

**Connecticut River Estuary Regional Planning Agency
March 6, 2006**

Attendance:

Chester: Steve Williams
Clinton:
Deep River:
Essex:
Killingworth: Pat Smulders
Lyme: Frank Skwarek, Ning Rich
Old Lyme: Jane Marsh
Old Saybrook: Dick Tietjen
Westbrook: Doris Sanstrom
Staff: Linda Krause, J. H. Torrance Downes, Jean Davies, Wini Olson

I. Chairman pro-tem Ning Rich called the meeting to order at 7:37 PM in the CRERPA Conference Space at 455 Boston Post Road, Old Saybrook, CT. 06475.

II. **Natural Hazard Mitigation Public Informational Meeting**

Director Linda Krause greeted guests and introduced Jean Davies who is responsible for the research and the compilation of the plans. Jean encouraged the audience to ask questions as she gave a power point presentation explaining the natural hazards that CRERPA towns are subject to and illustrating the power of natural disasters with historic photos of previous storms. Jean will post the presentation on the CRERPA web site at crerpa.org. Jean explained the history of CRERPA involvement in Natural Hazard Mitigation planning. The next step will be for each municipality to adopt their plan. When a town formally adopts its Natural Hazard Mitigation plan, it becomes eligible to compete for funding of pre-disaster mitigation projects. Without a plan in place, a town is not eligible for any potential funding for mitigation or for repairs and/or replacement of facilities after a disaster. Jean displayed maps of each town and explained the particular concerns that have been identified.

The meeting was well attended with representatives from the Old Lyme beach communities, Old Saybrook and Westbrook. The information was well received. Some frustration was voiced at the lack of immediate funding to mitigate problems. An audience member suggested that actions such as complying with the updated building code or reviewing insurance policies can improve the situation without public investment.

Chairman pro-tem Rich declared a brief coffee break as visitors chatted and departed. The meeting was resumed at 8:55 PM.

III. Minutes

Jane Marsh moved that the minutes of the February 6, 2006 meeting be approved as circulated. The motion was seconded by Frank Skwarek and unanimously approved.

IV. Correspondence

Director Linda Krause introduced Dick Tietjen as the newly appointed representative of the Old Saybrook Planning Commission.

Linda announced that Alan Bayreuther is recuperating from skin grafts on his legs.

Chairman Bruce Edgerton is in Florida.

V. Reports

A. Treasurer

There was no written report. Finance Director Dorothy Papp had been ill and was unable to prepare an up-to-date financial summary. Linda reported that she had talked to her and the Agency has no current financial problems to report.

B. Transportation

Since Jean was busy conferring with the departing guests, "Transportation" was deferred until later in the meeting.

C. Staff

There was no additional Staff Report.

D. Referrals

J. H. Torrance Downes reported on four referrals.

1. Old Saybrook: College Point LLC requests that flood zones not be considered an encumbrance when calculating the "MABL" Minimum Area of Buildable Land. The Old Saybrook Planning Commission has recommended against the change. It was agreed that CRERPA should also recommend that the standard not be amended.

2. Old Saybrook: A recent change in the statutes places Automotive Use under the authority of the Zoning Commission instead of the ZBA. Old Saybrook is updating its regulations to bring them into compliance with the current statutes. At the same time Old Saybrook is changing the local practice of referring two family conversions to the ZBA. Henceforth, the responsibility will rest with the Zoning Commission. The RPA concurred with both changes and found no inter-municipal concern.

3. Old Lyme: In a referral very similar to the one heard in February, Michael Cohen and Steven Wallet are requesting that non-residential buildings be allowed to be converted into multi-family residential uses in the R-10 zone. The previous request was for R-10 and R-15. Since the portion of R-10 in the Rogers Lake area could affect Lyme, a referral is still necessary. Agency concerns remain the same. Jane Marsh absented herself from consideration of the issue.

4. Madison: The Madison Planning and Zoning Commission is considering adopting a Floating Design District that would allow any use anywhere on a case by case basis. Extensive specifications for submissions and consideration of compatibility with the neighborhood are part of the proposed zone change.

Concern was expressed that the proposal could basically erase zoning. Adjacent owners would have to be constantly vigilant and might find it financially difficult to defend themselves. Jane Marsh made reference to “The Road to Serfdom” by Hajek. Dick Tietjen asked if the proposal is consistent with Madison Plan of Conservation and Development. Steve Williams asked what comments have been received from Durham, Guilford and the planning arm of the South Central COG. Although the proposal mentions that the adjacent RPA should be notified, questions were raised about the rights of owners whose land is within 500 feet of a proposed project but in an adjacent community. It is not clear that they would be notified or what standing they would have in a hearing held before a Madison commission. The very unpredictable nature of the proposal itself was declared an inter-municipal conflict.

Steve Williams moved that the Agency reaffirm its previous opinion of the Old Lyme proposal. Removing the R-15 zone does not alleviate the concerns. The motion was seconded by Pat Smulders and approved. Jane Marsh abstained from voting.

Jane Marsh moved that in reference to the other three referrals, the sense of the meeting be conveyed to both Old Saybrook and Madison. The motion was seconded by Pat Smulders and unanimously approved.

B. Transportation revisited

Jean Davies presented information concerning Municipal Grant Applications for a Dial-a-Ride Program for seniors and persons with disabilities. Dial-a-Ride services can be funded by the state when provided by a municipality, a Transit District or “other entity”. Extra points are awarded for coordinating programs.

The transit subcommittee of CREMPO met and decided to coordinate the programs within the region. Jean took the application to DOT and was instructed to bring it back to the RPA for approval and endorsement. The ETD had made out the application. The proposal will not require additional equipment. It will expand the hours of service for dial-a-ride and serve more people.

Doris Sanstrom moved that the RPA support the coordination of services and agree that the application appears to be in order. The motion was seconded by Steve Williams and unanimously approved.

D. Liaison

1. Gateway

Linda reported that Gateway has appealed a variance granted in Chester involving setbacks from the Connecticut River. She has received several positive and encouraging phone calls from residents of other towns. She also received a phone call from Dick Van Ausdall of OPM asking who Sam Chorches is and why he is so interested in how CRERPA is funded. Jean reported that Tom Marsh asked her the same question. Linda stressed that Gateway is a separate organization from CRERPA. Gateway receives no

funding from either the state or the towns. It is funded by the interest from the \$1,000,000 settlement of a previous lawsuit brought by a private party on behalf of the river. Gateway has been joined in the present suit by the DEP and by Attorney General Blumenthal.

Linda mentioned that the Chester Planning and Zoning Commission is about to update their Municipal Plan of Conservation and Development. She will visit the commission on the evening of March 16. She will be accompanied by Torrance, Jean and Margot Burns. They will discuss various alternative approaches to preparing a municipal plan.

VI. Old Business

- A. Linda reported that the review and revisions of the Lyme Subdivision Regulations are nearly complete. The committee wants to revise the town's road standards, which will also entail revising the town road ordinance..

VII. New Business

There was no new business to be considered.

Pat Smulders moved that the meeting be adjourned. The motion was seconded by Frank Skwarek

The meeting was adjourned at 10:05 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Winifred T. Olson, Clerk