

PIONEER VALLEY PLANNING COMMISSION (PVPC)

Minutes of Executive Committee Meeting  
Thursday, February 23, 2017  
Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC)  
60 Congress Street, Large Conference Room  
Springfield, Massachusetts 01104

Present were:

Walter Gunn, Chair – Longmeadow  
Judith Terry, Vice-Chair – Chesterfield  
Douglas Albertson, Secretary/Clerk – Belchertown  
George Kingston, Treasurer – East Longmeadow  
Mark Cavanaugh, Assistant Treasurer – South Hadley  
Lynn Arnold – Holland  
T.J. Cousineau - Blandford  
Michael Marciniac - Palmer

PVPC Staff:

Tim Brennan, Executive Director  
Lisa Edinger, Accountant  
Patty Gambarini, Senior Environmental Planner  
James Mazik, Deputy Director for Operations/Community Development Section Manager  
Catherine Ratte, Principal Planner/Environment and Land Use Section Manager  
Lynn Shell, Support Staff

1. Chairman's Call to Order, Welcome and Approval of the Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting Held on January 26, 2017

The February 23<sup>rd</sup> Executive Committee meeting was called to order at 4:05 p.m. by Commission Vice-Chair Judy Terry. Ms. Terry stated that Chairman Walter Gunn's arrival will be briefly delayed due to a prior commitment but he should be arriving shortly. Ms. Terry then welcomed everyone in attendance and she called for a motion to approve the minutes of the January 26, 2017 Executive Committee meeting.

MOVED BY DOUGLAS ALBERTSON, SECONDED BY MICHAEL MARCINIEC, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 26, 2017 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING AS PRESENTED.

Ms. Terry asked if there were any comments, corrections or questions concerning the minutes of the January 26, 2017 Executive Committee meeting but none were forthcoming.

THERE BEING NO QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS, THE MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 26, 2017 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING WERE APPROVED WITH ONE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER, GEORGE KINGSTON, ABSTAINING FROM THE VOTE.

2. Warrant/Financial Reports

Ms. Terry asked PVPC Accountant Lisa Edinger to offer her comments on the January warrant and Ms. Edinger stated that she wanted to highlight four items appearing on the check listing. Ms. Edinger first referred to check #15468 in the amount of \$3,000, payable to Marcotte Ford, and she explained that this is the down payment for PVPC's 3 year lease of a new Ford Escape vehicle. At this point, Ms. Terry welcomed Commission Chair Walter Gunn. After conferring with Ms. Terry, Mr. Gunn assumed his role as Chair of the Executive Committee meeting and he asked Ms. Edinger to continue with her review of the January warrant. Ms. Edinger next highlighted check #15471 in the amount of \$5,433, payable to the Behavioral Health Network, Inc., noting that this payment is for consultant work required for PVPC's Domestic Violence Prevention Services projects. Ms. Edinger also highlighted check #15477 in the amount of \$19,290.62, payable to the

Commonwealth of Massachusetts/GIC, which is the balance due on PVPC's quarterly employer share of the health insurance coverage for PVPC staff. Finally, Ms. Edinger referred to check #15491 in the amount of \$28,913.84, payable to the Massachusetts State Employees Retirement System (MSERS) for required employee payroll deductions. Ms. Edinger stated that she wanted to highlight this payment because MSERS now has an updated system and they are now asking for the PVPC's payment to be made with each payroll instead of on a monthly basis.

Ms. Edinger next reviewed a report entitled *Pioneer Valley Planning Commission Financial Summary Profile* which lists PVPC's account balances through February 22, 2017. Ms. Edinger explained that funds were transferred to PVPC's *General Checking Account* from the *General Savings* and *Line of Credit* due to a tight cash flow situation and she noted that PVPC is still awaiting payment of its 2017 District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) funds in the amount of \$254,000, a state payment which is expected to arrive soon. Ms. Edinger also noted that the *Route 9 Account* has decreased slightly because PVPC is sharing the costs of analysis work needed for the Inland Route Passenger Rail project with the Capitol Region Council of Governments. Following Ms. Edinger's financial update, Mr. Gunn moved to take up agenda item 3.

