

Rhode Island Statewide Planning Program
STATE PLANNING COUNCIL
MINUTES

Thursday, April 14th, 2005
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
Mr. Kevin Flynn	Representing Mayor Stephen Laffey, City of Cranston
Ms. Lucy Garliauskas (Advisory Member)	Federal Highway Administration
Mr. Joseph Newsome	South Providence Development Corporation
Ms. Anna Prager	Public Member
Mr. William Sequino	Public Member
Mr. Robert Shawver	Representing Mr. James Capaldi, RI Department of Transportation
Mr. Henry Sherlock	Representing Mr. Steven Cardi, Public Member
Ms. Janet White Raymond	Public Member

Members Absent

Mr. Timothy M. Costa, Vice Chair	Governor's Policy Office
Mr. Daniel Beardsley	RI League of Cities and Towns
Ms. Jeanne Boyle	Representing Mr. William J. Fuzzily, City of East Providence
Mr. Thomas Deller	Department of Planning & Development City of Providence
Ms. Rosemary Booth Gallogly	Budget Office

Guests

Mr. Ralph Rizzo	Federal Highway Administration
Ms. Harriet Holbrook	R.I. Public Transit Authority

Staff--Statewide Planning Program

Mr. George Johnson	Assistant Chief, Statewide Planning
Ms. Blanche Higgins	Supervising Planner, Land Use
Ms. Katherine Trapani	Supervising Planner, Transportation
Mr. Benny Bergantino	Senior Planner, Land Use
Mr. Paul Gonsalves	Senior Planner, Comprehensive Plans
Ms. Patricia Greene	Customer Service Specialist I

AGENDA ITEMS

1. Call to Order

Dr. Griffith called the meeting to order at 9:06 a.m.

2. Approval of March 10th minutes

Mr. Newsome moved that:

THE MINUTES BE APPROVED AS SUBMITTED.

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

3. Chief's Progress Report

Mr. O'Brien reported that at the March meeting the State Planning Council approved amendments to the CEDS scoring criteria. The Economic Development Section sent a request for interest in the 2005 CEDS project solicitation to approximately 100 contacts in municipal governments, public agencies, academic institutions, and private non-profits. Mr. O'Brien stated that the parties responding in the affirmative to the request will be sent an application package. An applicants' workshop, with representation for the US EDA, was held on Wednesday, April 13th.

Mr. O'Brien noted that on Wednesday, April 13th an all-day session with federal officials to review and discuss specific requirements of the transportation planning process was held. This was the third step in the process of the triennial recertification of the MPO. The first step was a document audit by the federal agencies. In March, staff responded to the request for documents as well as specific questions concerning the transportation planning process. The second step was a public hearing conducted by the TAC at their March meeting, with federal officials in attendance, to receive input from the public as to the openness of the planning process. The federal agencies should be releasing their report on this process sometime this summer.

Mr. O'Brien stated that the update of the TIP is proceeding with subcommittees of the TAC meeting to review the 132 applications. This is in addition to over 100 proposals received by the Transportation Enhancements Committee. The TAC will be prioritizing these projects over the next two months with the

intention of bringing a draft TIP to the Technical Committee and the State Planning Council in June with a public hearing scheduled for late June. Adoption of the new TIP is scheduled for August.

Staff is participating in the review of the EIS for the proposed runway extension at TF Green. Staff has also received a near final copy (500 pages) of the Airport System Plan from RIAC, which has pulled TF Green into the plan a lot better than the previous iteration, but it still needs to be strengthened. Staff is asking them to wait for the Purpose and Need section of the EIS as well as some preliminary work on the New England Aviation System to pull into the system plan. By doing so, it will make it a better plan, and also because the staff, the State Planning Council and Technical Committee are going to be very busy with other things in the next few months.

Mr. O'Brien reported that staff is working with an advisory committee on the update of the Solid Waste Management Plan. He noted that there have been proposals to put into place financial penalties for communities that do not set recycling goals. This is causing a lot of discussion both in the General Assembly and with the advisory committee. Staff continues to be optimistic that the draft plan will be ready for the Technical Committee's review by early summer.

Staff has concluded the first round of meetings with local communities on their affordable housing plans and is beginning to review revisions to the initial drafts as they are submitted. RI Housing and Statewide Planning have approved the first two plans of this batch. Staff anticipates that additional approvals will be made shortly. Earlier this month staff met with the consultants who have been selected by the Housing Resources Commission to assist in developing the State Housing Strategy. Staff also helped organize an all-day workshop on inclusionary zoning for municipal planners and their legal staff that was held last week.

The Director recently approved the Town of Burrillville's five-year update. Staff just received the final revisions to the East Greenwich five-year update and anticipates that it will be recommend for approval shortly.

4. Amendment: Transportation Improvement Program FY 2003-2005

Mr. O'Brien provided the Council with some background on the TIP amendment process and then introduced Mr. Shawver from RIDOT who described the amendments as set forth in the agenda supplement. The amendments addressed both project schedule changes as well as project cost increases. The amendments as proposed maintain the financial constraint of the TIP.

The Chair noted that the public hearing was conducted at the March TAC meeting and the TAC has recommended approval of this amendment.

ACTION:

Mr. Sequino moved to:

AMEND THE FFY 2003-2005 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM AS PROPOSED

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

5. Work Program

Mr. O'Brien reviewed the schedule for the preparation and review of the work program that also acts as the unified work program for transportation planning. Mr. O'Brien reviewed Parts 2 and 3 of the draft

work program. Part 2 of the program discusses performance measures for the current year and the upcoming year. Mr. O'Brien reviewed the results for the current year with particular attention to progress on State Guide Plan elements and approvals of local comprehensive plans. He noted that the percent of completed and pending complete tasks were the lowest this year than any year since staff began tracking performance. He explained that the substantial increase in comprehensive plan amendments due to the local affordable housing plan requirement accounts for much of this change.

Mr. O'Brien noted that he expected next year would be busy as staff continues to address affordable housing through the development of a state housing strategy. The foundation for that strategy will be the land use analysis that staff is doing as part of the land use plan update. In addition, he noted that other major tasks included update of some potentially controversial guide plans, completion of the TIP update and badly needed updates to some of Statewide Planning Program's basic handbooks on the comprehensive plan.

Discussion:

Ms. Garliauskas inquired as to how often the staff monitored the performance measures. Mr. O'Brien responded that they were used more as an internal tool by management to assess progress and determine if work priorities needed to be realigned. He stated that longer-term performance measures are adopted as part of State Guide Plan elements.

6. Other Business

Ms. Garliauskas reported that the triennial certification review provided the Washington Office of FHWA with some unique examples of how Rhode Island conducted the MPO transportation planning process and she hoped they would be used as examples elsewhere.

8. Adjourn

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 9:48 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

John P. O'Brien, Secretary