

WASHINGTON COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL

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

MONTHLY BOARD MEETING

MINUTES

May 17, 2006

Attendance:

WCRPC Board Members and Staff

Christopher 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
George Tracy, Narragansett Town Council
Sue Barker, WCRPC Executive Director

Advisory Members and Public

Michael Rauh, The Washington Trust Company
Anna Prager, Washington County CDC
Jean Barry, W.A.R.M.
Lou Raymond, South County Habitat for Humanity

The regular monthly meeting of the Washington County Regional Planning Council (WCRPC) held on Wednesday, May 17, 2006 at The Kettle Pond Visitor Center in Charlestown was called to order by President Chris Duhamel at 8:40 a.m.

Approval of Minutes

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

Executive Director's Report

Director's Report, May 2006

The Governor accepted our invitation to be the keynote speaker at the 4th Annual Congress of councils. Mark your calendars for June 28 at 5:30 p.m. at the University Club on the URI campus. Additional speakers will be Valeri Forti and Gary Sasse.

Plans are underway to launch the Route 1 Corridor Study. The Town of Charlestown approved the motion to enable the town to serve as the fiscal agenda. We have developed an RFP/RFQ which will be broadcast to recommended consultants, advertised in the Projo and included on our web site.

The Rhode Island Foundation approved our proposal for funds to support a mini-grant to develop a fundraising strategy. I have begun meeting with the consultant to develop that strategy.

18 people attended our workshop: "*Growing Together, Consensus Building, Smart Growth and Community Change*". The workshop was well received.

Our tax returns have been completed and submitted in time to meet the deadline of May 15. Now we will complete the 501-c-3 application to submit as soon as we can.

C Duhamel, M Rauh, H Oppenheimer, and S Barker met with State Representatives Kenneth Carter and Patrick Shanley of the Rhode Island Legislature South County Caucus to present the work of the WCRPC. The presentation was well received. A follow up letter was sent to provide Representative Carter with the information needed to propose funding for the WCRPC.

The bi-monthly planner's meeting will be held on Tuesday May 23 at The Washington Trust Company branch in Charlestown. We will use this meeting to continue planning for the Route 1 corridor grant.

The Targeted Assistance Grant workshops, co-sponsored by The Community Development Consortium, Grow Smart RI and RI Housing and the WCRPC were very well attended and very lively. The town planners and planning committee

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members who attended are well prepared to handle the necessary changes to town regulations to accommodate affording housing development in their communities.

The final presentation of the URI Landscape design class was held on May 5. It was an excellent presentation and contained thoughtful design proposals for the Route 1 corridor.

S Barker attended the Charlestown Town Council meeting on Monday at which the council voted to accept our request for their town to be the fiscal agenda for the Route 1 Corridor Grant.

Town Updates

South Kingstown: The Town has completed the budget process including a 9% increase to the public school budget. Inclusionary zoning is the pressing issue on the town agenda now.

Richmond: The Town and Richmond Commons have signed an MOU to install additional water tank that will enable increased development in the town. An 8.5% tax rate increase will be necessary to cover school costs. The town is looking at a 5.5% cap on the school budget.

Narragansett: Hearings between the Town and The Gilbane Company are ongoing. The Town is asking for 6 out of 16 units to be affordable. Gilbane is proposing 4 affordable units. The town meeting to review the budget will be held on the first Monday in June.

Hopkinton: The Town is considering rezoning the land around Route 95 exits 1 & 2 to encourage economic development, mixed use, and affordable housing development. The Town is working on the affordable housing component of their comprehensive plan. The town budget is increased by 5.4%.

Charlestown: The budget is ready to be presented to the voters. About 100 affordable housing units are currently in the pipeline or being contemplated. All but seven are age restricted.

Westerly: The budget passed with a 4.2% increase. The WCRPC is fully funded for next fiscal year. The town is looking to develop a municipal tax credit for affordable housing development.

The Town will receive CDBG funding to support construction of affordable housing at 71 Pierce St. The Washington County Community Development Corporation (WCCDC) will work to develop adjoining properties on Pierce St.

RIDOT cut down trees around the Westerly Airport that were not to be cut down and that were on private property.

Anna Prager, chair of the WCCDC reported that the organization has a full board of 15 members and an Executive Director in place. They are working with the Westerly Crime Watch and RI Housing to develop affordable units in the North End.

They plan to have 3 or 4 projects in the pipeline by the end of the year.

Guest Presentation:

Ari Matusiak, Acting Director of HousingWorks RI

Ari Matusiak introduced HousingWorks RI and gave an overview of their work to ensure quality affordable housing for all Rhode Islanders. HousingWorks RI now has over 100 member organizations (including WCRPC) from business, government, faith-based, philanthropic, and community organizations. HousingWorks RI developed a policy platform that has as its centerpiece a \$75 million bond issue to kick start the construction of affordable homes and to capitalize a Housing and Conservation Land Trust.

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 10:25 AM.

Katharine H. Waterman May 17, 2006
Board Secretary