

Draft Minutes
Regional Planning Commission Meeting
West Hartford Town Hall, 50 South Main Street, West Hartford, CT
Thursday, May 18, 2017
7pm

Attendance

Lamont Aheart
Jennifer Bartiss-Earley
Christopher Davey
Brendan Malone
Nancy Mayeda- Brescia
Lansford Perry
Stanley Sobieski
Julian Stoppelman
Karl Robert Profe
Andy Powell
Bruce Charette
Ed Marek
David Brassard
Roswell Hall
William Rice
Dan Mara
Lansford Perry
Keith Durao
Fred Peck
Tony Koos

Town/Organization

Vernon
Plainville
Bolton
Suffield
Rocky Hill
Canton
Newington
Manchester
Windsor
Tolland
Farmington
Coventry
East Granby
Mansfield
Simsbury
Bloomfield
Canton
Ellington
Hartford
Hartford

Staff

Mary Ellen Kowalewski
Lynne Pike DiSanto
Brittany Stephenson

CRCOG
CRCOG
CRCOG

Guests

Mark Branse

Halloran and Sage, LLP

With a quorum present, Chairperson Karl Profe called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

1. Adoption of Minutes: March 9, 2017

Chairperson Karl Profe asked for a motion to adopt the minutes of the March 9, 2017 RPC meeting.

Stanley Sobieski made a motion seconded by Brendan Malone to approve the minutes of the March 9, 2017 RPC meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

2. Presentation and Q & A: Discussion of Current Topics in Land Use Law by Attorney Mark Branse

Attorney Branse introduced himself to the committee and highlighted his experience in land use. His extensive background on issues from a different perspective qualified him as an expert to speak on land use law. He discussed the four regulatory frameworks established to produce affordable housing in Connecticut which include the housing authority, the 830G program, the incentive housing program, and the 8-21 statutes. He detailed each aspect and purpose of the vehicles and cited examples on how towns could work with their local government regarding affordable housing.

He answered questions and concerns from the committee. He will forward forms and documents to CRCOG for further distribution.

3. Report on Zoning and Subdivision Referrals

Lynne Pike DiSanto presented this item to the committee. She discussed the May 11, referrals, highlighting proposals from the town of Avon on its amendment to add a chapter to the Plan of Conservation and Development. She also discussed Rocky Hill's comprehensive update of its zoning regulations and map. Stafford is reworking its zoning regulations and comprehensive update, however, CRCOG has not yet reviewed these changes. Mansfield is looking at its housing regulations and trying to address issues around dormitorie which remains a work in progress. Ms. DiSanto also discussed the May 18, 2017 referrals, highlighting town proposals, updates, and staff comments.

Stanley Sobieski moved to approve the referrals. Julian Stoppelman seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

4. What's New in My Town-A Discussion and Report on Local Planning and Development Activities in the Municipalities of the Capitol Region

Newington-Stanley Sobieski updated the committee on Newington. The town is still discussing temporary signs and any conflicts with state statutes. An upcoming meeting Wednesday is scheduled to discuss TOD in the area of the Newington Junction Ctfastrak station.

Manchester-Julian Stoppelman updated the committee on Manchester. The is looking to come up with regulations for outdoor entertainment. A Walmart was approved on Specner street; however, Walmart decided not move forward with its construction plans.

Mansfield-The town is trying to update its affordable hosing and multi-family housing; the housing authority is involved.

Simsbury- Eversource is looking to increase its solar energy production on lands in Simsbury. The siting council will hold a meeting on this – most objections on the placement of the solar panels is from abutting landowners. Screening with shrubbery is being suggested.

Plainville-There is a meeting on Monday to discuss closing the gap trail.

Hartford-The city has been contacted by Mobilite wireless communication company regarding service coverage in the area. The City is interested in learning whether other towns have been similarly approached or have experience with this group.

Farmington-The Polo grounds came with proposal for big tents during the summer months; the council approved the tents; town also recently approved the Farmington high school and its plans to move forward; constuction on route 4 is ongoing-still on track to be completed by 2018.

Tolland-The town is going through rewriting its zoning regulations and bringing them up to date; the town also has its first solar farm ready to go online; a study will be done with commercial developments in conjunction with town council (commercial viability).

Coventry-The town is keeping a close eye on the town of Mansfield and its issues with student housing; The town is also working on affordable housing; there is a big cell phone tower that will be going up on a golf course; public forum held to let residents know.

Suffield-There is a pending lawsuit on standing gravel operations in business since 1938; Plaintiff has withdrawn the case and operations have since commenced.

East Granby-Petroleum companies are looking for gas stations on route 20; in relation to this, the town is working on regulations to clarify when a convenience store becomes a restaurant; there will be a special meeting on this issue next week.

Vernon-The old mill is being renovaded into housing in the Rockville section of town.

Bolton-The town has been taking a look at irregular lot provisions; trying to create more orderly development.

Bloomfield-The town is building apartments downtown; Trader Joe's will be opening soon; the town also has notable new solar farm near the Seabury property which has been surrounded by white fencing.

Rocky Hill-Public hearing on the rewrite of the town's zoning regulations will be held Wednesday

Ellington-The town is trying to redo its regulations related to temporary signage and solar.

Windsor-The town just completed two transit-oriented developments-two apartment buildings in the vicinity of town hall.

5. Other Business

Emily Hultquist highlighted the memo and e-newsletters included in the agenda packet. She mentioned tomorrow was Bike to Work Day, and May is Bike Month.

With no further discussion items, the meeting adjourned at 8:51pm.