

Rhode Island State Planning Council
Approved Minutes of Thursday, October 8, 2015 Meeting
 William E. Powers Building
 Conference Room A
 One Capitol Hill, Providence, RI

I. ATTENDANCE

1. Members Present

Mr. Kevin Gallagher, Vice Chair	Governor's Office
Mr. Kevin Flynn, Secretary	Associate Director, Division of Planning
Mr. Peter Alviti	Director, RI Department of Transportation
Mr. Jim Boyd	Representing Grover Fugate, Executive Director, RI Coastal Resources Management Council
Ms. Jeanne Boyle	President's Designee, RI League of Cities and Towns
Ms. Janet Coit	Director, RI Department of Environmental Management
Ms. Jeanne Cola	Non Profit Community Development Representative
Ms. Marion Gold	Commissioner, RI Office of Energy Resources
Mr. Marcus Mitchell	Small Business Representative
Mr. Thomas Mullaney	RI Department of Administration, Budget Office
Mr. L. Vincent Murray	Rhode Island League of Cities & Towns, Government Official Representative
Ms. Bonnie Nickerson	Director, Providence Department of Planning and Development
Ms. Ana Novais	Representing Nicole Alexander-Scott, Director RI Department of Health
Ms. Sandy O'Connor	Governor's Designee
Ms. Amy Pettine	Representing Mr. Raymond Studley, RIPTA
Ms. Amy Rainone	Representing Ms. Barbara Fields, Executive Director, Rhode Island Housing
Ms. Janet Raymond	Public Member
Mr. M. James Riordan	Public Member
Mr. Mathies Santos	Chair, Rhode Island Housing Resource Commission
Mr. Peder Schaefer	Representing Daniel Beardsley, RI League of Cities and Towns
Mr. Robert Shawver	Representing Peter Alviti Director, RI Department of Transportation
Mr. John Trevor	Environmental Advocate
Mr. Scott Wolf	Environmental Advocate

2. Members Absent

Mr. Michael DiBiase, Chair	Director, Rhode Island Department of Administration
Ms. Ana Cano-Morales	Public Member
Mr. Roy Coulombe	Public Member
Mr. Stafan Pryor	Secretary of Commerce
Mr. Girard Visconti, Esq.	Employer with more than 50 Employees

3. Staff – Division of Planning

Ms. Kirsten Bryan	Principal Planner, Statewide Planning Program
Ms. Linsey Callaghan	Supervising Planner, Statewide Planning Program
Ms. Kimberly Crabill	Executive Assistant, Statewide Planning Program
Ms. Caitlyn Greeley	Principal Planner, Statewide Planning Program
Ms. Nancy Hess	Supervising Planner, Statewide Planning Program
Mr. Kevin Nelson	Supervising Planner, Statewide Planning Program
Mr. Jared Rhodes	Chief, Statewide Planning Program
Ms. Karen Scott	Assistant Chief, Statewide Planning Program
Ms. Chelsea Siefert	Principal Planner, Statewide Planning Program

4. Guests

Ms. Barbara Breslin	Federal Highway Administration
Mr. Peter Garino	RI Department of Transportation
Mr. Nicolas Garcia	Federal Transit Authority
Mr. Ryan Gardiner	Budget Office
Ms. June House	Office of Housing & Community Development
Ms. Sarah Ingle	RI Public Transit Authority
Ms. Karen Lowe	Senate Policy Office
Mr. Danny Musher	RI Office of Energy Resources

II. **AGENDA ITEMS**

1. Call to Order

Vice-Chairman Gallagher called the meeting to order on October 8, 2015 at 9:05 a.m.

2. Approval of the June 11, 2015 Meeting Minutes – *for action*

Vice-Chairman Gallagher asked for a motion to approve the minutes of June 11, 2015. Ms. Raymond moved to approve the minutes of June 11, 2015 as submitted. The motion was seconded Mr. Murray. There being no discussion, the following members voted aye: Boyd, Boyle, Coit, Cola, Flynn, Gold, Mitchell, Mullaney, Murray, Nickerson, Novais, O’Connor, Pettine, Rainone, Raymond, Riordan, Santos, Shawver, Trevor, and Wolf. Vice-Chairman Gallagher abstained. Not voting - Mr. Peder Schaefer. There were no nay votes.

