

Commission on Connecticut's Development and Future

Regular Commission Meeting

Monday, December 5, 2022

3:00 PM – 4:30 PM

Room 1E of the Legislative Office Building or Virtual Via Zoom

In attendance: Rep. Jason Rojas (Chair), Martin Heft (Chair), Anika Lemar, Steven Kleppin, Lamond Daniels, Kiley Gosselin, Benjamin Wenograd, Gregory Ugalde, Francis Pickering, Elizabeth Gara, Rep. Cristin McCarthy Vahey, Rep. Quentin Williams, Paul Cicarella, Rep. Roland Lemar, Timothy Hollister, David Barkin, Alexandra Daum, Randi Pincus, David Elder

I. Call to Order

At 3:04pm Martin Heft called the meeting to order.

II. Attendance

Quorum met.

III. Approval of October 3, 2022, minutes

Motion to approve minutes by Sen. Cohen. Second by David Barkin. Voice vote. Kiley Gosselin and Betsy Gara abstained. Minutes approved.

IV. Working Group Recommendations

a. **State Consolidated Housing Plan**

i. Kiley Gosselin reported the recommendations as follows:

1. Would be a benefit if the state were to produce a broader, long range housing planning document every 5 years
2. Within this housing planning document, recommendations that should be included:
 - a. Additional staffing at state level to carry out these recommendations
3. Requiring regular state housing needs assessments every 5 years- look at segregation and consider homeowner vs. rental data, etc.
4. Expand evaluation of prior performance and align it
5. Tailor plans to communities; look at racial and economic segregation
6. Identify opportunities and incentives for rehabilitation and preservation
7. Addressing housing quality and healthy homes
8. Identifying strategies that might be non-funding related
9. Incorporating people with lived expertise

b. **Sewerage**

i. Sen. Cohen reports on top line recommendations:

1. Establish a regulatory framework for other non-conventional treatment systems, including alternative treatment systems
 - a. Would need to: Conduct a data-driven study of other state and county sewage programs. Explore within the study where

alternatives may be better suited. Identification of oversight. Examination of sewer capital reserve requirements.

2. The development of municipal plans with infrastructure intersection
3. Better coordination between DEEP and DPH
4. Better coordination between municipal state government and COGs
5. Education program for other treatments be explored, and/or testing and study similar to Massachusetts and Rhode Island

c. State and Municipal Statutory Plan Process

- i. Rep. McCarthy Vahey reports that the goal is for this to be a shared, strong vision for the future of our state. Recommendations include strengthening Executive Branch ownership with more specific goals and flexibility with changing conditions. Long-term, 10–20-year horizon. Using data to analyze existing conditions. Direct state spending to support the objectives, connecting this to COGs. Maintaining this as an executive branch plan that OPM plans and is voted on by the legislature, but with deemed approval if not acted upon. Plan would guide the COGs as well. Assure that there's a creation of reasonable targets and objectives with early engagement and buy-in. Personal and directed outreach to stakeholders. Ensuring implementation of the plan. Better feedback loop. Take a stronger lead in driving regional and local planning. Further changes may be warranted as the plan gets developed.

1. Legislative recommendations:

- a. Amend section 16a-27 to eliminate some mandates that have accumulated over the years and clarify that plan
- b. Amend section 16a-28, which adjusts process milestones

d. Model Code and Design Development

- i. David Barkin reports group's primary recommendation is consistent with 21-29. A legislative recommendation: require funding to develop a comprehensive template for towns to use. Enhance land use planning at the state level; using Office of Responsible Growth at OPM to help develop land use best practices, a referral process to help understand regional impacts, allow COGs to be a conduit to assist towns, training and funding to facilitate peer learning among different zoning commissions. State government provide funding to help update local zoning plans, integration of zoning plans with the local plans of conservation and development. Allow synchronization of the plan update cycle to align with regional plans. Improve coordination to support effective and efficient plan implementation, specifically, inventory of state funding and collecting and sharing data on infrastructure.