3. Authorization for the Executive Director to Negotiate and Execute a Mutually Acceptable Contractual Agreement With the Massachusetts Department of Transportation for a Federal Transit Administration-Funded Section 5303 Project in Support of Transit Planning Work Tasks Which the PVPC Will Perform During FFY 2017-2018 as Outlined in the Region's Current, Approved Unified Planning Work Program

Mr. Brennan stated that he is reporting on behalf of PVPC Principal Planner and Transportation Section Manager Dana Roscoe who is in East Longmeadow this afternoon and thus unable to attend today's Executive Committee meeting. Mr. Brennan noted that this is PVPC's standard annual contract for federal transit planning funds from the Federal Transit Administration of the US Department of Transportation. Mr. Brennan added that this contract encompasses a 2017-2018 Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funding allocation and he explained that these funds are used to support all of PVPC's transit work that is predominantly consumed by the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVTA).

After Mr. Brennan responded to several information questions, Mr. Gunn called for a motion to address agenda item 3.

MOVED BY LYNN ARNOLD, SECONDED BY GEORGE KINGSTON, TO AUTHORIZE THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO NEGOTIATE AND EXECUTE A MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE \$218,039 CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENT WITH THE MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FOR A FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION-FUNDED SECTION 5303 PROJECT IN SUPPORT OF TRANSIT PLANNING WORK TASKS WHICH THE PVPC WILL PERFORM DURING FFY 2017-2018 AS OUTLINED IN THE REGION'S CURRENT, APPROVED UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM.

Mr. Gunn asked if there were any questions or comments regarding the subject motion but none were forthcoming.

THERE BEING NO QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS, THE MOTION WAS UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

4. Authorization for the Executive Director to Negotiate and Execute a Mutually Acceptable Contractual Agreement With the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) for the PVPC to Provide Technical Support Services to DPH's "Mass.inMotion" Program and its Applicable Grantees

Mr. Brennan stated this is a contract that the PVPC has had with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) for many years and he remarked that DPH is clearly happy with PVPC's work. Mr. Brennan explained that the communities are working on initiatives involving healthy activities to improve the health care statistics of their community. Mr. Brennan stated that DPH is allocating funds for this purpose, noting that only Mass In Motion communities designated by the state are eligible to receive this assistance.

Mr. Gunn then called for a motion to address agenda item 4.

MOVED BY LYNN ARNOLD, SECONDED BY JUDY TERRY, TO AUTHORIZE THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO NEGOTIATE AND EXECUTE A MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE \$35,000 CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENT WITH THE MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH (DPH) IN ORDER FOR THE PVPC TO PROVIDE TECHNICAL SUPPORT SERVICES UNDER THE PROVISIONS OF DPH'S "MASS IN MOTION" PROGRAM AND TO ITS APPLICABLE GRANTEEES.

Mr. Gunn asked if there were any questions regarding the subject motion but none were forthcoming.

THERE BEING NO FURTHER COMMENTS OR QUESTIONS, THE MOTION WAS UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

At this point, Mr. Gunn welcomed Catherine Ratte, PVPC Principal Planner, Land Use & Environmental Section Manager, and he asked if she would also like to comment on this project. Ms. Ratte explained that this is related to PVPC's Healthy Community Design Toolkit and the PVPC is receiving another year of funding from DPH to provide support to Mass In Motion certified communities which are mostly located in western Massachusetts. Ms. Ratte stated that PVPC will focus on helping the communities understand how equity concerns are affecting the health of their residents, especially their vulnerable residents who may be struggling with additional health problems because of their economic status. Ms. Ratte noted that the Mass In Motion communities in Western Massachusetts include all those comprising the Franklin and Berkshire regions; the Cities of Holyoke and Springfield; the Towns of Palmer and West Springfield; and Healthy Hampshire which comprises the City of Northampton plus the Towns of Amherst, Belchertown and Williamsburg. In addition, Ms. Ratte noted that DPH would also like us to serve the City of Worcester. Ms. Ratte stated that DPH is hiring the PVPC to conduct statewide work and the PVPC is concentrating its activities mostly in central and western Massachusetts.

5. Authorization for the Executive Director to Negotiate and Execute a Mutually Acceptable Contractual Agreement With the City of Northampton, Acting on Behalf of the Town of Williamsburg, in Order for the PVPC to Assist and Support Williamsburg's Tactical Urbanism Planning Initiative

