



Lower Connecticut River Valley Council of Governments

145 Dennison Road Essex, CT 06426 | +1 860 581 8554 | www.rivercog.org

Regional Planning Committee

LOWER CONNECTICUT RIVER VALLEY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING

Monday, April 25, 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	Carey Duques *
	Sandra Childress
Haddam	Raul deBrigard *
	Maurice Adams
Killingworth	Alec Martin *
	Stephanie Warren *
Lyme	Mary Stone
	David Lahm * (came in after seating of alts)
Middlefield	Paul Pizzo *
Middletown	Catherine Johnson * (came in after seating of alts)
	Kellin Atherton *
Old Lyme	Harold Thompson *
Old Saybrook	Douglas McCracken *
	Karen Jo Marcolini
Portland	Chantal Foster *
	Bob Ellsworth
Westbrook	Bill Neale *
	Marie Farrell

*Members Present

Staff Present:

Sam Gold
Margot Burns
Rob Haramut
Eliza LoPresti
Torrance Downes

RiverRPC

Ben Lovejoy
 Megan Jouflas
 Kevin Armstrong
 Janice Ehle/Meyer

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 –Kellin Atherton (Middletown) was seated.

4. Adoption of Agenda

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

5. Public Comment – None

6. Approval of the Minutes of Past Meetings

Mr. Neale moved to approve the minutes of the March 28, 2022 meeting; second by Mr. Martin. Vote was unanimous in favor. Ms. Foster, Mr. deBrigard and Ms. Duques abstained.

7. Referrals – See below

8. Discussion of Cannabis Regulation in the RiverCOG Region; Review of Four Cannabis Regulation Proposals: Mr. Downes gave an in-depth presentation on the status of RiverCOG and immediately surrounding towns as related to approved cannabis regulations, moratoriums, or retail bans. There was some discussion about how and why each town may be leaning they way they are on their petitions.

Mr. Downes also described his visit to CT Pharma, an existing medical marijuana grower and dispensary in Rocky Hill. He showed photos and answered the committee’s questions on the building. He stated there were no odors outside the building or in the lobby due to strong odor controls. He will recommend to all the towns that they include odor control in their regulations, as Durham is the only town that currently has included a standard for odor management.

In addition to the below, Portland has recently approved a retail facility. Mr. Downes noted that it will likely be 1.5 to 2 years before licenses are distributed by the social equity council. License costs, the differences between medical and retail marijuana sales, and the CT Pharma building size and odor management were discussed.

Water output and management was also discussed, along with PFAS concerns. Mr. Downes will investigate the use of water in cultivation facilities further. Mr. Downes will write letters for the referrals below, recommending including an odor dispersion analysis as part of a requirement, for those that don’t have it. He will send the letters around to the committee for comment via email. There will also be a note included about showing a water maintenance plan as applicable to cultivation, not retail sales. There could be an inclusion of a travel analysis for parking for retail establishments. There was discussion on providing maps of all the areas in question.

- a. **Town of Cromwell. Petition to Permit Sales and Cultivation of Cannabis (Medical and Recreational) (PH April 5, April 19 [cont'd] May 3, 2022 [cont'd]):** Cromwell has prepared regulations with various standards. Mr. Downes summarized these for the group and they were included in full in the information sent out prior to the meeting. Standards for odor management were suggested to be included.
- b. **Town of Durham. Petition to Establish Regulations to Allow Sales and Micro-Cultivation of Cannabis (No Cultivation) (PH May 4, 2022):** Durham has created regulations outlining standards for retailers, micro-cultivators, and conditional approval requirements. Durham is the only town that has included odor management requirements, which may be the most important.
- c. **Town of Westbrook. Petition to Establish a 6-Month Moratorium on the Use of Land and Structures for the Purpose of Cannabis Establishments (PH May 19, 2022):** Westbrook is proposing two different things; first, a six-month moratorium to further study the topic and second, a petition for retailers. Both will be put to public comment to see how the residents feel and they will adopt either the moratorium or the move forward with the regulations.
- d. **Town of Old Saybrook. Petition to Prohibit Retail, Manufacturing, and Cultivation of Cannabis with Limited Exceptions (PH May 2, 2022):** Old Saybrook is proposing to prohibit retail sales though there is an exception for the one use they have already approved, which is actually two retail sites.

9. Updates

- a. **Regional Housing Plan:** The towns are nearing the end of the process of creating their plans for 8-30j and the regional portion of the plan is taking form. We are on target for adoption by June 1. The towns that are not participating are also partnering with us to create executive summaries of their plans to be include in the analysis. There is hope that the plan will be posted for comment within a month.
- b. **Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDs):** We are in the process of creating a strategy committee now. The project will gain speed later in May once the bulk of the housing plan is completed.
- c. **Legislative:** At only ten days left in the session there is a lot of action. Mr. Lovejoy provided a written update to the committee via email and he verbally reviewed bills that have an impact on land use.

10. Miscellaneous: State, Regional and/or Local Planning Issues - None

11. Adjournment

Mr. Thompson moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:53 pm; second by Mr. Martin. Vote was unanimous in favor.