

**MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 21, 2009 MEETING OF
THE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION**

Present: Adelman (Bozrah); Lange (East Lyme); Ayer (Franklin); Roper (Groton); Cherry (Ledyard); Dempsey (Lisbon); Christiansen (New London); Boissevain (North Stonington); Dalkowski (Salem); vanDyke (Borough of Stonington) **Staff:** Butler, Guggenheim

1. **Call to Order:** Mr. Adelman, acting as Chairman, called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m.
2. **Roll Call:** A quorum was present.
3. **Public Comment:** None.
4. **Review of the Minutes of May 18, 2009:** It was voted (Cherry, Adelman) to accept the minutes of the previous meeting.
5. **Committee and Liaison Reports:**
 - A. **Reference Committee:** Mrs. Ayer raised a question about a review in Lisbon (May) pertaining to a Common Interest Community. It was explained that allowable densities would be determined by the number of golf course holes developed times 16 housing units per hole. Therefore, if only 9 holes were developed, $9 \times 16 = 144$ housing units.
 - B. **Status Reports:**
 1. **Route 11:** Mr. Butler reported that the State has not entered into a contract with BL Companies to prepare the environmental mitigation work necessary to complete the EIS. Within the past several weeks, there is increasing concern that the State will not be advancing the Route 11 project due to lack of funding for the foreseeable future.
 2. **Greenway Authority Commission (GAC):** Mr. Butler reported that at the most recent GAC meeting, action was taken not to enter into a contract with BL Companies for the development of the bike/pedestrian path until such time as it was determined what the State's interest is in advancing Route 11. He reported that a high level meeting of all the principals is being organized by the Congressman's office and will include the Governor, Senators Dodd and Lieberman as well as Commissioner Marie, FHWA and others.
 3. **Route 2/2A/32:** No Report.
 4. **Norwich Hospital:** No Report.

6. **Executive Director's Report:** Mr. Butler began by discussing the State budget and the affect it would have on RPOs. He noted that in 2008-2009, the overall State Grant-in-Aid (SGIA) was \$1 million with \$66,044 coming to SCCOG. For 2009-2010, the SGIA is down to \$200,000 with SCCOG scheduled to receive \$13,000. Mr. Butler discussed the implementor bills which might further reduce these amounts as well as the recisions which the Governor has discussed.

He then outlined how the agency is dealing with the financial situation: (1) not filling a staff position; (2) not funding SECHA; (3) smaller salaries; (4) eliminating the RPC.

He acknowledged that the role of the RPC has changed dramatically when the Regional Planning Agency reorganized itself into a Council of Governments in 1992. Simply put, the work of the RPA has shifted to the COG leaving the RPC with a sparse mission. Mr. Butler outlined how he saw the Reference Committee function being carried forward with staff continuing to conduct reviews and the COG Executive Committee being called upon to deal with proposed large scale developments of significance. Mr. Butler noted that a bylaws change was being recommended to eliminate the RPC and this was allowed by the Statutes.

A discussion followed during which Mr. Butler noted that attendance at RPC meetings rarely exceeded 10 towns. Members present, however, felt that the exchanges that occurred between towns and the mutual sharing of experiences had value. After extensive discussion, it was voted (Roper, Christiansen) that: It was the shared sense of the RPC that it not be eliminated for the following stated reasons: (1) regionalism will suffer; (2) public involvement will suffer; (3) the towns will suffer.

7. **Old Business:** None.
8. **New Business:** Mr. Adelman raised the issue of incident management with respect to the recent accident on I-395. Mr. Guggenheim explained that a region-wide Incident Management Plan (IMP) was prepared for I-95 and I-395. This plan identified diversion routes for each accident location and the responsibility of state and local personnel to manage those incidents. Repeatedly, in de-briefing exercises held by the COG, it had been shown how the IMP was not being followed and that in many cases, local personnel were not being involved.

Mr. Roper then reported on the following:

- A. The status of the Mystic Streetscape project
- B. Ledgelight funding effort for restoration of the light house
- C. Groton Bike Sharing Program

9. **Date of Next Meeting:** To be determined.
10. **Adjournment:** There being no further business, it was voted (Roper, Cherry) to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 9:44 p.m.