

**RHODE ISLAND STATEWIDE PLANNING PROGRAM
TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEETING**

Friday, October 7, 2016
RIDOA, Conference Room A
One Capitol Hill, Providence, RI

DRAFT MINUTES

I. Attendance

1. Members Present

Mr. Robert Azar, Chair	City of Providence
Mr. Michael DeLuca, Vice Chair	Town of Narragansett
Mr. John Chambers	Fuss & O'Neill, Incorporated
Mr. Steve Devine	RI Department of Transportation
Mr. Nate Kelly	American Planning Association, RI Chapter
Mr. Thomas Kogut	RI Public Utilities Commission
Ms. Lisa Primiano	RI Department of Environmental Management
Mr. Jared Rhodes, Secretary	RI Statewide Planning Program
Mr. Ronald Wolanski	Town of Middletown

2. Members Absent

Ms. Barbara Breslin	Federal Highway Administration
Ms. Nicole LaFontaine	Town of North Kingstown
Ms. Eliza Lawson	RI Department of Health
Mr. Arnold Robinson	Roger Williams University
Ms. Jennifer Siciliano	Public Member
Ms. Ashley Sweet	Town of Exeter
Mr. Michael Walker	RI Commerce Corporation
Mr. Jeffrey Willis	RI Coastal Resources Management Council

3. Staff Present

Ms. Nancy Hess	RI Statewide Planning Program
Ms. Catherine Pitassi	RI Division of Planning
Mr. Paul Gonsalves	RI Statewide Planning Program

4. Guests Present

Sue Kiernan	RI Dept. of Environmental Management
Ernie Panciera	RI Dept. of Environmental Management

II. Agenda Items

1. Call to Order

Chairman Azar called the meeting to order at 9:09 a.m.

2. Approval of June 3, 2016 and September 2, 2016 Meeting Minutes – for action

Chairman Azar asked for a motion to approve the meeting minutes of June 3, 2016 and September 2, 2016 meetings. Mr. DeLuca motioned to approve the minutes of the two meetings with discussion concerning the September 2, 2016 minutes. The motion was seconded by Mr. Wolanski.

Discussion was as follows:

Mr. DeLuca proposed amendments to the September 2, 2016 minutes to numbers 4 and 5 for clarification purposes. He noted that the word “recession” should be corrected to “rescission” on the second paragraph under number 4, and that the word “imports” should be corrected to “imparts” on item three under number 5. There being no further discussion, all were in favor of approving the minutes of June 3, 2016 as submitted, and approving the minutes of the September 2, 2016 as amended by Mr. DeLuca. The following members voted aye: Azar, Chambers, DeLuca, Devine, Kelly, Kogut, Primiano, and Wolanski. Mr. Rhodes abstained. There were no nay votes.

3. Public Comment on Agenda Items – for discussion

There was none.

4. State Guide Plan Update: Water Quality 2035 – for action

Chairman Azar introduced Nancy Hess who summarized the purpose and goals of Water Quality 2035. She reported there were two public hearings held in July on the preliminary draft. She also indicated that all comments were unanimous in support for the adoption of the plan. Ms. Hess gave an overview of the comments and minor suggestions that were received during the hearings, and on the revisions that were made to the plan as a result of the public comments and hearing process.

Next, Ms. Kiernan of the Department of Environmental Management, emphasized the need for additional capacity at both the state and local levels, and also advised that DEM will be bringing on a new employee with a background on environmental matters, to assist.

Chairman Azar next asked for a motion to recommend that the State Planning Council adopt the final draft *Water Quality 2035* dated September 2016, as an element of the State Guide Plan rescinding existing elements: 162 – Rivers Policy and Classification

Plan (2004); 711 – Blackstone Region Water Resources Management Plan (1981); 715 – Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan for Narragansett Bay (1992); and 731 – Nonpoint Source Management Plan (1995). Mr. DeLuca made the first motion to approve the plan. Mr. Wolanski seconded the motion.

