

## MINUTES

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

COGCNV Conference Room  
60 North Main Street – 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
(Waterbury Savings Bank Building – North Lobby)  
Waterbury, CT  
7:00 P.M. Tuesday, March 3, 2009

**Attendance:** Martin Cobern, Cheshire; Ken Long, Middlebury; Joseph McEvoy, Naugatuck; Harold Cosgrove and Herman Schuler, Oxford; Nancy Clark and Harmon Andrews, Southbury; Robert Flanagan, Thomaston; James Sequin and Geoffrey Green, Waterbury; Linda Fercodini, Wolcott. **Staff:** Peter Dorpalen, Executive Director; Virginia Mason, Assistant Director; Samuel Gold, Senior Planner; Jeff Cormier, Regional Planner / GIS Specialist; Joseph Perrelli, Regional Planner.

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

Chairman Linda Fercodini called the meeting to order at 7:04 P.M. Those present introduced themselves and recited the pledge of allegiance. Nancy Clark and Geoffrey Green were welcomed to the Regional Planning Commission. There was no public comment.

#### 2. **Administrative Items**

- a. *Approval of November 18, 2008 Minutes* — On a motion by Harmon Andrews, seconded by Martin Cobern, it was unanimously

VOTED: To approve the minutes of the November 18, 2008 meeting.

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

November 25, 2008	Letter to Kay Campbell from the RPC thanking her for her leadership with the organization
November 30, 2008	Letter from Pamela Casagrande resigning from the RPC
December 3, 2008	Letter to Pamela Casagrande thanking her for serving on the RPC
December 29, 2008	Letter to Nancy Clark welcoming her to the RPC as a representative for Southbury
January 23, 2009	Memorandum from OPM requesting that COG remind municipalities that discretionary state funding could be affected if a municipality does not have a local plan of conservation and development updated within the last ten years, beginning July 1, 2010.
February 9, 2009	Email to area legislators alerting them that the Governor's Budget includes \$40 million for regional incentive grants, but it eliminates state funding for the RPOs which often serve as facilitators for regional services.

February 24, 2009

Letter to Geoffrey Green welcoming him to the RPC as a representative for Waterbury

## 1. **Economic Stimulus Package — Status of local shovel-ready transportation projects**

Peter Dorpalen and Joe Perrelli gave an update on the shovel-ready transportation projects process. Joe presented a memo with a table ranking the projects submitted by towns. Plans, specifications, and price estimates were requested for each of the projects. Projects will be ranked with both regional equity and shovel readiness in mind. The region has approximately \$6.5 million to spend on highway and bridge projects.

## 2. **Elimination of State Regional Planning Funding in Governor's Budget**

Peter Dorpalen reported that the Governor's budget eliminates funding for the state's regional planning organizations, including COGCNV. COGCNV sent a letter to area legislators, signed by each municipality's chief elected official, asking for the restoration of funding.

## 3. **Project Updates**

- a. *GIS Parcel Mapping Project* — Virginia Mason reported that COGCNV received 2006 AT&T color aerial photos for the entire region. GIS parcel maps have so far been completed for Beacon Falls, Bethlehem, and Thomaston. She will be meeting with Oxford on their parcels. Naugatuck has many issues and the consultant has done what he can with their parcels. The consultant has begun work on Middlebury and Cheshire. The project is expected to be completed by the end of June 2009. The parcel layers will be available online via our website until the end of December 2009. Towns will have to decide if they wish to continue paying for online access for next year.
- b. *Bus Route Ridership Study* — Samuel Gold reported that he will be starting a bus route ridership study this month. The study will count bus riders by bus stop. Every bus route will be counted on a weekday, Saturday, and Sunday.
- c. *Naugatuck River Greenway* — Samuel Gold reported that a request for qualifications was issued for the Regional Naugatuck River Greenway Routing Study. The RFQ responses are due on Friday, March 14. The study will investigate where it is feasible to build a greenway trail. Samuel also reported that he served on the consultant selection committee for Waterbury's greenway routing and feasibility study. The selection committee chose Alta Planning and Design from Saratoga Springs, NY to conduct its study.
- d. *Emergency Planning* — Virginia Mason reported that the 43 towns of northwest Connecticut met and voted to endorse a draft regional emergency operations plan. A final plan is required by the end of 2009.
- e. *Pre-Disaster Mitigation* — Virginia Mason reported that the last six municipalities in the region will have their pre-disaster mitigation plans completed and adopted by the end of the month. Having current pre-disaster mitigation plans allows towns to apply for money for pre-disaster mitigation projects.
- f. *HomeCT Program* — Virginia Mason reported that a draft RFQ for an incentive housing zone plan for Thomaston and Watertown is being circulated.

