

**NOTES FROM THE APRIL 24, 2017 MEETING
OF THE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION**

Members Present: Pritchard (Town of Groton); Cherry (Ledyard); Giroux (Lisbon); Malozzi (Lebanon); **SCCOG Staff:** Butler, Guggenheim, Molden

1. Call to Order: The Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.
2. Roll Call: A quorum was not present. Members introduced themselves.
3. Review of Meeting Notes of February 27th: No quorum was present for this meeting, and so the notes of the February meeting could not be approved.
4. 2017 Regional Plan of Conservation & Development.
 - a. Discussion of Housing Strategies Implementation and Next Steps: The Commission discussed the adoption of zoning regulations and state law that impact the building of accessory apartments. Adopting regulations to allow accessory apartments in single family homes is a recommendation of the 2017 Regional POCD. The pending state law, [Proposed S.B. No. 457](#), would “*permit municipalities to facilitate and provide incentives for the construction of in-law apartments and other structural modifications to residential dwellings that allow individuals to care for senior citizen family members at home.*” This proposed bill was discussed in terms of how it would be interpreted at the local level-particularly in terms of tie in to water and sewer service- and how it could be reconciled with the growth of Airbnb rental services.

The Commission then addressed another housing strategy from the POCD, that of adopting regulations to allow by-right development of multifamily and infill housing. Mr. Pritchard mentioned that Groton has looked for ways to attract mixed used development, with retail on the first floor and apartments above, and Mr. Cherry mentioned that developments with more than 32 housing units on a septic system run into regulatory issues with the Dept. of Energy & Environmental Protection (DEEP). Mr. Cherry also noted that multifamily and infill housing are not always well received by a community, especially if residents are concerned about an increase in school aged children. The Commission discussed that some of these worries come from a lack of information on the demographics of the region. Mr. Butler suggested that the Southeastern CT Housing Alliance (SECHA) is preparing a report on housing in the region, and could work with the RPC on bringing information the region’s P&Z boards. The Commission agreed that this would be a good idea and a way to advance the goals of the POCD. SCCOG and

SECHA will continue to develop this task and present an update at the July RPC meeting.

5. Other Matters

a. Recap of 2017 Land Use Law Seminar.

Mr. Cherry shared his experience at this years' Land Use Seminar, held at Wesleyan University in Middletown on March 25th, and urged the Commission and other members of town boards and Commissions to attend the next seminar, to be held in two years.

b. Update on *Mobilitie* and telecom tower siting.

Mobilitie is California private utility company, which has approached towns in Connecticut and in the SCCOG region with a proposal to build cell towers to expand service on the Sprint network. While *Mobilitie's* cell tower initiative is nationwide, Connecticut's laws regarding tower infrastructure are somewhat vague when it comes to siting towers in the public right of way, an issue which the legislature is currently addressing with [S.B. No. 536](#), "*An Act Concerning Establishing a Statewide Plan and Process for Siting Small Cell Antenna And Distributed Antenna Systems.*" In addition, *Mobilitie* has a [pending petition](#) with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) for "Declaratory Ruling and Possible Ways to Streamline Deployment of Small Cell Infrastructure." CT's Public Utility Regulatory Authority (PURA) is examining this issue as well, and has opened up a docket to explore the small cell siting process and *Mobilitie's* request to build in the public right of way.

If towns receives correspondence from *Mobilitie*, they are encouraged to contact the CT Siting Council to ensure that *Mobilitie* follows the proper procedures. *Mobilitie* has been erroneously publishing public meeting notices in local newspapers, and this has caused confusion as to the proper notification process between towns and *Mobilitie*. CT Siting Council contact info is: siting.council@ct.gov or 860-827-2935.

6. Set Date for Next Meeting: July 24, 2017.

7. Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 9:10 p.m.