

Rhode Island Statewide Planning Program
STATE PLANNING COUNCIL
MINUTES

Thursday, September 16th, 2004
William E. Powers Building
One Capitol Hill, Providence, Rhode Island

Members Present

Dr. Robert Griffith, Chair	Representing Beverly Najarian, Director RI Department of Administration
Mr. John O'Brien, Secretary	Statewide Planning
Ms. Susan Baxter	RI Housing Resources Commission
Ms. Jeanne Boyle	Representing Mr. William J. Fuzzily City of East Providence
Mr. Kevin Flynn	Representing Mayor Stephen Laffey, City of Cranston
Mr. Ralph Rizzo	Representing Ms. Lucy Garliauskas (Advisory Member) Federal Highway Administration
Mr. Peder Schaefer	Representing Ms Rosemary Booth Gallogly Budget Office
Mr. Robert Shawver	Representing Mr. James Capaldi, RI Department of Transportation
Mr. Henry Sherlock	Representing Mr. Steven Cardi Public Member
Mr. David Tremblay	Representing Jeffrey Grybowski, Vice Chair Governor's Policy Office
Ms. Janet White Raymond	Public Member

Members Absent

Mr. Daniel Beardsley	RI League of Cities and Towns
Mr. Thomas Deller	Department of Planning & Development City of Providence
Mr. Joseph Newsome	South Providence Development Corporation
Mr. William Sequino	Public member

Guests

Ms. Harriet Holbrook	Rhode Island Public Transit Authority
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Mr. Ralph Rizzo

Federal Highway Administration

Staff--Statewide Planning Program

Mr. George Johnson

Assistant. Chief

Ms. Katherine Trapani

Supervising Planner, Transportation

Mr. Bruce Vild

Supervising Planner, Economic Development

Ms. Patricia Greene

Customer Service Specialist I

AGENDA ITEMS

1. Call to Order

Dr. Griffith called the meeting to order at 9:09 a.m.

2. Approval of August 12th minutes

Ms. Baxter moved that:

THE MINUTES BE APPROVED.

The motion was seconded by Ms. Boyle and carried unanimously.

3. Chief's Progress Report

Mr. O'Brien referred to the publications that were distributed. They included the publication Ocean State Outdoors: State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan as well as the semi-annual update to the State Guide Plan Overview that includes the amendments made to the Rivers Policy and Plan.

Mr. O'Brien reported that the approved Ground Transportation Plan has been posted on the website pending federal approval and final formatting and printing. The plan has been submitted to FHWA and FTA.

Regarding the TIP schedule, Mr. O'Brien reported that staff is working with DOT to schedule joint workshops for both the TIP and the enhancements program. The workshops will be set for late November to early December with the intent to give applicants more time to prepare submissions. Mr. O'Brien reported that there was still no news on reauthorization.

In the area of local comprehensive plans, State approval was granted for the Five-Year Update to the Comprehensive Plan for the City of Newport and the Affordable Housing Plan for the Town of Burrillville. Staff continues to work on a number of five-year updates as well as two affordable housing plans.

Sponsored by The Rhode Island Foundation and United Way of Rhode Island, the Statewide Planning Program was one of ten cooperating agencies and organizations involved in the preparation and presentation of the workshop "What Municipalities Need to Know about the 2004 RI Housing Act and Affordable Housing Plans". Offered at three locations around the State, the workshop was designed to 1) help communities immediately affected by the 2004 Housing Act understand the impacts of the new

legislation; 2) offer local officials, staff, and their consultants the information and guidance they need to develop concise, defensible, and pro-active affordable housing plans; and 3) provide resources to help officials inform their communities and respond to citizen questions about the legislation and the required affordable housing plans. The presentation included the release of a model affordable housing plan developed by RI Housing and Statewide Planning. Attendance at the three workshops exceeded 275.

Mr. O'Brien reported that he had met with staff of the Housing Resources Commission to discuss roles in developing the State Strategic Housing Production Plan. A tentative schedule has been developed and staff will be drafting a cooperative agreement to formalize responsibilities. The staff will likely be recommending that the Housing Resources Commission be designated as the advisory committee for this new Guide Plan element.

Mr. O'Brien reported that September 3rd marked the last day of work for Mr. Alfred Freeman, Senior Draftsman. Mr. Freeman has retired after almost 34 years of state service. Mr. O'Brien noted that the agency would not be replacing the recently vacated drafting positions and posted openings for two senior planners.

Discussion:

Mr. Tremblay inquired as to the status of filing the senior planner positions. Mr. O'Brien responded that it will probably take at least a month to go through the required posting periods and get to the point of conducting interviews.