Under discussion, Mr. DeLuca wanted to express great appreciation for the iterative process that the development of the plan underwent. He also wished to congratulate Statewide Planning and DEM for their hard work. Mr. Rhodes took the opportunity to thank Mr. DeLuca for his comments.

There being no further discussion, the following members voted aye: Azar, Chambers, DeLuca, Devine, Kelly, Kogut, Primiano, and Wolanski. Mr. Rhodes abstained. There were no nay votes.

5. Announcements – *for discussion*

Mr. Rhodes apologized for bringing the committee together for such a short agenda and thanked everyone for their time. He expressed the importance of keeping this project moving forward and bringing it to a close.

6. Adjourn

Chairman Azar called for a motion to adjourn. Committee member Primiano made the first motion. The motion was seconded by Committee member Chambers. There was no discussion. The following members voted aye: Azar, Chambers, DeLuca, Devine, Kelly, Kogut, Primiano, and Wolanski. Mr. Rhodes abstained. There were no nay votes.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jared L. Rhodes, II
Secretary

**RHODE ISLAND STATEWIDE PLANNING PROGRAM
TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEETING**

Friday, September 2, 2016
RIDOA, Conference Room A
One Capitol Hill, Providence, RI

Approved **MINUTES**

I. Attendance

1. Members Present

Mr. Robert Azar, Chair	City of Providence
Mr. Michael DeLuca, Vice Chair	Town of Narragansett
Mr. John Chambers	Fuss & O'Neill, Incorporated
Mr. Steve Devine	RI Department of Transportation
Mr. Nate Kelly	American Planning Association, RI Chapter
Mr. Thomas Kogut	RI Public Utilities Commission
Ms. Nicole LaFontaine	Town of North Kingstown
Mr. Arnold Robinson	Roger Williams University
Ms. Jennifer Siciliano	Public Member
Ms. Ashley Sweet	Town of Exeter
Mr. Michael Walker	RI Commerce Corporation
Mr. Jeffrey Willis	RI Coastal Resources Management Council
Mr. Ronald Wolanski	Town of Middletown

2. Members Absent

Ms. Eliza Lawson	RI Department of Health
Ms. Lisa Primiano	RI Department of Environmental Management
Mr. Jared Rhodes, Secretary	RI Statewide Planning Program

3. Staff Present

Mr. Parag Agrawal	RI Division of Planning
Ms. Nancy Hess	RI Statewide Planning Program
Ms. Catherine Pitassi	RI Statewide Planning Program
Mr. Paul Gonsalves	RI Statewide Planning Program
Mr. Kevin Nelson	RI Statewide Planning Program

4. Guests Present

Cyrus Madden	Student Intern, DOP
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II. Agenda Items

1. Call to Order

Chairman Azar called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m.

2. Approval of May 6, 2016 Meeting Minutes – for action

Chairman Azar asked for a motion to approve the meeting minutes of June 3, 2016. Mr. Willis moved to approve and the motion was seconded by Mr. DeLuca. There was no discussion. The following members voted aye: Azar, Chambers, DeLuca, Devine, Kelly, Kogut, LaFontaine, Robinson, Siciliano, Sweet, Walker, Willis, and Wolanski. There were no nay votes.

3. Public Comment on Agenda Items – for discussion

There was none.

4. State Guide Plan Modernization Project – for action

Chairman Azar introduced Nancy Hess who gave an overview of the purpose of the State Guide Plan (SGP) and goals. She explained that during her research she found that out of the SGP's twenty-five individual elements there are currently five that are extremely outdated and obsolete, they are: Goals and Policies Nov. '74; Resources Management in the Reuse of Surplus Navy Land '79; Transit Facilities or Service '87; Cultural Heritage & Land Management Plan for the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor '90 and Howard Center Master Plan, Phase 1 '94. Ms. Hess advised that the DOP contacted known stakeholders, as well as ran an article in our E-News, to find out if anyone was concerned by the proposed rescission. She reported that none were received.

