

# Capitol Region Council of Governments

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## MINUTES OF REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

February 19, 2009

### ATTENDANCE

#### Members and Alternates

Patrick Kennedy  
John Larensen  
Mark S. Drake  
Sandra Bobowski  
Thomas Manning  
Michael Seder  
Susan Erickson  
Monty Aheart

#### Town

South Windsor  
Marlborough  
Simsbury  
Hartford  
Bolton  
West Hartford  
Tolland  
Vernon

#### Others Present

Emily Moos	CRCOG
Mary Ellen Kowalewski	CRCOG
David Kooris	Regional Plan Association

Chairman Larensen called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm.

### ADOPTION OF MINUTES

There being no quorum, the agenda item to adopt the minutes of the January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2009 meeting was postponed.

### PRESENTATION ON EDGELESS CITIES COURSE

David Kooris, Director of the Connecticut Office of the Regional Plan Association gave a presentation on the background of Regional Plan Association, a tri-state non-profit organization on the Redesigning the Edgeless Cities Course to share information on a two-day training program that will be conducted in the Capitol Region this spring. Mr. Kooris' presentation drew upon similar programs conducted in the New York metropolitan area.

The Capitol Region Council of Governments is partnering with the Regional Plan Association and the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy to hold a unique two-day course in the Capitol Region called Redesigning the Edgeless City. This professional development course is offered once a year by Regional Plan Association and the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy. It will provide the region with a region-wide build-out analysis and use a unique visual technique called an architectural build-out analysis for a handful of sites to be determined. The purpose of these exercises is to explain innovative design and land-use law techniques for combating sprawl through place making, to create nodes of activity and town centers and through maximizing the positive impacts of transit investments. The course also seeks to produce development alternatives that limit carbon emissions, minimize ecological impacts and maximize environmental amenities. Structured around the handbook *Redesigning the Edgeless City*, the course draws on case study work by the faculty from across North America on topics including re-making the suburban highway, turning "edge city" districts into compact mixed-use centers, and using "green infrastructure" strategies for shaping new communities at the metropolitan fringe.

The second day of the course will consist of a hands-on design workshop to demonstrate the application of these strategies to towns in the CRCOG region. A full range of participants are invited to attend this collaborative planning process for a sustainable future. Attendees will include planning commissioners, town elected officials, citizens, business owners, community leaders, planning and other area professionals, etc. On the first day of the

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course, legislators and other key decision makers are also a target audience. The course will most likely take place on May 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>, 2009.

**REGIONAL PLAN UPDATE:**

Mary Ellen Kowalewski presented a schedule for completing and adopting the revised Regional Plan. She noted that CRCOG staff has been working to finalize the land use policy map, and make minor changes to the text of the Regional Plan of Conservation and Development. As CRCOG staff has stated at previous meetings, this work has involved extensive outreach to member communities. The schedule was presented as follows:

- February 19<sup>th</sup> RPC Meeting:
  - RPC provides final comments on Land Use Policy Map and Chapters 9, 10 and 11.
  - Staff presents proposed changes to Chapters 4, 8, and plan goals and policies.
  
- March 19<sup>th</sup> RPC Meeting:
  - RPC provides final comments on Chapters 4, 8, and plan goals and policies.
  - Staff presents proposed changes to Chapters 3, 5, 6 and 7.
  - First presentation to CRCOG Policy Board—March 25<sup>th</sup>.
  
- April 16<sup>th</sup> RPC Meeting:
  - RPC provides final comments on Chapters 3, 5, 6 and 7.
  - RPC discusses any remaining issues related to the Regional Plan Update.
  - Second presentation to CRCOG Policy Board—April 16<sup>th</sup>. Policy Board sets public hearing date.
  
- May 1—Proposed Regional Plan Update posted on CRCOG web site, required notifications sent to member municipalities and the State Office of Policy and Management. Public hearing is set for 65 days later—no sooner than July 6, 2009.
  
- OPM submits findings, including a review to determine if the proposed of regional plan of development is not inconsistent with the State Plan of Conservation and Development. OPM must submit their comments back to the RPO not less than 10 days before such hearing.
  
- The RPO shall note on the record any inconsistency with the state plan of conservation of development and the reasons for such inconsistency.
  
- July 6, 2009—Conduct Public Hearing on Regional Plan Update.
  
- September 23, 2009—Policy Board adopts update.
  
- Adopted Plan is submitted to member municipalities and OPM.

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

Emily Moos reported on this month's referrals. She mentioned that there was one referral from Manchester that presented an amendment offered by the zoning commission to delete the provision allowing residential units above the first story as the permitted use in Business I, II and III zones. Ms. Moos stated that this amendment is not consistent with several goals and policies of the CRCOG Regional Plan and therefore received a comment to that effect.

Ms. Moos also summarized a memo on the statutes relating to zoning and subdivision referrals. She stated that there have been an increasing number of referrals coming to CRCOG that do not meet the requirements of the statutes, particularly with regard to timing and mailing procedures. Ms. Moos stated that this memo will go out to all planning departments in the Capitol Region. Sue Erickson stated that the memo should also go out to the chair of each planning and zoning commission.

Sue Erickson made and Patrick Kennedy seconded a motion to accept the report on zoning and subdivision referrals as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

**Adoption of January 15, 2009 Meeting Minutes**

Patrick Kennedy made and Sandra Bobowski seconded a motion to adopt the minutes of the January 15, 2009 meeting with corrections. The motion passed unanimously.

**Other Business**

Emily Moos described the work that CRCOG is doing with the U.S. Census Bureau to prepare for the 2010 Census. She stated that a memo had gone out to the CRCOG Policy Board and Town Managers which listed towns that will be affected by CRCOG's participation in the Participant Statistical Areas Program (PSAP). As a result of this program, updates are necessary for a number of tracts and block groups in the CRCOG region to ensure that they meet established population and housing unit thresholds in the areas that are either above maximum or below minimum. CRCOG must go through the process of either merging or splitting tracts or block groups depending upon the situation. In some cases, boundaries may need to change. According to the Census Bureau, this is an important part of the proper administration of the 2010 Census. This work must be completed by March 25, 2009.

Mary Ellen Kowalewski announced two upcoming events in the CRCOG region. The first is the second CRCOG Regional Roundtable to be held February 26<sup>th</sup>, 2009 from 11:30 AM to 2:30 PM. This roundtable will build upon the first CRCOG Regional Roundtable by examining the obstacles and opportunities to achieving the vision for each of the major issues discussed at the first regional roundtable: the economy, the natural environment, the built environment, transportation and quality of life. The second is a series of forums put on by the Partnership for Strong Communities and the Lyceum called Housing: The Hub of Public Policy. A March 6<sup>th</sup> event entitled, Housing to Solve Transportation and Environmental Problems and a March 10<sup>th</sup> event entitled Housing and Municipal Budgets – The Vital Connections are scheduled.

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:20 pm.