



Office of the **TOWN MANAGER**

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MEMORANDUM

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TO: Kevin Kuhr, Chairman
Planning and Zoning Commission

FROM: David E. Cox, Town Manager

DATE: April 27, 2023

SUBJECT: Regional Planning Commission

At its meeting on Tuesday, April 25, the Town Council concurred with the recommendation of the Planning and Zoning Commission and approved the Town's participation in the Lower Connecticut River Valley Council of Governments (RiverCOG) Regional Housing Committee. Thank you for the Commission's input.

Pursuant to the decision of the Council, the Planning and Zoning Commission has been assigned the responsibility of making an appropriate appointment to the Regional Planning Commission as the Town's representative. Pursuant to the attached bylaws of RiverCOG, the term will be for up to three years based on the method used by the Committee to stagger the terms of members. Further, if the Planning and Zoning Commission desires, it could appoint an alternate member to the Regional Housing Committee. The bylaws indicate that a member should "have sufficient familiarity with the municipality's housing issues and priorities and be able to communicate those issues and priorities to the Committee."

Again, thank you for the Commission's input and action on this matter. Please reach out to Jeremy DeCarli or me if you need additional information or other assistance.

DC

cc: Jeremy DeCarli, Planning and Zoning Official
Kelly Bilodeau, Town Clerk

ARTICLE XI: REGIONAL HOUSING COMMITTEE

Section A: Purpose and Intent - It is the purpose of this section to create a Regional Housing Committee as a step toward implementing the recommendations of the Regional Housing Plan, adopted on July 27, 2022. The Regional Housing Committee is intended to provide a forum for ongoing coordination and collaboration on housing issues between member municipalities with the goal of improving housing diversity and opportunity in the region. Key functions of the Committee will include the provision of resources and education materials for existing and potential residents, commissioners, developers, and landlords; partnership and engagement efforts with non-profits, private sector developers, and federal, state, and local officials; ongoing analysis of housing needs and recommendations to address those needs; and continued monitoring of progress and support of efforts toward the implementation of housing related goals and objectives in member municipalities.

Section B: Regional Housing Committee Established - There is hereby established a Regional Housing Committee which shall serve as an advisory body to the Board, as well as a housing information and education resource for the Lower Connecticut River Valley Region as set forth herein.

Section C: Appointments and Membership –

- (a) The Regional Housing Committee is a voluntary association of member municipalities. Member municipalities that choose to participate in the Committee shall be represented as follows:
- 1) Each member municipality shall be entitled to one representative to the Committee;
 - 2) Representatives shall be appointed by the member municipality;
 - 3) Representatives shall have sufficient familiarity with the municipality's housing issues and priorities and be able to communicate those issues and priorities to the Committee;
 - 4) Where the member municipality has a local housing commission or committee, the representative should be chosen from that group;
 - 5) Each member municipality may also appoint an alternate representative under the same conditions stated above. Such alternate representative shall, when the representative is absent, have all the powers and duties of such representative;
 - 6) Representatives and alternates shall be eligible to serve three-year terms. Appointment of Representatives shall be staggered in such a manner that the terms of not more than half of the representatives expire in any year. Staggering of terms shall be randomized and determined based on the number of participating municipalities.
- (b) Officers of the Committee shall be duly elected by a simple majority of representatives present at a regular meeting. Officers shall include a Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary. With approval of the Board, additional offices may be

created to facilitate the business of the Committee. Officers are eligible to serve one-year terms and no representative shall serve more than six consecutive terms.

- (c) The Board may, by majority vote, invite up to six additional non-voting members to serve on the Committee. These members shall represent a diversity of housing industry interests, including non-profit organizations, advocates, and developers specializing in affordable housing. Not more than two representatives from any interest category may serve.
- (d) Any representative may submit written resignation to the Committee within thirty days of the effective date of resignation. It is the responsibility of the Committee to notify the member municipality, with copy to the Board, of any such resignation so that a replacement may be appointed. Replacements shall be eligible to serve the remainder of the vacated term.
- (e) The Committee may recommend to the Board, by written statement, that an individual representative be removed. The written statement must demonstrate sufficient cause for removal. The representative shall have the opportunity to come before the Board and demonstrate why they should not be removed. Removal shall be at the discretion of the Board.

Section D: Duties and Functions

- a) The Regional Housing Committee shall:
 - 1) Serve as an information resource on housing and community development for member municipalities, developers, non-profit organizations, and current and potential residents.
 - i. Prepare and disseminate educational information and materials related to housing issues, resources, and opportunities in the region.
 - ii. Prepare, encourage, and coordinate programs and activities to promote knowledge and understanding of housing issues, resources, and opportunities in the region.
 - iii. Provide information, guidance, and technical assistance to member municipalities, private persons, organizations, or industries looking to create or obtain housing in the region.
 - iv. Maintain records and serve as the source of accurate and reliable data on practices, activities, and issues which are the subject of the Committee.
 - 2) Facilitate outreach efforts and build partnership opportunities between non-profit organizations, private developers, and member municipalities to encourage the strategic and sustainable creation of additional housing options in the region.

