



APPROVED MINUTES OF THE FULL COMMISSION November 19, 2020 MEETING

Virtual Meeting as allowed by Massachusetts Governor Charlie Baker's Executive Order dated March 12, 2020 suspending certain provision of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c.30 sec.20.

I. Opening

A. The meeting was called to order at 7:03 PM

Chair Kyle Hanlon reminded all that per the open meeting law, BRPC records all meetings. Others may record the meeting after informing the chair. Any documents presented must be provided to the chair at the meeting. Pittsfield TV is recording.

Roll Call

The following Commission members were present:

Robert Ronzio – Becket Delegate
Peter Traub – Cheshire Delegate
Zack McCain – Dalton Delegate
Malcolm Fick – Gt. Barrington Alternate
Pedro Pachano – Gt. Barrington Delegate
Barbara Davis-Hassan – Lanesborough Alternate
Lauryn Franzoni – Lenox Delegate
Kyle Hanlon – North Adams Delegate
Sheila Irvin – Pittsfield Delegate
Fred Schubert – Richmond Alternate
Rene Wood – Sheffield Alternate
Roger Bolton – Williamstown Alternate
David Zink – Windsor Delegate

Staff Present:

Thomas Matuszko – Executive Director
Marianne Sniezek – Office Manager
Clete Kus – Transportation Program Manager
Laura Brennan - Senior Planner
Allison Egan- Senior Planner

Others Present: Tammy Daniels - iberkshire
Andy Hogeland – Williamstown
Christine Rasmussen – Stockbridge Planning Board
Logan Malick - The BEAT & Berkshire Environmental Team
Francesca Paris

B. Approval of Minutes of September 24, 2020 Meeting

Roger Bolton moved to approve; Sheila Irvin seconded. Approved with a roll call vote and 4 abstentions.

Roll Call Vote:

Robert Ronzio – Becket Delegate - Abstain
Peter Traub – Cheshire Delegate - Yes
Zack McCain – Dalton Delegate - Yes
Pedro Pachano – Gt. Barrington Delegate - Abstain
Barbara Davis-Hassan – Lanesborough Alternate - Yes
Lauryn Franzoni – Lenox Delegate - Abstain
Kyle Hanlon – North Adams Delegate - Yes
Sheila Irvin – Pittsfield Delegate - Yes
Fred Schubert – Richmond Alternate - Yes
Rene Wood – Sheffield Alternate - Yes
Roger Bolton – Williamstown Alternate – Yes
Douglas McNally – Windsor Alternate - yes
David Zink – Windsor Delegate – Abstain

II. Comments from the Public – None

III. Delegate & Alternate Issues – None

IV. Executive Committee Actions

There were no questions on the actions taken by the Executive Committee at their October 3, 2020 and November 5, 2020 meetings.

V. Annual Update on the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

The Economic Development Administration (EDA) requires BRPC to submit an updated performance report annually, which the Commission needs to approve, on its Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDs) to keep it certified. Senior Planner Laura Brennan updated the Commission on the CEDs Report. A draft copy was in the meeting materials.

2017-2022

5-Year CEDS:

- Document demographic & economic data
- Describe economic distress in the region
- Use the S.W.O.T. system
- Contain Regional Goals
- Identify Priority Projects

2020

Annual Updates:

- Articulate changes to economic profile
- Track trends during 5 year cycles
- Describe progress toward Goals
- Update & revise the Priority Projects list

Rene Wood moved to approve the Annual CEDS Report; Pedro Pachano seconded. Approved with a roll call vote.

