

Minutes
Connecticut River Estuary Metropolitan Planning Organization

June 14, 2006

Attendance:

Chester:	Tom Marsh
Clinton:	
Deep River:	Dick Smith
Essex:	Phil Miller
Killingworth:	
Lyme:	Bill Koch
Old Lyme:	Tim Griswold
Old Saybrook:	Mike Pace
Westbrook:	
Estuary Transit District:	John Forbis
ConnDOT:	Kathryn Faraci
Guests:	ETD Director Jim Rode, ECS Director Mitzi Eilts, Betty Wagner, Representative Jamie Spallone
CRERPA Staff:	Linda Krause, Jean Davies, Wini Olson, Janice Ehle-Meyer

I. The meeting of the Connecticut River Estuary Metropolitan Planning Organization was called to order by Chairman Mike Pace at 8:35 AM in the conference space of the Connecticut River Estuary Regional Planning Agency at 455 Boston Post Road, Old Saybrook Ct 06475 at 8:40 A.M...

II. Public Comment

Chairman Pace called upon Rep. Jamie Spallone for comments.

Jamie noted that there are no plans for a Special Session although one has been mentioned for energy and conservation matters. The Speaker of the House has held two "Energy Summits". No special Session is anticipated for bonding. One round of bonding was held on June 9 for STEAP grants. Grants were received by Essex, Chester and Deep River.

Phil Miller asked what measures were passed that would help the business community. Rep. Spallone replied that the corporate surcharge has been eliminated, as has the tax on machinery has been eliminated. Measures regarding transportation and economic development will be beneficial. Scholarships have been established to educate potential workers.

Betty Wagner distributed a flyer explaining H.R. 4894 that allows school districts to do police checks on potential employees.

III. Minutes

Phil Miller moved that the minutes of the May 10 meeting be approved as circulated. The motion was seconded by Dick Smith and unanimously approved.

IV. Federal and State Programs

There were no Federal or State contractual agreements to be considered.

V. CREMPO Programs

A. Transportation Improvement Programs

Kathryn Faraci mentioned that she received a letter stating that bridges rated good or better would be inspected every five years. Bridges with less favorable ratings will inspected every two to four years. Chairman Pace favors two year inspections.

Jean explained that the lists that were distributed included proposed statewide projects extending to 2011. Some are applicable in this region. Henceforth, DOT will give the public the right to comment directly. TIP proposals will be advertised prior to CREMPO meetings.

B. Incident Management subcommittee

Chairman Pace noted that Willie Fritz agreed to chair the Incident Management Sub-committee that is concerned with how to handle traffic Diverted from I-95.

C. Agreements and Contracts

1. STIP Amendments

Two proposed STIP amendments concern CREMPO towns. A continuation of funding is requested for statewide recreational trails and for anticipated projects concerning the Killingworth traffic circle at the intersection of Routes 80 and 81.

Chairman Pace and several other members expressed concern about approving a Killingworth project with no input from Killingworth. DOT Representative Kasey Faraci noted that a project in Seymour is attached to the Killingworth proposal. Reluctance to approve the Killingworth project would adversely affect Seymour. Jean Davies suggested giving Killingworth another opportunity to comment. Phil Miller offered to call Selectman Martin Klein and proceeded to do so.

Dick Smith moved that action on STIP amendment 01240162, involving Killingworth and Seymour, be tabled and that STIP amendment 01770RT06 for continued funding of recreational trails be approved. The motion was seconded by Tim Griswold and unanimously approved.

Tim Griswold moved that another letter be sent to each Selectman of Killingworth and Westbrook explaining the importance of participating in the CREMPO and the need to appoint an active alternate if the First Selectman is unable or unwilling to attend. The motion was seconded by Dick Smith and unanimously approved.

Phil Miller returned to the table and reported on a conversation with Selectman Klein's Executive Secretary. She assured him that, as a citizen, she knows how important participation in the CREMPO is.

D. Emergency Meeting Policy

Jean Davies proposed that the by-laws of CREMPO be amended to provide for emergencies. She proposed that teleconferencing be provided for under specified circumstances. She also encouraged all members to appoint alternates. Mike Pace moved that the by-laws be amended to provide for teleconferencing under circumstances to be spelled out in the by-laws. The motion was seconded by Phil Miller and unanimously approved. Phil Miller reported that Selectman Martin Klein had returned his call and had promised to attend the July 12 meeting.

VI. Public Transit

A. Budget Requests

ETD Chairman John Forbis reinforced the ETD budget requests with news that ridership has increased from 30,000 to 43,000 rides per year. The District is projecting 60,000 rides for the next year. Riders from Old Lyme and Westbrook are beginning to use the service. The service relies on multiple funding services. The local contribution is essential. Workers are starting to use the service. Pre-driving teens are being encouraged to use the bus.

B. Added Services

Director Jim Rode reported that two new busses will be arriving today. There is a verbal agreement to provide service from Saybrook Point to Chester, Monday through Saturday with dispatchers available. New brochures are nearly ready in both English and Spanish. Bus Stop signs will be installed.

Chairman Pace asked if the anticipated new signs can be placed on existing poles and preferably replace the current "Trolley Stops Here" signs. That will be done wherever possible.

Director Rode noted that even the \$1.25 fare can become burdensome to residents of the group homes. He is working on providing a reduced rate for those customers.

Director Rode mentioned that he will be parking busses in various towns during the weekend. He suggested that their very presence can serve as an advertisement.

John Forbis is eager to have busses appear at festivals throughout the region and asked Selectmen to supply dates of anticipated events.

Director Rode reported that Lisa Rivers at DOT has reviewed the municipal grant applications and has found no issues.

C. Survey

Mitzi Eilts reported that the ECS will do a survey of satisfaction with transit services this fall.

VII. Other Business

A. Jean Davies encouraged members to submit project requests. Currently only Old Saybrook and Chester have projects pending. The Region is under- programmed. Projects can be submitted for local roads that serve as collector streets. Tim Griswold asked about sidewalks. When Old Lyme used this funding to improve Lyme Street, sidewalks were not eligible for funding. Sidewalk projects are now eligible. Tom Marsh asked about curb cuts for bus stops. Jean mentioned that the 80-10-10 funding is still being negotiated.

B. Agendas

Jean asked if the Selectmen are willing to receive the agenda via Email. It was agreed by consensus that all are willing. Many prefer it.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:19 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Timothy C. Griswold, Secretary