3. Public Comment on Agenda Items – *for informational purposes*

There were none.

4. FY 17-26 Transportation Improvement Program - *for discussion*

Vice-Chairman Gallagher introduced Director Peter Alviti and Deputy Director Peter Garino of the Department of Transportation who presented the attached power point presentation on RI DOT’s ten year plan. Instances where members of the Council engaged in discussion were as follows:

Ms. Raymond asked how Rhode Work's proposed tolls compare to that of Massachusetts and Connecticut and what the status of the Governor's economic impact study was. Mr. Garino responded that Connecticut does not have tolls and that DOT could provide the Massachusetts figures. Vice-Chair Gallagher responded that the Governor's study would be released October 8th at noon.

Ms. Cola questioned what opportunities for public input would be utilized in designing the Route 6/Route 10 Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Project. Mr. Alviti and Mr. Garino responded by noting that RIDOT has met with the Mayor of Providence, has been in discussions with RIPTA, and is committed to reaching out to the public through the Federally required scoping process.

Mr. Murray asked if use of the term "damage" within the presentation was related to the normal wear and tear produced by heavy trucks. Mr. Alviti responded that it was.

Mr. Wolf noted that GrowSmart RI supports the proposal but raised two questions; 1) What is DOT's response to the sentiment that the toll would eventually apply to all drivers not just tractor trailers and 2) What is DOT's response to concerns that drivers would choose to divert around tolls. Mr. Alviti responded that DOT was not looking for tolling to fund the entire program. Rhode Works is to supplement the bridge efforts by about 10 percent, so that is why only tractor/trailers are the focus of paying tolls. As far as diversion, all of the analysis from the traffic consultants and research that has been conducted indicates that this is not a large concern.

Mr. Riordan asked, why not charge more for tolls to be more in line with others states. Also, DOT employment dropped in maintenance in recent years so what is the intended maintenance staff increase and what would the time frame be. Mr. Garino responded that DOT has 40 new maintenance staff and would like to increase that by another 80. Mr. Alviti added that with current technology we don't need the same numbers of staff as in years past.

Ms. Rainone departed 9:44 am

Vice-Chairman Gallagher asked Ms. Scott to present the timeline of the FY 17-26 TIP as distributed and attached to these minutes. Instances where members of the Council engaged in further discussion were as follows:

Mr. Schaefer asked if the existing four year TIP schedule is a statutory requirement. Ms. Scott responded that it was.

Mr. Riordan asked, since we are adding this extra increment of time to the TIP, can we use this in some way to leverage additional funds. Ms. Scott responded that it was a possibility, anything that shows that we are proactive in our transportation planning can only be a benefit to Rhode Island.

5. Draft Rhode Island State Energy Plan (request to recommend approval) – for action

Ms. Nancy Hess, Supervising Land Use Planner, provided a brief explanation of the public hearing report as distributed and asked for a motion for the plan to be approved and adopted. Instances where members of the Council engaged in discussion were as follows:

Mr. Schaefer asked if there was anything in the plan that would prevent the proposed Burrillville project from moving forward. Ms. Gold responded that there was not because the plan is a high level vision-setting document overall.

Vice-Chairman Gallagher asked for a motion to approve the RI State Energy Plan. Mr. Trevor made a motion to adopt the draft plan. Council member Coit seconded the motion. There being no further discussion, the following members voted aye: Boyd, Boyle, Coit, Cola, Flynn, Gold, Mitchell, Mullaney, Murray, Nickerson, Novais, O'Connor, Pettine, Raymond, Riordan, Santos, Shawver, Trevor, and Wolf. Vice-Chairman Gallagher abstained. Not voting - Mr. Peder Schaefer. Ms. Rainone was not present at this time. There were no nay votes.

