

MEETING NOTICE

REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION of the VALLEY COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

**Tuesday, March 24, 2009
5:15 p.m. at VCOG Offices
Derby Train Station**

AGENDA

1. Public Session
2. Minutes of 1/6/09 Special VCOG RPC Meeting (Enc.)
3. Referrals and Reviews: (pertinent correspondence enclosed)
 - a) **Referral from City of Ansonia:** Proposed Amendment to the Ansonia Zoning Map; Request to Change Zone for Two Parcels.
Public Hearing Date: April 27, 2009
 - b) **Referral from Town of Orange:** Proposed Amendments to the Orange Zoning Regulations; Sections 383-42A, 383-141 To Permit Drive ATM Machines in Commercial C-1 District.
Public Hearing Date: March 17, 2009 (hearing left open)
 - c) **Referral from Town of Orange:** Proposed Amendments to the Orange Zoning Regulations; Sections 383-33 D. & 383-34 B. To provide uniform language for restaurants in the Local Shopping Center LSC District with other Commercial Districts.
Public Hearing Date: April 7, 2009
 - d) **Referral from Town of Orange:** Proposed Amendments to the Orange Zoning Regulations; Sections 383-140A. The Change in the qualifying date will increase the number of eligible dwellings for elderly housing.
Public Hearing Date: April 7, 2009

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
VCOG REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
Tuesday, March 24, 2009**

Members Present: Bart Flaherty, David Barboza II, Virginia Harger, Cliff Strumello
Members Absent: None

Staff Present: David Elder, Senior Regional Planner

Others Present: None

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Flaherty at 5:20 p.m.

The public session was called open. There were no public comments

Motion to close the Public Session.

Motion by: Cliff Strumello

Second by: David Barboza II; Motion passed unanimous

Motion to approve the Minutes of the 1/6/09 Special Meeting.

Motion by: Cliff Strumello;

Second: David Barboza II; Motion passed unanimous

Referral from City of Ansonia: Proposed Amendment to the Ansonia Zoning Map; Request to Change Zone for Two Parcels. Public Hearing Date: April 27, 2009

VCOG Regional Planning Commission (RPC) Chairman read the staff referral into the record. The proposed location map was presented and discussion occurred regarding the City's recent efforts in attracting commercial, retail, and office spaces in this part of downtown. Additionally, the City recently adopted the City Center Plan, which specifically recommended preserving the ground level of new and existing buildings to accommodate commercial, retail, and office-type uses. There were additional RPC member comments that residential development is a good thing for downtown areas in the Valley considering the access to mass transit including the Metro-North Waterbury Branch Line and numerous fixed route bus services. However, it was also acknowledged that residential downtown development on its own does not provide the opportunity for commercial and retail services to support residential communities without some form of mixed use. There were examples of successful mixed use development that incorporate ground level commercial ventures such as Blue Back Square in West Hartford.

A motion was made to support the VCOG RPC Staff Planner's finding that the proposal as submitted conflicts with the City of Ansonia's City Center Plan and the Regional Plan of Conservation and Development.

Motion by: Cliff Strumello

Second: David Barboza II; Motion passed with Bart Flaherty abstaining

Referral from Town of Orange: Proposed Amendments to the Orange Zoning Regulations; Sections 383-42A, 383-141 To Permit Drive-Through ATM Machines in Commercial C-1 District. Public Hearing Date: March 17, 2009 (hearing left open)

VCOG Regional Planning Commission (RPC) Chairman read the staff referral into the record. Discussion occurred regarding providing adequate egress and ingress for these facilities because of their location within shopping areas and the variation of traffic patterns. There were additional comments that reflected that this Use was a permitted by Special Permit and that because of the increased discretion afforded by that, each ATM location would be considered on a case by case basis.

A motion was made to approve the staff recommendation of no negative inter-municipal impacts.

Motion by: Cliff Strumello

Second: by David Barboza II; Motion passed unanimous

Referral from Town of Orange: Proposed Amendments to the Orange Zoning Regulations; Sections 383-33 D. & 383-34 B. To provide uniform language for restaurants in the Local Shopping Center LSC District with other Commercial Districts. Public Hearing Date: April 7, 2009.

The VCOG RPC staff planner reviewed the referral of no negative inter-municipal impacts. Discussion occurred regarding the level of specificity of the existing regulations as well as the increased specificity of the proposed regulations. Additionally, it was noted that there are numerous restaurant establishments that do not meet the regulations and that there would be a high number of resulting non-conforming uses if the regulation is adopted.

A motion was made to approve the staff finding of no inter-municipal impacts from the proposal.

Motion by: Cliff Strumello

Second: by David Barboza II; Motion passed with Virginia Harger abstaining

Referral from Town of Orange: Proposed Amendments to the Orange Zoning Regulations; Sections 383-140A. The Change in the qualifying date will increase the number of eligible dwellings for elderly housing. Public Hearing Date: April 7, 2009

VCOG Regional Planning Commission (RPC) Chairman read the staff referral into the record. VCOG RPC staff planner presented a printout from the Town of Orange's Assessor's office showing the total number of new single family homes that have been built since October of 1997. The proposed amendment to the regulations would change the qualifying date of homes that could be converted to allow the inclusion of one addition dwelling unit, age restricted, from 1997 to 2008. This would result in 221 more permitted conversions.

A motion was made to adopt the staff recommendation of no negative inter-municipal impacts.

Motion by: Cliff Strumello

Second: by Virginia Harger; Motion passed unanimous

A motion was made to deviate from the regular agenda and add a referral the Town of Stratford to the agenda.

Motion by: David Barboza II

Second: by Cliff Strumello; Motion passed unanimous

Referral from Town of Stratford: Proposed Amendment to the Stratford Zoning Regulations; Sections 7.5.1.4.2 and 12.3 regarding minimum building size in a CF District and shared use parking facilities. Public Hearing Date April 21, 2009.

The VCOG RPC staff planner reviewed the referral of unidentified negative regional impact. The proposal is for a reduction in the minimum building size of “free standing restaurant buildings.” The proposal would also permit, by special permit, shared parking facilities. Discussion occurred regarding areas within this region that have successfully utilized shared parking facilities and that, for the most part, depending on the usage, they have been adequate. There were additional comments that the shared parking facilities could present a problem for future development in a singular plaza if the number of parking spaces is reduced. However, the fact that each instance of a shared parking facility is by Special Permit only, the commission will have the benefit of seeing each proposal individually.

A motion was made to support the staff finding that negative regional impact was not identified.

Motion by: David Barboza II

Second: by Cliff Strumello; Motion passed unanimous

The meeting was adjourned at 6:19 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

David Elder
VCOG Senior Regional Planner