

Western Connecticut Economic Development Alliance

Appendix B

Agendas of CEDS Steering/Coordinating Committee Meetings

Minutes of CEDS Steering/Coordinating Committee Meetings

Agendas and Minutes of the Housatonic Valley Council of Elected Officials

Notes of Focus Group Meetings

Copies of Relevant News Articles



WESTERN CONNECTICUT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ALLIANCE

MEETING – October 17, 2012; 10:00-11:00 A.M.

**Greater Danbury Chamber of Commerce
39 West St., Danbury CT**

AGENDA

- 1) Introductions
- 2) Mark Waterhouse, Garnet Consulting Services---To kick-off the start of the CEDS process
- 3) Paul Steinmetz, Associate Vice President of Institutional Advancement, Western Connecticut State University---To discuss the University's involvement in the CEDS process
- 4) Committee Reports
- 5) Decision on Next Meeting and CEDS follow up
- 6) Adjourn



WESTERN CONNECTICUT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ALLIANCE

MEETING – November 19, 2012 - 10:00 A.M.

**Greater Danbury Chamber of Commerce
39 West St., Danbury CT**

AGENDA

CEDS Related Work Accomplished in the Past 30 Days:

- Master Research List created and reviewed with HVCEO staff
- Review of materials received by consultants underway
- Community-specific research list created (see #2 below)

Work Items for Today:

1) Creation of Master Interview List:

Names, affiliations, contact info for any people you believe the consultants should interview individually or include in focus groups during this project:

- Representative major employers in the study area
- Municipal officials (elected, appointed or staff)
- Western CT State University
- Your economic development allies (state, regional, utility, etc.)
- One or more individuals who can provide a summary of existing and planned infrastructure (roads, rail, public water, public sewer, natural gas, electric, and telecom service providers) serving your area
- School administrators
- Leading area commercial/industrial real estate brokers and developers for general commercial space (office, R&D, industrial, distribution, retail)
- Others you think appropriate

2) Review of Community Information Request Form
(see attached draft and will be available at the meeting)

3) Review of Proposed Public Input Process

4) CEDS Committee Composition Review

5) Schedule Review



WESTERN CONNECTICUT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ALLIANCE CEDS COORDINATING COMMITTEE MEETING

March 4, 2013 - AGENDA

**Meeting Time/Location: 10:30-1:00; HVCEO Office
162 Whisconier Road, Brookfield, CT 06804**

1. Selection of Final Focus Groups Topics

(Part of our public engagement process, as well as an important source of ideas for the CEDS Plan, is conducting 6-8 topic or sector meetings of 10 to 15 people who are knowledgeable about a specific topic. While we have had preliminary discussions about this process, we have not as yet actually identified the topic meetings to be held. Preliminary ideas included: Branding Western Connecticut; Young Professionals and Entrepreneurs; the Creative Economy; Advanced Research, Development and Manufacturing; Service Sector (WCHN); Retail Sector (Mall); others... We need to come-up with a final list of topic meetings, related invitations list, and begin to get them scheduled).

2. Strengths and Weaknesses Assessment

(This topic was covered in the four Focus Groups that NU facilitated for our WCEDA group. The attached Focus Group Strengths and Weaknesses table identifies related S&W comments. The attached Description of Positive Aspects and Pain Points further describes these comments. We need to take a look at those comments and suggestions, and add or refine as necessary).

3. Vision Statement

(An important element of the CEDS is an adopted Vision Statement. At this meeting, we will use a "Postcards from the Future" exercise to describe the area twenty years from now. Our Consultants will wordsmith our ideas into a Draft Vision Statement, which all WCEDA members will review and we will then tweak them into a Final Vision Statement).

4. CEDS Project Solicitation

(Another important element of the CEDS is the solicitation of potential economic

development projects, programs and initiatives from the region's communities and other key organizations. The CEDS document must show all the suggested projects and a shorter list of projects deemed "Vital" (EDA term). Some identified projects may become Initiatives in the CEDS Action Plan regardless of relevance to EDA. Our CEDS Committee needs to agree on the evaluation and ranking criteria and a document for soliciting projects. Attached is a draft Project Solicitation Memo. Also attached is a Project Description Form which shows suggested weighted criteria for ranking submitted projects).

5. Update CEDS Process Schedule

Review CEDS process activities and update Schedule as needed.



WESTERN CONNECTICUT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ALLIANCE

MEETING – March 20, 2012 - 10:00 A.M.

**Greater Danbury Chamber of Commerce
39 West St., Danbury CT**

AGENDA

1. CEDS Update

- **Selection of Final Focus Groups Topics**
- **Strengths & Weaknesses Assessment**
- **Survey of Area Businesses and Organizations**
- **Vision Statement**
- **Solicitation of Projects for CEDS Plan**
- **Excerpts of CEDS Draft Market Research**
- **Draft Minutes of March 4, 2013 WCEDA CEDS Minutes**
- **Next Steps**

2. Communications

3. Fund Raising

4. Old Business

5. New Business



WESTERN CONNECTICUT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ALLIANCE

MEETING – April 17, 2012 - 10:00 A.M.

**Greater Danbury Chamber of Commerce
39 West St., Danbury CT**

AGENDA

CEDS Related Work Items for Today:

- 1) Presentation of Demographic Analysis and Fiscal Overview by the Connecticut Economic Resource Center.
- 2) Final Review of Solicitation of CEDS Projects
- 3) Discussion of CEDS Business Survey
- 5) CEDS Schedule Review/Update
- 6) WCEDA Committee Reports
- 7) Other Business
- 8) Adjourn



WESTERN CONNECTICUT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ALLIANCE

MEETING – MAY 29, 2013

NOTE TIME: 9:00-10:30 A.M.

**Greater Danbury Chamber of Commerce
39 West St., Danbury CT**

AGENDA

1. CEDS ACTIVITIES

- **Presentation of Regional Economic Data by CERC**
(E-mailed with Agenda)
- **CEDS Vision Statement**
(E-mailed with Agenda)
- **CEDS Draft Business Survey**
(Web Link to Review Survey Monkey Draft)
<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/Mh2ohouseTEST>
- **CEDS Focus Group Meetings**
- **CEDS Project Solicitation**
- **Next Steps and Schedule**

2. WCEDA COMMUNICATIONS

- **Draft Press Release**
(E-mailed with Agenda)

3. WCEDA FUND RAISING

4. OLD BUSINESS

5. NEW BUSINESS



WESTERN CONNECTICUT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ALLIANCE CEDS COORDINATION COMMITTEE MEETING

August 21, 2013 - AGENDA

**Meeting Time/Location: 10:30-1:00; HVCEO Office
162 Whisconier Road, Brookfield, CT 06804**

1. Summary of Results from Focus Group Sessions
2. Summary of Responses from Employer Survey
3. Review of Draft 2 CERC Report
4. Discussion of Draft 2 Vision Statement
5. Working Lunch
6. Discussion of Draft 1 Goal Statements and Goal Ideas from the Committee
7. Discussion of Possible Objectives/Initiatives related to each Goal
8. Status of Project Submissions and Establishment of Prioritization Process
9. Other Discussion Items
10. Next Steps, Schedule, and Next Meeting



WESTERN CONNECTICUT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ALLIANCE CEDS COORDINATION COMMITTEE MEETING

OCTOBER 24, 2013

NOTE TIME: 9:30-11:30 A.M.

**Greater Danbury Chamber of Commerce
39 West St., Danbury CT**

AGENDA

1. Review/Modify/Prioritize WCEAD CEDS Initiatives
2. Review 1st Draft of WCEADA CEDS Report
3. Other Discussion Items
4. Schedule to Completion of WCEADA CEDS



WESTERN CONNECTICUT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ALLIANCE

MEETING – November 13, 2013

NOTE TIME: 9:00-11:00 A.M.

**Greater Danbury Chamber of Commerce
39 West St., Danbury CT**

AGENDA

1. CEDS ACTIVITIES

- **Presentation of CEDS Document**
(E-mailed with Agenda)
- **Consideration of CEDS Document for Endorsement**
- **Next Steps**

2. WCEDA COMMUNICATIONS

- **Draft WCEDA - CEDS Press Release**

3. WCEDA FUND RAISING

4. OLD BUSINESS

5. NEW BUSINESS

6. ADJOURN

Western CT Economic Development Alliance (WCEDA)

Meeting Notes for October 17, 2012

Attending: Hal Kurfehs, Town of Brookfield EDC / Coldwell Banker Scalzo Realty; Steve Bull, Greater Danbury Chamber of Commerce; Nick Gazetos, Savings Bank of Danbury; Luigi Fulinello, Town of New Milford; Jon Chew, HVCEO; Sally Herlihy, WCHC; Lisa Scalisi, Cultural Alliance of Western CT; Bruce Tuomala, City of Danbury; Jeff Ryer, Ryer Associates; Joy Strand, Town of Ridgefield EDC, Elizabeth Stocker, Town of Newtown; David Hannon, HVCEO; Mike Boyle, Base Industries and Bethel EDC. Also attending: Mark Waterhouse and Leslie Cosgrove, Garner Consulting Services; Paul Steinmetz, Western CT State University.

Hal Kurfehs- Called the meeting to order at 10:05 AM and welcomed strategy members and guests.

- 1) Introductions were made. Hal provided an overview of our progress with finalizing the funding and hiring a consultant to undertake the CEDS project.
- 2) Hal turned the discussion over to Mark Waterhouse who opened by reiterating the EDA requirements for committee makeup, pointing out that 51% of the committee must be from the private sector. He believed that we appropriately meet the EDA requirements. A brief description of the handout entitled "CEDS Work Program and Schedule" dated 10/15/12 was provided.

David Hannon recommended that the CEDS RFQ/RFP committee, chaired by Mike Boyle, and including committee members David Hannon, Sally Herlihy, Bruce Tuomala and Hal Kurfehs serve as the new CEDS steering committee. He also suggested that Luigi Fulinello and Elizabeth Stocker as additional members of the steering committee. Jeff Ryer expressed that others from the larger group should be added as well. Mark noted that while no rules are in place an appropriate number for the smaller steering committee would be around seven. Mike Boyle asked the consultants to describe the time commitment that committee members could expect. A discussion ensued. Hal asked that any board members who have an interest and time to serve on the CEDS steering committee contact him directly before the next full strategy board meeting.

