

# WASHINGTON COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL

Charlestown Exeter Hopkinton Narragansett New Shoreham North Kingstown Richmond South Kingstown Westerly

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## MONTHLY BOARD MEETING MINUTES December 21, 2005

Attendance:

### WCRPC Board Members and Staff

Chris Duhamel, Westerly Town Council  
Kate Waterman, Charlestown Town Council  
Henry Oppenheimer, Richmond Town Council  
Beverly Kenney, Hopkinton Town Council  
George Tracy, Narragansett Town Council  
Jim O'Neill, South Kingstown Town Council  
Sue Barker, WCRPC Executive Director

### Advisory Members and Public

Jared Rhodes, WCCDC board of Directors  
Michael Rauh, Washington Trust Company  
Robert Sherman, Block Island Alternate  
Richard Pastore, North Kingstown Planning Commission

The regular monthly meeting of the Washington County Regional Planning Council (WCRPC) held on Wednesday, December 21, 2005, at University of Rhode Island University Club, Kingston, RI was called to order by President Chris Duhamel at 8:35 a.m.

### Approval of Minutes

H Oppenheimer made a motion to approve the minutes of the November meeting. B Kenney seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

### Executive Director's Report

S Barker reported the receipt of grant funds for both the WCCDC and WCRPC from the Rhode Island Foundation for 2006. The WCRPC will receive \$30,000. The WCCDC will receive \$30,000.

Update on the progress of the WCCDC:

- A three-year commitment of \$30,000 per year from Rhode Island Housing was received. The first year WCCDC will receive \$30,000. In the second and third year, RI Housing will match town funds two to one.
- A commitment of \$5000 from the Housing Network received.
- The WCCDC anticipates approximately \$30,000 from United Way via LISC. Current funding commitment total: \$95,000 for the first year of operations.
- Housing development committee is pursuing development opportunities in all Washington County towns. Members attended the Charlestown affordable Housing Commission meeting in November to learn of their concerns.
- The WCCDC closed the application period for the position of Executive Director on December 16. There are several good candidates. Interviews will be held in mid January.
- The board welcomed a new member, Jerry O'Halloran. Additional community members will be invited to join until the total membership is 15.
- The board appointed Anna Prager to be chair, Susan Millis to be vice chair, and Carl Amaral to be chair of the financial committee.

Patrick Durney presented the results of his study on public school funding at a joint meeting of the North Kingstown Town Council and School committee earlier this month. He is completing his research and will soon be ready to report to the larger community. He will be invited to attend the February board meeting to present the study results.

The WCRPC will co-sponsor a presentation of the GIS program developed by the Economic Development Corporation that Jim Lucht previewed for the board earlier this year. The presentation is scheduled for January 12, 2006 at 10:00 a.m. at the Corliss Auditorium on the URI Bay Campus and is targeted to Washington County town officials, town council members and state elected officials.

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The Route One preservation project will begin with a broad overview of the entire Route 1 corridor. The study is meant to be the first in a series of studies to review the transportation corridors in Washington County with a goal of preserving the rural character of the secondary roads. Pending the approval of the board on this expanded project, a second tier study of local roads might include 1, 1a 2, 3, 102, 108, 110, 112, 95 and 138.

## **Town Updates**

**Narragansett:** G Tracy reported that Narragansett has installed a communication system between towns. It was suggested that Chief Smith be invited to a board meeting to explain the program.

**Richmond:** H Oppenheimer reported that the developers of the proposed Richmond Commons are working on an ISDS system that if approved will be the largest in the state. The proposed retail center will accommodate 3 large retail stores.

**Block Island:** B Sherman reported that the issues of low cost, affordable housing, ISDS systems and legal representation on Block Island are ongoing.

**South Kingstown:** J O'Neill reported that S. Kingstown is conducting a charter review. The town may be large enough to modify local government structure to include a mayor. The town is considering eliminating the annual town financial meeting. URI continues to grow but East Farm and Peckham Farm wish to remain undeveloped. The school budget continues to grow. The town is experiencing retail overload and calls for regional economic planning.

**Hopkinton:** B Kenny reported that a housing subsidy ordinance would come before the Hopkinton Town Council on January 3. Representatives from the Rhode Island Department of transportation have been invited to attend the town council to discuss excessive salt on town roads. The Chariho budget is an issue being discussed.

**Charlestown:** K Waterman reported that Charlestown is also conducting a charter review. A brief update on several NIT issues was presented.

**Westerly:** The Rhode Island Airport Corporation is running a campaign to improve airport safety. Design plans were presented at public meetings held by Senator Algier. The plan eliminated buffers of trees on airport property. In addition the state has taken down trees on private property around the airport. When the airport was built, restrictions were put in place to provide buffers and protect neighboring homeowners.

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn was made by H Oppenheimer, seconded by B Kenney, and approved unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 10:10 a.m.

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Katharine H. Waterman  
Board Secretary

December 21, 2005