Robert Ronzio – Becket Delegate - Yes
Peter Traub – Cheshire Delegate - Yes
Zack McCain – Dalton Delegate - Yes
Pedro Pachano – Gt. Barrington Delegate - Yes
Barbara Davis-Hassan – Lanesborough Alternate - Yes
Lauryn Franzoni – Lenox Delegate - Yes
Kyle Hanlon – North Adams Delegate - Yes
Sheila Irvin – Pittsfield Delegate - Yes
Fred Schubert – Richmond Alternate - Yes
Rene Wood – Sheffield Alternate - Yes
Roger Bolton – Williamstown Alternate - Yes
David Zink – Windsor Delegate – Yes

VI. Pittsfield Gray to Green Project

Tom explained the Executive Committee decided to present projects BRPC is working on related to social equity, inclusion and diversity.

Senior Planner Allison Egan described a new project called Gray to Green. This project will work in several neighborhoods in Pittsfield to engage the community and prioritize green planning in a social and racial justice context.

- Assess existing plans, surveys, assessments, and other studies conducted in Morningside and Westside in Pittsfield.
- Address areas of structural and environmental racism and environmental justice.
- Explore routes to environmental justice through community-lead initiatives education and advocacy.
- Amplify voices of Black people and people of color in Morningside and Westside, and build initiatives around their needs as seen through their lived experiences i.e. not imposing solutions but listening with curiosity.

Allison explained a person's life expectancy is shorter or longer due to social differences. Those living in the Morningside/Westside neighborhoods live, on average, 10-12 fewer years than those in the more income-secure Southeast

neighborhood. Climate change research and other studies have shown that people living in poverty and living in neighborhoods with greater heat exposure (less tree cover) are more susceptible to heat illness and mental health crises exacerbated by heat stress. A lack of green space and tree shade can have a large impact on the temperature of an urban area. Higher temperatures are not just uncomfortable but can exacerbate existing health conditions such as asthma, COPD, heart disease and mental health conditions.

BRPC will work with the City of Pittsfield, environmental advocacy and action groups, neighborhood organizations, Westside/Morningside residents, and social service organizations to conduct proactive planning that focuses on green development, promotes environmental justice, and establishes new standards for green investment and project prioritization in the most vulnerable neighborhoods.

VII. Transportation and Climate Initiative

The Transportation Climate Initiative (TCI) is an initiative of 12 Northeast and Mid-Atlantic States, with the District of Columbia, focused on reducing greenhouse gas emissions from the transportation sector through a regional cap and trade program. The BRPC Regional Issues Committee will meet on Wednesday November 18, 2020 to recommend comments on this initiative for the Commission's consideration.

Transportation Program Manager Clete Kus gave an overview of the draft comment letter and asked for the Commission to endorse the letter.

Comments and suggestions were made by Rene Wood, Andy Hogeland and Logan Malick.

Rene Wood moved to approve the Transportation Climate Initiative (TCI) comment letter with suggestions added; Roger Bolton seconded. Approved with a roll call vote.

Robert Ronzio – Becket Delegate - Yes
Peter Traub – Cheshire Delegate - Yes
Zack McCain – Dalton Delegate - Yes
Pedro Pachano – Gt. Barrington Delegate - Yes
Barbara Davis-Hassan – Lanesborough Alternate - Yes
Lauryn Franzoni – Lenox Delegate - Yes
Kyle Hanlon – North Adams Delegate - Yes
Sheila Irvin – Pittsfield Delegate - Yes
Fred Schubert – Richmond Alternate - Yes
Rene Wood – Sheffield Alternate - Yes
Roger Bolton – Williamstown Alternate - Yes
David Zink – Windsor Delegate – Yes

VIII. East-West Rail Draft Report

MassDOT has released its draft report on the East-West Passenger rail study with a request for comments. Transportation Program Manager Clete Kus gave an overview of the drafts comments for the Commission's consideration. Comments were due at 11:59 pm that evening.