Mr. Gunn again called on Principal Planner Catherine Ratte to address agenda item 5. Ms. Ratte stated that the City of Northampton had received a grant award from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and she noted that Wayne Feiden, Director of Planning and Sustainability for the City of Northampton, had advertised mini grants for the Hilltowns to help promote walking and biking. Ms. Ratte stated that PVPC's Environment and Land Use Senior Planner Dillon Sussman responded on behalf of Healthy Hampshire to conduct this work in the Town of Williamsburg which involves organizing an educational day focusing on walking and biking. In response to a question raised by Mr. Gunn, Ms. Ratte explained that *Tactical Urbanism* is a tool in the planning profession that has emerged largely from residents who are discouraged with how much time it takes to obtain permits to improve conditions within their communities. By way of example, Ms. Ratte noted that if residents want to demonstrate to their town officials that a bike lane is a good idea for their community, the residents might take it upon themselves to paint the bike lane and she pointed out that this is usually done in collaboration with the government of the affected municipality. As regards the Town of Williamsburg, Ms. Ratte remarked that this initiative is being referred to as *Tactical Urbanism* but it is more of a community celebration day with all relevant activities approved in advance and all necessary permits obtained.

Following a series of clarifying questions, Mr. Gunn called for a motion to address agenda item 5.

MOVED BY T.J. COUSINEAU, SECONDED BY LYNN ARNOLD, TO AUTHORIZE THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO NEGOTIATE AND EXECUTE, A MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENT, NOT TO EXCEED \$8,000, WITH THE CITY OF NORTHAMPTON, ACTING ON BEHALF OF THE TOWN OF WILLIAMSBURG, IN ORDER FOR THE PVPC TO ASSIST AND SUPPORT WILLIAMSBURG'S TACTICAL URBANISM PLANNING INITIATIVE.

Mr. Gunn asked if there were any questions regarding the subject motion but none were forthcoming.

THERE BEING NO FURTHER COMMENTS OR QUESTIONS, THE MOTION WAS UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

6. Review, Discussion and Potential Action on a Proposed Transition Plan for the Commission's Land Use/Environment Section Emanating From the Planned Retirement of PVPC Chief Planner Christopher Curtis as of March 31, 2017

Mr. Gunn reported that due to recent developments, agenda item 6 is now being presented for informational purposes only. Mr. Brennan noted that at the January Executive Committee meeting he provided Executive Committee members with a memo from PVPC's Environment and Land Use Chief Planner, Section Manager Chris Curtis and Principal Planner, Section Manager Catherine Ratte regarding Mr. Curtis' proposed retirement. In response to a discussion which took place at that meeting, Mr. Brennan stated that he followed through on two requests made by Executive Committee members. Mr. Brennan noted that the first request was to obtain a signed letter from Mr. Curtis stating that he is indeed retiring and as of a specific date certain. Mr. Brennan reported that he met with Mr. Curtis and Ms. Ratte following the January 26<sup>th</sup> Executive

Committee after which Mr. Curtis provided a signed memorandum to this effect as the Executive Committee had requested. Mr. Brennan referred to a memo dated February 17, 2017, signed by Chris Curtis, which he noted has been distributed to Executive Committee members for their information and reference.

Mr. Brennan stated that the second assignment given him by the Executive Committee was to check and make sure that any post-retirement employment between the PVPC and Mr. Curtis is legal under all terms of the State Retirement Board. Mr. Brennan stated that he looked into that and based on Mr. Curtis' original request, Executive Committee members would have needed to review and act as early as today. By way of background, Mr. Brennan explained that, in the past, there have been several PVPC retired staff members who were contracted to perform work for a finite period of time but they were retained as consultants. Mr. Brennan stated that after he had talked to Mr. Curtis about this, Mr. Curtis subsequently informed him that he would be happy to follow the same precedent that PVPC had utilized in the past. Mr. Brennan noted that such a post retirement engagement is now under discussion and Mr. Curtis is aware of all the State Retirement Board's limits and rules. Mr. Brennan explained that Mr. Curtis would be working as a consultant on an hourly basis only until the end of the current fiscal year on June 30, 2017, especially given that more certainty is needed regarding the future status of federal budgets and federal programs going into Federal Fiscal Year 2018 and beyond. At this point, Mr. Brennan responded to several questions raised by Executive Committee members. Mr. Marciniac expressed serious concerns that a former section head will continue working in the same department and he underscored that it is important to be clear regarding who will be in charge of that department. Mr. Brennan stated that Ms. Ratte will act as the sole Section Head until at least the beginning of the new fiscal year and Mr. Curtis will no longer be a regular employee or manager. Ms. Ratte explained that Mr. Curtis would be working outside of the PVPC office and his work will be focused on only three specific projects and that Mr. Curtis would meet with the staff at least once per month. Mr. Brennan said he has asked Deputy Director Jim Mazik to try and prepare a mutually acceptable post retirement contractual agreement which the Executive Committee will be kept informed about at future meetings. At this point, Mr. Gunn moved on to take up agenda item 7.