Under discussion, Mr. DeLuca asked if DOT and RIPTA were informed about the proposed rescission of the Transit element in particular. Ms. Hess responded that they were and that they did not have any concerns.

Chairman Azar asked for a motion to recommend that the State Planning Council authorize a formal public hearing on the repeal of these five outdated elements. Mr. Walker made the first motion to approve which was seconded by Mr. Robinson. There was no further discussion. The following members voted aye: Azar, Chambers, DeLuca, Devine, Kelly, Kogut, LaFontaine, Robinson, Siciliano, Sweet, Walker, Willis, and Wolanski. There were no nay votes.

5. 1988 – 2011 Land Use/Land Cover Analysis - informational presentation

Chairman Azar asked Ms. Hess to begin with the presentation of the 1988 – 2011 Land Use/Land Cover Analysis. In response, Ms. Hess gave an overview of the purpose, objectives, and findings of the project. She explained that its intent is to develop background land use information for the long range planning projects that are to be conducted by the Division of Planning. It examines the existing historical land use/land cover data from the Rhode Island Geographical Information System and creates a time series analysis of shifts in land use and development trends. While conducting the analysis a focus was to find where changes in development occurred, what types of development occurred, and how much development took place.

Ms. Hess concluded her comments by introducing Cyrus Madden, a student intern from the Earth Science Center of Brown University, who then delivered the attached presentation.

After the presentation, committee members asked the following questions and/or gave comments:

Mr. Walker expressed the following:

- 1.) Concern as to whether the work would be perceived as a deterrent to other development taking place. From an economic point of view, he also had concern that some cities and towns may not be supportive of it due to the loss of previous industrial space to housing conversion in urban areas; and
- 2.) He asked if the development trends along the State's borders had also been looked at; and
- 3.) He suggested that the team be careful using the word "sprawling" as it imparts a negative connotation.

Chairman Azar suggested being clear about what is meant when using the word "development" as the presentation inaccurately shows, in his opinion, Metro Providence as a cold spot. Ms. Hess acknowledged the concern and responded by noting that this is one of the drawbacks of analyzing land cover from the air as it does not capture redevelopment initiatives well in particular. Ms. Hess reported there are other methods that the team could and would explore in continuing to make improvements moving forward.

Mr. Kelly raised the possibility of potentially addressing this concern by analyzing local building permit data.

Mr. Robinson pointed out that language is critical. He suggested switching the title to something that is more suited to the study, and commented that a better definition of "hot spot" was needed.

Mr. DeLuca expressed the following:

- 1.) He noted that the presentation didn't address growth centers, and that those areas should be highlighted and or appropriately accounted for within the work;
- 2.) He suggested looking at the real estate sales to get a better picture of the development activity inside and outside the urban services boundary, and noted that there is value in trying to fine tune the analysis according to identify post 2006 trends; and
- 3.) He stated that he disagrees with Mr. Walker's comments on the issue of using the word "sprawl," and explained that building on new virgin land in communities outside of the urban core is sprawl.

Ms. Sweet stated that there is a need for a better understanding of "land use" and "land cover."

In concluding, Chairman Azar stated that this was good subject matter for discussion, and thanked Ms. Hess and Mr. Madden for bringing this presentation to them.

6. Announcements – *for discussion*

There were none.

7. Adjourn

Chairman Azar called for a motion to adjourn. Committee member LaFontaine made the first motion. The motion was seconded by Committee member DeLuca. There was no discussion. The following members voted aye: Azar, Chambers, DeLuca, Devine, Kelly, Kogut, LaFontaine, Robinson, Siciliano, Sweet, Walker, Willis, and Wolanski. There were no nay votes.

Respectfully Submitted,

/s/Catherine Pitassi

Catherine Pitassi

For Jared L. Rhodes, II, Secretary