Fred Schubert moved to approve the East-West Rail comment letter; Peter Traub seconded. Approved with a roll call vote

Robert Ronzio – Becket Delegate - Yes
Peter Traub – Cheshire Delegate - Yes
Zack McCain – Dalton Delegate - Yes
Pedro Pachano – Gt. Barrington Delegate - Yes
Barbara Davis-Hassan – Lanesborough Alternate - Yes
Lauryn Franzoni – Lenox Delegate - Yes
Kyle Hanlon – North Adams Delegate - Yes
Sheila Irvin – Pittsfield Delegate - Yes
Fred Schubert – Richmond Alternate - Yes
Rene Wood – Sheffield Alternate - Yes
Roger Bolton – Williamstown Alternate - Yes
David Zink – Windsor Delegate – Yes

IX. Approval of Community Assessments for FY 2021

The Finance Committee has proposed there be no increase in community assessments for FY 2022. The amount would be the same as FY21 amount. By law, BRPC must notify municipalities of their assessments no later than February each year so that they may be included in city/town budgets. Normally the Commission deals with assessments at the January meeting but since most municipalities initiate their budget processes in December we want to provide this information to municipalities as soon as possible, especially this year. Tom explained that each community is assessed a per capita amount that goes into BRPC's operating fund.

Sheila Irvin moved to approve no increase in community assessments for FY2022; Lauryn Franzoni seconded. Approved with a roll call vote

Robert Ronzio – Becket Delegate - Yes
Peter Traub – Cheshire Delegate - Yes
Zack McCain – Dalton Delegate – No vote
Pedro Pachano – Gt. Barrington Delegate - Yes
Barbara Davis-Hassan – Lanesborough Alternate - Yes
Lauryn Franzoni – Lenox Delegate - Yes
Kyle Hanlon – North Adams Delegate - Yes
Sheila Irvin – Pittsfield Delegate - Yes
Fred Schubert – Richmond Alternate - Yes

Rene Wood – Sheffield Alternate – No Vote
Roger Bolton – Williamstown Alternate - Yes
David Zink – Windsor Delegate – Yes

Executive Director’s Report

FY 2021 State Budget Update - Status of District Local Technical Assistance and other important priorities

Funding for the District Local Technical Assistance Program was included in the Governor’s version of the FY 21 budget as well as the House’s version. It was not included in the version of the budget released by the Senate Ways and Means.

CPTC Training

The Citizen Planner Training Collaborative (CPTC) is a collaborative made up of the Massachusetts Dept. Housing & Community Development, UMass Center for Agriculture, Mass Association of Regional Planning Agencies, Mass Chapter American Planning Association, Mass Audubon, Mass Association of Planning Directors, citizen and professional planners. It's mission is to empower land use officials to make effective and judicious decisions in the areas of development, transportation, natural resources and the environment by providing educational opportunities, access to information and resources, and by enhancing cooperation among and integration of land use boards within local government. CPTC provides training designed for Massachusetts Planners, Boards of Appeal, Zoning Enforcement Officers and others interested in land use in Massachusetts. This fall’s training sessions will be virtual. The full schedule of trainings can be accessed here, <https://masscptc.org/training/autumn/fall-workshops-20.html>

Office Update

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the BRPC Office remains closed to the public. Since we could partially re-open in the summer, up to 10 staff have been allowed to be in the office on any single day. Most days there have been significantly fewer staff. With the recent surge in COVID cases, Tom requested that staff not go into the office unless it is necessary for them to do so to conduct their work responsibilities. When staff are in the office they need to keep their face covering on, except when they are in a private office with the door closed.

X. Adjournment

Sheila Irvin made a motion to adjourn; seconded by Barbara Davis-Hassan. Unanimously approved. Adjourned at 8:45 pm.

Materials distributed or presented during this meeting:

Meeting Agenda

Draft Meeting Minutes September 24, 2020
Executive Committee Actions Memo
2020 Annual Update on the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
CEDs Presentation
Pittsfield Gray to Green Project Presentation
Transportation and Climate Initiative Comment Letter
dot-tci_FactSheet2019_eng
East-West Rail Ex Summary
East-West Rail Draft Comment Letter
FY22 Assessment RECOMMENDATIONS
Executive Director's Report
Transportation and Climate Initiative Draft Comment Letter
East-West Rail Draft Comment Letter