7. Authorization for the Executive Director to Negotiate and Execute a Mutually Acceptable Contractual Agreement With the Massachusetts Office of Technical Assistance – Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs in Order for the PVPC to Provide Information and Training Focused on the Enhanced Importance of Chemical Safety Practices Given Increasing Erratic and Unpredictable Severe Weather Conditions Linked to Climate Change

Mr. Gunn once again called on Principal Planner Catherine Ratte to address this agenda item. Ms. Ratte stated that the PVPC was one of eight regional planning agencies (RPAs) in the Commonwealth that had received a grant award from the Massachusetts Office of Technical Assistance (OTA), noting that this is a small grant that is intended to provide two trainings. Ms. Ratte explained that one of the trainings is aimed at community officials and leaders on new regulations related to the management of chemical spills that incorporate an awareness of climate change. The second training will be targeted at large chemical users and is designed to train them on the most current, safe practices for handling chemicals. In response to a question from Mr. Kingston, Ms. Ratte stated that the PVPC will promote the trainings and OTC will hire qualified consultants that will provide the trainings and she asked Executive Committee members to let her know if they can recommend someone to conduct the trainings based in the PVPC's planning district. Mr. Kingston noted that Eastman Chemical Company is the largest chemical employer in our area and he pointed out that there are numerous experts at Eastman who are knowledgeable about chemical safety practices. Mr. Kingston suggested contacting Eastman's plant manager to see if they might be willing to provide someone on staff to conduct these trainings. Ms. Ratte said this was an excellent idea and that she would follow up on it.

Mr. Gunn then called for a motion to address agenda item 7.

MOVED BY LYNN ARNOLD, SECONDED BY JUDY TERRY, TO AUTHORIZE THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO NEGOTIATE AND EXECUTE A MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENT, NOT TO EXCEED \$9,950, WITH THE MASSACHUSETTS OFFICE OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE – EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS IN ORDER FOR THE PVPC TO PROVIDE INFORMATION AND TRAINING FOCUSED ON THE ENHANCED IMPORTANCE OF CHEMICAL SAFETY BEST PRACTICES GIVEN INCREASING, ERRATIC AND UNPREDICTABLE SEVERE WEATHER CONDITIONS THAT ARE LINKED TO CLIMATE CHANGE.

Mr. Gunn asked if there were any questions regarding the motion for agenda item 7 but none were forthcoming.

THERE BEING NO FURTHER COMMENTS OR QUESTIONS, THE MOTION WAS UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

8. Authorization for the Executive Director to Negotiate and Execute a Mutually Acceptable Contractual Agreement With Madeline Culpo, d.b.a. White Terrace Realty, Incorporated, in Order for the PVPC to Provide Historic Tax Credit and Related Assistance and Support Services for the White Terrace Apartments Redevelopment Project in Pittsfield

Mr. Gunn called on James Mazik, PVPC Deputy Director for Operations and Community Development Section Manager to address this agenda item. Mr. Mazik reminded Executive Committee members that the PVPC is looking into taking on some existing contracts from PVPC's new Historic Preservation Planner, Shannon Walsh. He noted that as regards the contract with Madeline Culpo, d.b.a. White Terrace Realty, Incorporated, Ms. Walsh has completed the Massachusetts historic register nomination component and the PVPC would like to proceed with conducting the historic tax credit work. Mr. Mazik stated that the City of Pittsfield is in favor of PVPC's plans to work on this project and he noted that the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission has been contacted and the Executive Director has indicated their agency also does not have a problem with the PVPC conducting this work.

Mr. Gunn then called for a motion to address agenda item 8.

MOVED BY GEORGE KINGSTON, SECONDED BY MARK CAVANAUGH, TO AUTHORIZE THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO NEGOTIATE AND EXECUTE A MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENT, NOT TO EXCEED \$7,275.00, WITH MADELINE CULPO, D.B.A. WHITE TERRACE REALTY, INCORPORATED, IN ORDER FOR THE PVPC TO PROVIDE HISTORIC TAX CREDIT AND RELATED ASSISTANCE/SUPPORT SERVICES REQUIRED FOR THE WHITE TERRACE APARTMENTS REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT IN PITTSFIELD.

Mr. Gunn asked if there were any questions regarding the motion for agenda item 8 but none were forthcoming.

THERE BEING NO FURTHER COMMENTS OR QUESTIONS, THE MOTION WAS UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

At this point, as suggested by Mr. Brennan, Mr. Gunn stated that the next item to be discussed will be agenda item 10 (a).

