

# Capitol Region Council of Governments

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## MINUTES OF REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

March 15, 2007

### ATTENDANCE

#### Members and Alternates

Steven Adler  
Lamont Aheart  
Sandra Bobowski  
Horace Brown  
Jeffrey Carbonneau  
Marc Cerniglia  
Ferg Jansen  
Pat Kennedy  
John Larensen  
Thomas Manning  
Brad Pellissier  
Karl Profe  
William Skinner

#### Town

West Hartford  
Vernon  
Hartford  
Manchester  
Suffield  
Canton  
Simsbury  
South Windsor  
Marlborough  
Bolton  
Somers  
Windsor  
East Granby

#### Others Present

Mary Ellen Kowalewski	CRCOG
Rebecca Augur	CRCOG
Al Gary	CT Equestrian Center
Pat Kelly	CT Equestrian Center
David Ziaks	CT Equestrian Center
Glenn Geathers	Hartford Development Services

Chairman Larensen called the meeting to order at 7:04 pm.

#### Adoption of Minutes

Bobowski moved to adopt the minutes from the January 18, 2007 meeting. Carbonneau seconded. The motion passed.

#### Connecticut Equestrian and Exhibition Center

Pat Kelly and Al Gary, proponents of the Connecticut Equestrian and Exhibition Center, gave a presentation on their proposed project for Keney Park in Hartford and Windsor. The idea for the CT Equestrian Center (CEC) first came up in the late seventies/early eighties, after the closure of the Farmington Polo Grounds. In the mid-eighties, the CT Departments of Agriculture and of Environmental Protection commissioned a feasibility study for the CEC. That study identified Keney Park as an appropriate location. The study was updated in 1996, and reiterated the likely success of a CEC and the appropriateness of the Keney Park site given existing transportation and hospitality infrastructure. Interest in the proposal waned under Governor Rowland. The

current development team revived the idea in 2003, and has worked over the last four years to update the concept, and build support for it. They were before the Regional Planning Commission seeking support.

Ms. Kelly and Mr. Gary explained the operations of other major horse parks, and the business of equestrian competition. They described the Virginia and Kentucky Horse Parks, both of which are profitable. They also described the current CEC proposal, which includes a 6,000 seat indoor arena, stables and warm-up rings, a museum, a new facility for the Ebony Horsewomen, and other amenities. The development team for the CEC would include the Ebony Horsewomen, a private non-profit, and a for-profit developer, Red Horse Stables, who currently operate a facility in Southbury, CT. The CEC would host national and international competitions year-round, as well as provide opportunities to host mid-size events that do not fit within the Expo or Civic Centers. The CEC would also have a strong educational component, and would work with the City of Hartford and state officials to facilitate the development of an equine-themed magnet school. Ms. Kelly and Mr. Gary also remarked on the opportunity the proposal presents to bring Hartford and regional residents back to Keney Park. The park has suffered from under-use for the last few decades.

Mr. Gary and Ms. Kelly answered several questions from members about traffic concerns, the development team, ownership of the park and facility, and involvement of state agencies in the current proposal.

Once the presentation was over, Ms. Augur distributed draft staff comments on the proposal. According to this review, the proposal supports many regional plan goals surrounding the revitalization of Hartford and guiding development to regional centers. The comments also make recommendations concerning working with municipalities on traffic management and ensuring a high quality development that preserves the environmental resources of the park. Kennedy moved and Carbonneau seconded approval of the staff comments on the CEC. The motion passed unanimously.

### **Regional Transportation Plan Comments**

Mary Ellen Kowalewski asked for formal action on the draft comments on the Regional Transportation Plan. There were some questions regarding specific projects, including a possible flyover from Day Hill Road in Windsor to I-91, Route 6 in Bolton and Andover, and congestion on I-91 north approaching the Charter Oak Bridge. There was also some discussion on how to increase pedestrian friendly cities and towns. Bobowski moved and Kennedy seconded adoption of the staff comments on the Regional transportation Plan. The motion passed unanimously.

### **Report on Zoning, Subdivision, and Plan of Development Referrals:**

Rebecca Augur reported on several zoning and subdivision referrals. There was some discussion on the Barkhamsted proposal for Horizonline Overlay Zoning Districts, the proposed density reduction of age restricted housing in Cromwell, the proposed transfer of development regulations in Avon, and religious uses in industrial zones. There were no changes to staff comments.

Bobowski moved and Aheart seconded adoption of the referral comments. The motion passed unanimously.

### **Legislative Update**

Mary Ellen Kowalewski distributed summaries of legislation being tracked by CRCOG and the CT Chapter of the American Planning Association. She briefly discussed CRCOG's legislative priorities surrounding transportation, municipal service sharing and regional economic competitiveness issues.

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:35pm.