

**MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 25, 2010 MEETING OF
THE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION**

Present: Adelman (Bozrah), Roper (Groton), Cherry (Ledyard), Dempsey (Lisbon), Baron (Montville), Christiansen (New London), Boissevain (North Stonington), Sharron (Norwich), VanDyke (Borough of Stonington); **Staff:** Butler, Guggenheim

1. **Call to Order:** The chairman called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.
2. **Roll Call:** A quorum was present. Members introduced themselves.
3. **Public Comment:** None.
4. **Review Minutes of September 21, 2009:** Mr. Sharron noted that although he was not in attendance at the September meeting, he objected to the tone of the wording in Paragraph 3 of the Executive Director's Report which, he felt, was demeaning and insulting and implied that the work of the Regional Planning Commission was not significant. Mr. Butler responded saying that is not what the minutes state, nor was it his implication. Upon discussion and a re-visit of the issues surrounding the restructuring of the Regional Planning Commission, it was voted (Adelman, Christiansen) to amend the minutes to change: *Paragraph 3, second sentence from "Simply put, the work of the RPA has shifted to the COG leaving the RPC with a sparse mission." to "Since then, the work of the RPA has shifted to the COG."* (Roper voted against and Sharron abstained)
5. **Review of SCCOG Bylaws Change:** Mr. Butler then reviewed the details of the SCCOG bylaws change relative to the restructuring of the Regional Planning Commission. Key to the new mission were the elements contained in PA 09-165, Proposed Project(s) of Regional Significance. This legislation defines such projects as one that is to be built by a private developer, that is an open air theater, shopping center or other development that is planned to create more than (A) five hundred thousand square feet of indoor commercial or industrial space, (B) two hundred fifty residential housing units in structures under four stories, or (C) one thousand parking spaces.

The bylaws also state that the Regional Planning Commission shall advise the Council on planning matters on an as needed basis, such as when the Regional Plan of Conservation and Development is being updated and on other regional planning matters when so requested by the Council.

Mr. Butler then noted that all of the referrals previously reviewed by the RPC's Reference Committee shall now be conducted by staff. However, while membership on the Commission will remain the same, other than an annual meeting to be held in January, there shall be no regular meeting dates. Meetings of the Commission will be required only when PA 09-165 is invoked and a project of regional significance is proposed, or as needed for other matters.

RPC members again raised a variety of questions not only about the details surrounding the

voluntary process of bringing all of the potential stakeholders together for a project of regional significance but also the underlying reasons for the action taken by SCCOG to restructure the RPC. This discussion immediately led to a detailed discussion of how SCCOG is funded, the source of the funds and the purposes to which those funds are put. Mr. Butler distributed copies of the Annual Report (copy attached) and reviewed the sources of funding. Central to the issue of funding was the loss of \$66,000 for the present fiscal year of the State Grant-in-Aid from OPM. Mr. Christiansen raised a question about local dues. Mr. Butler responded that SCCOG=s per capita dues (\$.50) were the lowest of any regional planning organization in the State. He also noted that the BF&O (burden, fringe and overhead) of SCCOG was among the lowest in the State, thereby reiterating that the restructuring of the RPC was driven by financial considerations.

6. **Election of Officers**: It was voted (Baron, Cherry) to elect the following members as officers of the RPC for 2010:

Chairman: Arthur Sharron
Vice Chairman: Michael Cherry
Secretary: Mark Christiansen

RPC members thanked Mr. Baron for his three years of service as Chairman.

7. **Schedule of Meetings**: The annual meeting of the Commission will be on the 4th Monday of January. Meetings related to PA 09-165 will be held on the third Monday of the month, as necessary.
8. **Next Meeting**: The date of the next meeting will be January 24, 2011.
9. **Adjournment**: There being no further business, it was voted (Adelman, Cherry) to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 8:38 p.m.