

**Capitol Region Council of Governments
Regional Planning Commission Virtual Meeting
Thursday, September 23, 2021, 7:00 pm**

Attendance

Jennifer Bartiss-Earley
Thomas Armstrong
Gary Bazzano
Bill Rice
Tom Manning
Ed Marek
Lansford Perry
Bruce Mayer
Bill Rice
Stanley Sobieski
Jay Stoppelman
Meg Harvey
Brendan Malone
Marc Frantz
Bart Pacekonis

Town/Organization

Plainville
Avon
Hartford
Simsbury
Bolton
Coventry
Canton
Tolland
Simsbury
Newington
Manchester
Windsor
Suffield
Newington
South Windsor

Staff

Chris Henchey
Caitlin Palmer
Laura Quintiliani

CRCOG
CRCOG
CRCOG

Guests

Martha Kelly
Stephanie Camp

1. Call to Order and Introductions

Vice Chairman Brendan Malone called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm.

2. Adoption of Minutes: June 17, 2021 (attachment)

Stanley Sobieski moved to approve the minutes of June 17, 2021 as presented. Bill Rice seconded the motion; it carried unanimously with Brendan Malone abstaining.

3. Presentation: Affordable Housing and Regional Housing Assessment – Caitlin Palmer and Chris Henchey

CRCOG staff members Caitlin Palmer and Chris Henchey presented on the 8-30j legislation requirement to provide affordable housing within all Connecticut towns. Ms. Palmer provided a background of affordable housing in the state of Connecticut and a history of overall affordability while Mr. Henchey offered up a statistical analysis with data compiled in part by CRCOG Intern Stephanie Camp. To view the entire presentation, [please click here.](#)

4. Report on Zoning and Subdivision Referrals ([attachment](#))

Chris Henchey reviewed recent zoning and subdivision referrals with the RPC.

Stanley Sobieski made a motion to approve the referrals as presented. Gary Bazzano seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

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

Plainville – Jennifer Bartiss-Earley stated that the town of Plainville is looking at their regulations for marijuana dispensaries and changing them to include a recreational component ahead of the regulations that the state will be announcing.

Newington – Stanley Sobiesky shared that Newington has approved units on the Berlin Turnpike and Stephen Street for middle income housing.

Tolland – Bruce Mayer noted that on Monday, September 27, 2021, Tolland is holding a public hearing on a series of major zoning regulation changes to all of the town's commercial zones. The goal is to streamline processes to make more uses by right instead of by special permit. The town is exploring becoming more open to commercial development.

Suffield – Brendan Malone shared that the town of Suffield has formed a subcommittee on affordable housing, which includes the Planning and Zoning Commission, the Board of Selectman, the Suffield Community Aid, the Housing Authority, and the town's Economic Development Department. He also noted that Suffield is settled among many towns that have already established moratoriums regarding cannabis use; the town has been exploring regulations for cannabis use without enacting a moratorium.

Hartford – Gary Bazzano announced that in August, the city of Hartford approved a new housing project. An existing building will be updated from the current 60 unit capacity to 100 units. The city has also created a subcommittee focused on various cannabis uses over time. Lastly, Hartford Healthcare is looking to add emergency transformers to their property.

Avon – Tom Armstrong stated that the town of Avon has been focussed on overcoming some hurdles related to Public Act 21-34. A subdivision has been built, but roads, lighting, and other tasks remain at a standstill. The town has been advised by counsel that the bond cannot be recalled due to the extension under the aforementioned statute. If your town or your counsel can provide any feedback or input based on past experiences in your municipality, please call Tom Armstrong at 860-977-5247.

Windsor – Meg Harvey announced that the town of Windsor has been discussing cannabis use as well. The town is planning a public listening session this fall in hopes of receiving input from the community. In July, Windsor approved the first brew pub which will be on Day Hill Road. The town also approved a large distribution warehouse on Kennedy Road.

South Windsor – Bart Pacekonis shared that South Windsor has, like other towns, been moving forward with a moratorium on the sale of recreational cannabis. South Windsor has also approved a revised

general plan at Evergreen Walk, which relocates some roadways, moves some stores, and adds new stores (a Whole Foods Market will go in near the new Costco that is currently under construction).

Manchester – Jay Stoppelman reported that the town has plans to convert a Spencer Street hotel to apartments which will be rented out at market rate.

6. Other Business

Chris Henchey sent out a poll to members of the Regional Planning Commission regarding topics for upcoming meetings. Many mentioned an interest in cannabis best practice regarding zoning and community engagement. To submit additional ideas, please email Chris directly at chenchey@rcog.org.

With no further business, Stanley Sobieski made a motion to adjourn at 9:15 pm. Gary Bazzano seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.