

# 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

June 21, 2006

Attendance:

#### **WCRPC 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  
Sue Barker, WCRPC Executive Director

#### **Advisory Members and Public**

Michael Rauh, The Washington Trust Company  
Patrick Durney, URI MBA Candidate

The regular monthly meeting of the Washington County Regional Planning Council (WCRPC) held on Wednesday, June 21, 2006, was called to order by President Chris Duhamel at 8:47 a.m.

#### **Approval of Minutes**

B Kenney made a motion to approve the minutes of the May 2006 meeting. H Oppenheimer seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

#### **Executive Director's Report**

The 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Congress of Councils will be held on June 28. The deadline for registrations is Friday, June 23. We received 40 responses as of June 21 and expect to have 70 attend. Board members were encouraged to remind their town council members and other invited town officials to attend.

The deadline for proposals to conduct the Route 1 Corridor Study is Thursday, June 22. The town planners from the five towns along Route 1 and URI Professor William Green will form the review committee. We hope to have a consultant in place by the end of July.

S Barker visited the RI State House on June 15 to call on the legislators and learn of the progress of the application for the WCRPC legislative grant recently submitted for \$39,000. Representatives Carter, Lally, and Shanley sponsored the application. Development of the WCRPC fund raising strategy is underway. Meetings with key individuals have been scheduled. S. Barker met with Anthony Miccolis yesterday to explore funding possibilities available through Senator Chafee's office.

The Transportation Advisory Council met at the Coastal Institute in May, hosted by the WCRPC. The Council will meet at the Bay Campus again in July.

The URI Coastal Institute has made an office available for the WCRPC beginning July 1.

#### **Town Updates**

**Richmond:** H Oppenheimer reported that the Town of Richmond will raise taxes by 8.5 % to fund the Chariho schools. The three town councils have been discussing ways to get school funding under control. Richmond Commons development is progressing. The development will increase their tax base. The affordable housing project in Shannock is going to SHAB for decision. The WCCDC met with RI Housing and received funds to rehabilitate one 6 unit building in Westerly. The WCCDC board is debating changing the by-laws to allow

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elected officials to be on the board. A motion to request that the WCCDC retain one WCRPC board member on the WCCDC board as a voting member was made by C Duhamel, seconded by K Waterman and passed unanimously. H Oppenheimer abstained from the vote.

H Oppenheimer will not be available on Wednesday mornings beginning in September. S Barker will send an email to board members to determine their availability on other weekday mornings.

**South Kingstown:** J O'Neill reported that the South Kingstown Town Council approved elimination of their town financial meeting and will adopt the North Kingstown model. Responses to a recent town survey indicated that town residents feel they do not have a voice in town government. They had a 10 to 1 approval for motions to go to referendum, requiring 200 signatures. Inclusionary zoning is being considered now and the discussions are ongoing.

**Westerly:** C Duhamel reported that the Westerly Police Department is gearing up the police reserve unit for summer. There have been some problems with qualifications for summer police including a part time training program.

**Hopkinton:** B Kenney reported that the Hopkinton Charter revisions are underway. The town will go to an all day referendum model on the ballot on November. The Exit 2 development has been approved. The use table is being revised. Hopkinton is revising the use tables to include uses in the appropriate areas of the town.

**Charlestown:** K Waterman reported that the financial town meeting referendum passed by one vote. No one came to the public forum on the budget. The CRMC workshop on the Ninigret Hamlet was held and included excellent and thoughtful testimony by all present. Only one member of the CRMC board attended to hear citizen responses. The town is conducting a long-range master plan study for Ninigret Park. The town has prepared Charter revisions for the referendum in the fall. The 130-hour Training program for reserve police officers in Charlestown has not been approved.

## **Guest Presentation:**

Patrick Durney, MBA student in the URI College of Business Administration presented his final study entitled: *Report on Public School funding: Factors in Washington County Rhode Island*. A discussion of the factors that influence school costs followed. P Durney suggested that there are several costs that can be consolidated to save money. He recommended that towns can share resources, such as special education teachers, bus services, and health plans to cut costs. Class size can also be increased until size begins to affect test scores negatively. The study provides a good start and points out the areas the WCRPC can tackle.

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 10:12 AM.

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Katharine H. Waterman      June 21, 2006  
Board Secretary