

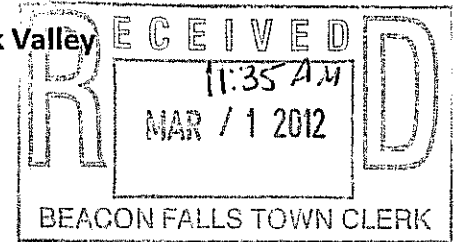


MINUTES

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

COGCV Conference Room
60 North Main Street – 3rd Floor
(Waterbury Savings Bank Building – North Lobby)
Waterbury, CT

7:00 P.M. Tuesday, January 10, 2012



Attendance: Martin Cobern, Cheshire; Richard Minnick and Peter Betkoski, Beacon Falls; Ken Long, Middlebury; Joseph McEvoy, Naugatuck; Harold Cosgrove, Oxford; Nancy Clark, Southbury; Robert Flanagan, Thomaston; Ruth Mulcahy, Watertown; Cathe Sherman, Wolcott. **Staff:** Peter Dorpalen, Executive Director; Virginia Mason, Assistant Director; Samuel Gold, Senior Planner; Joe Perrelli, Senior Planner.

1. Pledge of Allegiance, Roll Call, Introductions

The meeting opened at 7:02 P.M. with the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance. RPC representatives, COGCV staff, and guests introduced themselves.

2. Administrative Items

- a. *Approval of September 13, 2011 Minutes* — On a motion by Martin Cobern, seconded by Nancy Clark, it was unanimously

VOTED: To approve the minutes of the September 13, 2011 meeting.

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

- | | |
|-------------------|---|
| November 2, 2011 | Wolcott's 2011 Plan of Conservation and Development — Acknowledgements include COGCV's Regional Plan and GIS Coordinator Glenda Prentiss's assistance with data and mapping used in the Wolcott plan |
| November 17, 2011 | Honorable mention to Planning Assistant/GIS Mark Berube by the State Geospatial Council for his parcel-level land use map of the region |
| December 2, 2011 | Letter from HUD notifying COGCV that its Sustainable Communities grant application was not selected for a grant, but COGCV was awarded Preferred Sustainability Status, providing COGCV higher priority for certain federal grants. |
| December 3, 2011 | Memorandum from Joe Perrelli transmitting the draft regional Transportation Improvement Program and announcing a TIP public meeting on December 14 from 3:00 to 5:00 pm. |
| January 9, 2012 | Email for OPM inquiring whether COGCV is willing to serve as the regional cross-acceptance facilitator |
| January 9, 2012 | Email response from Peter Dorpalen stating that COGCV intends to serve as the cross-acceptance facilitator for CNVR municipalities, subject to RPC and COGCV support |

On OPM cross-acceptance facilitation, Martin Cobern made a motion, seconded by Nancy Clark, and it was unanimously

VOTED: To recommend that COGCNV act as the cross-acceptance process facilitator for the Central Naugatuck Valley Region on the behalf of the state Office of Policy and Management.

3. Permitted and Non-permitted Uses of CL&P Transmission Rights of Way (ROW)

Two representatives from Connecticut Light and Power (CL&P), Chris Swan, Director of Municipal Relations, and Hank O'Brien, Real Estate Specialist, spoke to the RPC about permitted and non-permitted uses of CL&P's transmission rights of way. The speakers gave examples of misuse of rights of way that either endangers people or the integrity of transmission lines. CL&P would like to work with municipal land use commissions and enforcement officials to ensure the protection and proper use of transmission rights of way.

4. Waterbury Regional Bus Ridership Study 2011

Samuel Gold gave a presentation on the draft Waterbury Regional Bus Ridership Study 2011. Passenger boarding and alighting counts were conducted on all bus route runs in the CTTransit – Waterbury local bus system, operated by North East Transportation, in spring 2009. The study presents the results of the counts, analyzes bus ridership trends, and makes recommendations based on this analysis. The study found an average of 6,181 passengers per weekday. Ridership increased significantly from 2001 when the last counts were conducted. Some interesting trends were observed including more passengers taking the bus uphill than downhill on hilly routes such as Willow St. and significant variations in monthly ridership on routes servicing the mall and the Wolcott Street retail corridor. A public meeting was held in November and useful comments and suggestions were received at that meeting and via email. Drafts of the study were sent to CTDOT and North East Transportation. North East provided comments on the draft study. Robert Flanagan commended Sam on his work on this study.

