



RECORD OF MEETING
REGULAR MEETING

Regional Planning Commission (RPC)
of the Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments (NVCOG)
49 Leavenworth Street – Suite 303, Waterbury, CT
7:00 p.m. Tuesday, October 6, 2015

Attendance: Joseph Jaumann, Ansonia; Michael Opuszynski, Beacon Falls; Marie Chasse, Bristol; Ken Long, Middlebury; Margus Laan, Plymouth; Gil Graveline, Prospect; Nancy G. Clark, Southbury; Jeremy Leifert, Thomaston; James Sequin, Waterbury; Robert Travers, Woodbury.

Staff: Mark Nielsen, Planning Director, NVCOG; Joanna Rogalski, Regional Planner NVCOG; Aaron Budris, Regional Planner NVCOG; Max Tanguay-Colucci, Regional Planner NVCOG.

The meeting opened at 7:03 PM. Mark Nielsen, planning director for NVCOG, opened the meeting with a welcome to all representatives and members of the public, and a brief description of the NVCOG consolidation process. One goal is to get the RPC up and running. Suggest a temporary chair be elected for tonight's meeting. A motion was made by Nancy Clark, seconded by Michael Opuszynski to elect Ken Long as the temporary RPC chair for tonight's meeting. The motion was passed unanimously.

1. Pledge of Allegiance, Roll Call, Introductions, Public Participation

The pledge of allegiance was recited. RPC members, NVCOG staff and members of the public introduced themselves. At this point in time, nine (9) RPC members present at the meeting. One (1) RPC alternate arrived at about 7:30 PM. A quorum of ten (10) RPC members and/or alternates were present.

The public was invited to make comments. No comments were made.

2. Guest Speaker

Len Dejong, Executive Director of the Pomperaug River Watershed Coalition (PRWC), discussed Water Allocation and Use Ordinances in the state of Connecticut, and the need for a broader, more regional approach to adopting and implementing a water allocation and use ordinance. The need was outlined in the context of environmental protection, climate change, drought and public safety. He described the PRWC work with stakeholders in Southbury, CT to devise municipal water allocation and use ordinances. The State of Connecticut Public Act 14-163 "An Act Concerning The Responsibilities Of The Water Planning Council" regarding the preparation of a State Water Plan, which is to be completed by July 1, 2017, would affect municipalities and regions. He posed two questions to the NVCOG RPC representatives and staff: 1) Is the water allocation and use ordinance an NVCOG issue, and 2) How could municipalities work together on this water issue? In the course of discussion the following points were made:

- The COG could be a facilitator for discussion and a forum for education on this issue.



- Water use is the issue, water source is not important so don't limit the discussion to municipalities drawing from a certain watershed.
- The proposed ordinance concerns any municipal water emergency, not just drought.

3. Discussion – NVCOG RPC role, mission statement, and referral response process

Mark Nielsen discussed the need for NVCOG by-laws to be amended to satisfy the Connecticut General Statutes regarding the functions of the RPC in the COG. RPC is a permanent subcommittee of the NVCOG. The CGS allows for the creation of an RPC, but it is not a requirement. However, if an RPC is created, and Executive Committee of the RPC must be also be created and comprised of chair, vice-chair and secretary and anyone else you want to appoint. The CGS identifies two main responsibilities of the RPC: 1) reviewing amendments to municipal zoning and subdivision regulations, and 2) reviewing and providing input to the regional plan of conservation and development. The CGS gives no guidelines on what the review should include or how it is to be done. The regional plan of conservation and development (RPOCD) will be based upon the updated and adopted municipal plans of conservation and development, (POCD). The CGS calls for a bottom—up process for the POCD's: RPOCD must be consistent with municipal POCD's, and the State POCD must be consistent with the RPOCD's. Once all 19 NVCOG members have adopted their POCD's, the RPOCD may be adopted. Current deadline for municipal POCD update and adoption is July 1, 2016.

Another RPC function is being a regional forum for planning issues, including presentations and education as had been presented this evening.

Discussion turned to the referral process. A suggestion was made that referrals considered regionally significant by the NVCOG staff be reviewed by the RPC Executive Committee for confirmation of regional significance and comment. The Executive Committee would meet monthly to review these referrals. The full body of the RPC would meet quarterly.

Discussion turned to the organization and membership of the Executive Committee. Members of the Executive Committee need not be limited to the RPC officers. A recommendation of five (5) members was discussed.

Power for motions. An Executive Committee quorum would be 51% of the membership. Other RPC members could attend the Executive Committee meeting, however if all RPC members attend, the meeting would be considered a meeting of the full body of the RPC, and thus a quorum of ten would be required to act on motions. More substantive issues, including the RPOCD, would be considered and acted upon by the full body of the RPC.

Recommendation was made that a synopsis of all referrals be sent out to the full board, with a comment period of five (5) business days.

Discussion turned to the draft Mission Statement of the RPC. One representative commented that the referral process as described was streamlined and quarterly meetings of the RPC would help meet the mission statement objectives. Another member pointed out that the RPC discusses policy, and



does not make policy. Another commented that the mission statement could be adopted today and be changed as the need arose.

A motion was made by Bob Travers, seconded by Mike Opuszynski to approve the RPC Mission Statement. The motion was passed unanimously.