Mark then turned to the subject regarding a community input process. He said that a process must be clarified as it is very important to include the public and to engage residents of the ten town region in the process. Meeting minutes would be required as is public engagement. It was noted that we currently maintain meeting notes and HVCEO puts them and other work on their web site for the public to see. Mark referenced Task 5 in the Work Program and Schedule. Sally Herlihy spoke in support of the consultant's recommendation for the frequency of meeting which will wax and wane as the process unfolds. The schedule will be decided upon by the committee once they review and discuss the work.

Mark noted that the EDA Philadelphia office appointed Margariette as a representative to CT. Now that we have our own rep, interaction and feedback between EDA and us should be more efficient.

Mark noted that the next step that they will take is the Task 3 documentation.

The number of public engagement and participation meetings will be determined at a later date. Mark provided examples from other CEDS and suggested that at a minimum we may expect 4-6 topic oriented meetings but that there were no hard rules on the number or type of meetings. Each town may or may not have a desire to hold a meeting in their community. Some towns may want to have joint meetings with another town. It is likely that HVCEO members will help to determine whether or not they want their own meeting. Also, towns that have economic development commissions or corporations will likely be very engaged in the process.

- 3) Paul Steinmetz noted that the University is supportive of the CEDS process and looks forward to participating with us together on the CEDS. Mark Waterhouse spoke of the university's history and support for economic development in our region. He worked directly with WCSU and Chuck Wrinn of the Housatonic Industrial Development Corp. on developing a program for students interested in economic development. The program was termed studies in regional development as it was not part of the economics department.

4) Committee Reports

Jeff Ryer reported on the status of fundraising and described the commitments that need follow up. We have approximately \$3,500 in commitments that are outstanding. Follow up funding is also sought for items such as marketing and future needs. Cash donations are required for our match of EDA funds. No in-kind contributions are allowed.

Joy Strand reported on the Media Committee. Hal noted that coordination between the Media and Fundraising Committees needs to occur. Sponsors of the CEDS process are noted on the HVECO website.

Hal wanted to speak about the CT Economic Resource Center (CERC) - **Celebrate CT 2012** awards event which is coming up on November 28th at the Bushnell Theatre in Hartford. The gala event recognizes contributions to the local economy - one for a company and the other for a project, program, organization or individual. Each region around the state decides on the two awards for their region.

Last year Matrix and Western CT Health Network (WCHN) received the regional awards. Several of us attended along with representatives of the companies.

Hal suggested that it would be appropriate for all members who could attend the event to do so. <http://www.cerc.com/Events/eventView.asp?EventID=22>

In terms of the 2012 event, several nominations were offered by members. The two that were selected and submitted are Boehringer Ingelheim and Kimchuck.

Hal requests and invited that someone from each town provide him with information that he can use for a write up on the region's current activities and successes. Also, any photos/images that you have which help to represent western CT are needed for the event. Members are welcome to submit information to Hal directly and he must submit all by November 1st. the link above can be used by members who wish to register.

The meeting adjourned at 10:50 AM.

Next Meeting: Monday, November 19, 2012 at 10 AM at the Danbury Chamber office

Prepared by
Elizabeth Stocker, AICP
203-270-4271

Shares\Economic Development\CEDS\WC CEDS\2012 Meeting Notes & Agendas\Meeting Notes for October 17 ,2012

Western CT Economic Development Alliance (WCEDA)

Meeting Notes for November 19, 2012

Attending: Hal Kurfehs, Brookfield EDC & Coldwell Banker Scalzo Commercial Realty; Mike Boyle, Base Technologies, Inc.; Steve Bull, Greater Danbury Chamber of Commerce; Luigi Fulinello, New Milford Economic Development; David Hannon, HVCEO; Sally Herlihy, WCHN; Jeff Ryer, Ryer Associates; Lisa Scails, Cultural Alliance of Western CT; Roy Steiner, Berkshire Corporate Park; Paul Steinmetz, WCSU; Bruce Tuomala, Danbury Economic Development

Also attending: Mark Waterhouse and Leslie Cosgrove, Garnet Consulting Services

Hal Kurfehs called the meeting to order at 10:04 am – introductions were made.

Jeff Ryer reported the fundraising is nearing achievement of its initial targeted goal, and there are several requests pending resolution. The committee is confident it will achieve the minimum required, and Dave Hannon indicated the Garnet/CERC team has been engaged. Plans are to continue fundraising in support of future initiatives.

David Hannon provided an update on the 20 page scope of work with Garnet and the efforts to identify the economic development reports, research and studies available for the region. There have been discussions on which data to share and potentially update as part of this project.

A draft of the suggested data request to be made to each municipality was reviewed. Discussion ensued and it was agreed that any comments on the draft information list shared today be provided to him by November 28th. Additionally, consistency of data provided from each town will be important, and Dave Hannon will help coordinate 1:1 meetings with Mark Waterhouse for each town to validate the information provided.

To help the process it was agreed that an informational meeting will be coordinated where Garnet could answer questions and clarify expectations on the responses. Correspondence will be developed for distribution to each elected official to share the data request, ask that someone be assigned responsibility for the data collection, along with an invitation to an informational session to learn more about the process. Dave Hannon will also highlight the timeline and activities at the Dec 6th HVCEO meeting.

Tentative dates for the informational sessions were identified for December 12th in Danbury and December 19th in New Milford.

Hal Kurfehs mentioned he has received a follow-up request from the Danbury New Times on progress of activities for preparation of the CEDS. The talking points previously developed by Joy Strand should be updated and can be distributed to all members for awareness. 2

Mark Waterhouse indicated the composition of the CEDS committee should be 51% or more representative of the private sector. Following discussion it was indicated that goal was achieved. Jeff Ryer asked whether there should be an ongoing approach to reviewing and expanding the CEDS Committee as needed, and it was noted that adjustments can be made as warranted and interest is expressed through the public engagement activities.

Mark Waterhouse then initiated discussion of the public engagement phase and potential activities to capture community input from the ten towns. Dave Hannon, Jonathan Chew, Mark Waterhouse and Leslie Cosgrove will develop a summary of the approaches, pros and cons, and recommendations based on other CEDS processes that have worked for the committee members to consider. Lisa Scails inquired how the previous focus group material will get included. Mark will obtain the write-ups and incorporate that foundation in the approach.

The meeting adjourned at 11:05 am.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, January 16, 2013

Prepared by: Sally Herlihy, WCHN

WCEDA
CEDS Coordinating Committee
March 4, 2012

Meeting Topics & Highlights Notes

Selection of Final Focus Groups Topics

Part of our public engagement process, as well as an important source of ideas for the CEDS is conducting topic or sector meetings of 10 to 15 people who are knowledgeable about a specific topic. The Coordinating Committee headed up by Mike Boyle discussed the four focus groups previously facilitated by Liz Adams from Northeast Utilities and discussed augmenting them to include:

- Advanced Manufacturing
- Life Sciences
- Retail & Downtown Services
- Affordable Housing

Another one could be added if deemed necessary in the future. Possible participants and group leaders were identified. Steve Bull, President of the Greater Danbury Chamber of Commerce would be contacted.

Strengths & Weaknesses Assessment

Two handouts regarding the four focus groups that took place in 2010 and in 2011 were reviewed. The first was a list of the strengths (positive aspects) and weaknesses (pain points) identified at the four sessions. The second was a matrix of the four focus groups using bullets and abbreviated wording noting the individual category or attribute such as:

- Opportunities
- Location
- Schools
- Amenities
- Quality of Life
- Diversity
- Workforce
- Infrastructure
- Transportation
- Taxes
- Other areas of importance

The Coordinating Committee thought that even though the sessions were held in 2010 and in 2011, the information was still relevant. Mark Waterhouse presented a business survey form that could be used to identify the strengths and weakness of Western Connecticut as a business location, a section on evaluating infrastructure and assistance programs and identifying future business opportunities. Using Survey Monkey was the preferred way to get the responses. Suggestions included:

- Adding an explanation for each category
- Asking the chambers to be drivers and include on their weekly general discussion
- Ask the CEDS Committee to do outreach
- Send to the CEO in the city and towns and ask them to distribute them as well

Vision Statement

One of the elements in creating a CEDS is the creation of a Vision Statement. In an exercise “Postcards from the Future”, members of the Coordinating Committee were asked to imagine visiting the Greater Danbury Region in the year 2033 and sending a postcard home describing the region and to write down words or a series of words to describe the region in twenty years. Each person read their descriptions which will be incorporated into a draft vision statement by the consultant team.

CEDS Project Solicitation

A project solicitation form presented by Mark Waterhouse was reviewed and it was decided that the area would be called the Western Connecticut Region. One of the required steps in the CEDS is to solicit projects/initiatives from the municipalities and then prioritize the projects in the region according to evaluation criteria that has been developed.

These projects may or may not receive funding from the government, but must be listed for consideration in the CEDS.

The group made recommendations:

- Include more detail in the cover letter
- Emphasize why this is important
- The consultant team should have “face time” with the communities
- Discuss at the upcoming HVCEO meeting on March 21st
- Send out the form to the HVCEO CEO’s in advance of the meeting and include an update on the progress made to date and note appreciation for the community participation in providing data to the consultant team (Dave Hannon will prepare)

If necessary, Leslie Cosgrove would be willing to attend the meeting to answer questions.

Also discussed was the need for scheduling a full CEDS Committee meeting.

Update Process Schedule

Dave Hannon distributed a revised chart of the schedule for CEDS Activities. The previous one had been distributed in November 2013. Jon Chew thought it was better to take the necessary time to complete the process in a comprehensive manner and not be totally rigid to a schedule. A September/fall completion date was cited.

**Western Connecticut
Economic Development Alliance
(WCEDA)**

Meeting Notes for March 20, 2013

Members Attending: Hal Kurfehs, Mike Boyle, Luigi Fulinello, David Hannon, Jon Chew, Jeff Ryer, Lisa Scails, Roy Steiner, Bruce Tuomala, Gerard Casiello and Joy Strand. Also attending were consultants Leslie Cosgrove and Bob Santy.

Chair Hal Kurfehs called the meeting to order at 10:05 AM. Introductions were made.

Jeff Ryer gave the fund raising committee report. He stated that \$29,500 had been received, close to the phase 1 goal of \$30,000.

CEDS Steering Committee Chair Mike Boyle reviewed progress with items reviewed at the recent March 4 Steering Committee meeting. These are selection of final focus group topics, strengths and weaknesses assessment, survey of businesses and organizations, vision statement, and solicitation of projects for the plan.

