



# **TOWN OF MIDDLEBURY**

*Planning & Zoning Commission*

*1212 Whittemore Road*

*Middlebury, Connecticut 06762*

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**October 6, 2022**

**SPECIAL MEETING**

**MINUTES**

**REGULAR MEMBERS PRESENT**

Terry Smith, Chairman

Matthew Robison

Joseph Drauss

Erika Carrington

**REGULAR MEMBERS ABSENT**

William Stowell

**ALTERNATE MEMBERS PRESENT**

Frank Mirovsky

**ALTERNATE MEMBERS ABSENT**

Paul Anderson

Gerald Lukowski

**ALSO PRESENT**

John Calabrese, P.E.

Curtis Bosco, Z.E.O.

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Smith called the Special Meeting to order at 6:31 p.m.

**2. ATTENDANCE**

Chairman Smith announced Regular Members Smith, Robison, Carrington & Drauss and Alternate Member Mirovsky as present. Regular Member Stowell and Alternate Members Anderson & Lukowski were absent.

**3. Presentation by representatives of the Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments (NVCOG) regarding the Regional Plan of Conservation and Development (RPOCD)**

Joanna Rogalski, Senior Regional Planner with Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments provided the members of the Commission with flyer with four (4) questions and instructions on how to complete their survey online. She then proceeded with her presentation. She stated that this is the first time they are writing a Regional Plan of Conservation and Development for the NVCOG. The group was formed in 2015 and this is their first 19-town plan. Public outreach and participation has been lacking and since this is a document that is used by Planning & Zoning Commissions and the NVCOG, they are seeking viewpoints on regional issues. She explained that NVOG is a 19-town region which consists of a voluntary group of people. The municipal CEOs are the ones that make up their board. Essentially, they are accountable to them. They are state designated and 1 of 9 within the State of CT. Additionally, they are a metropolitan planning organization which uses federal transportation dollars to work on transportation projects throughout the region. They are a staff of professionals and currently have 22 full-time and 4 part-time/intern members. They also have a Regional Planning Commission, of which Curtis Bosco is a representative for Middlebury. She acknowledged the interdependence of municipalities, health districts for example. There are a lot of regional issues with local impact and some of those are the Economic Development Technology. She mentioned the importance of finding out what the needs are of the aging population and how to attract and retain younger residents. The Regional Plan is very similar to the municipal POCD. While it is not as specific, it is advisory and visionary. She stressed that the Middlebury POCD guides Middlebury's land use development. They are looking for the commonalities within the 19 towns that could be better addressed with a regional grant (roads, open space, housing). The CGS says this must be done every ten (10) years, although she feels it is good planning practice. They are looking at issues from a broad perspective. They want to know what the bigger issues are that are affecting towns. The Regional POCD is based on all of the municipal plans, which they are currently looking at. The vision statements, issues and how municipals want their future land use to look are all being incorporated into their plan. While they attempting to find commonalities, it is not their intent to make every town look the same. The components of the plan are going to be an existing conditions report which looks at data from the U.S. Census, 3<sup>rd</sup> party sites like Zillow and the State of CT Departments. Regional goals and strategies will happen after they have their initial discussion with all 19 towns along with input from an online survey. They are currently in the first phase of the process. They will be talking with Curtis Bosco and she expressed their desire to meet with this Commission in the future, should they be invited. They will be looking at the numbers for the aging population, people who live and work in the same community and how that trend seems to be decreasing. From a regional standpoint, according to the 2020 Census in comparison to the 2010 Census, there has been a slight increase in the aging population. In Middlebury, there seems to be an increase in the over 65 and child populations. There is a decrease in the number of those that live and work in the same

area (19 towns). Either there are fewer people working or commuting out of the area. The numbers are very low for those that live and work in Middlebury. While it may be because there is not a lot of industry or manufacturing, they welcome this Commission's thoughts as to why that might be. They want to know how Middlebury sees itself within the region.