#### 4. Transportation Project Updates

Joe Perrelli and Sam Gold gave an update on transportation projects in the region.

#### 5. Points of Interest/Local Activities

Naugatuck — Joseph McEvoy reported that:

- The borough is in the middle of election season.

Middlebury — Ken Long reported that:

- The 188 commercial zone gateway district has been approved.
- The site next to Juniper's Restaurants has development interest.
- The Dunkin Donuts for the center of town has been approved by the conservation commission, but zoning approval expired.
- Health spa on N. Benson Road has broken ground.
- A commercial building on Rte 64 has been approved across from Ledgewood Park.
- The gas line that Yankee Gas put in along Rte 188 is completed.
- A co-generation electric/steam plant is going in at Westover School.
- Intersection improvements at exit 16 would benefit Middlebury.

Southbury — Nancy Clark reported that:

- Nothing new on the Southbury Training School or the town owned economic development land.
- Looking into sports field lighting.
- Southbury budget is being cut.

Southbury — Harmon Andrews reported that:

- The Southbury Training School sewer plant is failing and the state doesn't want to repair it.
- Strategic planning for Region 15 does not project growth in the school system. New school children in Middlebury is shifting costs over to Middlebury.
- Watermark will be putting in homes around its life-care center.
- 200 acres on exit 14 are up for sale.

Waterbury — Jim Sequin reported that:

- Permitting activity is slow, but enforcement is up.
- Working to getting quarry operators special permits.
- A 20 bed drug and alcohol facility tried going in near the Mattatuck Museum without seeking any approvals.
- Rewrite of land use regulations is proceeding. Two public meetings will be held. Drafts are out for comment. Largest change will a shift of workload between commissions. Special permit work done by city plan commission will be transferred to zoning commission.

Cheshire — Martin Cobern reported that:

- Planning and zoning commission just approved a larger Rite Aid (15,000 sq. ft.) at Maplecroft Plaza. The commission was able to convince Rite Aid to design the building so from the main road it appears to be a row of town homes, with no signage.
- Bozzuto's received approval for a helicopter landing pad. The landing pad will allow executives to get back and forth between facilities. Helicopters will not be flying over homes and businesses in Cheshire.

- In process of considering a proposal from the Cheshire Housing Authority to put in 20 affordable attached homes in a historic building and three new buildings.

Thomaston — Bob Flanagan reported that:

- The incentive housing grant was approved.
- The town is \$3 million into a \$10 million road program.
- Board of Finance and Selectmen are asking for a 0% increase.
- Teachers have refused to renegotiate their contract. Town is proposing laying off 13 teachers.
- The Opera House is having trying times. The organization owes the Town \$140,000 and it is having a difficult time with the board of finance.
- Thomaston GIS is up and running thanks to COGCNV.
- He is attending FEMA flood plain training in Maryland. Two people from each state can go for free. The application is through the FEMA website.

Wolcott — Linda Fercodini reported that:

- The town does not have a plan for tax abatement. The Industrial and Commercial Commission has asked the town for such a plan.
- Grilly Road project is stalled.
- A few retailers want to come to town.
- Not many residential buildings being built.

Oxford — Harold Cosgrove reported that:

- An architectural review committee is being established.
- Builders are still trying to put in projects with dead end streets longer than the maximum of 1,500 feet. Developers prefer putting in cul-de-sacs over streets that connect.

Oxford — Herman Schuler reported that:

- P&Z had a work session on the incentive housing plan. Identified an area that would work for affordable mixed use developments, town housing, and detached housing.
- The sewer from Seymour is now up to West Street.
- Expecting an application for a 32,000 sq. ft. medical building. Developer is planning on giving back some of the land for a library site and daycare center.
- Supermarket project is not moving forward.
- A brewer is interesting in the industrial park.
- Power plant is asking to renegotiate tax agreement.
- A bill is in committee in the legislature for improvements at exit 16.
- Airport hanger project is waiting for OPM to approve leases for the airport.

## **8. Other**

Virginia Mason reported that the land use academy is being done differently this year. A one day session will be done on a Saturday in Stamford. The sessions are being held in areas that previously were under-served.

Virginia Mason reported that COGCNV was approached by Randall Arendt to do a workshop on redeveloping strip malls.

**9. Adjournment** — On a motion by Martin Cobern, seconded by Robert Flanagan, it was unanimously

VOTED: To adjourn the meeting at 8:43 P.M.

Respectfully submitted by  
Samuel Gold  
Senior Planner

for

Bob Flanagan  
RPC Secretary