



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
STATE OF CONNECTICUT

Governor's Task Force on Transit Oriented Development in Fairfield County
December 13, 2019, 2:00-3:00 pm
State Capitol, Governor's Conference Room 208
DRAFT Meeting Minutes

Subcommittee and Task Force Members Present*

City of Norwalk	Jessica Casey, Chief of Economic and Community Development
JDA Development Company	Robert Wiener
Town of Stratford	Susmitha Attota, Planning Department
CT Homebuilders and Remodelers Association	Jim Perras, Executive Director
Supportive Housing Works	David Rich, Executive Director
Fairfield County Housing Alliance	Christie Stewart, Director
Local Initiatives Support Corporation)	Jim Horan, Executive Director
Independent Consultant	Bruce Carlson

State Agency Representatives

Office of the Governor	Lisa Tepper Bates, Governor's Senior Coordinator for TOD and Housing
Department of Transportation	David Elder
Department of Housing	Shante Hanks, Deputy Commissioner, and Mike Santoro

- I. Bob Wiener, Chair of the Subcommittee, called the meeting to order at 2:05.
- II. Areas of Best Practice for focus with regard to advancing TOD in CT context
 - a. **CT Incentive Housing Zone Program:** It was noted that an Incentive Housing Zone (IHZ) program currently exists and is run by DOH. The original program included planning funds of between \$20,000-\$50,000. Any developments built within the established IHZ were eligible for \$2,000/unit (a similar program in Massachusetts offers \$3,000 in incentive payment for same).

*Leadership of participating entities may elect to appoint a designee

Funding for this incentive payment had not been made available, however. Additionally, some towns that had developed IHZ regulations were not able to secure the approval of the regulations from their respective Planning and Zoning Committees. While the CT IHZ program is focused on affordability rather than TOD (which is allowed but not required), participants noted that it would be useful to understand where that program stands. DOH/Mike Santoro noted that a report on the IHZ program would be completed in January and could be reviewed with members of the Task Force. Members of the subcommittee noted that the IHZ program could be a model for a similar incentive structure for TOD.

- b. **Model TOD zoning:** Jessica Casey noted that April Anderson Lamoureux of Anderson Strategic Advisors will be a guest speaker at the January 23 Task Force meeting, at which she will review the work in Massachusetts to develop a range of tools, including Chapter 40R (The Smart Growth Zoning Overlay District Act). This Act encourages communities to create dense residential or mixed-use smart growth zoning districts, including a high percentage of affordable housing units, to be located near transit stations, in areas of concentrated development such as existing city and town centers, and in other highly suitable locations. Lisa Tepper Bates noted that the Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG) had developed model TOD zoning toolkit that the subcommittee should review. Subcommittee member Bruce Carlson noted that Pace University has a land use website that offers models as well. Subcommittee Chair Wiener will lead in identifying other models and bringing them forward to the committee.
- c. **Possible incentives for towns to adopt TOD ordinances:** Chair Bob Wiener noted the challenge of creating financial incentives in era of austerity. Lisa Tepper Bates suggested that *one path* is to make available funding for a connected planning process (reward is TOD project funding); *second path* is to connect land use reform to incentive funding that is wholly flexible (not connected to specific projects, but for general economic development purposes). Subcommittee members discussed whether there is a third option that might combine carrots and sticks. Subcommittee members noted that need to create a culture shift – to encourage localities to pro-actively want to develop TOD. Subcommittee Chair Bob Wiener noted that given the tradition of local control, there is a clear need to create a “blocking and tackling” method to engage town by town in this work” town-by-town conversations are needed. Subcommittee member Tami Strauss would be asked to take lead on reviewing possible incentives for towns to adopt TOD ordinances.
- d. **Expanding use of Tax Incremental Financing (TIF) as a funding vehicle for TOD:** TIF uses anticipated future increases in property tax revenues to generate incremental tax revenues from a specific development project or projects across a designated district to help pay for current costs associated with development. These can be public and/or private costs. TIF is a local economic development policy and program that is enabled and guided by state law. It does not require state approval and its structure and details are determined by the local legislative process. Further to legislation passed in 2015, CT municipalities have more flexibility with regard to establishing TIF zones and using TIF for economic development purposes. Subcommittee members discussed the fact that TIF is an important source of funds for

development, but TIF requires a process, both to gain the required local approvals and to execute on an approved TIF arrangement. Many localities may lack the capacity. Bruce Carlson noted that a TIF district required adequate marketing to succeed. Lisa Tepper Bates suggested that the subcommittee engage with Patrick McMahon of CT Main Street and a key driver of TIF in CT; Christie Stewart suggested that Task Force member and professional planner Rick Redniss could also provide helpful thoughts. Subcommittee members Bruce Carlson agreed to take the lead on research in this area.

- e. **RFP processes:** Subcommittee Chair Wiener noted that agenda item IIe (Guidelines for fair and efficient RFQ/RFP process – prospects for model offered to towns; attention to leveraging private interest to advance due diligence and planning to reduce local burden) would be taken up by the Streamlining and Efficiencies subcommittee of the Task Force.
- f. **Public-private partnerships:** Chair Wiener suggested that guidance on the best ways to structure. David Elder noted that DOT has done RFPs based on interest by developers in specific sites. Chair Wiener noted that it would be helpful to look at state/municipal/private partnerships to outline the rights and responsibilities of each party and learn how private sector can be leveraged to best effect. Chair Wiener noted that he would ask Task Force members Francis Pickering and Juanita James to lead in this area.
- g. **Other Models:** The Subcommittee is mindful of the fact that other states and municipalities have substantial experience with planning and supporting TOD projects, and there are lessons in their experience for Connecticut. Jim Horan will lead the effort to identify the most relevant models and points of contact, and the Subcommittee will follow up.

III. **Next steps:** the next meeting of the subcommittee will be on January 17, 2020 at 2:00. The next meeting of the full Task Force taskforce is January 23: Anderson Strategic Investments and Beacon Communities will be the guest speakers, and will discuss work in Massachusetts to advance TOD. DOH will provide an update on IHZ, further to the expected January 2020 report on same.

IV. **Adjournment:** meeting was adjourned at 3:00.