There was then considerable discussion of each of these items.

Bob Santy of CERC then gave a report on data development. Some initial draft products were distributed and discussed.

There was then additional discussion on the project solicitation process and other items.

The meeting was then concluded at approximately 11 AM.

Western CT Economic Development Alliance (WCEDA)

Meeting Notes for May 29, 2013

Attending: Hal Kurfehs, Town of Brookfield EDC / Coldwell Banker Scalzo Realty; Steve Bull, Greater Danbury Chamber of Commerce; Nicholas Gazetos, Savings Bank of Danbury; Sally Herlihy, WCHC; Lisa Scalis, Cultural Alliance of Western CT; Joy Strand, Town of Ridgefield EDC; Morgan Julo, Ridgefield First Selectman's Office Intern; Elizabeth Stocker, Town of Newtown; David Hannon, HVCEO; Mike Boyle, Base Industries and Bethel EDC; Bob Santy, CERC; Janice Chrzescyanek, Town of Bethel; Bill Shannon, BEDC; Mark Waterhouse, Garnet Consulting Services; Leslie Cosgrove, Garnet Consulting Services; Carmel Ford, CERC; Matthew Ross, CERC; Alyssa DeJonge, CERC; Jerry Casiello, Redding SCORE; Roy Steiner, Berkshire Corporate Park

Also attending: Paul Steinmetz, Western CT State University.

Hal Kurfehs- Called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM.

Alyssa DeJonge presented the data of the Economic Indicators: Western CT Region – Preliminary Findings May 29, 2013.

Western CT Regional Counties includes four counties: Fairfield, Litchfield, Putnam and Dutchess.

Nick: Northern Westchester County, New Haven County

Absolute numbers for:

Labor Market Area (LMA) would be useful when reviewing the occupational employment trends. Linkages between the fuel cell industry and state's comprehensive energy policy

Industry:

Financial information and some manufacturing sectors
High Income and educational levels will impact our strategy

Discussion:

Growth opportunities vs. expansion and retention disconnect between growth industries and focus for business retention.

Dave Hannon:

External forces impacting our economy were discussed / explained. The next assessments should be who/what and how we stack up.

Postcards from the Future:

16 responses were received. The draft vision statement was discussed. Discussion of adjectives ensued – quality of life issues, education and transportation are important and not addressed. “quality of place” peace and safety

Mark Waterhouse:

Survey reviewed. Typically it will take 15 minutes to fill in. The plan is to distribute to Greater Danbury Chamber and other chambers. Next week the survey will be distributed by email. A press release with a link will be issued. It is expected that the survey will be available in about two weeks. Discussion concerning distribution and tabulation.

June 18 – two focus groups to be conducted. Sally is the lead for the four focus groups:

- 1) Life sciences focus (Sally Herlihy)
- 2) Advanced manufacturing (Elizabeth Stocker)
- 3) Retail / downtown services (Andrea Gardner)
- 4) Affordable housing (Mark Nolan)

@ 8:30 and 10:30 AM life sciences

Seeking coordinators. Steve will get someone from Barden.

Solicitation of Projects:

Two received to date: HVCEO and New Milford

- 2) New Milford – Century Brass

All members of the committee will receive another email for the solicitation. Responses go back to Mark Waterhouse. Next steps and schedule: 5-7 weeks on a Wednesday

Draft Press Release distributed. Any comments in the next day or two must go to Mark.

Hal Kurfehs reported for Jeff Ryer on fundraising. We are about \$500 short of the goal.

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**WCEDACEDS Coordinating Committee
Meeting Notes
Greater Danbury Chamber of Commerce
August 21, 2013**

Attendees:

Michael Boyle
Stephen A. Bull
Janice Chrzescijanek
Leslie Cosgrove
Alissa DeJonge
Luigi Fulinello
David Hannon
Harold Kurfehs
Matt Ross
Robert Santy
Lisa Scails
Elizabeth Stocker
Bruce R. Tuomala
Mark D. Waterhouse

Meeting Topics & Highlights Notes

Call to Order

Chairman Mike Boyle called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m. and welcomed the group together. He explained that there was a great deal of work to accomplish during the meeting in order to keep on track with the CEDS project schedule.

Summary of Results from Focus Group Sessions

Hal Kurfehs gave an overview of the four focus group sessions held to date. He had attended and participated in them and thought the information provided by the participants was extremely helpful. Four have been held and an additional one concerning "Life Sciences" will be scheduled in the future:

- June 18, 2013 Retail & Downtown Services
- June 18, 2013 Advanced Manufacturing
- June 20, 2013 Affordable Housing
- August 20, 2013 Health Services

An update was given about the Healthcare Focus Group that was held the previous day. At the conclusion of that focus group session, interest was expressed in forming a regional health care collaborative organization.

More work is needed to identify the life science companies located in the region and a focus group on that topic will be scheduled.

Summary of Responses from Employer Survey

A letter from Mike Boyle had been sent out to the Presidents of the area Chambers of Commerce and to the Economic Development Coordinators asking for assistance in distributing the business survey/ questionnaire. This questionnaire will help the consulting team (Garnet Consulting Services, Inc. and the Connecticut Economic Resource Center) gain a clearer

understanding of the major strengths and weaknesses of the Western Connecticut Region as a place to operate a business and gain insight about the primary opportunities for economic growth.

The questionnaire has been put into the SurveyMonkey format which will allow for both ease of response and tabulation of responses. Responses were asked to be submitted by August 8th. Appreciation was expressed for the Chambers of Commerce and the staff of economic development offices that assisted in the distribution of the Business Survey.

Responses were received from businesses in all of the WCEDA communities, with most responses coming from the top four communities noted below:

- Danbury
- New Milford
- Bethel
- Brookfield

The top three business sectors responding to the survey were:

- Finance and Insurance
- Retail Trade
- Professional, Scientific & Technical Services

Nearly two thirds of the respondents were from businesses that have been in the region for ten or more years.

Businesses were asked to rate business infrastructure factors in Western Connecticut. Responses varied, depending on the business sector responding.

Overall, the group felt survey responses validated what appeared to be “reasonable on the ground business conditions and concerns” within the WCEDA area.

Review of Draft 2 CERC Report

Alissa DeJonge gave an overview of the CERC demographic and economic analysis work including the summary report and explained what the data means to the region. CERC staff was thanked for all their work in providing the economic data for the CEDS which included:

- Demographic
- Regional analysis
- Fiscal analysis
- Economic analysis
- Cluster analysis

This work is an important part of the CEDS and will be useful for the communities and their staff to use to obtain grants. Dave Hannon and Jonathan Crew had reviewed and provided comments on the CERC materials, which will be incorporated into the next draft of this analysis.

Discussion of Draft 2 Vision Statement

Responses provided by members of the Western Connecticut Economic Development Alliance (CEDS Committee & Steering Committee) to the first draft of the CEDS Vision Statement were used to modify the Vision Statement at the meeting to read:

In 2034, the Western Connecticut Region will be nationally known for its exceptional quality of place that attracts both businesses and people. The region's diverse communities will offer the education, housing, workforce skills, arts and culture, and infrastructure that make Western Connecticut a global leader in attracting, creating, and expanding businesses that promote innovation and effectively respond to the economy of the future. Its communities will be fiscally sound and its town centers and neighborhoods will be business centers and magnets for population growth that provide a growing labor force and support the region's retail and service businesses.

Discussion of CEDS Goal Statements

Four goals were discussed and adopted:

Goal 1: Economic Development Tools and Resources

Assure that the Western Connecticut Region and its communities have a full-service economic development program with the necessary tools and programs to support effective economic development efforts.

Goal 2: Workforce

Assure that the existing and future businesses of the Western Connecticut region have access to the workforce skills and training programs required for profitable business operations in the global economy of the future. Assure that the Region's workforce has access to high quality jobs and the programs and services necessary to keep their skills current.

Goal 3: Economic Expansion and Diversification

Carry out an aggressive set of business attraction, retention, expansion, creation, and transition programs and services to strengthen the Western Connecticut Region's existing sectors and clusters and grow new ones.

Goal 4: Creating Great Places

Continue and strengthen community and regional efforts to make the Western Connecticut Region a highly desirable place to live, work, play, and run a business.

Lisa Scails commented that the four goals were good ones and would provide for thriving economic development in the region when implemented.

Discussion of Possible Objectives/Initiatives related to each Goal

A number of possible initiatives were cited, such as establishing a regional permitting process for municipal approvals, a regional approach to standardizing tax abatements to stimulate economic development, inter-municipal and regional tax sharing of municipal economic development projects, inter-municipal cooperation in assisting business relocations within the WCEDA region, create a regional approach to annual site locators tour, regional capital development fund to support economic development and expansion, regional incubator projects, etc., all of which would need prioritization at a future meeting.

Status of Project Submissions and Establishment of Prioritization Process

Mark Waterhouse spoke about the project submissions from the communities. Dave Hannon had informed the CEO's of the communities that they would be asked to submit projects. A letter

had been sent out to the CEO's in the communities requesting suggested projects and project data:

- Status of project (planning stage or ready to go)
- Vision, scope & details
- Feasibility of project
- Budget
- Site control
- Land use process and permits
- Employment generated

Dave Hannon will follow-up with municipalities for any additional project submissions. The WCEDA CEDS Coordinating Committee will then review and prioritize projects for consideration by the full WCEDA CEDS Committee.

Other Discussion Items

Mike Boyle thought it was important to foster good working relationships and spoke about the importance of "planting seeds". Liz Stocker noted that there are savings to municipalities by working together regionally. The group supported an approach of-do our best to keep it (existing business or inquiring business) in the community; if that does not work, try to keep it in the WCEDA region; if that does not work, try to keep it in Connecticut.

Dave Hannon informed the group that the Housatonic Valley Council of Elected Officials will become a Council of Governments and discussions have been taking place with the CT Office of Policy and Management that has initiated the changes in the regions.

Incubators in the region were discussed. Newtown is working with Sacred Heart and Danbury is working on a private sector effort with the Mad Hackers and has invested over \$500,000 with the effort.

Keeping the public informed was noted and Hal Kurfehs would speak with the press.

Next Steps, Schedule, and Next Meeting

The Coordinating Committee then discussed the next steps in the CEDS process, the schedule of CEDS activities and set the date for the next meeting.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 1:25p.m.

