



NAUGATUCK VALLEY COUNCIL of GOVERNMENTS

49 Leavenworth Street, 3rd Floor, Waterbury, CT 06702 • 203-757-0535 • 203-735-8688

MEETING MINUTES REGULAR MEETING

Regional Planning Commission (RPC)
of the Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments (NVCOG)
49 Leavenworth Street – 3rd floor, Waterbury, CT
6:30 p.m. Tuesday, February 25, 2020

Attendance: Gary Giordano, Bethlehem; David White, Bristol; Lori Rotella, Naugatuck; Margus Laan, Plymouth; Stacy Sefcik, Thomaston.

Staff: Joanna Rogalski, Senior Regional Planner

Members of the Public: 1

The meeting opened at 6:35 PM.

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

- The pledge of allegiance was recited. All those present introduced themselves. Member of the public commented about her desire to learn more about regional processes and mechanisms for regional cooperation and coordination. A quorum was not obtained for this meeting.

2. Administrative Items

Joanna Rogalski reported on the following topics:

a. Adoption of December 10, 2019 Meeting minutes (motion)

Since a quorum was not obtained for this meeting, there was no motion for adoption. No edits were suggested to the draft meeting minutes.

b. Referrals – 15 since December 10, 2019. None regionally significant.

c. Correspondence – Prospect confirmation of representation at RPC – Mr. Graveline and Mr. Hughes

3. Discussion of Regional Planning Commission

Joanna Rogalski led discussion regarding a proposed restructuring of the Regional Planning Commission..

Discussion ensued. The following points were discussed:

- The Valley Council of Governments (VCOG) RPC felt like each town supported one another, they all had similar planning issues, the larger NVCOG RPC feels like there is a greater disconnect among the Towns.
- Future form of the NVCOG RPC would be better with the following:
 - Be more of an educational forum, where Towns can learn from each other. Current roundtable discussion is very helpful.
 - Give more recommendations for municipal plans of conservation and development (POCD)
 - NVCOG staff providing more tools, methods and information to help towns counteract shortsighted thinking on proposed zoning and developments.
 - Be a setting where members could get a sense that “you’re not alone, we’ve been through this, and this is how we did it.”
- Referral reports are helpful; current format is OK.
- Frustration with discontinuity of planning issue discussions. Would like to have more follow-up and education about Broadband/5G infrastructure, solar farms/fields.
- Lots of people at the table – too large for a consensus
- Have a “Hot Topics” segment to help planners and commissioners be up to date on planning issues.
- Advise the NVCOG staff to ask to be on the meeting agenda for municipal Planning and Zoning Commission meetings, get a chance to introduce themselves, ask for volunteers to join the RPC



- The RPC representatives would like the RPC to be the group which brings expertise to a discussion on planning issues, bring technical background, understand the logic behind regulations, understand why location matters.
 - Education reiterated as important aspect of the RPC – provides a forum for Commissioners to step back and understand the reasons behind proposed planning actions.
 - Suggest more training opportunities through the RPC for municipal Commissioners.
 - Perception that residents have a general loss of pride in their Towns.
 - Helpful if there was more information about grants for municipalities.
 - Of the RPC representatives present, three preferred day meetings, two preferred night meetings, the rest had no opinion.
 - Concern that an RPC with representatives from only planning staff would be biased; the Commissioners give another perspective on planning issues.
 - The RPC representatives were OK with referrals becoming entirely an NVCOG staff function.
4. Discussion of the Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan (NHMP)
- Review of the need for a Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan.
 - FEMA grant award to prepare an NHMP is for \$300,000 with a \$100,000 non-federal match of cash and/or in-kind services.
 - The RFP issued January 29, 2020, closes February 28, 2020.
 - Next step is reviewing and choosing the consultant.
5. Discussion of the Regional Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) –
- There will be an analysis of affordable housing options across the region. A few different standards of affordability will be considered: municipal housing authorities, CGS 8-30g, CGS 4-124u and Untied Way ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Restrained, Employed).
6. Roundtable – Discussion of Points of Interest/Local Activities

Bethlehem – Gary Giordano, elector
Nothing to report

Naugatuck – Lori Rotella, Land Use Administrator

Three lot subdivision on Prospect town line is forthcoming. New Mexican restaurant opened. New Brazilian market opened. Rail conference was held regarding improvements to the Metro North Waterbury Branch Line service and infrastructure.

Bristol – David White, Zoning Commissioner

City expects a resubmission of a zoning map change for 12.3 AC on Red Stone Hill Rd – from single family residential to multi family residential. When first proposed, public comment was largely against this zone change. Expecting a proposal to be submitted in March for an expansion of facilities at a Double Tree Hotel – expansion would help property accommodate larger meetings and events. The Assistant City Planner has resigned and taken a job at Robinson and Cole.

Thomaston – Stacy Sefcik, Land use Administrator

Increased applications for home-based businesses. There is an axe throwing business expected to be built. The new brewpub is expected to open by the end of summer 2020. The Town's zoning regulations are slowly being updated in-house. The town may hire a UCONN public policy student as an intern to work as the Town's ZEO assistant.



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Plymouth – Margus Laan, Town Planner

Also a lot of home-based businesses. Discussion ensued about the impact of home based businesses on neighbors and the road infrastructure to accommodate delivery vehicles.

7. Other –

- The Naugatuck River Greenway (NRG) Trail Thomaston to Torr Routing Study is being reviewed – public comments about the study will be accepted until March 13, 2020.

8. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:16 PM.

Respectfully submitted by
Joanna Rogalski, Senior Regional Planner
NVCOG