Ms. Baxter noted that the RI Foundation and United Way were impressed with the affordable housing workshops and are looking to sponsor additional training sessions. Mr. O'Brien noted that staff was working with RI Housing on a handbook for inclusionary zoning.

4. Transportation Improvement Program

Ms. Trapani noted that Amendment #10, pertaining to the Freight Rail and Commuter Rail projects (as described in the attachments), was requested by RIDOT and affects the Administrative, Bridge, Major Projects, and Transit Programs of the TIP.

The Transportation Advisory Committee considered this amendment at their August 26, 2004 meeting following a public hearing and recommends that the Council adopt the amendment. A public hearing report was provided to the Council.

Discussion:

Dr. Griffith asked if the service would have an impact on the Amtrack schedule? Mr. Shawver responded that it would not.

Ms. Raymond inquired as to the impact of these changes on the bridge program? Mr. Shawver noted that much of the work was actually bridge work and the GARVEE funds covers the remainder of the scheduled bridge work.

Ms. Boyle requested clarification as to why there was so much unallocated money? Mr. Shawver replied that it was due to the GARVEE issuance.

Action:

Ms. Baxter moved to:

ADOPT AMENDMENT #10 TO THE FY 2003-2005 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

The motion was seconded by Ms. Raymond and carried unanimously.

5. FY 2006-2007 Transportation Improvement Program – Proposal Evaluation Criteria

Mr. O'Brien noted that pursuant to State Planning Council Rule IX (Section 5.01.05), the Council shall adopt overall criteria for the ranking of projects. Ms. Trapani reviewed the proposed revisions and noted that they include a new section containing items on safety, security, and technology, as recommended by Transportation 2025. The scoring would also allow for negative points (rather than "0") for items in which a negative impact is expected to result.

The TAC considered the criteria at their August 26, 2004 meeting and recommends that the Council adopt the criteria. Staff made other minor revisions to maintain consistency in language with the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy.

Discussion:

Mr. Shawver requested that the proposed deletion of "enhanced safety" in criterion 6.a. be struck and that the original language be retained.

Mr. O'Brien recommended that the new language suggested for criterion 3.a. that would reward locally designated economic development districts not be approved. He stated that this would violate the intent of the state's enterprise zone legislation and would further delute the impact of that program. Mr. Tremblay asked if the law required that priority in state programs be given to enterprise zones? Mr. O'Brien responded that the law does require such priority. Mr. Flynn noted that the criterion was only worth five points and a good project would make that up in other categories. Mr. Sherlock suggested deleting the added language and allowing the TAC to revisit this at a future date.

Action:

Ms. Boyle moved to:

APPROVE THE TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM PROJECT PROPOSAL EVALUATION CRITERIA WITH THE CHANGES NOTED IN THE COUNCIL'S DISCUSSION.

The motion was seconded by Mr. Sherlock and carried unanimously.

6. Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy: Annual Report

Mr. Vild noted that the CEDS Annual Report examines an area's economic development needs, problems, and resources; evaluates progress toward attaining goals and objectives; and provides a yearly update on economic development activities, highlighting the CEDS Priority Project List. The Annual Report is submitted to the Economic Development Administration (EDA) every year. Every fifth year, a more extensive Update to the CEDS is submitted in place of the Annual Report.

Mr. Vild stated that the Annual Report for 2004 is being submitted for the Council's approval as part of the EDA's requirements for the Rhode Island Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy. The Priority Project List contained within the report was approved at meetings of the Technical Committee and the State Planning Council in June.

Discussion:

Ms. Boyle inquired as to the status of the priority projects. Mr. Vild reviewed some of the recent EDA awards.

Action:

Ms. Raymond moved to:

ACCEPT THE 2004 CEDS ANNUAL REPORT

The motion was seconded by Ms. Boyle and carried unanimously.

7. Appointment of Nominating Committee

Mr. O'Brien noted that The Nominating Committee recommends nominees for the Council's various standing committees including:

- Technical Committee,
- Transportation Advisory Committee,
- Recreation Resources Review Committee; and
- RIGIS Executive Committee

Mr. O'Brien stated that the only terms expiring this year were for Technical Committee members. He noted that the Technical Committee was designated by the Council as its advisory committee for the update of the state land use plan and that the Committee was in the midst of that task which is expected to carry over into next year. He suggested retaining the current membership if the members whose terms were due to expire at the end of this year agreed to extend for an additional year.

Mr. Sherlock responded that he concurred with Mr. O'Brien's suggestion. Mr. O'Brien stated that he would discuss this with the impacted members and report back to the Council at a future meeting.

8. Other Business

There was no other business at this meeting.

9. Adjourn.

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 9:55 a.m.

Respectively Submitted,

John P. O'Brien, Secretary

JPO'B:pag

