

GPCOG Steering Committee Minutes
December 16, 2008
12:00 p.m. at GPCOG

In attendance: Paul McKenney, President, Cape Elizabeth; Gordon Billington, Standish; Cathy Breen, Falmouth; Tony Plante, Windham; Mike Reynolds, Raymond

Staff: Neal Allen, Maddy Adams, Anne Holland, Rosi Kulow, Steve Linnell

- (1) **Welcome:** Paul McKenney welcomed everyone and opened the meeting at 12:10 p.m.
- (2) **Approval of November 14th, 2008 Minutes.** *Gordy Billington moved approval of the November 14th minutes and Tony Plante seconded the motion. The motion was approved (Cathy and Mike abstained because they were not present at that meeting).*
- (3) **Regional Sustainability Initiative.**

(1) Continue the discussion from the November 14th meeting on “Another Approach”. Neal provided some background. For the energy plan, public infrastructure (municipal buildings, schools, etc.) would be inventoried. We can start gathering the data; however, the ICLEI software is still in the process of being updated.

The CEDS Committee would be expanded with some private sector people. In response to questions about CEDS, Neal explained that as part of the EDA administration requirements, each district is required to have a CEDS document. The document gets updated on an annual basis and this year we hope to conduct a major revision of the CEDS. It lays out the broad goals of regional economic development; it is very comprehensive. It deals with quality of life issues, housing, business development, the environment, health, etc. It requires a committee. The Executive Committee approves the CEDS document after it is reviewed and recommended by the CEDS Committee. We are still trying to become our own economic development district apart from SMRPC but we are getting additional money from EDA. York County has their own CEDS Committee.

There was discussion about the County’s role in economic development and the Steering Committee agreed that a meeting should be set up with the County Commissioners and County Manager to discuss the roles and responsibilities of the respective organizations. It was suggested that the County’s charter be reviewed but the County doesn’t have a charter – they are ruled under state statute. A charter review commission has been formed; they want to redefine their role.

There was concern about moving the sustainability effort into the CEDS because of the possibility of losing the other two legs of the stool – environment and community. The effort of the Metro Regional Coalition (MRC) to form their own economic development authority may complicate matters as it would not necessarily meet the needs of all of the COG members. It was asked why the MRC couldn’t work on the subregionalization effort at the same time that we are doing our effort. Our sustainability initiative is not at odds with the MRC economic development discussion. The County has a role with community development through the CDBG Entitlement program, but not for economic development. A lengthy discussion regarding regional economic development options and the potential respective roles of GPCOG, the MRC and the Chamber were discussed.

It was asked what each community should be doing with the CEDS. Neal explained that the CEDS is working towards a regional vision and it reflects strategies about commercial development, land use, infrastructure investment, etc. We want to weave the sustainability principles into the CEDS. CEDS should reflect the goals and objectives of the municipalities. CEDS is an economic development strategy that is approved by the CEDS Committee and the Executive Committee and

is then presented to EDA for planning funds. It is a strategy that should be used to implement policy at the local level. The principles should be working principles.

(2) Review Preliminary Program for the March forum on economy. Neal distributed a handout on the March Sustainability Forum. We'd like to ask some questions from the audience and present the findings later in the event if we can find a feasible way to do so. Gordy mentioned that at a recent meeting in Standish, the audience participated by using voting machines that were obtained from GrowSmart Maine. It was very interactive and interesting.

Dick Barringer will be the moderator; he is familiar with the issues. After Michael Shuman's presentation, he will participate on a panel with local businesses. Neal mentioned the possibility of having a luncheon speaker from the Denver Regional COG. Mark McAuliffe will also be on the panel -- he has a tie with the Chamber and the Metro Regional Coalition and has opened a small business in Bayside utilizing local vendors. Coffee by Design is another possible panelist; they are involved with MEBSR. Other panelist suggestions included Oakhurst, National Semiconductor, Hancock Lumber and Maine & Company.

(3) Review draft outline of the "Sustainability Road Show". Neal reviewed the outline for the road show. We would probably want to present it to our Corridor Coalitions first. Mike offered Raymond as a practice location.

4. **Steering Committee Vacancy and Review of Executive Committee Membership.** There was a general discussion regarding the vacancy on the Steering Committee resulting from Ed Suslovic not being re-elected to the Portland City Council. Neal will get back to the committee when he hears how Portland plans to fill Ed's seat.
5. **Reports and Other Business.** Not addressed.
6. **Adjourn.** The meeting adjourned at 1:35 p.m.