



RECORD OF MEETING

Regional Planning Commission (RPC)
of the Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments (NVCOG)
NVCOG Offices, 49 Leavenworth St. Waterbury, CT
Third floor
6:30 p.m. Wednesday, February 15, 2017

Attendance: Joseph Jaumann, Ansonia (by phone), Nancy G. Clark, Southbury (by phone); Robert Clarke, Woodbury (by phone); Margus Laan, Plymouth; Jeremy Leifert, Thomaston; Ruth Parkins, Shelton (by phone); Herman Schuler, Oxford (by phone).

Staff: Aaron Budris, Senior Regional Planner; Joanna Rogalski, Regional Planner; Max Tanguay-Colucci, Regional Planner.

Public: 1 person via conference call

The meeting opened at 6:36 PM.

1. Pledge of Allegiance, Roll Call, and Public Participation

The pledge of allegiance was recited. RPC members and NVCOG staff introduced themselves. At roll call seven (7) RPC members were in attendance. A quorum was not obtained for this meeting. The public mentioned that a recording of the Sustainable CT meeting in Hartford was available via Facebook. The public offered to facilitate public outreach through their social networks to help ensure the public does not fall through the cracks during the route 6, regional and POCD planning processes. The public stated they had seen flyers in Bristol City Hall for the Capital Region Council of Governments (CRCOG) public participation plan and asked for clarification on Bristol's membership in regional organizations. Ms. Rogalski offered to make that clarification via email communication after the meeting.

2. Discussion: Sustainable CT - a voluntary, sustainable community certification program currently under development. Joanna Rogalski and Aaron Budris

- outcome of the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities' (CCM) Task Force on Sustainability, overseen by Eastern CT State University
- intent is to develop a road map or framework for towns and cities to follow to make the communities healthier, safer, more resilient, more efficient and livable
- will promote the implementation of a wide range of strategies and projects at the local level
- tools are flexible enough to allow each individual community to design a program that meets their specific needs
- will create a "sustainable community certification program" to recognize the efforts of communities that implement sustainable actions
- Working groups being formed
- NVCOG will be participating in the working groups and assisting in the development of the program.

Q: What are the benefits for the towns?



A: That's being worked out now. There's models out there similar to what CT is trying to do. If you go to sustainablejersey.org you'll see their list. They have funding attached from private foundations. These certifications will also help towns sell themselves to potential residents or businesses.

Comment: It does look like the Environment committee at the legislature is discussing this as well.

Q: Is it geared towards urban or rural topics?

A: It's geared towards towns directly, and is aiming to be universal regardless of town context.

A: It's basically a menu of a variety of options towns can use, and it should have enough options that any town can have the opportunity to engage in the program.

3. Discussion and Motion: NVCOG Public Participation Policy and Environmental Justice Policy documents – Joanna Rogalski - No Motion due to a lack of a quorum.

- Public information meeting 2/2/17 – No attendees.
- Goal to apply to all projects.
- Advisory unless a NEPA (Natl. Environmental Policy Act) project.

Q: It seems a bit contradictory that there is so little participation, even in the public outreach process. How can we encourage greater participation through the towns?

A: We're trying to go to where the community groups meet, and hoping to have a stronger relationship and presence directly in the community.

Q: You had mentioned that it's only binding when there's federal funding?

A: When there's federal dollars, there are some Title VI and Environmental Justice requirements that need to be completed to ensure you've done the appropriate outreach. So the Environmental Justice policy specifically is only required when we are undergoing the NEPA process, though we are trying to apply these ideas more broadly.

4. Discussion: EPA brownfields grant – Max Tanguay-Colucci

- There is \$400,000 available for environmental assessment services through NVCOG's EPA FY 2016 Assessment grant.
- Any municipalities interested in securing funding for environmental assessment services on a potential brownfield site with redevelopment opportunities should visit the brownfields webpage at <http://nvcogct.org/content/funding-opportunities>, or call Max directly.
- Pre-applications are accepted on a rolling basis until all funds are expended.
- To qualify for EPA funds, important to remember that if the brownfield is acquired by the municipality it must have had a phase 1 assessment completed within the past year, and must've been updated within 6 months.
- If your town wants to acquire a property or wish to work with someone in the municipality who is familiar, NVCOG Regional Brownfields Partnership can determine whether the property is eligible for federal assistance and provide guidance on how to proceed.

