

Draft

MINUTES OF
POLICY BOARD MEETING
SEPTEMBER 23, 2009

Policy Board Attendance

Melody Currey, Chair
Dick Hines
Jon Colman
Joyce Stille
Dick Barlow
Dave Kilbon
Susan Karp
John Adams
Jim Boucher
Lou Spadaccini
Dave Nagel
Barbara Gilbert
David Pinney
Steve Werbner
John Ward
Ron Van Winkle
Jeff Bridges
Peter Souza
Steve Wawruck

Town/Organization

East Hartford
Avon
Bloomfield
Bolton
Canton
East Granby
Glastonbury
Granby
Hartford
Manchester
Newington
Rocky Hill
Somers
Tolland
Vernon
West Hartford
Wethersfield
Windsor
Windsor Locks

Others Present

Paul Nonnenmacher
Jack McCoy
John Shemo
Paul Boutot
Kathie Lutz

CRRA
Manchester
MetroHartford Alliance
Newington
Rome Smith & Associates

Staff

Maureen Barton
Mary Ellen Kowalewski
Jennifer March-Wackers
Mario Marrero
Jocelyn Mathiasen
Tom Maziarz
Emily Moos
Lyle Wray

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Chair Currey called the meeting to order at 12:07 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments.

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

Mr. Colman made a motion to approve the minutes from the June 22, 2009 and May 27, 2009 meetings. Mr. Kilbon seconded. All voted in favor of the motion.

REPORTS

Chair and Executive Director

Chair Currey spoke briefly about negotiating for Solid Waste, and stated that there is power in numbers. She pointed out the Solid Waste Regional Authority interest form that was distributed to the membership, which does not commit anyone to joining a Solid Waste Regional Authority, but provides information about the program which members can take back to their councils. Chair Currey said that MDC towns appointed Andrew Adil to represent them in negotiations with MDC, but the negotiations have broken down, so it will be moving to arbitration. Mr. Wray told the Board that CRCOG is working on a half-day working session for Policy Board goal-setting, after elections and before January. He asked if members would prefer to share their priorities via a short survey or a telephone call, and the members stated a preference for a short survey. Mr. Wray also announced a free upcoming Bus Rapid Transit hearing, and discussed the State Economic Development draft report. In addition, Mr. Wray reminded the members that CRCOG's alliance with the MetroHartford Alliance will be expiring soon. Mr. Wray told the members about Senator Dodd's upcoming fall event to boost his Livable Communities bill. Passage of the bill is likely about a year out, but it has Administration support, and CRCOG is well placed to take advantage of any resources the bill will provide, which could be valuable for the region. Mr. Wray also informed the board that the reauthorization of Transportation funding from the Federal government will likely be delayed, which is a big issue for Connecticut since there is not much available from the State for Transportation. Chair Currey asked if members would be interested in hearing from Verizon about moving to Blackberry technology, and Board members suggested moving that subject to Municipal Services.

MetroHartford Alliance

Mr. Shemo informed the Board that the MHA is seeking feedback from municipalities to find how MHA can best assist them. Bonnie Therrien is the consultant, and she will be contacting municipalities for feedback. Mr. Shemo told the Board about an upcoming trip to St. Paul, which is a leadership visit, some members of the Policy Board will be attending along with representatives from MHA. Mr. Shemo will report on the trip when he returns. There were four submittals for CEDS this year, MHA will meet on Friday to review and rank the submitted projects. Mr. Shemo announced a program called Graduate CT, which will assist adults with some college credits to complete their degrees. This is a replication of a program called Graduate Philadelphia, which found that 70% of the participants were women in lower income brackets. The program will launch in the second quarter of 2010, and the website is up and running. There will be a fair on October 24 and October 26 at the Hartford Public Library with various workshops and representatives from many local colleges. Mr. Shemo will continue to provide updates as the program moves forward.

Public Safety Council/Homeland Security

Mr. Wray reported on behalf of Cheryl Assis. The Public Safety Council is closing out projects from the past fiscal year, and will kick-off a mutual aid program between nursing homes.

Transportation Committee

Mr. Colman reported on the TIP amendment. One of the items distributed was a status report for ARRA projects. All of the projects bid thus far have come in low, which means additional funds will be available, and the Transportation Committee will discuss how to use those funds. Mr. Maziarz stated that the last three projects going out to bid in October, November and December will include contingencies for change orders, which will build in a way to use any extra funds from low bids. The other item distributed was a list of projects which are being dropped due to lack of funds. On the good side, this points to an attempt at fiscal responsibility at the DOT, however, the dropped projects are not included in the TIP, and many of them will not show up again until 2014. Mr. Maziarz stated that the Transportation Committee does not know how DOT analyzed to determine which projects would be dropped. Part of the problem is that Connecticut relies so heavily on federal funds for transportation, with little aid available from the State. The revenue side needs to be addressed. Several members wanted to know if it would be helpful for the DOT to get information on how much municipalities have already spent on design. This could be an issue with federal agencies, which may want to be paid back for money spent on projects that are not moving forward. Mr. Maziarz also stated that the process for approval will need to be streamlined, as it shouldn't take ten years to study and design.

