

MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 23RD MEETING OF THE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

Present: Adelman (Bozrah, Ford (Colchester), Ayer (Franklin), Sherrard (Groton), Cherry (Ledyard), Christainsen (New London), Boisevain (North Stonington), Sharron (Norwich);
Staff: Butler, Guggenheim.

1. Call to order. The Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:34 p.m.
2. Roll Call. Members introduced themselves. A quorum was present.
3. Election of Officers. It was voted (Cherry, Ford) to elect Mr. Sharron as Chairman. The vote was unanimous.

It was voted (Boisevain, Adelman) to elect Mr. Cherry as Vice Chairman. The vote was unanimous.

It was voted (Sharron, Cherry) to elect Mr. Christainsen as Secretary. The vote was unanimous.

4. SCCOG Updates. Mr. Butler presented a brief summary of the following activities that have helped shape the region over the course of the past year.
 - a. CEDS: seCTer recently completed the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy which is a basic requirement for the region to receive economic development assistance. The document recommends a strategy called “economic gardening” which refers to the idea of growing smaller business as opposed to attracting large business to locate in the region.
 - b. HUD Sustainable Communities Plan: Mr. Butler noted that the eastern Connecticut region comprised of the Southeast, Windham and Northeast RPOs as well as SECHA and the Eastern CT Workforce Investment Board won a coveted HUD grant. The grant will underwrite the study of various land use, housing and transportation plans in the larger region with the objective of integrating them in a comprehensive fashion.
 - c. Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan: Mr. Butler explained the difficulties of the process of updating this plan which is necessary for a community to have access to FEMA funds.
 - d. Transportation Planning Program: Mr. Butler referred to the recent SCCOG solicitation process for grants under two Federal Transportation Programs:
 - 1) Enhancements
 - 2) CMAQ (Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality)

SCCOG is presently reviewing 9 proposals submitted under the Enhancement Program. The total amount available to the region is \$256,000/year or \$2,024,000 over a 4-year period. The total amount requested from all 9 applicants exceeds \$2.5 million.

Mr. Butler reported that only 1 application was submitted under the CMAQ program. The City of Norwich, in conjunction with Norwich Public Utilities has proposed a CNG fueling station at the intersection of Otrobando Avenue and Town Street. The application also involves “partners” who have agreed to purchase CNG vehicles to be used in their fleets. The partners include W.W. Backus Hospital, Levine Distributors and Prime Electric. Backus Hospital operates a regular van shuttle service for employees to a remote parking lot off of New London Turnpike.

- e. SCCOG Commissioner Education Program: Mr. Butler described a joint effort between the SCCOG and the UCONN Center for Land Use Education and Research (CLEAR) Program. A survey has been distributed to local planning and zoning commissions and staff to elicit suggestions for topics for the upcoming Spring educational series.
5. Report of Referrals for 2011. A summary Report of Referrals under 8-3(b) and 8-26 was distributed with the call of the meeting. There was no discussion.
6. Other Matters. Mr. Cherry raised the matter of the update of the State Plan of Conservation and Development and how that process will impact the RPOs and the individual towns. The process is being modeled on one developed in New Jersey which focuses on cross-acceptance and negotiation of differences between State and local entities. While the emphasis is on a bottom-up rather than top-down process, the net outcome is the identification of Preferred Funding Areas (PFAs) which will be eligible for discretionary State funding.
7. Set Date and Time for Next Meeting. Tuesday, January 22, 2013 at 5:00 p.m.
8. Adjournment. There being no further business, it was voted (Ford, Adelman) to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 8:47 p.m.