



# Lower Connecticut River Valley Council of Governments

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## Regional Planning Committee

### LOWER CONNECTICUT RIVER VALLEY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMITTEE

#### MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING

Monday, January 24, 2022 – 7:00 pm

Virtual Zoom Meeting

#### Members:

Chester	Elaine Fitzgibbons *
	Cindy Lignar *
Clinton	Alan Kravitz *
	Martin Jaffe *
Cromwell	Nick Demetriades
	Anthony LaCava *
Deep River	Tony Bolduc *
Durham	Frank DeFelice *
East Haddam	Crary Brownell
East Hampton	Michael Kowalczyk *
Essex	Jane Siris
	Sandra Childress *
Haddam	Raul deBrigard
	Maurice Adams *
Killingworth	Alec Martin *
	Stephanie Warren *
Lyme	Mary Stone *
	David Lahm *
Middlefield	Paul Pizzo
Middletown	Catherine Johnson *
	Kellin Atherton *
Old Lyme	Harold Thompson *
Old Saybrook	Douglas McCracken *
	Karen Jo Marcolini
Portland	Mary Dickerson *
Westbrook	Bill Neale *
	Marie Farrell

\*Members Present

#### Staff Present:

Sam Gold  
Margot Burns  
Kevin Armstrong  
Eliza LoPresti  
Megan Jouflas  
Torrance Downes

## RiverRPC

Ben Lovejoy

**Guests:** 113 public participants

**1. Call to Order**

Chairman DeFelice called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. The meeting was conducted via Zoom.

**2. Roll Call**

Eliza LoPresti called the roll.

**3. Seating of Alternates** – Anthony Lacava (Cromwell) and Sandra Childress (Essex) were seated.

**4. Adoption of Agenda**

*Mr. Kravitz moved to adopt the agenda; second by Mr. Bolduc. Vote was unanimous in favor.*

**5. Regional Housing Plan Presentation**

A presentation on the Regional Housing Plan was given by RiverCOG staff and consultants Don Poland from Goman + York and Elizabeth Esposito, Karen Martin, and Robert Collins of SLR. A full recording of this presentation can be found at [www.rivercog.org/rhp](http://www.rivercog.org/rhp)

**6. Public Comments** – None

**7. Election of Officers**

*Ms. Dickerson moved to elect Sam Gold as temporary secretary to run the officer elections; second by Mr. Kravitz. Vote was unanimous in favor.*

*Ms. Dickerson moved to nominate a slate of officers; second by Mr. Neale. Vote was unanimous in favor.*

*Mr. Neale nominated the following slate of officers: Frank DeFelice for Chairman, Raul deBrigrad for Vice Chairman, and Mary Stone for Secretary. Second was by Ms. Dickerson. Vote was unanimous in favor.*

**8. Approval of the Minutes of Past Meetings**

*Mr. Neale moved to approve the minutes of the November 22, 2021 meeting; second by Ms. Dickerson. Vote was unanimous in favor with Mr. Bolduc abstaining.*

**9. Referrals** – None

**10. Updates**

- a. **Bike/Ped Plan** – A draft is under review by the steering committee at this time. It will come before the RPC at the February meeting.
- b. **ARPA** – There are a few regional projects in the works such as multi-town document digitization and shared grant reporting assistance. It is possible that a project with the Middlesex Chamber Revitalization Commission may include loans or grants to small businesses in the area.

- c. **Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)** – RiverCOG requested designation as a Regional Economic Development District, which was needed to create a CEDS, which is effectively a regional economic plan that is recognized by the Federal government. There is a robust process for participation as outlined by the federal EDA, particularly for municipalities and economic development commissions. This plan will be kept up to date every five years.

#### **11. Miscellaneous: State, Regional and/or Local Planning Issues**

Mr. DeFelice welcomed three new members. Elaine Fitzgibbons (Chester), David Lahm (Lyme), and Catherine Johnson (Middletown) introduced themselves.

Mr. Gold stated the legislative session will begin Feb. 9 and will be a short session. He also noted that the CEDS plan is being funded by a grant from the US EDA which is also funding assistance to DEMHS with long-term recovery, a long-term recovery coordinator that will be shared with another COG, Middlesex Chamber entrepreneurship and small business virtual meet-ups and workshops, and expansion of the ability of regional farmers to sell their goods online or facilitate easier pickup through the Regional Agricultural Commission.

Ms. Lignar introduced and welcomed Charlene Janecek, Chester’s new First Selectperson.

#### **12. Adjournment**

*Mr. Neale moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:15 pm; second by Mr. Martin. Vote was unanimous in favor.*

Respectfully submitted,  
Eliza LoPresti