9. Agenda Item 10 - Other Business

(a) Authorization for the Executive Director to Negotiate and Execute a Mutually Acceptable Contractual Agreement With Kim Lundgren Associates for a Portion of the Work on the City of Springfield Climate Action Resilience Plan, Specifically the Creation of a Project Website for the Tracking of the City's Work Reducing GHG Emissions, Reducing Vulnerability to Natural Hazards and Charting a Path to a Resilient City.

Mr. Gunn once again called on Principal Planner Catherine Ratte to address this agenda item. Ms. Ratte stated that this project is related to a contract that PVPC has with the City of Springfield to facilitate the City's Climate Action Resilience Plan (CARP). She noted that the PVPC wanted the City to have a website for their residents and city officials to be able to track the goals of the plan. Ms. Ratte remarked that Kim Lundgren is very knowledgeable in climate action sustainability and its related benchmarking approach noting that Ms. Lundgren served as the Climate Action Coordinator for the City of Arlington, Virginia and she was also hired by the International Council of Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI) Local Governments for Sustainability and opened ICLEI's Boston office. Ms. Ratte stated that Ms. Lundgren will create the website that the PVPC will, in turn, populate with data and content.

Mr. Gunn then called for a motion to address agenda item 10 (a).

MOVED BY DOUGLAS ALBERTSON, SECONDED BY T.J. COUSINEAU, TO AUTHORIZE THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO NEGOTIATE AND EXECUTE A MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENT, NOT TO EXCEED \$9,500, WITH KIM LUNDGREN ASSOCIATES FOR A PORTION OF THE WORK ON THE CITY OF SPRINGFIELD CLIMATE ACTION RESILIENCE PLAN, SPECIFICALLY THE CREATION OF A PROJECT WEBSITE FOR THE TRACKING OF THE CITY'S WORK REDUCING GHG EMISSIONS, REDUCING VULNERABILITY TO NATURAL HAZARDS AND CHARTING A PATH TO A RESILIENT CITY.

Mr. Gunn asked if there were any questions regarding the subject motion but none were forthcoming.

THERE BEING NO FURTHER COMMENTS OR QUESTIONS, THE MOTION WAS UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

At this point, Mr. Gunn moved to take up agenda item 10.

10. Agenda Item 9 - Executive Director's Highlights

Mr. Brennan stated that at the February 16<sup>th</sup> Commission meeting, the Commission certified PVPC's new local annual assessment fees for Fiscal Year 2018, noting that we agreed to increase the assessment rate slightly by 2.4%. Mr. Brennan reported that the advance notices have been prepared and they were sent out today to the Treasurers and Boards of Assessors in the PVPC's 43 member communities. Mr. Brennan also noted that at our last Commission meeting, we took up a proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2018 and as is our normal practice, the proposed budget report will be sent out to all Commissioners and Alternates for review and feedback. Mr. Brennan added that the PVPC's Fiscal Year 2018 budget will be included on the agenda of the April 10<sup>th</sup> Commission meeting for a final vote.

Mr. Brennan next reported that the Planning Commission has received more applications this year than any other year for District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) and he noted that seven planning projects have been approved. Mr. Brennan added that the companion list of shared services projects is not yet finalized and will need to be settled soon.

As regards the June 15, 2017 Annual Meeting, Mr. Brennan reported that this year the event will take place in a community in the Hampshire portion of the planning district and he noted that one location that is being investigated is *Mill 180* in the City of Easthampton. Mr. Brennan stated that this is an old mill building that was purchased by a couple who own a software company. He added that they have created a mixed use environment which includes an indoor public park and they are trying to use the space to test out the software they develop. Mr. Brennan pointed out that there are some logistical issues that must be carefully considered, however, we are pursuing this idea to see if it might work out as a possible venue for the PVPC's 2017 Annual Meeting. Mr. Brennan also stated that he would be happy to entertain any other suggestions that Executive Committee members would like to offer.

Mr. Brennan next reported that the February 28<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) was cancelled for lack of an agenda and he noted that the next MPO meeting will take place on Tuesday, March 28<sup>th</sup> from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 Noon. Mr. Brennan also noted that a *Mass Moves* workshop will be held in Springfield on March 28<sup>th</sup> which is part of a statewide series of 9 workshops that will be taking place across the Commonwealth. Mr. Brennan noted that members of the State Senate, particularly from western Massachusetts, will be attending the *Mass Moves* session and he stated that this workshop is mostly about a future vision for transportation for the Commonwealth in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

Mr. Brennan reported that a planned rail briefing for the Western Massachusetts Legislative Delegation has been postponed until March due to a conflict with a Massachusetts Municipal Association event. Mr. Brennan stated that the rail briefing has been postponed until March 20<sup>th</sup> so that more members of the western Massachusetts State Delegation can attend and participate.

