

# 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 February 15, 2007

### Attendance

#### Board Members and Staff

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

#### Advisory Members and Public

Geoffrey Marchant, Community Development Consortium  
Lynne Donahue, Owner, Seaside Philanthropy

The regular monthly meeting of the Washington County Regional Planning Council (WCRPC), held on Thursday, February 15, 2007 at the Kettle Pond Visitor Center in Charlestown was called to order by President Chris Duhamel at 8:36 a.m.

#### Approval of Minutes

B Kenney made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 2007 meeting. K Waterman seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

#### Executive Director's Report

S Barker reported that the WCRPC Legislative Breakfast and GrowSmart workshop were well received. The bi-monthly Washington County Town Planners meeting was held on January 23. Troy West gave a presentation of his plans for the redesign for Dale Carlia Corner to the planners. The Smart Growth elements of the plan were discussed. The Brown Forum for Enterprise held an Energy Conference on February 8 at the RI Convention Center. The conference included presentations by companies developing a variety of energy resources such as biofuels; gasification of waste streams; wind, wave, solar, and tidal power.

**The Route 1 Corridor Study** is progressing on schedule. Meetings with town planners to review current and potential development along the corridor have been conducted. A public meeting in Westerly is scheduled for Tuesday, March 13 at 7:00 p.m. at the Westerly Library.

Proposals for federal funding through Senator Reed's office are due March 1. The WCRPC will submit a proposal focusing on business and economic development. S Barker and grant writer L Donahue met with Jeanne Cola from Citizens Bank to discuss possible ideas for projects and funding, also concentrating on economic development.

#### **Police Reserves:**

A meeting with representatives from concerned towns will be arranged to further discuss and plan legislation to enable and fund a training program for police reserves. The training academy will not agree to design a new program, but is willing to present their curriculum in segments to accommodate those with full time jobs.

The Westerly solicitor wrote legislation enabling police reserve training in 2006. The legislation, which did not include funding, was submitted by Senator Dennis Algieri at last year's session but was not acted on. That legislation may be resubmitted with a funding provision included.

#### **Future board meeting Presentations:**

**David Soule**, Associate Director of the Northeastern University Center for Urban and Regional Policy (CURP) will present the program at the board meeting in March. CURP works with communities and regions to compile basic databases containing decision-making information for companies wishing to locate in the area. Such data will include factors effecting business location.

**Ed Parker**, RIDOT Division of Transportation Development, Chief Engineer will attend the board meeting in May to discuss DOT's construction regulations along travel corridors and how we can work with the department to insure that roads are reasonably constructed.

#### WCCDC Update

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H Oppenheimer reported that the WCCDC has received official notification of 501-c-3 tax exempt status. Ads have been placed in local papers for a new executive director. The deadline for applications is March 2, 2007. The search committee plans to have a new director in place by April 1, 2007. The affordable housing development in Westerly is progressing on schedule. Several lots will be merged to enable construction of up to 12 units.

## **Town Updates**

**Narragansett** is looking for a new town manager and finance director.

The proposed polo field will come up for review in March. Flood Ford has submitted plans to extend their parking lot near Route 1. CVS is in negotiation to build a new facility on Post Road.

The town plans to hold a goals meeting to look at town planing and zoning reforms to retain the scenic town character.

**Charlestown** will be initiating talks with the state about selling the land adjacent to Worden's Pond owned by the Dept. of Mental Health and Rehabilitation. Congressman Patrick Kennedy is working to remove the Chafee amendment regulating Narragansett activities. The town is advertising for a permanent planner. K Waterman asked S Barker to write a description of the Route 1 corridor Study to clarify the roles of the various organizations involved in the study. C Duhamel and J O'Neill requested copies of the piece.

**Hopkinton** has completed the first draft of inclusionary zoning regulations for the town. They will revise zoning regulations to include mixed-use development next. Legislation to locate a Municipal Court in Hopkinton will be introduced to enable hearings for municipal infractions. Some local zoning decisions have been intended for long periods. A municipal court in Hopkinton will solve this problem.

**Richmond's** new town treasurer is doing well. The Richmond Commons development is moving along slowly. 800,000 square feet of retail space is planned. DOT's plans at Route 95, Exit 3, and Route 138 for ½ mile in either direction from the exit ramps are a design challenge. The Chariho budget is better than in previous years.

**South Kingstown** has developed amendments to RI General Laws to allow towns to be reimbursed for interest on school funding and to eliminate the provision for blended bonding with poor communities. All towns in Washington County have A, A+, or AA bond ratings. Blended ratings reduce the standing of the richer communities. J O'Neill distributed copies of the proposed amendment to board members and with a request to share the revisions with their legislators.

## **Guest Presentation:**

Lynne Donahue, Owner of Seaside Philanthropies, presented the WCRPC Strategic Plan for Development. The study conclusion is that the current funding structure is inadequate to sustain the organization. The report included a analysis of steps to increase WCRPC appeal to additional funding sources. A variety of funding possibilities was suggested.

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn was made by B Kenney, seconded by K Waterman, and approved unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 10:05 AM.

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Katharine H. Waterman, February 15, 2007  
Board Secretary