Matthew Robison questioned if they ever sit in on a Public Hearing or workshops that are done at the municipal level.

Joanna Rogalski replied that every once there is a final draft, it goes through the 65-day review period and that draft is sent to the COG. They do not attend those meetings but she did work on the Ansonia POCD because they had a contract that the COG staff would write their POCD.

Chairman Smith shared that both he and Matthew Robison have been on this Commission for over 28 years and COG never once asked their opinion. He was his understanding that if something in Middlebury's POCD conflicted with theirs, Middlebury would have to change.

Josh Lecar, Director of Planning, with Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments stated that typically the language at the regional level is sufficiently vague so as to avoid a direct conflict.

Chairman Smith recalled one occurrence when Middlebury's had to be changed due to a conflict.

Josh Lecar, suggested that it may have been the State of CT's plan.

Chairman Smith agreed that it may have been. He went to offer the desire to keep the rural aspect of Middlebury and yet still increase the commercial and industrial. They are looking to keep this section of town the same as well as down at the business area, although modernization would be welcomed. Three or four-story buildings with shops on the sidewalk would not be in keeping with the character of the town. There is a need for elderly housing, including an assisted living facility or active senior housing. He suspects the decrease in those that live and work in Middlebury is due to the loss of the big employers (Uniroyal, General DataComm, Timex).

Joanna Rogalski questioned why someone from out of town would come to Middlebury.

Matthew Robison suggested that some of it might be the close proximity of I84.

Chairman Smith added the airport, hospitals and a good school system.

Joseph Drauss emphasized the special needs area within the school system. He then

questioned how they are funded.

Joanna Rogalski replied transportation dollars as well as money from the State of CT.

Josh Lecar added that the state receives funds from the towns based on their population, typically in the range of \$5,000-\$10,000 per town. All of which represents less than 10% of the total funding. Approximately 65% of their work is paid for through the federal transportation dollars and state transportation dollars and an estimated 25% comes out of the Regional Services Grant.

Joanna Rogalski declared that the Regional POCD helps them go after different grants and prioritize projects.

Chairman Smith voiced his opinion that Middlebury receives little in grant funding.

Joanna Rogalski shared that the projects they are working on are listed on their website under "Our Towns".

Josh Lecar encouraged all to visit their website as there is much more content that could be reviewed this evening.

Joanna Rogalski requested that Curtis Bosco distribute the pdf copy of their presentation. She provided members of the Commission with the attached card from MetroCOG & NVCOG regarding the Metropolitan Transportation Plan, which is updated every four (4) years, and contains details on how to complete their general public survey.

#### **4. Adjournment**

**Motion:** to adjourn the Special Meeting at 6:58 p.m. Made by Erika Carrington, seconded by Joseph Drauss. Unanimous Approval.

Filed Subject to Approval,

Respectfully Submitted,

Rachelle Behuniak, Clerk

Original to Brigitte Bessette, Town Clerk

cc: P&Z Commission Members  
Paul Bowler, Chairman, Conservation Commission  
Mark Lubus, Building Official  
Curtis Bosco, Z.E.O.  
Ken Long, Chairman, Z.B.A.  
Attorney Dana D'Angelo  
Rob Rubbo, Director of Health

METROPOLITAN  
TRANSPORTATION  
PLAN 2050



The Connecticut Metropolitan Council of Governments (MetroCOG) and the Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments (NVCOG) invite you to share your thoughts on transportation in the Greater Bridgeport and Naugatuck Valley regions.

The survey will help us identify priorities of community residents and visitors—how you travel now and how your travel may change in the future. Your feedback will help include community needs and wishes in each region's Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), which documents our long-term transportation visions.

Open until November 1, 2022.

Scan the QR code or visit:  
[bit.ly/travel-2050](https://bit.ly/travel-2050)

Comments: [bit.ly/mtp-comments](https://bit.ly/mtp-comments)

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