

TOD Roles, Visioning, Viability, and Financial Tools Analysis Project Advisory Committee – DRAFT Minutes

TIME: NOON

DATE: **Wednesday December 15, 2021**

PLACE: Zoom Call

<i>Name</i>	<i>Affiliation</i>
Renata Bertotti	Newington
David Elder	CTDOT
Matt Pafford	CT OPM
Chris Edge	Berlin
Laurie Whitten	Enfield
Patrick McMahon	Windsor
Peter Souza	Windsor
Jonathan Cabral	CHFA
Todd Dumais	West Hartford
Jennifer Rodriguez	Windsor Locks
Jim Mahoney	Berlin
Alexandra Daum	CT DECD
Jim Horan	LISC

CRCOG Staff

Rob Aloise
Ryan Faulkner
Tim Malone

Consulting Team

Peter Waldt
Charles Warren
Sean Scott
Laura Toole
John Loughran
Jennifer Ross-Amato
Grant Olear
Megan Weiner

1. **Call to Order:** Tim Malone called the meeting to order at 2:03pm.

Andover / Avon / Berlin / Bloomfield / Bolton / Canton / Columbia / Coventry / East Granby / East Hartford / East Windsor / Ellington / Enfield / Farmington / Glastonbury / Granby / Hartford / Hebron / Manchester / Mansfield / Marlborough / New Britain / Newington / Plainville / Rocky Hill / Simsbury / Somers / South Windsor / Southington / Stafford / Suffield / Tolland / Vernon / West Hartford / Wethersfield / Willington / Windsor / Windsor Locks

2. Public Forum

Nobody chose to speak.

3. Introductions

The CRCOG team and the consultant team introduced themselves. Attendees were asked to introduce themselves as well.

4. Presentation

The consulting team gave a presentation on:

- Project Goals
- Scope of Work
 - The team discussed each task in the scope of work. For the public involvement task, there was the following discussion:
 - Dave Elder: Regarding the groupings of towns for public involvement, my understanding is that all the towns have sites that have been identified and may be ready to go.
 - Todd Dumais: We have a site that is in both Hartford and West Hartford, so I'm not sure how the groupings of towns would work in that case.
 - Peter Waldt answered that in that case it may make sense to reconsider groupings.
 - Peter Souza: by being grouped together, what does it mean in terms of process?
 - Laura Toole answered that the groupings are just an opening framework for discussion.
 - Peter Waldt added that the groupings were also done for efficiency's sake.
 - Renata: I would like to understand more about what consists of stakeholder and public outreach. Perhaps you will schedule two town council meetings at a time and at that presentation you would talk about the project overall as well as more information on the two communities?
 - Laura Toole answered that that was a good description.
 - Tim Malone added that there would also be individual town council meetings for each town.
 - Peter Souza: I do have some concerns about being grouped with West Hartford. Windsor generally identifies as part of the Enfield and Windsor Locks corridor. It may feel odd for residents to be in that grouping.
 - Todd Dumais: I would second those comments. West Hartford would see itself in a continuum between Hartford and Newington.
- Overview of previous study recommendations
 - The team went through previous study recommendations and site visit findings for each of the eight municipalities.
 - Berlin
 - The team discussed a few potential sites for development.
 - Newington
 - The team discussed potential alternatives for the train station as well as which CTfastrak station area to focus on.
 - Renata Bertotti noted that the Cedar Street location would face less political opposition.
 - David Elder noted that the Newington Junction location was shown as the rail station in the EA. He also noted that Newington Junction had access challenges versus Cedar Street. Newington Junction also has limited opportunities for TOD within walking distance. Newington also has supportive zoning in the Cedar Street area.
 - Renata added that there are pros and cons in both locations in Newington.

- Peter Waldt noted that it would be good to have a sidebar conversation on the issue later.
 - Matt Pafford noted that defining or explaining equity in the context of this study may help determine which station area to focus on.
- West Hartford
 - The team talked about sites along New Park Ave as well as the Party Store site to the east of New Park.
 - David Elder mentioned that he could find out the timing for the West Hartford train station. He also noted that the new infrastructure bill could speed up the timeline.
 - David Elder also noted that the Suisman site in Hartford is getting some interest.
- Hartford
 - The team discussed a few sites as well as examining the continuum of stations between Parkville and Flatbush. The team decided not to focus on Union Station due to the ongoing I-84 study.
- Windsor
 - The team discussed a few sites as well as the idea of assisting some sites that have already been identified by developers.
 - Peter Souza noted that Arther's Plaza or 125 Poquonuck Ave were probably the preferred sites.
- Windsor Locks
 - The team discussed that Windsor Locks was next on the list for getting a station.
 - David Elder noted that CTDOT enlarged the design for parking on the station area size so that it could accommodate a shared parking structure on the site. He also offered to get an update on the schedule for construction. He also discussed some issues with Amtrak-owned sites as well as issues with highway access for the area.
- Enfield
 - The team discussed a previous recommendation regarding a process for advancing TOD in the area. The team also discussed the site owned by Eversource as well as some other initiatives the town is advancing.
 - Laurie Whitten noted that the town doesn't have site control of the Eversource site, which was originally identified as a potential multi-modal center. She also noted that the design for the station area has changed in part due to uncertainty regarding double tracking through Enfield.
 - David Elder noted that the graphic showing the process for advancing TOD was part of a previous DOT planning effort. He noted that where there is private money involved, it becomes a compelling reason for which station goes next. He discussed some details regarding the DOT funding program. He also discussed the differences between shoreline train lines and the Hartford Line. Margins tend to be thinner on the Hartford Line and require more subsidy.
 - Todd Dumais noted that \$35 million in funding for the Enfield Station was on the bonding commission agenda.
 - Renata commented that it is going to be essential that when we do presentations to towns that we show clearly the connection between how much it costs versus what can happen.
- New Britain

- The team discussed how a lot of previous analysis focused on the downtown. The team is now focusing on the DPW site at the East Main Street station.
- Project schedule and next steps
 - The team went over the project schedule and next steps, which included the need for information on potential developers to talk to.
 - David Elder asked for more information on the relationship between the job market and the housing absorption rate. He noted that there are new apartments being occupied but he isn't seeing a commensurate increase in jobs. Charles Warren gave an explanation of the methodology.