**WCEDA CEDS Coordinating Committee
Meeting Notes
Greater Danbury Chamber of Commerce
October 24, 2013**

Attendees:

Michael Boyle
Stephen A. Bull
Janice Chrzescijanek
Leslie Cosgrove
Luigi Fulinello
David Hannon
Harold Kurfehs
Jean Leonard
Betsy Paynter
Robert Santy
Lisa Scails
Bruce R. Tuomala
Mark D. Waterhouse

Meeting Topics & Highlights Notes

Call to Order

Chairman Mike Boyle called the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m. and welcomed the group together and commented about how far the group had come from the initial view of creating a regional economic development plan.

Review/Modify/Prioritize WCEDA CEDS Initiatives

Mark Waterhouse gave an overview of the twenty-four (24) initiatives that had been identified and commented that it is necessary that the Coordinating Committee identify and prioritize the ones that will be recommended to the full CEDS Committee. The group went through a prioritization exercise and eight (8) were chosen:

- Objective 1 Organization and funding – Position WCEDA or establish a new organization as the designated entity to implement the CEDS goals and objectives, with adequate structure, staffing, funding and other resources.

- Objective 3 Business retention and expansion program – Develop and operate an effective business visitation, relationship building, information collection, and service provision program.

- Objective 4 Regional economic development infrastructure plan and improvements – Develop and implement a regional infrastructure plan specific to supporting economic development.

- Objective 5 Future Skills Needs Task Force – Establish a Future Skills Needs Task Force to continually identify new skills that will be needed by the region's employers and develop training programs or other methods to provide those skills when they are needed.

- Objective 6 Sector and cluster advisory groups – Create sector/cluster advisory groups for target sectors to identify tools, programs, and policies necessary to stimulate

growth in those sectors and clusters, including:

- Advanced manufacturing
- Value-added food manufacturing
- Wellness and life sciences
- Retail
- Financial services
- Logistics/distribution/wholesaling
- Arts & culture

Objective 7 Western Connecticut Cultural Center – Create a regional multi-purpose cultural center including space for the display of art as an attraction and destination. (Consider using the Charles Ives identity in the same fashion as the Rockwell Museum in Stockbridge, MA.)

Objective 8 Regional Main Street Program – Collaborate with the Connecticut Main Street program to establish and operate a regional Main Street program to support Town and village center revitalization and vibrancy with a focus on TOD and Complete Streets initiatives.

For each of the eight (8) Objectives/Initiatives, a template providing details to guide the implementation will be prepared and included in the CEDS/Action Agenda.

The priority projects were reviewed and the Four Corners project in Brookfield and the brown-fields project in Ridgefield would be added.

Review 1st Draft of WCEDA CEDS Report

Leslie Cosgrove noted that the present document at this stage is a rough draft and that there were technical issues due to the merging of various documents and charts. There is a later version of the data and text that reconciled some items that HVCEO staff had identified and will be used in the next draft version. She also noted that there would be more on the strengths assessment of the region and would include:

- The arts
- Transit oriented development and transportation
- Affordable housing
- Availability of commercial real estate in the region

Comments included:

- Approach should stay on the offence and stay focused.
- The Region needs to work together on the Action Agenda whether there is assistance or not from the state and federal agencies.
- Organization and funding should be included in the Executive Summary.

Other Discussion items

It was noted that it is the intent to ask for Economic District Designation and to make sure it is included in the document.

Bruce Tuomala noted that his priority focus in Danbury is to retain and grow businesses. Real estate is less expensive in Danbury than in lower Fairfield County. Key to Danbury's success is the widening of I-84 and interchange improvements, Mill Plain Road improvements from Exit 1 to Exit 4 and electrifying the Danbury Branch commuter rail line.

Completion Schedule

The following dates were noted for completion of the CEDS process:

- November 7 Draft modified and placed on HVCEO website
- November 8-9 Public review period begins
- November 13 Joint Meeting of WCEDA CEDS and Coordinating Committee
- November 21 Meeting with HVCEO
- December 9 Proposed end of Public Review Period
- December 12 Final Review
- December 16 Submission of document to EDA

Motion

The CEDS document was endorsed by acclamation for transmittal to the full WCEDA CEDS Committee.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:25 a.m.

**WCEDA CEDS Committee & CEDS Coordinating Committee
Meeting Notes
November 13, 2013**

Attendees:

Michael Boyle
Stephen A. Bull
Jonathan Chew
Gerald Casiello
Janice Chrzescijanek
Jonathan Chew
Carmel Ford
Luigi Fulinello
Ni David Hannon
Nicholas Gazetos
Sally F. Herlihy
Harold Kurfehs
Ned Moore
Maura Ruby
Jeffrey Ryer
Robert Santy
Lisa Scails
Paul Steinmetz
Bruce R. Tuomala
Mark D. Waterhouse

Meeting Topics & Highlights Notes

Call to Order

Chairman Hal Kurfehs called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m. and welcomed the group together. He acknowledged a number of people including Mike Boyle for heading up the Coordinating/Steering Committee, Jeff Ryer for his fundraising efforts, Lisa Scails for Publicity of the CEDS process, and Stephen Bull for the hospitality of the Greater Danbury Chamber in hosting CEDS related meetings. The Chairman expressed appreciation to all those who served on the various committees.

He noted that implementation of the CEDS was going to be important. *The Danbury New Times* is slated to run a story that will appear in the business section on a Sunday and Lisa Scails has prepared a press release.

He spoke about the Danbury Mall/Macerich Property and Neeltran from New Milford that will be recognized at Celebrate Connecticut on November 27th at the Bushnell in Hartford.

Mark Waterhouse gave an overview of both the process and the CEDS Document. The content included:

- Executive Summary
- Detailed Regional Data Analysis
 - Demographic Analysis
 - Fiscal Analysis

- Economic Analysis
- Cluster Synergies
- Competitive Assessment (Regional Strengths and Weaknesses)
- Regional Vision Statement
- Four Major Goals
- Eight Initial Objectives
- Seventeen Priority Projects

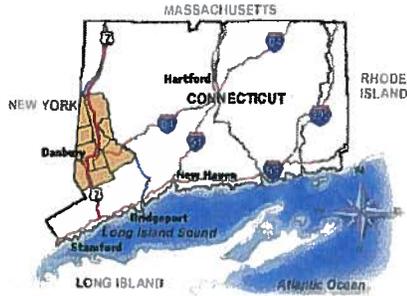
Bob Santy spoke about the importance of a public private partnership and it is where the two intersect that economic development really takes place. Jonathan Chew spoke about the TOD that HVCEO is working on. Dave Hannon addressed the issue about the consolidation of regional planning organizations in the state. There was concern that this might be another way of having a county government and Dave shared that the by-laws for the organizations do not allow the ability to tax. He sees the competitive advantage in Connecticut where there is not currently another layer (county) of government bureaucracy affecting economic development.

Motion

Upon a motion by Lisa Scails seconded by Nicholas Gazetos it was voted unanimously by the Western Connecticut Economic Development Alliance CEDS Committee to authorize the submission of the CEDS document to EDA with the edits recommended from this meeting and from comments received during the public review process pending authorization from HVCEO staff.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10:24 a.m.



**HOUSATONIC VALLEY
COUNCIL OF ELECTED OFFICIALS**

OLD BROOKFIELD TOWN HALL
162 WHISCONIER RD., BROOKFIELD, CT 06804
203-775-6256 HVCEO.ORG

**AGENDA FOR MEETING OF
THURSDAY, 1/17/2013 AT 12:30 PM**

BROOKFIELD TOWN HALL, SECOND FLOOR
100 POCONO ROAD, BROOKFIELD, CT 203-775-7300
BUFFET LUNCH 12:00 TO 12:30

NOMINATING COMMITTEE MEETING AT 12:15 PM

CHAIRMAN NEW FAIRFIELD FIRST SELECTMAN JOHN HODGE; VICE CHAIRMAN NEWTOWN FIRST
SELECTMAN PAT LLODRA; SECRETARY-TREASURER BETHEL FIRST SELECTMAN MATT KNICKERBOCKER

1. CALL TO ORDER

Determine Quorum; Pledge of Allegiance; Public Comment.

2. ADMINISTRATION AND SHORT ITEMS

- 2a. Minutes from meetings of 11/15/2012 and 12/6/2012, Item 2a.
- 2b. Financial Statements for 11/2012 and 12/2012, Item 2b.
- 2c. Amendments to Transportation Improvement Program, Item 2c.

3. EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT UPDATE

- 3a. Coordinating employee assistance programs, remarks
by Brookfield Chief of Police Robin Montgomery.
- 3b. Other emergency management items.

4. CULTURAL ALLIANCE UPDATE, remarks
by Cultural Alliance of Western CT Executive
Director Lisa Scails, with request for HVCEO
to make board appointment.



→ **5. REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN UNDERWAY**, introduction
by Dave Hannon, followed by remarks from Hal Kurfehs, Chair of the Western
CT Economic Development Alliance, and then economic plan consultants
Mark Waterhouse and Leslie Cosgrove of Garnet Consulting Services.

6. BOUNDARY REVIEW FOR GREATER DANBURY,
authorized 6/2012, PowerPoint by Jon Chew, Item 6.

7. NOMINATING COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT
Natalie Ketcham Chair, with Pat Murphy and Clay Cope.

8. OTHER BUSINESS; ADJOURNMENT
The 2/21 meeting will be held at Danbury Hospital and is
to include an update by the Western CT Health Network.

cc: Clerks, observers, hvceo.org
- Discutir la transportacion en
Espanol 203-775-6256

**HVCEO MEETING
MINUTES OF 1/17/2013
BROOKFIELD, CT TOWN HALL**

See page 4

MEMBERS ATTENDING

Bethel.....First Selectman Matthew Knickerbocker
Bridgewater.....Alternate Selectman Curtis Read
Brookfield.....First Selectman William Davidson
Danbury.....Mayor Mark Boughton
New Fairfield....First Selectman John Hodge, Chairman
New Milford.....Mayor Patricia Murphy
Newtown.....Absent
Redding.....First Selectman Natalie Ketcham
Ridgefield.....First Selectman Rudy Marconi
Sherman.....First Selectman Clay Cope

OTHERS ATTENDING

State Representative Cecelia Buck-Taylor, Brookfield Chief of Police Robin Montgomery, Redding Chief of Police Douglas Fuchs, Cultural Alliance of Western CT Executive Director Lisa Scails, Chair of the Western CT Economic Development Alliance Hal Kurfehs, Leslie Cosgrove of Garnet Consulting Services, Jennifer Atkins of the CT Light and Power Company, Edgar Wynkoop of CT DOT, Richard Schreiner and Paul Chenard of HART, Lynn Waller of Danbury, Director of the Downtown Danbury Services District Andrea Gartner, and from the HVCEO staff Camille Acquanita, David Hannon and Jonathan Chew.