Community Development/Municipal Services/Purchasing Council

Mr. Souza informed the Board about the Municipal Services Committee's performance measurement system, which will develop measures and benchmarks. Towns will be contacted for data. On October 23, 2009, the Capitol Region Purchasing Council will hold its Annual Meeting at the West Hartford Town Hall. Chair Currey asked how municipalities are handling H1N1 flu when contracts require employees staying out to have a note from their doctors while current recommendations for people suspected of having H1N1 are to isolate themselves. Mr. Wray shared that CRCOG has updated its policies.

REPORT ON REGIONAL PLAN OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

Ms. Kowalewski briefly updated the Board on the Regional Plan of Conservation and Development update. Since the draft of the plan was presented to the Policy Board, there has been a 65 day public comment period. The Regional Planning Commission will review the comments at their next meeting, and Ms. Kowalewski will be bringing the final draft to the Policy Board on October 21, 2009 for approval. The draft was reviewed by MetroHartford Alliance and OPM, which stated that the plan was consistent with the State Plan of Conservation and Development. Most of the changes left are technical in nature, and Ms. Kowalewski will address specific questions individually. Some rural communities gave substantive comments, and are concerned with how the plan could affect state funding for water and sewer issues. All changes to the draft will be posted on the website, and the entire plan will be available prior to the next Policy Board meeting.

DISCUSSION AND ENDORSEMENT OF CRCOG SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES INITIATIVE

Mr. Wray gave a brief introduction of the Sustainable Communities Initiative, which is the product of some long-standing work by Community Development staff. Mr. Wray referred to Senator Dodd's Livable Communities bill, which will be forthcoming this fall, and stated that the work to develop this initiative leaves CRCOG well-placed to take advantage of this bill. Ms. Kowalewski then informed the Policy Board of the projects that led to the creation of this Initiative, which include a couple of EPA funded workshops CRCOG held, one on visualizing density and the other an interactive planning forum. Ms. Kowalewski said she is seeking endorsement from the Policy Board to move forward with the Initiative. Chair Currey asked for a motion to endorse the Sustainable Communities Initiative, Mr. Colman made the motion and Ms.

Stille seconded. All voted in favor of the motion.

APPROVAL OF THE TIP AMENDMENTS & MEMO REGARDING FY2010-2013 DRAFT TIP

Mr. Colman made a motion to approve the TIP amendment. Ms. Gilbert seconded. All voted in favor of the motion.

CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

- Approval of Jobs Access Self-Assessment Report and Resolution
- Authorization to Enter into a Contract for Providing Regional Online Permitting Services
- Resolution Authorizing Consultant Contract for MetroHartford Brownfields Assessment Program
- Resolution Authorizing Grant Application to U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for Brownfields Assessment Funding

Mr. Colman made a motion to approve the above consent agenda items. Mr. Barlow seconded. All voted in favor of the motion. Mr. Boucher commented that Policy Board members should advocate for the Jobs Access program to be strengthened.

SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT UPDATE

Chair Currey pointed out the commitment form in the packet, and asked if there was anyone who was not going to participate. Mr. Nagel shared that Newington has a lot of questions, and are confused about the \$500 and how it will be used, and also wonder if there will be additional financial requirements in the future. Ms. Stille shared that for a small town like Bolton, the \$500 commitment fee is substantial, and she would like to know what the budget and timeframe for the project are. Mr. Nagel asked if someone from CRCOG would be willing to come to council meetings to answer questions, and Mr. Wray and Ms. March-Wackers both confirmed that CRCOG would be happy to send someone to any council that had questions. Mr. Wray said that the program will be transparent and open at every step. Mr. Barlow stated that the Solid Waste contract will involve hundreds of millions of dollars over twenty years, so municipalities shouldn't let a \$500 fee hold them back. The Solid Waste committee can put together a fact sheet and timeline, which they will distribute, and Mr. Wray reiterated that CRCOG will attend council meetings to answer questions.

STATE AND LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Ms. Lutz reported that the legislature is in session and working on budget implementation bills. New versions of the bill keep coming out. Transportation funding has been tied to the stimulus. The Finance Committee is meeting today. The Governor will get first cut in the next couple of weeks, and the Comptroller will send a deficit bill before the end of October. Ms. Lutz reported that passed laws have little shelf life right now, and the problem will only get worse. Mr. Werbner asked about STEEP Grants, and pointed out that all the projects that received grants were non-economic development related.

OTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD

Mr. Wray informed the Board that Debby Rihm is on medical leave, and thanked Ms. Barton for filling in. Ms. Stille told the Board that she will be representing small towns at COST, and she will keep the board informed.

5. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Colman made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 1:25 p.m., and Ms. Stille seconded the motion. All voted in favor of the motion.