



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR  
STATE OF CONNECTICUT

**Governor's Task Force on Transit Oriented Development in Fairfield County**  
**January 23, 10:00 am – 12:00 pm**  
**Sacred Heart University Martire Center Forum**  
**DRAFT Meeting Minutes**

**Task Force Members Present\***

City of Norwalk	Jessica Casey, Chief of Economic and Community Development
JDA Development Company	Robert Wiener
Business Council of Fairfield County	Joe McGee, Vice President, Public Policy and Programs
Town of Stratford	Susmitha Attota, Planning Department
Town of Fairfield	Mark Barnhart, Director of Economic Development
City of Stamford	Ralph Blessing, Land Use Bureau Chief
University of Bridgeport	George Estrada, Director of Facilities
CT Metropolitan Council of Governments	Matt Fulda, Executive Director
City of Bridgeport	Lynn Haig, Director of Planning
Fairfield County Community Foundation	Juanita James, President and CEO
Public Housing Authorities of Westport and Fairfield	Carol Martin, Executive Director
CT Homebuilders and Remodelers Association	Jim Perras, Executive Director
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development	Suzanne Piacentini, Field Office Director, Hartford Office
CT West Council of Governments	Francis Pickering, Executive Director
Redniss & Mead	Rick Redniss, Principal
Supportive Housing Works	David Rich, Executive Director
Norwalk Redevelopment Agency	Tami Strauss, Director
Local Initiatives Support Corporation	Jim Horan, Executive Director
Regional Plan Association	Melissa Kaplan-Macey, Vice President and CT State Director
City of Danbury	Lisa Morrissey, Director of Social Services
	Sharon Calitro, Director of Planning

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\*Leadership of participating entities may elect to appoint a designee

## State Agency Representatives

Office of the Governor	Lisa Tepper Bates, Governor's Senior Coordinator for TOD and Housing
Department of Administrative Services	Noel Petra, Deputy Commissioner
Department of Energy and Environmental Protection	Brian Thompson
Department of Housing	Shante Hanks, Deputy Commissioner
Department of Transportation	David Elder

## Task Force Members Absent

Department of Economic and Community Development	
Alpha Community Services/YMCA	Carmen Colon, Executive Director
Environmental Protection	Betsey Wingfield, Deputy Commissioner
Fairfield County's Center for Housing Opportunity	Christie Stewart, Director

- I. Meeting Called to order at 10:10 am by Co Chairs Jessica Casey and Bob Wiener
- II. Introduction of Presenters and Topic:

**Presenters:** April Anderson Lamoureux, Anderson Strategic Advisors and Dara Kovel, President & CEO, Beacon Communities

**Topic:** Planning, permitting and infrastructure – Lessons learned from Massachusetts

- a. April Anderson Lamoureux, Anderson Strategic Advisors
  - Massachusetts has site specific efforts to advance development around transit: “expedited local permitting” -- localities can develop special zones in designated locations where they commit to permit projects in 6 months or less; if no action in 6 months or less, project is deemed approved
    - Legislation that allows communities to opt in – min requirement: site must be able to hold 50,000 square feet of development
    - Half of MA towns have opted in
  - Chapter 40R allows cities and towns to adopt program in smart growth locations: as of right overlay; site specific; minimum 8 units/acre single family; 20 units/acre multifamily; site plan review at local level; incentive payments.
    - 40S: provides a measure whereby if a town builds a housing development under this measure that increases local educational costs, state will pay the difference
  - 43B: If cities and town opts-in, state will follow suit on expediting permitting in those locations
  - MassWorks: state combined several smaller funding streams to support infrastructure into one pot under executive offices of Housing & Economic Development
    - Annual funding round emphasizing job creation and housing creation