4. RPC Officer Nominating Committee Report and Elections – Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary (Motion)

Ken Long discussed the work of the nominating committee. Two candidates were presented: Nancy Clark for chairperson and Marie Chasse for vice-chairperson. There were no candidates identified for secretary, and thus the floor was open for nominations. The main duty of the secretary is to sign official documents on behalf of the RPC. NVCOG staff writes meeting minutes. The secretary would preside over meetings should the chair or vice-chair be unable to attend. Michael Opuszynski offered to run for secretary.

The terms of the RPC officers were clarified: the term follows the NVCOG fiscal year, from July to June. The chair would serve a two year term. The vice-chair and secretary would serve one year terms. The next chair election will take place in June, 2017. The next elections for vice-chair and secretary will take place in June 2016.

A motion was made by James Sequin, seconded by Gil Graveline, to elect Nancy Clark as RPC chairperson, Marie Chasse as RPC vice-chairperson and Michael Opuszynski as RPC secretary. The motion was passed unanimously.

The Executive Committee membership was discussed. Margus Laan and Ken Long volunteered to be members in addition to the three RPC officers. A consensus was reached that the Executive Committee would consist of five members, three of which would be RPC officers, and two of which would be other RPC representatives, and that those two other members would be Margus Laan and Ken Long.

5. Administrative Items

- a. Approval of January 6, 2015 Meeting Minutes (Motion) The floor was opened for discussion and corrections of the meeting minutes. No corrections were made. On a motion by James Sequin, seconded by Michael Opuszynski, it was unanimously voted to approve the January 6, 2015 meeting minutes.
- b. Approval of May 5, 2015 Meeting Minutes (Motion) Since the May 5, 2015 meeting was a workshop meeting; the title of the document was corrected to “Workshop Meeting.”
- c. Correspondence – there was no correspondence to report upon.

6. Roundtable - Points of Interest/Local Activities



Woodbury

Woodbury would like to change its ordinances to allow for more sustainable development. In late October the American Institute of Architects will visit Woodbury to assess the area through the lenses of sustainable development, conduct interviews, and hold discussions on their findings. These sessions will be Woodbury focused and be open to the public.

Bristol

The Bristol POCD was adopted in June, 2015. There are zoning changes being considered which are unique to the downtown. A business incubator commercial kitchen will be allowed by special permit. The city would like to study the Route 6 corridor from Farmington to Plymouth to address the encroachment of commercial uses into the abutting residential areas, and create recommendations for future land uses along Route 6. Citizens are adverse to more commercial development along Route 6.

Southbury

The recently built movie theater lost 450 seats because of film industry requirements for barc-o-lounger type seating. The development needs tenants for the adjacent restaurant and retail spaces. Le Bonne supermarket is closing. A streetscape subcommittee is being established.

Prospect

An elementary school was recently built and opened. The planning and zoning commission is considering an overlay zone on its two main roads. The overlay zone would require new commercial developments to be built in a colonial style to complement existing architecture.

Waterbury

The public hearing on the POCD will take place on October 21, 2015. The POCD can be viewed through links from the city website. Comments are welcome. A zoning change for propane transfer facility use is being considered. The change is unique in that the property to be developed as a propane transfer facility is adjacent to a railroad will use rail transportation. The rail usage exempts the property from Waterbury zoning, and causes the federal government to govern the property. Plymouth has a similar facility; their zoning changes included the creation of a third industrial district to account for property adjacent to rail transportation.

Beacon Falls

The main roads are being redone. There has been activity at the Beacon falls energy park. A 63 MW fuel cell energy plant, fueled by National Gas, will be built adjacent to the Naugatuck River. When built, it will be the largest fuel cell plant in the world. The application has been submitted to the Siting Council; a declaratory ruling is pending. A question was posed regarding the proposed plant's water



usage. The plant will work with Aquarian Water as its water source. Cooling ponds will be onsite and water will settle into the ground; the treatment plant will not receive the fuel plant's cooling water.

Thomaston

The Planning and Zoning Commission is rewriting the liquor and adult entertainment zoning regulations. Current zoning was perceived as overly restrictive. The rewritten zoning will hopefully create a balance between the need to protect property values and to develop more downtown business. There continues to be parking issues in the downtown area.

Plymouth

Margus Laan acknowledged the presence of Bill Aaron in the room. Mr. Aaron is a potential candidate for Mayor of Terryville. The Plymouth POCD was recently adopted. Mr. Laan elaborated on the propane transfer facility, the work done to assure safe rail car passage into Town, and the growth of the market for inland propane and the increase in propane delivered by rail.

Ansonia

The city has received a \$50k grant from the CT Trust for Historical Preservation to conduct a feasibility study for a village zoning district. The city has a blight problem and has beefed up its blight ordinance.

Middlebury

There are houses in the airport zone which need to be torn down. Crematory zoning has been approved. Public hearings concerning the POCD are scheduled; the meaning and boundaries of a Village Center is causing contention and will be discussed.

7. Other

There were no other topics of discussion.

8. Adjournment

On a motion by James Sequin, seconded by Gil Graveline, the meeting was adjourned at 8:35 PM.

Respectfully submitted by

Joanna B. Rogalski

Regional Planner, NVCOG