Q: I attended a DEEP outreach program in Hartford last year where the state was developing its own program, is that connected to EPA's programs?

A: I think the program and guide DEEP is putting together would definitely have to be coordinated with EPA. It might just go into more specifics. CT has rolled out a number of newer programs recently, including the Abandoned Brownfield Cleanup Program. If you're familiar with the CT Transfer Act, it changes the way the Transfer Act interfaces with brownfields properties. It opens up a lot of



opportunities that may have been stuck. These are the types of things CT has been pushing for recently that EPA might not necessarily be of assistance with.

Q: Is the funding available for the assessment or the cleanup, or both?

A: We currently have a \$400,000 assessment grant. We do have a revolving loan fund that can be applied for cleanup funding, but the assessment grant is solely for assessment. We don't have free funding in the revolving loan fund presently, but as previous borrowers pay back their loans we will have new funding coming in. It's always good to submit an application if you have a property that might need funding down the line for cleanup. Things we look for are having a clear idea of need, a development plan mapped out, and an interested developer lined up.

5. Update: Water Issues: State Water Plan, State Water Supply Plan (Water Utility Coordinating Committees – WUCC) – Aaron Budris

State Water Plan

- The State Water Plan has moved on from Phase 1 (data collection and policy evaluation) into phase 2 (developing policy recommendations and developing the plan itself).
- Anticipated plan completion date is April 2017.
- Informational meeting at Southbury Town Hall on February 23rd, from 1p-3p, discussing plan status and soliciting public comment. If you'd like to learn a bit more and have your voice heard that's the best opportunity.

State Water Supply Plan (WUCC - Water Utility Coordinating Committee)

- Final water supply assessment completed. This assessment takes all of the local water supply plans and meshes them together, then distills that information. Available online (http://www.ct.gov/dph/lib/dph/drinking_water/pdf/2016-12-12westernwsa.pdf).
- Exclusive Service Areas (ESA) are being determined based on the water supply assessment. Municipalities and existing water providers asked to submit claims on supply areas. Less conflict than anticipated among stakeholders. ESA maps on CT Department of Public Health website (see above).
- Next step short term: improve ESA's
- Next step long term (1 year): incorporate information from all ESA's into statewide planning document.
- NVCOG has voting rights on WUCC board. Please contact Aaron Budris with any comments or suggestions.

Q: Does that map show the existing infrastructure and water plants?

A: That's part of the protected information they can't release for security purposes. It will basically be a polygon showing which company can supply water to whom. And there will now be a third water supply plan looking at coastal water suppliers and resiliency. It's looking at the ability of coastal water suppliers to provide potable water after storms.

Q: Is there a publicly-available version of the agreement between Connecticut Water and Heritage Water regarding the interconnect?

A: Not on the ESA map, but in the assessment they do mention all of the interconnects. I will have to check and see if it shows the expiration dates. If you just google "Western Connecticut WUCC" it will show up.



Q: How should we reference this in the Regional POCD?

A: We get to decide, but it certainly should be highlighted. What the state is currently developing will be much more detailed than what we would reference in the Regional POCD.

A: The state plan may come up with regional or local recommendations that we would probably want to include or consider in our POCD.

6. Update: Municipal Low Impact Development and MS4 Regulatory Assessment and Action Plan Project – Aaron Budris

An NVCOG intern reviewed each town's land use regulations to identify where changes might need to be made to cover DEEP MS4 requirements. Over the next few weeks we'll be finishing this project and expect to distribute those assessments to the towns as soon as possible in anticipation of the April 3rd due date for municipalities to provide an initial draft plan to DEEP. NVCOG has developed a webpage on our site detailing the new requirements, including links up to state sponsored assistance, an overview of the new regulations, and other links to UCONN-CLEAR. UCONN-CLEAR will be doing a lot of outreach, and they've developed the stormwater management plan template which towns can complete with their information. The template is easier than creating the plan from scratch. UCONN_CLEAR also provides an online map with a lot of the data you're going to need for that initial plan.