e. Municipal Affordable Housing Plans

- i. Tim Hollister reports that the group decided to circulate the plan to stakeholders before finalizing the report. Reviewed 110 of the reports submitted under 8-30j. Summarized in section 4 what our observations are and incorporated into recommendations.
 1. Recommendations: 27 total, below is a focus on those that get to the core.
 - a. Bring town's regulations into conforming with general statutes 8-2 as amended by PA 21-29, specifically, promote economic diversity in housing choice; allow multi-family housing to adhere to the

affirmatively furthering requirements of the Federal Fair Housing Act; make sure the regulations do not intentionally or indirectly maintain or promote racial segregation; eliminate minimum floor area requirements... eliminate excess parking requirements; adhere to the state law about alternative dwelling units, or, if opting out, adopt regulations that still promote so-called ADU's; eliminate caps on the number and percentage of multi-family units; eliminate "town character" or similar phrases as a zoning approval criterion; eliminate excessive application fees; eliminate zoning approval criteria that specifically refer to public school impact and property tax revenues as a metric and zoning decision

- b. Review all zones for what if any residential uses are allowed, and revise regulations that unnecessarily exclude residential
- c. Review all residential zones for rules that unnecessarily limit density; review the definition of buildable land; enact zoning regulations that provide for middle housing; revise the town rules on rehabilitation of existing structures and eliminate unnecessary restrictions; ensure that town regulations allow for affordable housing to proposed by both for-profit and non-profit and governmental entities
- d. Be sure that the plan identifies and promotes the units for the most needed types; avoid design standards that add unnecessary costs; review the procedural requirements to eliminate or mitigate things that add unnecessary time and cost; review residential zones to make sure they are practical and available for property owners; review all non-residential zones to determine if residential or mixed-use can be adopted; review land proximate for transportation for opportunity for transit-oriented design; review the town's fair share calculation; review subdivision and wetlands regulations for requirements that add unnecessary expense or delay; align the plan with the town plan of conservation and development; review town ordinances and finances for potential direct financial assistance that can make assisting residences more affordable

V. Business

a. Questions

- i. **Sen. Tony Hwang:** reports will have to go to various committees' public hearings and vetting and public input, is that correct?
 - 1. **Rep Jason Rojas:** one of the additional actions we need to take as a group is deciding what does become legislation and in what manner; anything that comes out of these working groups will go through the process Senator Hwang was alluding to.
- ii. **Sen. Hwang:** we have the various dates for 2023, there will be new committee assignments... Will they also be changing as well given new committee assignments?
 - 1. **Martin Heft:** Yes, when they take office or are appointed, they will take positions in this commission

- b. 2023 Legislative proposals
 - i. State and Municipal Statutory Plan and Process: Amend Section 16a-27 to eliminate the various mandates that have accumulated over the years and to clarify the breadth and focus of the Plan. Amend Section 16a-28 to adjust process milestones.
 - 1. Making sure municipalities file these in a timely manner. If they do not have their plans in, they will not be eligible for the funding or something along those lines.
- c. Review of Commission Timeline:
 - i. Review recommendations – July 1, 2023
 - ii. Working group presentations – January: State and Municipal Statutory Plan Process, February: Model Code and Design Development, March: Municipal Affordable Housing Plans, April: State Consolidate Housing Plan, and May: Sewerage.
 - iii. Draft Report – September 1, 2023
 - iv. Final Report – January 1, 2024
- d. Request for Ideas on Potential Full Commission Presentations
 - i. Full Working Group Report and Recommendations
- e. 2023 Meeting Schedule – VOTE
 - i. Motion to accept the schedule by Greg Ugalde. Second by Francis Pickering. Voice vote, schedule approved.
- f. Next Commission Meeting – January 9, 2023
- g. Other

VI. Public Comment

No public comment.

VII. Adjournment

- a. Chairs thanked everyone. Motion to adjourn. Resounding second from group. Meeting adjourned at 4:01pm.