- i. Create, support, and participate in activities which bring together various factions and viewpoints on housing issues in a way that will help the region move toward addressing housing needs.
 - ii. Consult and maintain contact with public agencies, non-profit organizations, developers, professional associations, and other such entities that might partner with the region in creating housing opportunity.
 - iii. Engage with member municipalities to understand housing priorities and opportunities in the region and maintain a catalogue of such information to facilitate future partnerships.
 - iv. Develop an outreach plan to assist member municipalities in forming partnerships that will result in the creation of additional housing consistent with the municipality's priorities and regional housing goals.
- 3) Collect, analyze, and monitor data related to housing needs in the region and assess progress toward addressing housing needs.
 - i. Develop a methodology for assessing housing needs in the region in coordination with the 5-year updates to the municipal 8-30j plans. The methodology shall be approved by the Board and shall consider, but need not be limited to, the following factors:
 - projected population growth
 - job markets
 - access to transportation
 - access to infrastructure
 - environmental assets
 - environmental constraints
 - ii. Using the housing needs assessment, draft a Regional Housing Plan that provides a framework for municipalities to address housing needs in a coordinated and sustainable way. The Regional Housing Plan shall be adopted by the Board and may serve as a guide for member municipalities as they update their 8-30j plans.
 - iii. Monitor progress on goals and objectives stated in the Regional Housing Plan and municipal 8-30j plans and assist member municipalities in revising strategies as necessary to facilitate progress.
- 4) Explore opportunities for expansion of operations.
 - i. The Committee shall not seek to expand its operations until it has been in existence for at least one year.
 - ii. Areas of potential expansion may include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - Partner with or act as a regional land bank
 - Create or partner with a housing trust fund

- Cooperate with a regional housing land trust
 - Act as or partner with local, municipal, or regional housing authorities
- ii. Prior to expanding operations, the Committee shall draft and submit to the Board a formal request for expansion. The request shall include a report detailing the extent of the expanded operations as well as the feasibility and suitability of the expansion.
 - iii. The Committee shall not expand its operations until the Board has approved such expansion.

Section E: Meetings

a) Regular Meetings

- 1) Meetings of the Committee shall be held on a monthly basis at a time and place to be determined by the Committee.
- 2) Meetings may be conducted virtually or in person. A hybrid option may also be provided.
- 3) A simple majority of voting representatives, or their designated alternates, shall constitute a quorum.

b) Quarterly Meetings

- 1) A meeting of the Committee may be called on a quarterly basis for the purpose of hosting a round table discussion with non-profit organizations, developers, and other entities engaged in housing related business in the region.
- 2) The purpose of the quarterly meeting is to share opportunities, form partnerships, and provide updates on progress, issues, and concerns related to housing in the region with a broad base of stakeholders and industry professionals.

c) Meeting Requirements

- 1) The schedule of regular meetings, including quarterly meetings, for the ensuing year shall be filed with the Clerk of each member municipality not later than December 31, of each year. Each representative and alternate shall be emailed or mailed a notice and agenda of each meeting post-marked at least five days in advance of the meeting date.
- 2) All regularly scheduled meetings shall be advertised and made accessible to the general public and persons with disabilities.
- 3) Minutes of all meetings shall be recorded, filed in the LCRVCOG offices, and distributed as required by law.
- 4) The conduct of the Committee's meetings shall be by Robert's Rules of Order.

Section F: Actions

- a) Action of the Committee shall be by majority vote of those representatives or their designated alternates constituting the quorum.
- b) Where Board approval is required, the Committee shall submit its recommendation or request to the Board, which may approve, reject, amend, or return the request to the Committee for further action.

END EXCERPT

ARTICLE XII: METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

The Council shall serve as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the region, which is made up of the member municipalities and other stakeholders as required pursuant to federal regulations.

Section A: Purpose - LCRVCOG-MPO is the policy board established under the requirements of the 23 CFR 450C, as required in urbanized areas with populations over 50,000, and as designated by local officials within the Lower Connecticut River Valley Council of Governments and by the Governor of the State of Connecticut. LCRVCOG-MPO is responsible, in cooperation with regional, state and other transportation providers, for carrying out the metropolitan transportation planning requirements of federal highway and transit legislation. The policy board aspires to achieve consensus on transportation planning decisions and commits to a transparent process in conducting its work. The policy board shall consider and act upon transportation matters presented to it by the federal, state, regional, tribal, local, public, private and other agencies.

Section B: Membership - MPO membership shall be comprised of the Chief Elected or Executive Officials of each of the member towns in the Lower Connecticut River Valley Council of Governments. In addition, one (1) appointed member of the Middlesex County Chamber of Commerce and one (1) appointed member of the Estuary Transit District shall be members of the MPO with full voting privileges. One (1) representative of the Connecticut Department of Transportation from the Council of Governments Coordination Unit shall be a non-voting member of the MPO.

Section C: Officers - The COG officers as designated in Article VI of these bylaws also serve as the MPO officers.

Section D: Alternates - The Chief Elected Official of a member municipality may appoint an alternate as outlined in Connecticut statutes and Article IV, Section C of these bylaws, who shall, in the absence of the regular member, serve on the MPO and have the same rights and privileges as the Representative. Other members of the MPO may appoint in writing an alternate who is a member of the organization who shall, in the absence of the regular member, serve on the MPO and have the same rights and privileges as the Representative.