CALL TO ORDER / PUBLIC COMMENT

The meeting was called to order by Chairman John Hodge at 12:30 PM after which attendees recited the Pledge of Allegiance. Pat Murphy introduced Cecelia Buck-Taylor, the new 67th District State Representative replacing Clark Chapin who was elected to the State Senate.

There was then public comment by Edgar Wynkoop of CT DOT, thanking members for their support during his first year as CT DOT coordinator to the region. There was then comment by Jennifer Atkins of the CT Light and Power Company. She spoke to storm preparedness and distributed copies of the 12/2012 CL&P Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan and related materials.

Lynn Waller of Danbury then expressed her thanks to Council members for their leadership during the recent Newtown tragedy and for providing comfort by quick organization of a Regional Tribute to Newtown at the O'Neill Center of Western Connecticut State University in Danbury on December 17.

Regarding the tribute, Natalie Ketcham praised the leadership of John Hodge for fast and effective organization of the event which attracted over two thousand persons. John Hodge stated that other key contributors were Wayne Shepperd and the City of Danbury staff, also WCSU President James Schmotter and his staff.

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

Minutes for 11/15/2012 and 12/6/2012: On a motion made by Bill Davidson and a second by Rudy Marconi, the minutes of the meetings of 11/15/2012 and 12/6/2012 were unanimously approved, except for an abstention by Matt Knickerbocker.

Financial Statements for 11/2012 and 12/2012: The financial statements for 11/2012 and 12/2012 were then reviewed. Staff provided comment on consultant line items. An excerpt from the consultant proposal for preparing a Transportation Plan for West Street in Danbury was referenced in the agenda packet. Then on a motion made by Clay Cope and seconded by Matt Knickerbocker, the November and December financial statements were unanimously approved.

Amendments to Transportation Improvement Program: Dave Hannon reviewed this topic, summarizing a CT DOT request for endorsement of federal funding for the following Redding and HART projects:

1. *CT DOT Project # 0116-0134 to **replace bridge #02390 on Route 53 in Redding**, total phase costs of \$100,000 for preliminary design followed by \$100,000 for final design, 80% of those amounts from the STP-A Federal Highway Administration funding category.*

2. *CT DOT Project (# to be determined) to **replace HART para-transit vehicles**, total purchase cost of \$495,000, 80% of that amount from the 5307 Federal Transit Administration funding category.*

Staff presented a resolution of endorsement for the above expenditures, which was followed by brief discussion. Then on a motion made by Natalie Ketcham and seconded by Matt Knickerbocker, the TIP amendments and accompanying resolution were unanimously approved.

COORDINATING EMERGENCY MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES DURING DISASTERS

Remarks on this topic were initiated by Brookfield Chief of Police Robin Montgomery and then supplemented by Redding Chief of Police Douglas Fuchs. They stated that members of the Fairfield County Police Chiefs Association learned valuable lessons from the confusion and overlap surrounding grief and emotional trauma counseling at the 12/14 Newtown tragedy. Many municipal police departments assisted that date and well after. Officers were emotionally affected as were first responders; there were instances of uncontrollable crying.

The chiefs note that support resources for those with emotional trauma were overwhelmed. And there was no central agent with authority to coordinate what help was available. The message is clear that first responders may need fast and well organized "psychological first aid." And that this is not just for Newtown personnel, nearby communities sent first responders who in time will "need to talk through" what they saw and how they felt.

The two chiefs stated that the Fairfield County Police Chiefs Association is to evaluate improving protocols for emergencies when emotional trauma counseling is suddenly needed, when the municipality's own "employee assistance program" is overwhelmed, or the responsible local persons are themselves emotionally incapacitated.

There was then considerable discussion of this issue. It was agreed that leaders of major hospitals may be approached to determine their interest in serving as the upfront emergency counseling resource. It was also suggested that the result of the law enforcement leaders

effort may in time be codified as a uniform update to each municipal emergency operations plan.

After further discussion the consensus was that the Newtown event revealed that coordination of mental health services needs a clearly defined location within the incident command structure in an emergency. After further comments the two police chiefs were thanked for their leadership on this issue and invited to attend future Council meetings to provide progress reports.

CL&P MAPS FOR USE IN EMERGENCIES

A discussion was then held with Jennifer Atkins of the CT Light and Power Company regarding CL&P maps that may be available to municipalities for use as emergency planning and response tools.

The discussion led to an agreement that rather than individual municipal requests to CL&P for their maps, that such requests be grouped into a regional request from HVCEO to CL&P. The request is to be for circuit maps for ten municipalities, preferably in digital format, and relevant GIS digital data concerning power distribution circuits for the HVCEO area.

The goal is for such information to be forwarded to HVCEO as a central depository for utility map management, followed by dissemination as requested back to the municipalities. A motion to this effect, requesting that CL&P provide the geographic information regionally to HVCEO, was then made by Pat Murphy, seconded by Clay Cope, all aye.

CULTURAL ALLIANCE UPDATE

A presentation was then made by Cultural Alliance of Western CT Executive Director Lisa Scails. She was accompanied by Andrea Gartner, Director of the Downtown Danbury Special Services District and who is Chair of the Cultural Alliance.

Ms. Scails noted that the name of her organization had recently been revised from Housatonic Valley Cultural Alliance. She reviewed the activities of the organization and distributed informational materials. She and the arts community have been supporting HealingNewtown.org and assisted with specialized Newtown events such as art therapy, quickly organized mural memorials, etc.

There was discussion of the program in New Haven to convince owners of empty store fronts to make them available temporarily at no charge for artists and exhibits, until a paying tenant can be found, thereby increasing foot traffic and awareness of the location. There was discussion as this effort relates to Danbury, New Milford and Ridgefield.

It was agreed that HVCEO will again support the annual arts breakfast with a \$300 contribution. It was also agreed that the new organizational logo will be sent to the HVCEO staff and then forwarded to members for use by municipal webmasters as a replacement for the older Cultural Alliance logo now on municipal sites.

Ms. Scails also noted that the board of directors of the Cultural Alliance has one seat reserved for an appointee named by HVCEO. This seat is now vacant as the previous HVCEO appointee, Danbury resident Vincent Nolan, had moved out of the area. She then suggested as an appointment New Milford Economic Development Coordinator Luigi Fulinello, a Danbury resident.

There was then discussion of this recommendation. HVCEO members familiar with Mr. Fulinello stated that he is a talented professional with an excellent work ethic. Then on a

motion made by Bill Davidson, seconded by Rudy Marconi, and voted all aye, Mr. Fulinello was designated the HVCEO appointee to the board of the Western CT Cultural Alliance. Lisa Scails and Andrea Gartner were then thanked for their visit.

→ REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN

After an introduction by Dave Hannon, remarks on this topic were made by Hal Kurfehs, Chair of the Western CT Economic Development Alliance (WCEDA) and Vice President of Coldwell Banker Commercial in Bethel. Mr. Kurfehs distributed copies of his 8/11/2012 News Times guest editorial entitled "Working to Build Jobs and Prosperity in the Region."

He then reviewed highlights of that document. The \$125,000 regional economic development plan being prepared will position the region for additional state and federal grants and update the traditional marketing for the area, he said.

Economic plan consultant Leslie Cosgrove of Garnet Consulting Services then addressed the Council She outlining the process and the value of component pieces to be produced. A brief question and answer period followed.

BOUNDARY REVIEW FOR GREATER DANBURY

Jon Chew presented a PowerPoint on this topic, noting that the boundary research process had been authorized by the Council at its June 2012 meeting. He then made a presentation that defined the high degree to which data for the Greater Danbury Area met legislative boundary review criteria. He distributed the hard copy report.

The presentation was followed by discussion. Members noted an error on page 24 and also requested inclusion of Danbury's high sales tax generation figures. Issues along various boundary segments were reviewed with most of the discussion on the northeast segment.

It was agreed that the boundary research as corrected was complete and could be disseminated by staff as appropriate. A motion to that effect was then made by Clay Cope and seconded by Rudy Marconi, all aye.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT

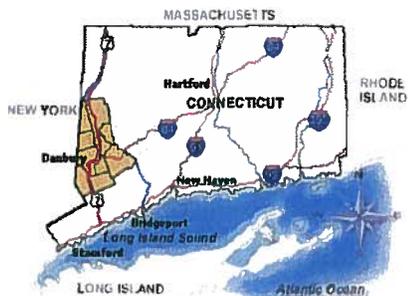
Chairman Hodge stated that as is the practice each November, a nominating committee of three with chair was appointed to make a recommendation as to officers for the upcoming calendar year. This year's committee is Natalie Ketcham, Pat Murphy and Clay Cope.

Natalie Ketcham then gave their report. She stated that current Vice Chair Pat Llodra did not wish to move up to Chair at this time due to her greatly expanded post-tragedy duties in Newtown, but would be pleased to remain as one of the officers. Mrs. Ketcham then proposed Bethel First Selectman Matthew Knickerbocker as Chair, New Milford Mayor Patricia Murphy for Vice Chair, and Newtown First Selectman Patricia Llodra for Secretary-Treasurer.

Then on a motion made by Natalie Ketcham and seconded by Clay Cope, the recommended slate was unanimously endorsed as presented. That action was followed by applause for the good work of outgoing Chair John Hodge.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, on a motion duly made and seconded the meeting was adjourned at 2:05 P.M.