Mr. Brennan next reported that the PVPC is hosting another meeting of the Massachusetts Gaming Commission's Local Community Mitigation Advisory Committee which will take place on March 20<sup>th</sup> here at the PVPC at 3:00 p.m.

Mr. Brennan stated that no feedback was received regarding rail priorities since our December meeting with Transportation Secretary Stephanie Pollack, nor was there any response to a follow-up memo about next steps that was sent to MassDOT. Mr. Brennan stated that he therefore urged them to set up a meeting which will now take place at MassDOT in Boston on March 7<sup>th</sup>.

Finally, Mr. Brennan reported that earlier today there was a meeting here at the PVPC of our Valley Development Council with representatives from the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). Mr. Brennan pointed out that last spring DHCD came here to the PVPC to talk about their Starter Home Zoning Districts and he noted that DHCD will likely issue draft regulations by the end of February. Mr. Brennan pointed out that this is a very complicated topic and he indicated he was not sure how much traction it will get among western Massachusetts cities and towns. Mr. Brennan stated that it is really designed to get more starter housing in the eastern part of the state which has severe problems with both the supply and cost of housing units.

At this point, Mr. Brennan asked Mr. Mazik if there are any problems with projects that he would like to discuss. Mr. Mazik stated that he would like to provide updates on two projects. Mr. Mazik first talked about a situation related to the Home Modification Loan Program and he reported that a draft settlement agreement with the parties is moving forward and this problem will soon be resolved. Mr. Mazik stated that the second issue involves the Regional Municipal Shared

Accounting Program with the Town of Chesterfield. Mr. Mazik noted that initially both the Towns of Chesterfield and Blandford were to be involved in this program, however, the Town of Blandford decided not to move forward because at the time they felt that the accounting costs were too high. Mr. Mazik reported that going into Year 3 of our contract, the accounting firm has informed us that they want to increase their fee from \$18,500 to \$25,000. Mr. Mazik pointed out that there are several options that will need to be discussed and he noted that he wants to protect the Town's interest and make sure they receive the service. At this point, Mr. Cousineau stated that the Town of Blandford would now like to reconsider the idea of participating in the shared accounting program and he asked Mr. Mazik to contact their Town Administrator, Angeline Ellison. Mr. Cousineau also asked for Mr. Mazik's email address so that Ms. Ellison could get in touch with him.

After Mr. Mazik had completed his update, Ms. Terry asked if there was any new information regarding the discussion about recreational marijuana and if the model bylaw will be forthcoming. Mr. Brennan stated that the PVPC is planning to work on this. He noted that PVPC staff intends to use the same approach as was used with medical marijuana and he stated that PVPC Senior Planner Larry Smith will convene a work group of local professional planners from several communities. Mr. Brennan also underscored that we likely need to wait for the draft regulations in order to fashion a reliable model. A discussion followed and Mr. Brennan replied to a series of questions raised by Executive Committee members. Mr. Brennan suggested that he could explore the option of trying to find a lawyer to come in and talk about this, however, he cautioned that there are a lot of unknowns and it will likely remain that way for awhile. Ms. Terry stated that she intends to bring up this topic at the Rural Policy Advisory Commission meeting, noting that they have already started some discussions in the small work groups. Mr. Brennan also pointed out that there are legislators that we could connect with in terms of any kind of legislative changes and he remarked that the State Legislature has just created a Joint Task Force which from our region includes State Senator James Welch and State Representative Aaron Vega.

Mr. Gunn asked if there was any other business to discuss. There being no further business for the Executive Committee to conduct, Chairman Gunn adjourned the February 23<sup>rd</sup> Executive Committee meeting at 5:03 p.m. without objection.

Respectfully Submitted,

Douglas Albertson, Secretary/Clerk

List of Documents and Other Items Distributed at the February 23, 2017 Meeting

1. Executive Committee February 23, 2017 Meeting Agenda and Suggested Motions
2. Executive Committee January 26, 2017 Meeting Minutes
3. PVPC Warrant: January 1, 2017 through January 31, 2017
4. PVPC Financial Summary Profile as of February 22, 2017
5. Staff Memo of Christopher Curtis dated 2-17-17