

MINUTES OF
CRCOG Concrete Foundations Issues Meeting
March 2, 2017 12:01 p.m.

ATTENDANCE

Name	Town
Steve Werbner	Tolland
Lisa Pellegrini	Somers
Sam Belsito	State Rep. 53 rd District
John Elsesser	Coventry
John Ward	Vernon
Kevin Alvarez	U.S. Congressman Joseph Courtney
John Filchak	NECCOG
Christina Mailhos	Willington
Andy Goodhall	Union
Chandler Rose	CAAO Assessors
Tony Frassinelli	Stafford
Chip Beckett	Glastonbury
Mark Walter	Columbia
Mary Lavalle	Columbia/Eastford
Jason Lawrence	Tolland
Hoween Flexer	NECCOG
Scott Shanley	Manchester
Pauline Yoder	CRCOG
Randy Belair	Willington
Don Shubert	CCIA
Brad Drazen	NBC Connecticut
Riachard Kehoe	Senator Blumenthal
Evan Johnson	Senator Murphy
Sue Moran	Vernon
Nick Neeley	Senate Democrats
Wyatt Bosworth	Representative Ritter

Co-Chair Lisa Pellegrini called the meeting to order at 12:01 p.m.

Ms. Pellegrini asked everyone to introduce themselves.

- **Adoption of Minutes**

Action: John Elsesser made a motion for the adoption of the minutes; Mr. Ward seconded; all voted in favor of the motion.

- **Current Legislative Proposals Summary and Hearing Debrief**

Ms. Pellegrini thanked everyone who was at the hearing and those who came to the press conference. Both the press conference and the hearing were well received. Mr. Shanley thanked the chairs for their

powerful and effective testimony.

- ***Proposed Language***

Mr. Werbner outlined various aspects of the ad-hoc working committee's current proposed language and mentioned that a group will be meeting on the 6th to further work out the details. The question was asked if there was a champion for the bill, and the answer was that there is not one yet, but once the language is at a good point, the committee hopes to recruit a champion.

Mr. Werbner then asked Mr. Shubert to discuss a little more regarding testing of aggregate and what the construction industry and concrete industry thoughts were on the ad-hoc committee's original testing requirements.

Mr. Shubert expressed that the concern with regards to testing was as follows: How would it be quantified, who would do the testing, how often and what procedures would have to be followed? The industry's concern is that the standard might be something that is not achievable or not feasible to test. They do have quality control plans in place, but there is a limit to what the industry can do. A geologist cannot quantify but can identify material. There are trace amount of deleterious material in any aggregate.

Mr. Elsesser stressed that it is the committee's concern is that this doesn't happen again and need to have some way to protect the citizens of Connecticut to be able to say that this will never happen again and "good enough is good enough" isn't satisfactory.

Mr. Shubert said he would be happy to assist in trying to discover a standard or understand a standard. Ms. Yoder mentioned the deleterious material standard that New York State Department of Transportation requires one of which is 1% or less of iron sulfides, which includes pyrrhotite among others. Mr. Shubert said he would ask for more information regarding that and how that is determined.

Mr. Beckett expressed that there is Micah and other sulfites all across Eastern Connecticut and we do not want to have the unintended consequence where we end up with no concrete east of the river in Connecticut and need to be mindful of that with regards to a standard.

Mr. Shubert also offered that the CCIA would be interested in pursuing the testing proposal by Mr. Milanovich, building official in Stafford, as it may give additional information and is not at a high cost and would, at a minimum, eliminate a factor.

Mr. Belsito expressed concern that Becker's quarry is slated to be open for business after June 30th. Becker's quarry is currently not being used for residential property only and the committee would like to see that extended indefinitely.

Mr. Shanley expressed a concern that he had thought because of the mix of the concrete in commercial buildings and rebar, that commercial buildings would not be affected. Mr. Werbner said that Tolland has at least one that has been identified. Mr. Shanley expressed concern that the implications could be large for many municipal buildings as well as UCONN and other locations. Mr. Goodall said that he had at least one municipal building in Union tested but he's not sure what the implications of it are. Mr. Frasinelli expressed an interest in having some of his municipal buildings tested, but does not have the resources to do so.

- ***Communications Consultant Update***

Ms. Pellegrini stated that Mr. Werbner and she had interviewed all three firms and have recommended Grossman Heinz as the consultant who does lobbying and marketing. She and Mr. Werbner felt that they understood the issue and the problem facing the committee, including challenges the committee faced and timing of those challenges. In addition, the firm understood that the issue was not if something is passed, but insuring the right legislation is passed.

Ms. Mailhos asked about the possibility of creating a 90 second video that showed the explanation of the problem and that a video that shows something cohesive in a short timeframe might be effective.

Mr. Elsesser stated that it's important to make the case that this is a statewide issue. It would impact insurance and banking in the state and he mentioned that banking was clearly concerned with this issue in their testimony at the public hearing.

- ***Status of Testing Funding***

Ms. Yoder stated that CRCOG had met with representatives from the Department of Housing, Department of Consumer Protection, Governor's Office and Lieutenant Governor's Office to discuss the testing program and answer questions that CRCOG had submitted regarding the structure of the testing program and CRCOG is currently developing estimates on what CRCOG expects to have to pay for the administering the testing program. Ms. Yoder also mentioned that the group at that meeting expressed that the 20 mile radius could be amended by the bonding commission if enough homes outside of the radius requested funding. Ms. Yoder also mentioned that it was still unclear from the bonding language whether Condos and PUDs would also be covered. Mr. Shanley expressed concern regarding this because we are aware of a large number of Condos and PUDs that are affected by this issue.

Ms. Mailhos made a motion to send a letter to the governor requesting an amendment to the bonding language to expand or radius and to also include commercial properties and municipal buildings as eligible recipients of the testing program. Mr. Frasinelli seconded the motion. The priorities for the letter would be 1) expanding or eliminating the 20 mile radius, 2) assuring that condos and PUDs would be covered under the testing program, 3) having commercial and municipal buildings eligible for the testing, and 4) potentially dividing the funding into two pools to allow for remediation of the direst homes in need.

Mr. Werbner expressed that Tolland is seeking a determination from Department of Housing (DOH) whether Program Income funds may be used for testing. Currently, Tolland has program income funds that need to be expended and cannot apply for additional CDBG funding but would like to use the program income for testing, but has not received a determination. In addition, there is a limitation on the amount of assistance of 30,000 to these low and moderate income homes and most (if not all) do not have the additional funds to be able to remedy the crumbling basements and consequently remediation assistance is not feasible.

Mr. Elsesser motioned and Mr. Frasinelli seconded a motion to send a letter to the Commissioner of Housing as a request to clarify for towns whether program income fund can be used for this purpose.

The meeting adjourned at 12:50 PM.