

Commission on Connecticut's Development and Future

Regular Commission Meeting

Monday, February 7, 2022

3:00 PM – 3:45 PM

Virtual Meeting Via Zoom

In attendance: Anika Singh Lemar, Rep Jason Rojas, Donna Hamzy, Lamond Daniels, Kiley Gosselin, Benjamin Wenograd, Gregory Ugalde, Francis Pickering, Elizabeth Gara, Rep Cristin McCarthy Vahey, Sen Tony Hwang, Rep Joe Zullo, Sen Christine Cohen, Sen Rick Lopes, Rep Quentin Williams, Sen Paul Cicarella, Rep Roland Lemar, Timothy Hollister, Erin Kemple, David Barkin, Alexandra Baum, Jennifer Perry, Randi Pincus, David Elder, Martin Heft

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order Representative Rojas at 3:01pm. Representative Rojas noted that Co-Chair, Secretary McCaw, was unable to be present today, but Martin Heft would be serving in her place.

II. Attendance

Attendance recorded by Erica Byrne.

III. Approval of December 7, 2021 Minutes

Motion to approve unamended by Erin Kemple, seconded Donna Hamzy. Approved by unanimous voice vote.

IV. Working Group Appointments

Representative Rojas thanked the individuals who agreed to serve as Working Group Co-Chairs. Working Group membership lists, as determined by the Commission Co-Chairs, were distributed with the meeting materials. Rep. Rojas noted that if additional working groups are needed at a later date, we can add them. Rep. Rojas also noted that each Working Group has a Co-Chair that is a legislator.

Tim Hollister, Co-Chair of the Municipal Affordable Housing Plans Working Group, noted that the Group has an interesting challenge with respect to providing guidance for towns that are crafting their plans currently. Mr. Hollister noted that the group's goal is to help towns develop realistic plans that could be used to develop housing.

Senator Hwang asked about adding a working group on TOD design and an evaluation of 8-30g, if possible, under the statute. Rep. Rojas suggested that might be an item that could be included under the Municipal Affordable Housing Plans Working Group. Mr. Heft suggested that 8-30g would fit under the Municipal Affordable Housing Plans Working Group, and that TOD could fit under the Model Code Development Working Group. He also suggested that legislation may be needed to expand the work of the Commission to add working groups. Sen. Hwang agreed that these items could come under those working groups.

Ms. Singh Lemar noted that it is important to put discussions around 8-30g into larger context discussions regarding building housing. She also noted that the Municipal Affordable Housing Plans Working Group should be charged with providing guidance to the state regarding the review of plans, in addition to providing guidance to towns. Representative Zullo said he appreciated the Commission encouraging his working group to add TOD to their focus, and agreed with Ms. Singh Lemar about the need to have a broader focus and thanked Sen. Hwang for bring these issues up.

V. Working Group Reports

Mr. Heft recommended presentation ideas for each working group:

State and Municipal Reporting – OPM Overview of POCD Process

Model Code – Town of Canton and City of Hartford

Consolidated Housing Plan – Department of Housing

Municipal Affordable Housing Plans – Department of Housing

Sewerage – Department of Public Health and Department of Energy and Environmental Protection

Ms. Kemple said that she hopes the State and Municipal Plans group will look at the responsibilities of state and local government with regard to affordable housing, and how that can be used to undo some of the segregation patterns in Connecticut. Representative McCarthy Vahey expressed her hope that the legislature will be able to pass the Plan of Conservation and Development this year and noted that the group will work closely with the Office of Planning and Development.

Representative Lemar noted that the Municipal Affordable Housing Plans Working Group has an opportunity to help the towns working on their affordable housing plans to make sure they have the resources they need in crafting their plans. Mr. Hollister said that a starting place for the Working Group will be the plans that have been filed already.

Ms. Hamzy noted that sewerage systems have been expressed as a roadblock to the developing housing, and is excited about the opportunity to work through these issues. Senator Cohen said she looks forward to examining the intersection between environment and housing.

Ms. Gosselin said that the State Consolidated Housing Plan Working Group will work closely with the Department of Housing. Representative Williams noted that he looks forward to working with everyone on these issues.

Representative Zullo noted the importance of Model Codes to empower municipalities by being permissive and showing towns what can be best policy. Mr. Barkin said that its important that we get this right in order to develop codes that will apply to many different municipalities and geographies.

VI. Business

Representative Rojas noted that included in the meeting materials was a copy of the correspondence that Secretary McCaw and himself sent to Senator Looney and Speaker Ritter requesting an extension of time for submitting an interim report.

The next Commission Meeting is scheduled for April 4. Rep. Rojas noted that it's the hope of the Co-Chairs that the Working Groups will meet in the meantime. Mr. Heft noted that in April there will be an opportunity for reports by the Working Group Co-Chairs.

VII. Public Comment

No one signed up for public comment.

VIII. Adjournment

Rep. Lemar moves for adjournment, seconded by Kiley Gosselin.

Materials:

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Working Group listing

Extension of Interim Report Letter