**HOUSATONIC VALLEY
COUNCIL OF ELECTED OFFICIALS**

OLD BROOKFIELD TOWN HALL
162 WHISCONIER RD., BROOKFIELD, CT 06804
203-775-6256 HVCEO.ORG

**HVCEO
MEETING**

THURSDAY, 3/21/2013

12:30 PM IN THE ROBILOTTI CONFERENCE ROOM
DANBURY HOSPITAL, 24 HOSPITAL AVENUE, DANBURY, CT
BUFFET LUNCH 12:00 TO 12:30

CHAIRMAN BETHEL FIRST SELECTMAN MATTHEW KNICKERBOCKER; VICE CHAIRMAN NEW MILFORD
MAYOR PATRICIA MURPHY; SECRETARY-TREASURER NEWTOWN FIRST SELECTMAN PATRICIA LLODRA

**PARKING IS AVAILABLE IN THE BLUE GARAGE OFF OF HOSPITAL AVENUE. FREE VALET PARKING IS AVAILABLE
AT THE HOSPITAL AVENUE MAIN DRIVE FOR THOSE WITH SPECIAL NEEDS. PLEASE THEN PROCEED
TO THE ADJACENT NORTH ENTRANCE FOR VISITOR BADGES AND ESCORT TO THE ROBILOTTI ROOM.**

1. CALL TO ORDER

Determine Quorum; Pledge of Allegiance; Public Comment.

**2. UPDATE ON ISSUES BY THE
WESTERN CT HEALTH NETWORK**

John M. Murphy, President and CEO, Senior
Vice President and CFO Steven Rosenberg.



3. ADMINISTRATION AND SHORT ITEMS

- 3a. Minutes from meeting of 1/17/2013, Item 3a.
- 3b. Financial Statements for 1/2013 and 2/2013, Item 3b.
- 3c. Transportation Improvement Program, Item 3c.
- 3d. Endorse Senior and Disabled Transit Applications, Item 3d.
- 3e. Preparing FEMA Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plans, Item 3e.
- 3f. Municipal projects solicited for CEDS regional economic plan.
- 3g. Endorse Brookfield and New Fairfield Small Cities Applications.

4. OTHER BUSINESS

- 4a. Members discussion items.
- 4b. Review of 4/18 agenda; guest presenters State Comptroller
Kevin Lembo and HVCASA Director Allison Fulton, suggest additional topics.

5. ADJOURNMENT

cc: Municipal clerks, observers, hvceo.org
- Discutir la transportacion en Espanol 203-775-6256



See page 3

3/21/2013 MEETING MINUTES

DANBURY HOSPITAL, DANBURY, CT

MEMBERS ATTENDING

Bethel.....First Selectman Matthew Knickerbocker, Chairman
 Bridgewater.....Alternate Selectman Curtis Read
 Brookfield.....First Selectman William Davidson
 Danbury.....Mayor Mark Boughton
 New Fairfield....First Selectman John Hodge
 New Milford.....Mayor Patricia Murphy
 Newtown.....First Selectman Patricia Llodra
 Redding.....Alternate Selectman Julia Pemberton
 Ridgefield.....First Selectman Rudy Marconi
 Sherman.....First Selectman Clay Cope

OTHERS ATTENDING

From the Western Connecticut Health Network President and CEO John Murphy, with Steven Rosenberg, Mike Daglio, Deborah Weymouth, Andrea Rynn and Matt Cassavechia; Edgar Wynkoop of CT DOT, Richard Schreiner and Paul Chenard of HART, Anne Alzapiedi of GE Capital, Marla Scribner of New Milford, Rob Michalik of Senator Murphy's Office, and from the HVCEO staff Camille Acquanita, David Hannon and Jonathan Chew.

CALL TO ORDER / PUBLIC COMMENT

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Matt Knickerbocker at 12:30 PM after which attendees recited the Pledge of Allegiance. In regard to the Newtown tragedy Pat Llodra thanked members for their support and generosity. She introduced Anne Alzapiedi of GE Capital, part of a team GE has donated to the Town to assist with the many follow-up responsibilities stemming from the school shooting.

WESTERN CT HEALTH NETWORK

Western Connecticut Health Network President and CEO John Murphy then addressed the Council. Main topics included the upcoming merger with Norwalk Hospital and the severe impact of proposed state budget cuts upon Network services.

There was considerable discussion. It was agreed that HVCEO would support the Network with area legislators in opposing the deep cut to Network funding.

There was also discussion of ways in which the Network and area municipalities might cooperate to reduce health care costs. In the model of the Network providing health services, the employees of the Network and municipalities using them, and an insurance carrier providing for profit administration and management, there could be a savings in reducing the role of the insurance carrier.

The City of Danbury is in the lead with the Network on planning for this potential savings. Mark Boughton noted that including additional municipalities could positively impact the economics of the proposal. The other municipal leaders expressed interest in further discussions.

After additional discussion Chairman Knickerbocker thanked Network officials for their hospitality and informative update.

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

Minutes for 1/17/2013: On a motion made by Pat Murphy and a second by John Hodge, the minutes of the meeting of 1/17/2013 were unanimously approved.

Financial Statements for 1/2013 and 2/2013: The financial statements for 1/2013 and 2/2013 were then reviewed. Then on a motion made by Rudy Marconi and seconded by John Hodge the financial statements were unanimously approved.

Amendments to Transportation Improvement Program: Dave Hannon reviewed this topic, summarizing a CT DOT request for endorsement of federal funding for the following improvement projects:

1. *CT DOT Project # 0018-0128 to construct the Still River Multi-Use Trail Phase 2 in Brookfield, total phase cost of \$2,407,000, with the federal share at \$1,926,000 and the 20% local share at \$481,000, the federal funds from the FHWA Transportation Alternatives (Enhancement) Program.*

2. *CT DOT Project # 0174-0361 to install State Traffic Commission approved Traffic Signals in CT DOT District 4, right of way cost of \$100,000 at 100% federal.*

3. *CT DOT Project # 0174-0362 to install State Traffic Commission approved Traffic Signals in CT DOT District 4, right of way cost of \$100,000 federal and \$481,000 municipal.*

A photo of the Still River Trail was reviewed along with discussion of Army Corps permit and other issues affecting the Brookfield project. Mr. Hannon then presented a resolution of endorsement for the proposed expenditures, which was followed by brief discussion.

Then on a motion made by Bill Davidson and seconded by Pat Murphy the three TIP amendments and their accompanying resolution were unanimously approved.

Senior and Disabled Transit State Grant Applications: Dave Hannon and Richard Schreiner reviewed the requirements for FY2014 state funding under the CT statute 13b-38bb municipal dial-a-ride grant program, one of which is for completed municipal applications to be coordinated by HART and HVCEO staffs and forwarded to CT DOT.

Grant guidelines require evidence of regionally coordinated applications and operation of service, they said. Municipalities have recently received their application packages.

There was discussion. Then on a motion made by Rudy Marconi and seconded by Clay Cope, a resolution attached to the agenda authorizing submission to CT DOT of coordinated municipal 13b-38bb grant applications was unanimously approved.

FEMA PRE-DISASTER HAZARD MITIGATION PLANNING PROGRAM

Dave Hannon addressed this topic, noting that the FEMA regional grant program is administered through the DEEP. Both agencies are encouraging regional planning organizations to prepare pre-disaster mitigation plans for their members municipalities.

The goal is to prepare multiple plans at one time such that the cost per plan will be reduced. The proposed end result is ten individual plans tailored to local conditions and needs.

It was noted that such municipal plans must be completed prior to FEMA pre-disaster mitigation grants being awarded to municipalities. Typical projects include prevention of flooding, generators for critical infrastructure, retrofitting structures to minimize damages from natural hazards, etc.

Of the ten municipalities in the region Sherman, New Fairfield and Danbury have already prepared the needed plans, Mr. Hannon said. A strategy for HVCEO is to newly prepare the seven other plans, and at the same time update the three completed ones.

As HVCEO served as fiduciary and consultant contractor for preparation of the April 2011 Town of Sherman Natural Hazard Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plan, widely advertised and with Milone & MacBroom competitively selected, this proposal is to extend the contract with that firm for this phase two planning project. A total planning grant budget of \$165,000 is proposed as follows:

75% FEMA Cash Grant of \$123,750
 13% HVCEO Cash Match of..... \$22,250
 12% HVCEO In-kind Match of....\$19,000
 100% Total Program of..... \$165,000

Further, that Milone & MacBroom consultant costs will be the combination of the FEMA and HVCEO cash contributions to a maximum of \$146,000. There was discussion of the proposal.

Then on a motion made by Bill Davidson and seconded by Rudy Marconi, it was voted unanimously to approve the recommended financial plan and to authorize the staff and the chairman to facilitate the preparation of municipal FEMA Hazard Mitigation plans and municipal plan updates for the ten municipalities.

MUNICIPAL PROJECTS FOR CEDS ECONOMIC PLAN

Staff noted that one of the required steps in the CEDS regional economic planning process is to solicit projects from municipalities and others. Then, to prioritize them according to evaluation criteria that has been developed.

A CEDS project solicitation form presented by Dave Hannon was reviewed. Members will receive their project solicitation paperwork shortly, he said.

BROOKFIELD AND NEW FAIRFIELD SMALL CITIES GRANT APPLICATIONS

Jon Chew reviewed this topic, noting that Brookfield and New Fairfield are applying for \$400,000 each in federal Small Cities grant funds from the CT Department of Economic and Community Development. In each case the funds will continue municipal housing rehabilitation programs.

The goal of the grants is to provide low interest loans to eligible low and moderate income homeowners to make needed health and safety improvements. John Hodge, Matt Knickerbocker and Bill Davidson all commented on the practical value of this program, noting its effectiveness in crisis heating issues faced by lower income residents.

Jon Chew related the applications to census demographics and the policies of the 2009 regional housing plan. Then on a motion made by John Hodge and seconded by Clay Cope, it was voted unanimously to endorse the Brookfield and New Fairfield applications.

STAFF REPORT ON HB 6629 AN ACT CONCERNING REGIONALISM

Jon Chew reported on the Planning and Development Committee legislative hearing on this bill, which would have canceled the upcoming OPM boundary study on regional boundaries.

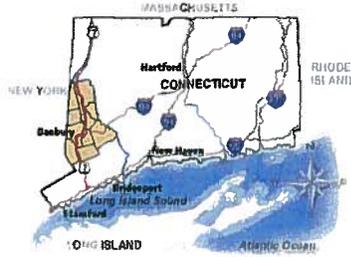
He noted that HVCEO has supported the study approach as it includes varied data sets, consultations and a professional research process. HB6629 would substitute use of 1680 era county boundaries and cancel the study process.

There was discussion indicating that the legislative initiative on regional boundaries was now shifting to the MORE Commission (Municipal Opportunities and Regional Economies) which has created four committees, one of which is the Regional Entities Working Group.