- Projects have to be shovel ready
- Timely return on investment: \$100 million in investment/year; more efficient deployment of existing resources in a targeted fashion
- Supports TOD and smart growth projects
- Rolled out in 2011 as a pilot program
- Requires a private sector partnership for each project
- Allocation of MassWorks funds -- combination of point based and discretionary; questions include whether community adopted 40R & 43B -- thresholds that show the local community is thoughtful in how it is moving forward and wants to move forward?
- Other tools include Urban Center TIF (not a criteria for Massworks)- used quite widely in other areas; not so much in New England
- Communications framing to build support for TOD
  - Outward messaging -- negative net migration for many years; municipalities spending large amounts per student every year; educating people very well and then send them off; how do we get them to come back?
  - Need to increase supply of housing in a diverse way to attract people back home; frame in the way that is a personal connection; no 25-30 year old wants to live in their parents basement; must create housing and jobs
  - Inward messaging -- Electronic application that could be forwarded to each of the agencies

b. Dara Kovel, President & CEO, Beacon Communities

- Kovel CT program for Jonathan Rose; now head of Beacon Communities
- With the right framework around zoning, you will see development happen
- CT coordination on TOD: informal -- not legislated: 7 state agencies sat together to think about coordinating (CHFA, DOH, DEEP, DOT, OPM, DECD, Town of Meriden)
- TOD is a focus of Beacon: Haverhill, MA Mill redevelopment; Town of Easton, MA shovel factory redevelopment: 130 mixed income units; Montgomery Mill in Windsor Locks: 160 mixed income apartments
- Important to be thoughtful about parking and not overbuild; don't waste land; try to minimize parking requirements
- Mass Housing Partnership doing a study of zoning around MBTA
- State can be more discriminating on giving money -- state resources should be predicated on certain amount of zoning; show where growth is going to happen; show how you are going to zone for that growth, including to accommodate housing demands
- Regulatory reform initiative- roundtable to find out the most challenging regulations for developers- that is something the state can control and fix
  - Every 2 years every state agency has to review processes and make recommendations for streamlining; empowers managers to streamline their own agencies; agencies at first hated the idea
  - Get the agencies themselves to make these recommendations; business groups were able to provide input on what issues should be looked at; be smarter and more efficient; don't diminish protections that the agencies are tasked with upholding
- Governor Baker has made priority moving from super majority to majority vote on zoning for housing development
- Assembly Square, Somerville -- best practice case study

- Straightforward and transparent process for mitigation (impact fees)? A local impact fee would create certainty; but very hard to pass legislature
- Off-site/fee in lieu; payment must be meaningful
- Parking -- immediate challenge & future state
  - In Boston you cannot now build a garage without showing how you will repurpose it in the future
  - Be aggressive as possible; design so parking can be shared in different ways in the future
  - Need to rethink ratio of parking to units or we will never be able to take advantage of the market; 0-.5 spaces/unit; get out of mindset that everyone needs to have a car near transit
  - Good transit is the baseline requirement; CT doesn't have the baseline level of reliable transit that Boston and New York have
  - You have to take the risk: not everyone is going to want to live in TOD locations; that demographic is going to be willing to have fewer cars; only way to make TOD work is to reduce parking requirement
  - Stamford -- creating parking categories, rather than coupling parking with zoning -- the closer you are to transit, the lower the parking requirement; Stamford is willing to give parking reductions, but developers don't want them- in many cases the bank under-writing criteria requires more parking than necessary
  - Greater Boston region did a study of utilization of parking in multifamily building- showed no more than 50% utilization

### III. DOH Incentive Housing Program Update- Shante Hanks

- TOD is one criteria, but the program isn't quite a vehicle for TOD development; workforce housing
- Report attached

### IV. Streamlining subcommittee update:

#### *Ralph Blessing*

- Permit center (Denver example -- Stamford exploring); customer rep who takes an application through the whole process; the applicant only deals with one person from the city
- Paperless process (Stamford & Danbury)
- Recommend a similar one-stop approach for CT local and also state approvals -- Danbury reorganized their physical space so different departments are physically close to one another with common space
- Financial assistance for implementing software solutions & training would help localities

#### *Susmitha Attota*

- Committee is reviewing land use policies to identify those that could make the biggest impact
- Committee is also drafting an RFP template for localities to solicit TOD assistance

### V. Best Practices subcommittee update – Bob Weiner

- Committee is looking at the following:
  - TOD ordinances
  - Tax Incremental Financing (TIF)

- Public-Private Partnerships (P3s)
- Identifying best practice examples and setting up meetings with neighboring states and municipalities
- Identifying key ways to make it easier for municipalities to support TOD and make it easy to understand why they should do it

VI. Site Selection subcommittee update -- Jessica Casey

- The subcommittee will identify sites in Fairfield County based on methodology with specific criteria
  - See slide deck attached
- Goal is to wrap up the work of all three subcommittees and present as a report to the Governor at a meeting in July

VII. Meeting adjourned 12:05 p.m.

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