On a motion by Robert Flanagan, seconded by Martin Cobern, it was unanimously

VOTED: To recommend the Waterbury Regional Bus Ridership Study 2011 to the COGCNV for approval.

5. Transportation Funding Programs

Samuel Gold and Joe Perrelli gave an overview of the Transportation Enhancement (STP-E) and Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) funding programs. STP-E funds a variety of enhancements to the transportation system and has been used in past years to fund the region's greenway projects and the renovation of the Naugatuck Train Station building. CMAQ funds projects that reduce traffic congestion and improve air quality in federal clean air act non-attainment zones. CTDOT has asked COGCNV to solicit the region's municipalities for projects for both funding programs and to rank the projects. COGCNV's projected STP-E allocation is \$1.1 million for FY2013-16. COGCNV received seven proposals totaling over \$5 million. Staff will be scoring the proposals using ranking criteria. There will be a regional workshop on Wednesday, January 18th at 2 pm to discuss a regional ranking of projects for STP-E funding and to come up with a recommendation to be approved by COGCNV at the January 20th meeting. COGCNV received only one proposal for CMAQ funds. This CMAQ project will be submitted to CTDOT and will compete against other projects in the state for funding.

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6. Other

- a. *Regional Animal Shelter Study application* — Peter Dorpalen provided an update on the Regional Animal Control Feasibility Study. At its October meeting, COGCNV decided to pursue an OPM Regional Performance Grant to study options for a regional animal control facility. COGCNV staff submitted an application and cost benefit analysis has also been completed. The towns of Beacon Falls, Naugatuck, Middlebury, Southbury, Prospect, and Wolcott are all interested in collaborating on a regional shelter. The deadline for the application was December 31, 2011.
- b. *Congested signalized intersection study* — Joe Perrelli reported that staff have compiled a list of congested corridors in the region and identified signals that can be retimed to improve traffic flow as a cost-effective means of reducing congestion and improving air quality. All of the intersections that were identified are on State highways, so staff is working with CTDOT in their review. Staff began recording turning movement counts at intersections and will be conducting their analysis of existing conditions in the Spring. If anyone has ideas for intersections that can benefit from retiming, they can contact the COGCNV office to request a review.
- c. *Transportation Improvement Program: 2012-2015 (TIP)* — Joe Perrelli discussed the draft Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) prepared by COGCNV and CTDOT. The TIP is a federally-required four year funding schedule of highway and transit projects paid for by federal, state, and local funding sources. The COGCNV will be voting on approval of the TIP at their January meeting. If approved, the TIP will be forwarded to CTDOT. If accepted by CTDOT, the CNVR's TIP will become part of the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). CTDOT will submit the STIP to the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration for their review and approval.
- d. *Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant Application* — Samuel Gold reported that COGCNV's application to HUD's Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant program was not successful, although our application earned us "Preferred Sustainability Status" which gives our region and its municipalities preference in some HUD and other federal grant programs. It will also earn COGCNV extra points in a future Sustainable Communities grant. Unfortunately the program has not been funded for next year.
- e. *Land use educational training* — Virginia Mason reported that COGCNV, in conjunction with CLEAR will again be conducting a three session land use training academy for land use commissioners on the last Wednesday of February, March, and April. Attendees of all three training workshops will receive a certificate. The workshops are free, but advanced registration is required.
- f. *Pre-disaster mitigation planning grants* — Virginia Mason reported that COGCNV submitted applications in the Fall for updates to the pre-disaster mitigation plans in Oxford, Watertown, and Woodbury. Cheshire, Wolcott, Prospect, and Waterbury will be considered next for updates. The other six towns in our region are not due for an update yet. The town match for these grants is funded through in-kind services. The State will have approximately \$700,000 to spend on planning this year.

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7. Points of Interest / Local Activities

Cheshire

Martin Cobern reported that

- The town has been quiet, but the budget season is starting.
- The new bubble for the community pool has arrived. It should be open at the end of the month.

