



Lower Connecticut River Valley Council of Governments

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Regional Planning Committee

LOWER Connecticut River VALLEY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMITTEE

DRAFT MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING

Monday, Sept 22, 2025

7:00 p.m.

Members:

Chester	Carlie Dailey
Clinton	Lawrence Edwards
	Eddie Alberino*
Cromwell	Nick Demetriades
	Anthony LaCava
Deep River	Daniel Smith*
Durham	Frank DeFelice*
East Haddam	Crary Brownell
	Debbie Langdon
East Hampton	Michael Kowalczyk*
Essex	Carey Duques
	Thomas Pinkowish*
Haddam	Raul deBrigard*
Killingworth	Alec Martin*
	Stephanie Warren
Lyme	Mary Stone
Middlefield	Paul Pizzo
Middletown	Beth Emery *
	Nathaniel Spencer
Old Lyme	Harold Thompson
	Howard Margules*
Old Saybrook	Douglas McCracken*
	Michael Bender*
Portland	Chantal Foster
	Bob Ellsworth
Westbrook	Bill Neale*
	Marie Farrell

*Members' Present

Other attendees: Rebecca Mead, Sandra Childress

Staff Present: Megan Jouflas, Kevin Armstrong, Marcos Gonzalez, Susie Beckman, Vicki Harris

1. Call to Order

RiverRPC

Chair Frank DeFelice called the meeting to order at 7:01 welcoming all participants to the virtual Zoom meeting. He introduced Vicki Harris, the new Office Manager for RiverCOG.

2. Roll Call

Ms. Harris completed the roll call.

3. Seating of Alternates

Eddie Alberino (Clinton), Daniel Smith (Deep River), Thomas Pinkowish (Essex), Howard Margules (Old Lyme)

4. Adoption of Agenda

Raul deBrigard moved to accept the agenda, with a second from Bill Neale.

Motion was unanimously approved.

5. Public Comment

None

6. Approval of Minutes of Past Meeting

Beth Emery moved to accept the minutes with a second from Raul deBrigard.

The following members abstain: Doug McCracken, Thomas Pinkowish, Rebecca Mead, Daniel Smith.

Chair DeFelice declared the motion passed.

7. Referrals – to view current referrals: <https://www.rivercog.org/regionalservices/referrals/>

Marcos Gonzalez reviewed the referral documentation. Each referral is located on the RiverCOG website within the Referral Online Database. The referral moves through the subfolders therein as the status of the response is updated. Once the decision by the staff is made, the serialized document is placed in the Completed subfolder with a link to an Archive with the supporting documentation used in the determination.

00167 -Durham: A text amendment for new regulations zoning to permit drive-through facilities by special exception, or site-by-site basis. There were no adverse intermunicipal impacts to the adjacent RiverCOG towns, and the proposed regulation is consistent with zoning regulations from other RiverCOG towns.

00168 -Essex: A clarification of the maximum total building coverage to one of the sections of the zoning regulations adopted in December 2025. RiverCOG finds no adverse intermunicipal impacts to the adjacent RiverCOG towns.

00169 -Westbrook: A zoning text amendment for a section change relating to standards for floor area ratio and the neighborhood commercial zone. No adverse impacts to neighboring towns were found with the caveat that, parcels that are zoned for the neighborhood commercial district do abut parcels in the towns of Old Saybrook and Clinton, so it is on the periphery of the town.

Mr. Gonzalez noted that this was supported by existing plans including the Regional Plan of Conservation Development, the Regional Housing Plan, the Transit Plan, and the Economic Development Study, which allowed for denser development within areas that were along the Route 1 corridor.

00170 -Portland: The petition proposes revisions to regulations concerning the level of density permitted in the rural residential zone (RR). Developments under the section, and the RR zone must border a state highway, have a maximum density of three units per net buildable acre, or six units per net buildable acre, subject to 25% of the units being affordable. A stipulation was added to have access to public water and public sewers.

The change is compatible with regulations in other zones within the town, and there would be no significant adverse intermunicipal impacts to the neighboring towns, especially the town of East Hampton.

Discussion:

Mr. deBrigard suggested an opportunity for improving communication between the RiverCOG and Gateway agencies when a request for a zoning change is made in a town adjacent to the Connecticut River.

Mr. Gonzalez shared that RiverCOG and Gateway have started collaborating more and consider the potential ecological impacts on the sound and the watershed.

Mr. Martin inquired about lot size changes within the Portland referral. Mr. Gonzalez clarified that it was only a density increase, explaining that they allowed for more concentrated developments with a maximum density of three units per net buildable acre in the rural residential zone.

8. EPA Grant

Ms. Beckman presented an update on EPA Brownfields grants, explaining that RiverCOG is pursuing one of two potential grants: a \$500,000 or a \$1.5 million award, with the larger amount requiring town coalition partnerships. She outlined that RiverCOG would be the fiduciary to the funds which would be used for property assessments (not contaminated by the town), planning and stakeholder engagement, and stressing it could not be used for remediation.

UConn Technical Assistance for Brownfields group (TAB) will assist with the application process. TAB will help to gather information by investigating the properties background, and data collection for the participating towns. Ms. Beckman shared the potential to create a map of the brownfields with this information which would be shared with the members.

Several towns were discussed, including Clinton's Stanley Bostitch property, which Eddie identified as a viable candidate, and will share with Ms. Beckman. Of note, the grant has not yet been released by the federal government but is expected in the coming weeks.

9. Miscellaneous: State, Regional and/or Local Planning Issues

Mr. DeFelice shared that Durham opted to continue with the current zoning restriction on drive-through window other than banks and similar entities.

Mr. Alberino shared that, with over four hundred people providing feedback, Clinton has completed the POCD and will be forwarding to the commissions.

Mr. Smith noted the same for Deep River after two years and was planning to incorporate new regulations and a regional housing module.

There was discussion with noting variations in voting procedures across towns.

Mr. DeFelice thanked Ms. Beckman for sharing information on PA2525-33, the Coastal Site Review.

10. Adjournment

Mr. Neale made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Martin.

Unanimously approved.

cc: RPC members

Town Clerks

RiverCOG

DRAFT