It was noted that membership from our region on the Regional Entities Working Group includes State Representatives Bob Godfrey and David Scribner and HVCEO members Pat Murphy and Rudy Marconi.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, on a motion duly made and seconded the meeting was adjourned at 1:50 P.M.



HOUSATONIC VALLEY
COUNCIL OF ELECTED OFFICIALS
OLD BROOKFIELD TOWN HALL
162 WHISCONIER RD., BROOKFIELD, CT 06804
203-775-6256 HVCEO.ORG

**HVCEO MEETING
THURSDAY, 10/17/2013**

BROOKFIELD TOWN HALL, SECOND FLOOR
100 POCONO ROAD, BROOKFIELD, CT 203-775-7300
BUFFET LUNCH 12:00 TO 12:30 --- MEETING BEGINS AT 12:30

Chairman Bethel First Selectman Matthew Knickerbocker
Vice Chairman New Milford Mayor Patricia Murphy / Secretary-Treasurer Newtown First Selectman Patricia Llodra
Bridgewater First Selectman William Stuart / Brookfield First Selectman William Davidson / Danbury Mayor Mark Boughton
New Fairfield First Selectman Susan Chapman / Redding First Selectman Natalie Ketcham
Ridgefield First Selectman Rudolph Marconi / Sherman First Selectman Clay Cope

1. CALL TO ORDER

Determine Quorum; Pledge of Allegiance; Public Comment.

**2. VISIT FROM
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR
NANCY WYMAN**



3. ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

- 3a. Meeting Minutes for 9/19/2013, Item 3a.
- 3b. Financial Statement for 9/2013, Item 3b.
- 3c. Transportation Improvement Program Amendments, Item 3c.
- 3d. Appointment available to First Light Committee, Item 3d.
- 3e. Information on Algonquin Pipeline Project, Item 3e.
- 3f. Emergency Management Update.

4. FINAL ENHANCED CL&P OUTAGE MAP AND CRITICAL FACILITIES,
Remarks by Lissette Andino, Acting Manager, CL&P Community Relations.

5. HVCEO - SWRPA MERGER COMMITTEE, Item 5.

 **6. UPDATE ON CEDS ECONOMIC PLAN**

7. DRAFT LEGISLATIVE AGENDA FOR 12/5/2013, Item 7.

8. OTHER BUSINESS, ADJOURNMENT

cc: Municipal clerks, observers, hvceo.org

- Discutir la transportacion en Espanol 203-775-6256



See page 4

10/17/2013 MINUTES

MEETING AT BROOKFIELD, CT TOWN HALL

ATTENDANCE

Bethel.....First Selectman Matthew Knickerbocker, Chairman
 Bridgewater..... Selectman Curtis Read, Alternate
 Brookfield.....First Selectman William Davidson
 Danbury.....Mayor Mark Boughton
 New Fairfield.....First Selectman Susan Chapman
 New Milford.....Mayor Patricia Murphy, Vice Chairman
 Newtown.....Absent
 Redding.....First Selectman Natalie Ketcham
 Ridgefield.....First Selectman Rudy Marconi
 Sherman.....First Selectman Clay Cope, Selectman Chris Jellen, Alternate

Also Lieutenant Governor Nancy Wyman and Senior Advisor Martin Heft, Director of Danbury Hospital Community Relations Andrea Rynn, Manager of CL&P Community Relations Lissette Andino, Stephanie Scavelli of HART, Lynn Waller of Danbury, DEMHS Region 5 Coordinator Thomas Vannini, from the HVCEO staff Camille Acquanita, David Hannon and Jonathan Chew.

CALL TO ORDER AND PUBLIC COMMENT

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Matt Knickerbocker at 12:30 PM after which attendees recited the Pledge of Allegiance. Public comments were then made by Andrea Rynn and Lynn Waller.

CONVERSATION WITH LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR WYMAN

Chairman Knickerbocker then introduced Connecticut's Lieutenant Governor Nancy Wyman. Mrs. Wyman provided an update on state finances, economic development activity and other efforts. A major initiative is to identify and implement changes at state agencies that will reduce administrative costs and speed governmental processes, she said.

She then invited discussion. Members detailed examples of state grant activities where time and cost were unnecessarily increased. It was noted that "time is money" to the investors cooperating with some municipal projects.

Lack of progress with I-84 improvements was also raised as a key concern. Members noted that an environmental impact statement for I-84 thru Greater Danbury has been in progress for many years, that other areas of the state can lobby for their interstate

traffic improvements as their EIS processes have been completed, but that this area cannot as the Danbury to Waterbury I-84 EIS remains stalled.

The Lieutenant Governor agreed to request CT DOT to provide HVCEO with a definitive completion schedule for the I-84 EIS. After additional discussion she was thanked by the members for the visit.

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

Minutes and Financial Statement: On a motion made by Rudy Marconi and seconded by Bill Davidson, the minutes of the September 19, 2013 meeting were unanimously approved. The financial statement for September was then reviewed, and on a motion made by Bill Davidson and seconded by Pat Murphy, it was unanimously approved.

Appointment to First Light Committee: Staff outlined a communication in the agenda packet from hydro power project owner First Light Power Resources, stating that the federally approved Shoreline Management Plan calls for a River Advisory Committee. This will meet annually to receive updates from FirstLight on both recreation and shoreline management programs.

A representative from HVCEO is requested. It was agreed that Pat Murphy would attend these meetings as the representative of HVCEO.

Algonquin Gas Transmission Line Expansion: Staff provided information from the 10/1 FERC hearing in Danbury on this topic and also reviewed information included in the agenda packet. The project will expand the capacity of Spectra Energy's existing Algonquin Gas Transmission System.

The Algonquin right of way across the planning region has been in existence for about fifty years. Host communities are Danbury, Bethel, Brookfield and Newtown. The product transmitted is methane gas. The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission is requiring a detailed EIS by Spectra energy prior to consideration of approval for the expansion. There was then discussion of the proposed project.

REGIONAL SUPPLIES DROP OFF SITE

Dave Hannon reported that DEMHS Deputy Commissioner William Shea had responded to the HVCEO letter of 9/23, requesting consideration of ways in which emergency supplies passing thru our area on I-84 to reach the statewide drop off site in East Hartford could be more quickly delivered to area municipalities via a drop off site in Danbury.

Mr. Shea's letter stated that the concept proposed is a good one, and that there is precedent in Connecticut. He also noted that there are staffing and equipment challenges to establishing such staging areas. He asked that area municipalities identify resources that could be called into action to support such a regional staging area.

DEMHS Region 5 Coordinator Thomas Vannini then addressed the Council. He stated that Deputy Commissioner Shea would invite the HVCEO emergency

management directors group to the DEMHS Commodities Work Group - ESF7 where discussions of this topic are in progress, and where the Danbury depot concept can be fully assessed. Members were also updated by Mr. Vannini on an upcoming emergency management grant administration workshop.

NEW CL&P OUTAGE MAP AND CRITICAL FACILITIES LIST

A presentation on this topic was then made by Lissette Andino, Manager of CL&P Community Relations. She distributed a report on CL&P outage map enhancements and revised definitions of critical facilities.

There was considerable discussion. Pat Murphy criticized the relocation of the 24 employees at the CL&P New Milford service center to Newtown as that merger will slow provision of emergency services to the New Milford Area. Clay Cope stated that the revised notification map downplays the severity of service outages in small towns such as Sherman.

HVCEO - SWRPA MERGER ACTIVITY

Chairman Knickerbocker then reviewed the current status of the upcoming merger with SWRPA. As authorization to file a joint application with SWRPA for the merger had been provided at the 9/19 HVCEO meeting, he had done so. Mr. Knickerbocker reviewed the text of the merger application which is as follows:

The Housatonic Valley Council of Elected Officials (HVCEO) and the South Western Regional Planning Agency (SWRPA) hereby petition the Connecticut Office of Policy and Management (CTOPM) to redesignate the Housatonic Valley Region and the South Western Region into a single consolidated planning region.

The new region will include Stamford, Greenwich, Darien, New Canaan, Wilton, Weston, Westport, Norwalk, Bethel, Ridgefield, Newtown, Redding, Danbury, Brookfield, New Fairfield, Sherman, New Milford and Bridgewater for a total of 18 municipalities encompassing one sixth of Connecticut's population.

We have determined that the municipalities of the South Western Region and the Housatonic Valley Region have a common character which creates a compatible regional merger. Residents of both regions live, work and relax in each other's area. Because we are demographically similar, our land use, housing, transportation, and approaches to municipal management are in alignment.

The proposed consolidated region has a history of cooperation on regional planning matters such as promoting upgrades to the infrastructure of the Danbury Branch rail line, supporting the design and implementation of the Route 7 Land Use Study, collaborating on a 38 mile multi-purpose trail from Danbury to Norwalk, and sharing the Route 7 bus service cooperatively run by the Norwalk Transit District and the Housatonic Area Regional Transit District.

In addition we have jointly protected the water supply watersheds that we share, have requested federal funding for an Army Corp of Engineer's "Reconnaissance Study" of rivers in the expanded region, and have held conversations regarding establishing a regional dispatch.

Further, strong joint regional collaboration efforts were established in challenging the FAA rerouting plan for landing patterns, which would have substantially increased the noise levels in both regions. These examples are a foundation for a strong unified region and an effective council of governments.

In accordance with Connecticut General Statutes (CGS) Chapter 249 §16a-4c(b), this merger is being pursued voluntarily prior to January 1, 2014. It is our understanding that this action exempts our regions from CTOPM redesignation described in CGS Chapter 249 §16a-4c(a).

SWRPA/MPO is aware that the Greater Bridgeport Region passed a resolution petitioning OPM to merge with SWRPA. That action by Greater Bridgeport was unilateral and is not supported by SWRPA.

This transmittal provides the following documents that support consolidation of the regions; HVCEO Resolution dated September 19, 2013, SWRPA Resolution dated September 3, 2013, SWRMPO Resolution dated August 29, 2013, SWRMPO Resolution dated September 26, 2013, and a map of current and proposed regional boundaries.

We look forward to your approval of the requested redesignation. Please confirm receipt of this communication, and provide information on the next steps and timetable for redesignation to become recognized formally by the State of Connecticut.