In order to assist our towns in NVCOG with the stormwater management plan development, NVCOG issued an RFQ for consulting engineers who are available and willing to do the work at a readily-available rate. From this RFQ staff developed an on-call list of prequalified firms with their rates. We've attempted to make it easy for municipalities to compare consultants and select one without the municipality needing to perform a new RFQ. If you want more information about that you can contact me or John DiCarlo at the NVCOG offices.

NVCOG may be able to provide mapping assistance. John DiCarlo sent out a survey to town engineers and public works directors to gauge interest in regional services that NVCOG might be able to provide, including shared equipment, shared contracts for mapping, etc. In the past NVCOG staff partnered with Pomperaug River Watershed Coalition to provide outreach materials to satisfy MS4 requirements. This same survey may be of use to the RPC.

Group: General acclamation

Q: It looked like it was a random thing, but do you know how many towns DEEP is going to do inspections on? They're coming to us, and they gave us a list of pre-visit action items to work on. We just got that today.

A: I think Bristol and Cheshire are also being inspected.

The link to our website is: www.nvcogct.org/content/ms4. If you have any ideas about information we should add or could be helpful please let us know.

7. Administrative Items

- a. Approval of December 6, 2016 Meeting Minutes – No comments. **No motion due to lack of quorum.**



b. Referrals

- Since last RPC meeting, recv'd 15 referrals, 11 from outside NVCOG
- Regionally significant: Shelton POCD, subdivisions, overlay zones
- Recognizing a trend in zoning changes that allow for greater diversity of housing. EG Woodbury, Trumbull, Hamden – floating zone, multi-family overlay, housing opportunity development zone
- Ruth Parkins commented on Shelton's POCD update: There'll be a workshop with the Board of Aldermen next Tuesday, but it didn't get posted in time to meet statutory requirements. Now it's been rescheduled for March 22nd.

c. Correspondence

- OPM – State POCD update online survey - <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CQN3D9M>, closes 2/9.
- Smart Growth America – Small-scale manufacturing economic dev grant – NVCOG not chosen
- Valley Health and Human Services is beginning its strategic planning process based on VCF led Community Indicators Report 2016.
- Connecticut Bar Association - Land Use Seminar - March 25, 2017, Wesleyan in Middletown
- Census 2020 Local Update of Census Addresses
- Completed Signage Manual for Greenway – The Signage Manual is available on our website. It includes templates that towns can use for any recreational signage, and is available to our towns for free. Any templates or design guidance is available to the towns by request.
- Greenway signage – We received a new recreational trails grant to design and install signs along open sections of the greenway, and to get our brand out there so people know it already exists in some places.
- Greenway Economic Impact Report - Final is not complete, but it will be coming out shortly. We'd like to discuss that at our next RPC meeting.

8. Roundtable - Points of Interest/Local Activities

Plymouth – Margus Laan, Town Planner

We're continuing to deal with spot zoning, where we have property owners finding that their property was rezoned during the previous process, either from commercial to residential or to a more transitional form of residential.

Thomaston – Jeremy Leifert, Land Use Administrator

We made a handful of mistakes in our town wide zoning map update, including one particular parcel that's residential under the new map but should be a heavy industrial lot. We've had significant opposition from the neighbors, and the property owner wants to have an industrial project on the site that we cannot improve just yet. The property owner and their attorneys are working to force-change the zoning. We had two projects approved at a town meeting: a bonding for phase 2 of our new track at a recreational area on an existing soccer field, and the Webb area to resurface and rework the draining on all those streets, so there will be a lot of roadwork going on.

