



Lower Connecticut River Valley Council of Governments

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Lower Connecticut River Valley Council of Governments and Lower Connecticut River Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization

MINUTES OF REGIONAL HOUSING COMMITTEE MEETING

Tuesday, November 28, 2023 – 2:00 PM

Members & Alternates Present: Pat Bandzes (Chester), Bonnie Bennet (Chester), Abby Piersall (Clinton), Stuart Popper (Cromwell), Daniel Smith (Deep River), John Board (Durham), David Rosengren (Essex), Richard Pleines (Killingworth), David Lahm (Lyme), Jim Irish (Middlefield), Marek Kozikowski (Middletown)

Others Present: Karla Lindquist (HOPE Partnership), Carey Duques (Essex), Eric Salmon (Clinton), Kara Capone (Mercy Housing), Sarah Bird (Middlesex Habitat for Humanity)

RiverCOG Staff Present: Megan Jouflas, Eliza LoPresti, Susie Beckman, Kevin Armstrong, Sam Gold, Marcos Gonzalez, Janice Ehle-Meyer

Call To Order

The meeting was called to order by Ms. Jouflas at 2:00 p.m. The meeting was held in person and via Zoom video conference.

Approval of Minutes of October 24, 2023 Meeting

Mr. Lahm moved to approve the minutes of the October 24, 2023 meeting; second by Ms. Bandzes. Vote was unanimous in favor.

Approval of 2024 Meeting Dates

Ms. Bandzes moved to approve the 2024 meeting dates; second by Mr. Lahm. Vote was unanimously approved.

Nominations for & Elections of Officers for 2024

Ms. Bandzes nominated Michael Fogliano for Chair; this was seconded by Mr. Lahm. Vote was unanimously approved.

Mr. Lahm nominated Ms. Bandzes for Vice Chair; this was seconded by Mr. Rosengren. Vote was unanimously approved.

Speaker Series – Sarah Bird, Middlesex Habitat for Humanity

Sarah Bird, Executive Director of the Middlesex Habitat for Humanity, explained Habitat's role in building homes for people within 30% - 80% AMI that can afford a mortgage on their own home. Homeowners will be chosen by lottery moving forward. Usually, once a site has been found, Habitat will then work with a town to move forward with their plans. Sometimes a town approaches them with a project. The properties are not deed restricted

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affordable housing, but because of the mortgaging system of third party lenders, typically one of which is CHFA, can probably count toward a town's affordable housing stock. Towns can help facilitate Habitat properties by allowing them to not pay taxes on their properties, as they will eventually be receiving taxes from the homeowners.

Toolkit: Single Family Conversions

Ms. Jouflas gave a presentation on the topic which can be found [here](#). We are working on a spreadsheet on the topic by town which will be available in the toolkit eventually.

Updates From Members

Ms. Bandzes reported that the affordable project in Chester was approved by P&Z with 13 or 14 conditions attached. They learned that 8-30g site plans can indeed be conditioned.

Ms. Jouflas updated the group that the PRO Housing application was entered, and we are hoping to hear back by the end of the year on the award. RiverCOG ended up with 40 letters of support from in and out of the region.

Other

Topic(s) for Next Meeting

There was a suggestion that someone at the state level come speak to the group on housing at a future meeting.

Adjournment

Mr. Lahm moved to adjourn the meeting at 3:17 PM; second by Ms. Bandzes. Vote was unanimous in favor.

Respectfully submitted,
Eliza LoPresti