Mr. Mullaney departed 10:15 am

6. **Comprehensive Planning Standards (request to recommend public hearing) - for action**

Vice-Chairman Gallagher introduced Ms. Siefert who presented the attached power point to the Council. Instances where members of the Council engaged in discussion were as follows:

Mr. Santos departed 10:21 am

Ms. Coit commented that the presentation is high quality and commend Ms. Siefert on her skill in creating it. Ms. Coit further recommended that every city and town view the video because it is so customer service friendly.

Mr. Murray questioned whether the communities will be able to meet the deadline. Ms. Siefert responded that to her knowledge 6 already had and that there are at least another ten currently working toward it.

Mr. Riordan requested that Ms. Siefert remind the Council of the consequences of not having state approval. Mr. Rhodes explained that essentially the consequence of not having state approval is that a municipality loses the ability to bind the actions of the state, relative to the content of their comprehensive plan.

Mr. Wolf asked if a town misses the deadline, would Planning still review it once it is submitted. Ms. Siefert responded that Planning would.

Ms. Coit asked if the state's review includes every element of the guide plan. Mr. Rhodes confirmed that it does.

Ms. Nickerson departed 10:34 am

Mr. Schafer asked how the Office of Planning would handle a municipality that is unwilling to comply with the housing standards. Ms. Siefert stated that Planning is not empowered to enforce and municipalities have the ability to proceed as they wish. Mr. Flynn added that municipalities do however take risks in making such decisions.

Ms. Cola commented that Housing Works just released a new report that shows that individuals earning 30 percent or less of Area Medium Income (AMI) cannot afford to rent a two-bedroom apartment anywhere in the

State of RI. So while municipalities do struggle with the 10 percent requirement on developing affordable housing, we have to really appreciate that there is a true need out there.

Mr. Murray pointed out that this issue is not just a municipal issue to solve. Local governments do not swing hammers and build the houses, if there are not proper resources on the federal and state level, and political will, then it will be impossible to get to the ten percent.

Vice-Chairman Gallagher asked for a motion to approve a public hearing for the Comprehensive Planning Standards. Council member Coit made the first motion and Council member Novais seconded the motion. There being no further discussion, the following members voted aye: Boyd, Boyle, Coit, Cola, Flynn, Gold, Mitchell, Murray, Novais, O'Connor, Pettine, Raymond, Riordan, Shawver, Trevor, and Wolf. Vice-Chairman Gallagher abstained. Not voting - Mr. Peder Schaefer. Ms. Rainone, Ms. Nickerson, Mr. Mullaney and Mr. Santos were not present at this time. There were no nay votes.

7. **2016 Meeting Schedule** – *for discussion*

Ms. Novais departs 10:48 am

Mr. Rhodes provided a copy of the proposed meeting schedule for 2016 and noted that it will be placed on the Council's next agenda for action.

8. **Associate Director's Report** – *for discussion*

Mr. Flynn addressed the following items under the Associate Director's report:

- Jeanne Cola's – new affiliation as a council member
- Wetlands rules and regulations
- FY 2017 Budget
- ISO Visit with Janet Coit

9. **Announcements**– *for discussion*

Mr. Scott Wolf announced that GrowSmart is planning a forum on December 1st entitled Future of Transit in RI and that there will be a Land Use Training Collaborative session for planning board chairs on November 30th.

Mr. Riordan announced that Rhode Island Chapter of the American Planning Association has been going through a "Strategic Planning Process"; and that the draft product will soon be released for public review and comment.

10. **Adjourn**

Vice-Chairman Gallagher asked for a motion to adjourn. Council member Coit motioned to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Council member Gold. There being no further discussion, the following members voted aye: Boyd, Boyle, Coit, Cola, Flynn, Gold, Mitchell, Murray, O'Connor, Pettine, Raymond, Riordan, Shawver, Trevor, and Wolf. Vice-Chairman Gallagher abstained. Not voting - Mr. Peder Schaefer. Ms. Rainone,

Ms. Novais, Mr. Mullaney, Mr. Santos, and Ms. Nickerson were not present at this time. There were no nay votes. The meeting adjourned at 10:45 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kevin Flynn". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "K" and a long, sweeping underline.

Kevin Flynn
Secretary