Southbury

Nancy Clark reported that

- Planning and Zoning is at work on its new Plan of Conservation & Development.
- There are concerns among residents about the future of the 1,600-acres at the Southbury Training School. The town has some ideas for the state-owned land. The town applied for open space designation for 900 acres of the property. They need to develop a plan for its future use.
- A new Panera Bakery opened up in Southbury Plaza on Main Street South.
- TJ Maxx is expected to take over the former Borders location in Southbury Plaza.

Thomaston

Robert Flanagan reported that

- The town has approved \$175,000 to study an area north of downtown called "the Web." It has many old, clay sewer pipes that limit the town's ability to include the area in the municipal pavement program.
- Planning and Zoning is at work on its new Plan of Conservation & Development. It is expected to be an 18-month process.
- The Thomaston Opera House is back in operation thanks to a private consortium that will manage the theater.

Beacon Falls

Peter Betkoski and Richard Minnick reported that

- The town's Plan of Conservation & Development is in its final draft stage.
- A new medical office is being built in town, since the mild winter weather has been very accommodating.
- The streetscape is on hold through the winter.
- The Inland Wetlands Commission will have its new regulations approved tomorrow evening.

Oxford

Harold Cosgrove reported that

- Three locations were identified for the town's Incentive Housing Zone. They were submitted to OPM for approval.
- Herman Schuler is no longer the town's economic development director.
- P & Z just encountered a state law that dictates 14 years as the maximum time allowed for extensions to construct approved buildings.

Walcott

Cathe Sherman reported that

- The town's Plan of Conservation and Development was approved in December.
- A new blight ordinance was recently passed. Blight control enforcement will be the responsibility of the police department, although complaints are initially received and reviewed by the Blight Commission.

- There are two CTDOT construction projects that are ongoing and one other signal project on Route 69 at Long Swamp Road.

Naugatuck

Joe McEvoy reported that

- The mayor is pursuing a municipal government operations study to identify inefficiencies and areas for improvement.
- The Whittemore bridge (Maple Street) improvement will be starting soon.
- A new traffic signal will be installed at the intersection of Maple Street and Old Firehouse Road in front of the Fire Department. The light was taken down several years ago and the intersection has been controlled by stop signs ever since.
- The Board of Education is moving out of the Tuttle House. The borough needs to consider what to do with the property.
- Peter Paul property still sits vacant with no plans for the future.

Middlebury

Ken Long reported that

- P & Z established a committee to discuss a draft blight ordinance, which is largely focused on property maintenance.
- The ZEO position may be removed from the next budget.
- The town did not receive any STEAP money from the state this year.
- There has not been much building activity: mainly remodels and a small amount of commercial activity.
- Sixteen homes are now gone from the Triangle Hills neighborhood in a voluntary acquisition program related to the Waterbury-Oxford Airport's noise abatement zone. The acquisition program is ongoing.

Watertown

Ruth Mulcahy reported that

- The 59-unit single-family dwelling project is in public hearing.
- A 59,000 square-foot industrial application is now on the P & Z agenda.
- There is an application to expand parking at Lombard Plaza (1156 Main Street). Blockbuster has moved out of that plaza. The owners applied for another building in the past, but were turned down. They are now attempting to add more parking to make the former-Blockbuster space more attractive.
- Controversial cell tower is being proposed on the Gustafson Farm.
- Owners of several industrial properties have approached the Planning & Zoning Office with proposals.
- A dealership was issued a permit to start site work for a new 30,000-square foot building on its property.
- The town is compiling a list of its properties to see what should be sold.
- Incentive Housing is getting final signatures and will be mailed this week.
- Town offices are gradually being moved to the new building.
- Proposed CVS on Davis Street is on the agenda. It has a number of traffic issues related to Main Street.

8. Upcoming Events

There were no upcoming events.

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9. Adjournment

At 8:43 p.m. on a motion by Ken Long, seconded by Nancy Clark, it was unanimously

VOTED: To adjourn the meeting

Submitted by
Samuel Gold
Senior Planner

For

Nancy Clark
RPC Secretary

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