

**Southern Windsor County  
Regional Planning Commission**

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Minutes of February 16, 2010

**Commissioners Present:** Donald Barrett, Springfield; Peter Daniels, Weathersfield; Thomas Bock, Chester; Norm Vanasse, Ludlow; John Mitchell, Reading; Stephen Cottrell, Windsor; Bob Flint, Springfield Regional Development Corporation, Commissioner At-Large.

**Staff Present:** Tom Kennedy, April Harkness, Angela Esslinger, Jason Rasmussen, Cynthia Porter, Joe Bonanno, John Broker-Campbell.

**Public Hearing on Approval of 2009 Weathersfield Municipal Plan**

Donald Barrett, Chairman, opened the public hearing at 12:05PM on the approval of the readopted 2009 Weathersfield Municipal Plan. There were no comments from the public. The public hearing was closed at 12:06 PM.

Donald Barrett, Chairman, opened the RPC meeting at 12:07 PM.

**Approval of the 2009 Weathersfield Municipal Plan**

Norm Vanasse reported that the Town Plan Review Committee is in favor of approving the readopted plan. Norm Vanasse made a motion to approve the 2009 Weathersfield Municipal Plan, seconded by John Mitchell. Motion carried.

**Secretary's Report**

Norm Vanasse made a motion to approve the January 2010 Secretary's Report as written, seconded by John Mitchell. Cynthia Porter had three corrections to be added (Carol Lighthall was present via phone, the second bullet under audit report should state expenditures NOT income, and in the last paragraph July invoice was not received in July). Motion carried.

**Treasurer's Report**

Tom Bock made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report for January 2010 as written, seconded by John Mitchell. Motion carried.

**Revised Budget**

A revised FY10 budget was presented by Tom Kennedy and Cynthia Porter. Tom and Cynthia met with the Executive Committee February 2<sup>nd</sup> to review the proposed budget revisions. Cynthia reviewed the changes from the approved June 2009 to the revised budget.

Peter Daniels made a motion to accept the revised budget as presented, seconded by John Mitchell. Motion carried.

## **Brownfield Updates**

April Harkness updated the Board on recent Brownfield activity:

**J&L** – (2009 ARRA funding) – A waiver for the use of \$400,000 in ARRA funds at this site has been submitted to EPA and we are awaiting their response.

**Ludlow Armory** – (Hazardous Assessment Grant) – The town of Ludlow now owns the Ludlow Armory. The vote for \$1.2 million bond to cover the remediation and reconstruction costs will be at Town Meeting in March. Weston and Sampson was asked to come up with a cost estimate for a Corrective Action Plan (CAP); the cost estimate is for \$9,450. This cost estimate has been submitted to the DEC and EPA for their input as it goes above the \$5,000 not to exceed cost which was approved by the Brownfields Steering Committee (BSC) on February 3rd. The Brownfields Steering Committee will be informed and vote via email regarding DEC/EPA's input as to the final cost for the CAP.

**Edgar May Health and Recreation Facility in Springfield** – (Hazardous Assessment Grant) – The Brownfield Steering Committee met on February 3<sup>rd</sup> and voted to approve a revised Phase II work plan which was submitted by Stone Environmental. The overall cost has come down due to some of the tasks being revised, such as less ground water sampling, but now includes additional PCB sampling.

The Steering Committee recommends the RPC Board ratify the approval of the revised Phase II work plan. The Phase II will be complete by June 2010. Steve Cottrell made a motion to ratify the BSC approval of the Phase II work plan, this was seconded by Norm Vanasse. Motion carried.

**PVDC Site, 100 River Street** – (2009 ARRA funds) - The \$140,000 site eligibility has been approved by EPA. The funds will be used mostly for PCB remediation tasks. A stakeholders meeting is scheduled for February 24<sup>th</sup>.