Southbury – Nancy Clark, Planning Commission

We have an application for multi-family that does not meet our regulations. Unless they withdraw and resubmit with lower density it doesn't meet our regulations. Our theater should open in June.



Our Lutheran Hall on South Main Street has applied and been approved for a medical office facility, and we have two applications for building daycares in residential homes which were denied. The gas station at the intersection of 188 and 167 has been approved, but the details are still being worked out. We have an RFP looking for a consultant to present alternative use for the Southbury Training School since the state wants to close it. I would like to recognize our wonderful employee Nancy Van Orten passed away suddenly last week; she will be sorely missed.

Q: We were curious if there were any plans for the Regional Health District?

A: As far as I know, that's been put on the backburner. That was very contentious, and pretty much no municipalities were for it at least in the NVCOG region.

Oxford – Herman Schuler, former Economic Development Director

We picked up a Five Guys, a Verizon, another restaurant, and a daycare center, so we're going to add two more buildings to Quarry Walk. They're going to come in shortly with the town green area and some of the 150 apartment buildings going into that plaza. We opened another industrial park called Pheasant's Walk: 61 acres in the north end of town by the airport. It looks like we have the first major company to come in there, probably 100,000 sqft building. The enterprise zone is working for us. I think we have a 40-unit subdivision, 2 acres zoned, on the west side of town, and the power plant is on schedule.

Ansonia – Joseph Jaumann, Planning and Zoning Commission Chairperson

Nothing really big coming as far as applications moving in. We are working on revisions of our regulations and updating them. Our POCD is coming along, thank you Joanna. We're in the process now of getting input from our boards for the economic development commission; comment's being sought by our planner who will present tomorrow, and then we will send a memo out and ask for comment back on the POCD. Then we have a public meeting scheduled for late March.

Shelton – Ruth Parkins, Planning and Zoning Commission Chairperson

We continue to be extremely busy. There's a lot of interest in development along Bridgeport Avenue, including a Big Y and a Goodwill. We were hoping for a bit more upscale retail, though. We do have another hotel that was approved for Bridgeport Avenue, a new model of Best Western. There's a teardown of an old office building on the corner of Commerce and Bridgeport Avenue for someone who's putting in a new retail center including a Starbucks. We have two mixed use developments going on, both of which are very controversial. One is in hearing and the other is going to vote on March 7th. They've been in the hearing process since last April. Downtown continues also with a lot of interest and a lot of mixed use projects, with one being built right now that's very visible from the highway. We're continuing environmental cleanup on Canal Street, and the Chromium building is being taken down to make room for more parking downtown. Our mixed use controversy is mostly coming from neighborhoods which are in wooded areas and the neighbors want the land along Bridgeport Avenue to stay wooded.

Woodbury – Robert Clarke, Zoning Commission Chair

Latest big news item came to Zoning last night when the applicant submitted an application for a nanobrewery, which was approved. When they open, you all come, but you bring your reverse brown bag because they don't have an open pantry. Last night also the Inland Wetlands agency closed the public hearing on Dollar General. Zoning also opened a public hearing on its multi-residence new zoning so that we could have a more intense building for people who want to downsize or are young



and want to stay in town. Unfortunately, the concept of floating zones does not “float” in Woodbury. We kept the hearing open so we can discuss it at our next meeting on the 28th of February. Planning is looking for money to hire a consultant to help with its POCD. We also have a new planner on staff.

9. Other

Herman Schuler, Oxford: We did a thing called Incentive Housing to get some subsidy from the State, but the State hasn’t really been reimbursing towns for that. Has anyone heard anything about this? It’s an alternative way to comply with the Affordable Housing rules, by including an Incentive Housing Zone, and the State would pay the town \$5,000 per unit of affordable housing built in an Incentive Housing Zone. Wallingford had a large development along this lines, and the State never paid them. I wanted to check if anyone had an idea about that.

10. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted by
Joanna B. Rogalski
Regional Planner, NVCOG
And
Benjamin Muller
Transportation Planner I, NVCOG