns and the regional aerials is \$250,000.

Herman Schuler asked about the cost to towns to maintain the parcel data. Mrs. Mason did not have the figures available at the meeting, but information on pricing and discounts for multiple towns was distributed at the October COGCNV meeting. Bob Flanagan commented that Thomaston applies a fee to all zoning permits, which goes into a GIS account to pay for such GIS costs.

- c. *Bus Route Ridership Study* — No report was made on this item.
- d. *Naugatuck River Greenway* — No report was made on this item.

5. Emergency Planning

Virginia Mason reported that Milone & McBroom are working on pre-disaster mitigation plans for six towns this year. Mrs. Mason recently reviewed drafts on Bethlehem and Thomaston. Public meetings will be held once FEMA comments on the plans. The plan for Beacon Falls is almost complete. The final three plans will follow. All plans must be approved by March 2009.

Last week, the Regional Emergency Planning Team (REPT) for DEMHS Region 5 voted to approve the organizational structure to be used in the Regional Emergency Operations Plan (REOP). The plan proposes to use subregions (zones) based on regional planning boundaries. The deadline to submit the final plan is December 2009.

Mrs. Mason discussed some of the projects that were included in the Region 5 spending plan, including a resource officer for 20 towns in Litchfield County, a command vehicle, and a police response study. The Region has requested a cash advance from DEMHS on 1/3 of the funding (approx. \$300,000) to start some of these projects.

6. HomeCT

Virginia Mason reported that under the HomeCT program the state has grants up to \$50,000 available for towns to look at areas that can be made into “workforce housing” zones (for those earning up to 80% median income). Oxford and Beacon Falls have already received grants. Thomaston will be submitting its application to the state shortly. The application will include a provision that a study be performed to determine the impact that such a zone would have on school enrollment in town. Middlebury and Waterbury both decided against applying. Watertown Planning & Zoning approved the grant, and the Town Council will review it next before submitting it. COGCNV staff have presented the program before the Woodbury Board of Selectmen and will be presenting it to the Zoning Commission shortly. Staff is also planning to present the program before both the Town Council and Planning and Zoning in Cheshire in December.

7. Regional Roundtable Topics

Peter Dorpalen presented the revised regional roundtable topics, which include suggestions received at the September RPC meeting. New items that were added to the list include time frames for transportation projects, Municipal Government Training Academy, and a proposal for regional tax base sharing. The topics will be presented to municipal officials to solicit other feedback.

8. Points of Interest/Local Activities

Prospect — Gil Graveline reported that:

- Sales at the Toll Brothers property continue to go well.
- There are a few subdivision applications before the Zoning Commission, including one industrial subdivision.
- The town is working on fine tuning its zoning regulations.

Middlebury — Ken Long reported that:

- A zone change had been proposed in an area zoned LI-200 to CA-40 zone. The application was withdrawn and resubmitted with modifications to include the road area and put building limit sizes on the parcels.
- A health club has been approved on Benson Road.
- The town recently hosted a hazardous household waste collection event.
- A proposed Dunkin’ Donuts has created traffic concerns.

Southbury — Harmon Andrews reported that:

- The biggest issue is the 200+ acres off I-84 which the town purchased. It is trying to find a suitable tenant.

Waterbury — Jim Sequin reported that:

- A 71-unit single family cluster development was approved near the Prospect line.
- The corporation counsel is reviewing the proposed new regulations. The public outreach effort will begin after the holidays. He anticipates new land use regulations will be ready by September.
- The moratorium on multifamily permits may be extended.

Woodbury — Martin Overton reported that:

- The town is seeking to create a central location for all of the town buildings.
- The Zoning Commission is trying to determine whether there is any legal definition for “residential” for use in zoning regulations. This elicited a few responses and suggestions of resources that might be useful.

Thomaston — Bob Flanagan reported that:

- Age restricted 55+ development on S. Main Street continues to move forward. The developer just framed the first two units, which are duplexes.
- \$10 million road project is under way. Began at High Street Ext. and Atwood Road.
- He had served on a committee that discussed the possibility of a local tax savings program to aid low-income households. The Board of Finance did not agree with the committee's recommendations.

Bethlehem — Maria Hill reported that:

- The proposed theme park will not be coming to Bethlehem, although it has raised discussion about zoning.
- There is no new building going on. A few lot line revisions have come up.

Oxford — Herman Schuler reported that:

- State has approved the design for the improvements to the curve on the Rte 188. Construction has started.
- There has been an explosion of development on Rte. 67 near the Seymour line. Sewer and water extension along Rte 67 is already half way up West Street. It is expected to be completed in April. [Something missing??]The project includes 117,000 sq. ft. of retail and medical in 5 new buildings. Building for the retail component will probably begin in the spring.
- On the south side of town, a 6,000 sq. ft. professional building is going in. The Planning & Zoning chair is conceptualizing lighting and streetscape improvements in the area.
- Eight or nine industrial buildings have been approved and are in various phases of construction.
- The Towantic Energy Plant is now going for a water permit. The owner has begun building a road to connect the east side of town to the airport.
- Spectra Energy natural gas facility was commissioned last month. It is now pumping natural gas.
- The town has concerns about the State Traffic Commission (STC), which is requiring the developers of Technology Park (1 million square feet) to rebuild portions of Interchange 16 on I-84 to accommodate the anticipated increase in traffic. The town feels that the proposed improvements to the airport will also contribute to the increase in traffic, so the state should bear some of the burden. Since the STC views these traffic impacts in a linear fashion, it is usually the last developer who is responsible for upgrades to the road system. The town would like to see the intersection rebuilt as part of a stimulus package because of its regional significance to Southbury, Middlebury, and Oxford.

Cheshire — Martin Cobern reported that:

- Town Council committee issued a report suggesting alternatives for what to do with the pool.
- Town will buy a dam from Strathmore Development, Cheshire's first cluster subdivision. As a condition for approval, a homeowners association was to be established in order to decide what to do with the dam. After 35 years, a homeowners association will be set up, the town has decided to take over the parcel, and the developer has agreed to make the necessary repairs. The proposal is set for a vote next Monday.
- F&S filed for bankruptcy. The Town approved a biodiesel facility for F&S last year at Peck Lane. The state appointed a receiver to auction off the property, but if there are no bids, it will be turned over to the bank..

- Lifestyle Center is moving ahead slowly.
- During the downtime, the Planning & Zoning chair has decided it would be a good time to start looking over the zoning regulations.

8. Other

Jim Sequin mentioned a DEP letter asking towns to revisit their sewer service “planned areas” to incorporate that data into an upcoming revision of the State Plan of Conservation & Development. Towns can be ruled ineligible for Clean Water funding if properties outside of these areas are allowed to hook into the sewer system. The City will likely use the municipal boundary as the “planned area” for sewer service.

Rob Flanagan commented that the CT Council of Small Towns (COST) has said that DEP is getting out of the noise regulation business.

9. Adjournment — On a motion by Harmon Andrews, seconded by Gil Graveline, it was unanimously

VOTED: To adjourn the meeting at 8:21 P.M.

Respectfully submitted by
Joe Perrelli
Regional Planner

for

Bob Flanagan
RPC Secretary