**Petroleum Assessment Funds** – The RPC has remaining petroleum assessment funds and also petroleum clean up funds available for use. Tom received a phone call from Northeastern Vermont Development Association which has unused hazardous assessment funds. The EPA said it is up to us if we would like to swap Petroleum Assessment Funds for Hazardous Assessment Funds. Tom will follow up with the RPC and Northeastern Vermont Development Association. We also need to look through our Bylaws to see what may need to be changed so that we are able to sub-grant and accept funds outside of the region. *April will look into the Bylaw changes and will have legal input. April and Tom will discuss findings at the next Brownfields Steering Committee meeting.*

## **Discussion of Economic Development in the Region with Bob Flint**

- Bob discussed the Community Development Block Grant which was approved several months ago.
- PVDC still owns the 100 River Street property; once the grant funds are used up, the transfer of ownership will occur.
- J&L site is designated as an “opportunity zone” by the State which will help to market the redevelopment of the site.
- The Winstanley Biomass project, a 25 megawatt energy project, has picked up steam this quarter, receiving a significant amount of attention from both the State and Federal levels. Bob is not only excited about the potential job creation of this project, but also the possibility of providing heating for the entire industrial park. This will be a major benefit to park, community and region.
- Ellis Block: financing needs to be finalized by the end of April. A press release is going out looking for theatre operator.
- The economy is still struggling; however, we are starting to see an increase in activity in the region.

## **Transportation Updates**

Tom Kennedy updated the Board on the recent Transportation activity:

The Connecticut River Byways Council would like the SWCRPC, TRORC and UVLSRPC to assist the byways group with managing federal grants and updating the corridor management plan. CRJC is not happy they are losing this but are not able to manage this project.

## **Section 248A**

We received a proposal from AT&T to add antennas to the existing tower on Skitchewaug Trail Road in Springfield. This proposal requires a Certificate of Public Good issued by the Public Service Board under Section 248A, which, among other criteria, evaluates conformance with town and regional plans. The Permit Review Committee was consulted with and determined that the project is in conformance with our Regional Plan. Peter Daniels made a motion to send this letter, seconded by Tom Bock. Motion carried.

## **ACT 250 Updates**

Jason Rasmussen updated the Board on the active ACT 250 projects:

- The second hearing for a new hangar at the Springfield airport is scheduled for March 9<sup>th</sup>, as an abutter did not receive the notice and could not attend the first hearing.
- Two appeals (local permit and ACT 250) with the Black Dog Realty/Morgan Meadows Subdivision are still in Environmental Court. The Environmental Court proceedings are on hold pending the remanded local permit decision and the related Superior Court appeal. The Superior Court appeal involves an abutter’s Freedom of Information Act request for detailed records of Windsor DRB’s deliberations.
- The Mt. Ascutney Resort snowmaking pond hearing was held on February 10<sup>th</sup>. The District Commission gave the Resort an extension on the related permit condition, requiring an alternative analysis of the snowmaking pond be completed by 2012.

## **Energy**

Tom Kennedy and Jason Rasmussen discussed the major components of our new Energy Program, which includes the following activities:

- Develop a baseline energy study for every SWCRPC town's energy consumption is (electric and fuel usage for public buildings and vehicle fleet). We will use an existing methodology from Clean Air, Cool Planet to record the baseline usage.
- Perform energy audits and make small upgrades to town buildings.
- A wide variety of education and outreach, including developing a website resource for town energy planning, assist local energy committees, holding public forums and other educational activities.
- Develop model language for town plans and land use regulations, and assist Planning Commissions with energy planning efforts.
- Evaluate and update the Regional Plan by 2012.

## **Old Business**

There was no old business to discuss.

## **New Business**

- Tom Kennedy introduced Joe Bonanno, the new planner, to the commissioners.
- RACLT announced a project to renovate the Stoughton House (??) in Windsor with CDBG funding, including energy efficiency upgrades.
- The Town of Weathersfield has asked the RPC to participate in a panel discussion discussing the merits of zoning. This is intended as an informational meeting prior to the vote to repeal both zoning and subdivision regulations at Weathersfield's 2010 Town Meeting. Tom Kennedy intended to ask the RPC before participating in this discussion; however, the notice of public hearing has already been released.
- MPG's: There will be a reduced FY 2010 round of Municipal Planning Grants sometime this spring. The program is usually funded at \$800,000 statewide; the FY 2010 grant is funded at \$250,000 statewide. The state will be very slow to get the grants out, and there is concern that the money will be used for other purposes if not used. One potential solution might be if the RPC can handle the grants to expedite this round.
- Institute a policy for towns to update their Town Plan instead of continuing to adopt the same plan. (discuss at next meeting)

## **Adjourn**

Don Barrett made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Norm Vanasse. The meeting adjourned at 1:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Angela Esslinger