It was also reported that OPM had requested a name for the new region. Chairman Knickerbocker reviewed a statement on this topic to OPM which read as follows:

After a poll of HVCEO and SWRPA merger committee members, we request that the newly consolidated region's geographic identifier be "Western Connecticut", leading to the organizational name of "Western Connecticut Council of Governments."

Current geographic identifiers are Housatonic Valley and South Western. From the perspective of merger, neither title is appropriate to apply to the newly combined geography.

While all HVCEO towns are located entirely or in part within the Housatonic Valley, none of the SWRPA towns are. And within Connecticut history the Greater Danbury Area has never been characterized as 'southwestern.'

Fortunately the simple identifier 'Western Connecticut' could accurately categorize the entire area of the new region. Suggestion: 'Western Connecticut Council of Governments,' with the acronym 'WCCOG' replacing SWRPA and HVCEO. This title is also of national value from the perspective of attracting economic development, a key concern of many municipalities.

Matt Knickerbocker then stated that he had had several conversations with OPM's David LeVasseur recently, having been told by him that the joint HVCEO-SWRPA application was verbally approved, and that written confirmation of the approval would arrive in one or two weeks.

Members then discussed aspects of the upcoming second merger involving regional transportation authority. While regions are being reduced from 15 to 8, it was seen as problematic that the federal transportation authority "MPO" function within the current regions was to be reduced to 5, not 8, thereby inducing coordination problems. Staff was directed to prepare a draft position statement on this issue.



CEDS REGIONAL ECONOMIC PLAN

Dave Hannon reviewed upcoming steps leading to final completion of the Greater Danbury Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, as follows:

- October 18th: Life Sciences Focus Group Session at Danbury Chamber.

- October 21st: First Draft of completed CEDS submitted to CEDS Committee for review.**
- October 24th: CEDS Committee meeting to discuss and review Draft CEDS document.**

- November 4th: Final Draft of CEDS document to CEDS Committee and WCEDA members for review.**
- November 6th: Joint meeting of CEDS Committee and WCEDA to review and approve final CEDS document. EDA requires approval by the CEDS Committee.**
- November 8th -December 9th: 30 day Public Review/Comment Period required by EDA.**

- November 21st: Presentation of final CEDS document to HVCEO for approval, subject to input from Public Review/Comment period.**
- December 12th: Revisions to final CEDS document, based upon input received from the public comment period. The CEDS Committee Chair will review/approve final changes.**
- December 16th: Submission of final CEDS document to EDA.**

There was then a discussion of the CEDS finalization process.

REVIEW OF DRAFT 2014 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

Staff reviewed the draft legislative agenda for the upcoming annual breakfast meeting with legislators scheduled for 12/5/2013. The following topics were proposed: Prevent Cuts to Municipal Aid, Reform Prevailing Wage Law, Consolidating Public Safety Answering Points, Stalled Danbury Branch Rail Plan, I-84 Issues, Reform 8-30g Affordable Housing, and HRRRA Product Stewardship Legislation.

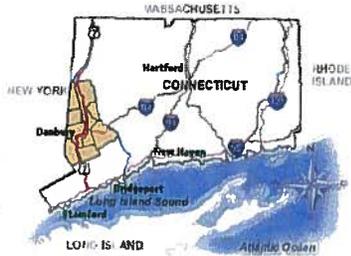
There was discussion, during which staff was directed to revise and streamline the language used for several of the agenda items.

OTHER BUSINESS

Natalie Ketcham stated that after 14 years as Redding First Selectman she is not running again and that this would be her last meeting. She praised HVCEO as highly effective. Bill Davidson then stated that after 4 years as Brookfield First Selectman he is not running again and endorsed Mrs. Ketcham's assessment.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, on a motion duly made and seconded the meeting was adjourned at 1:50 P.M.



HOUSATONIC VALLEY
COUNCIL OF ELECTED OFFICIALS
OLD BROOKFIELD TOWN HALL
162 WHISCONIER RD., BROOKFIELD, CT 06804
203-775-6256 HVCEO.ORG

HVCEO MEETING THURSDAY, 11/21/2013

BROOKFIELD TOWN HALL, SECOND FLOOR
100 POCONO ROAD, BROOKFIELD, CT 203-775-7300
BUFFET LUNCH 12:00 TO 12:30 -- MEETING BEGINS 12:30

Chairman Bethel First Selectman Matthew Knickerbocker
Vice Chairman New Milford Mayor Patricia Murphy / Secretary-Treasurer Newtown First Selectman Patricia Llodra
Bridgewater First Selectman Curtis Read / Brookfield First Selectman William Davidson / Danbury Mayor Mark Boughton
New Fairfield First Selectman Susan Chapman / Redding First Selectman Julia Pemberton
Ridgefield First Selectman Rudolph Marconi / Sherman First Selectman Clay Cope

1. CALL TO ORDER

Determine Quorum; Pledge of Allegiance; Public Comment.

➔ 2. PRESENTING THE COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Remarks by Western CT Economic Development
Alliance Chair Harold Kurfehs and WCEDA CEDS
Steering Committee Chair Michael Boyle, Item 2.



3. ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

- 3a. Meeting Minutes from 10/17/2013, Item 3a.
- 3b. Financial Statement for 10/2013, Item 3b.
- 3c. Vote on Nominating Committee of three with chair, Item 3c.
- 3d. Proposed membership dues for FY2015, Item 3d.

- 3e. Meeting schedule for 2014, Item 3e.
- 3f. Transportation Improvement Program, Item 3f.
- 3g. Process for CT DOT LOTCIP project development.
- 3h. Status of I-84 EIS, Item 3h.
- 3i. Emergency Management Update.

4. HVCEO - SWRPA MERGER

5. OTHER BUSINESS, ADJOURNMENT

Next meeting 8 AM with Legislators (Breakfast served 7:30)
on 12/05/2013 at Ethan Allen Hotel in Danbury

cc: Municipal clerks, observers, hvceo.org
Discutir la transportacion en Espanol 203-775-6256



11/21/2013 MINUTES

MEETING HELD AT BROOKFIELD, CT TOWN HALL

ATTENDANCE

Bethel.....First Selectman Matthew Knickerbocker, Chairman
Bridgewater.....First Selectman Curtis Read
Brookfield.....First Selectman William Davidson
Danbury.....Mayor Mark Boughton
New Fairfield.....First Selectman Susan Chapman
New Milford.....Mayor Patricia Murphy, Vice Chairman
Newtown.....First Selectman Patricia Llodra, Secretary-Treasurer
and Alternate Development Director Elizabeth Stocker
Redding.....First Selectman Julia Pemberton, Alternate Selectman Leon Karvelis
Ridgefield.....First Selectman Rudy Marconi
Sherman.....First Selectman Clay Cope

Western CT Economic Development Alliance Chair Harold Kurfehs and WCEDA CEDS Steering Committee Chair Michael Boyle, President of Garnet Consulting Services Mark Waterhouse, President of the CT Economic Resource Center Robert Santy, Stephanie Scavelli and Richard Schreiner of HART, Lynn Waller of Danbury, Eric Hampton of DECD, and from the HVCEO staff Camille Acquanita, David Hannon and Jonathan Chew.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Matt Knickerbocker at 12:30 PM after which attendees recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman Knickerbocker welcomed new members Curtis Read of Bridgewater and Julia Pemberton of Redding, both of whom were until their election alternate members.



COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (CEDS)

A presentation of the new regional economic development plan was then made by Mark Waterhouse, Robert Santy, Harold Kurfehs and Michael Boyle. A full copy of the draft plan had been delivered earlier in the week and a CEDS Briefing Paper was distributed at the meeting.

The presentation noted that a CEDS is an economic development strategic plan prepared and structured in a way that meets the requirements of the U.S. Economic Development Administration. It will also be used to further economic development in the region and will make town grant applications more competitive especially to the CT Department of Economic and Community Development.

In addition, this particular CEDS was designed to be a regionally oriented action plan on its own to promote economic development. The value of each segment of the CEDS Plan was then summarized.

A key point was derived from research indicating that many employees in the financial services industry located nearby live in this area and commute out daily. With such highly skilled labor in place, there is an opportunity for growth in that sector here. As Danbury was the home of famous composer Charles Ives, that theme can be further developed for identity and tourism.

Another conclusion was that a single web portal for economic development is needed for Greater Danbury, this in recognition of the fact that economic development investors research merits of regions first, only then selecting a locality within a preferred area.

Part of the process in creating a CEDS is the identification of priority projects and seventeen were deemed vital. Fifteen were individual community projects and two were multi-community regional projects. All are considered priority infrastructure investments for economic development and include

Bethel – Expansion of Clarke Business Park
Bethel – Transit Oriented Development Capital Improvements
Bethel – Water System Improvements

Brookfield – Four Corners Revitalization Plan
Brookfield – Lower Route 202 Traffic Improvements
Brookfield – Still River Greenway

Danbury – West Side Route 6 Traffic Improvements
Danbury – I-84 Widening
Danbury and Region - Branch Commuter Rail Improvements

New Milford – Century Brass Remediation/Demolition
New Milford – Still Meadows Business Park

Newtown – Hawleyville Sewer Extension
Newtown – Fairfield Hills Campus Infrastructure

Redding – Transit Oriented Development Intermodal Transportation Facility

Ridgefield – Transit Oriented Development Capital Improvements
Ridgefield – Abatement and Demolition of Former Schlumberger Brownfield

Presenters indicated that funding will be needed to continue this key regional activity. Mayor Mark Boughton stated that the model used for the earlier Housatonic Valley Economic Development Partnership should be avoided as that group was not successful at sustaining regional economic development initiatives. Concerning commercial revitalization, Pat Llodra reviewed Sandy Hook retail area planning activity.

After discussion, members stated their willingness to review proposals for regional funding of Western CT Economic Development Alliance priority activities.

Then on a motion made by Rudy Marconi and a second by Pat Llodra, the draft CEDS document was unanimously endorsed and will be submitted to the U.S. Economic Development Administration and to the CT DECD.

The presenters were then thanked by Chairman Knickerbocker for their attendance and collective good efforts on behalf of the region.

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

Minutes and Financial Statement: On a motion made by Pat Murphy and seconded by Rudy Marconi, the minutes of the October 17, 2013 meeting were unanimously approved except for abstentions by Julia Pemberton and Pat Llodra who were not present.

The financial statement for October 2013 was then reviewed. Jon Chew requested an amendment of \$10,600 as a new line item to implement an agreement between DEMHS Region 5 Emergency Support Function 8, Public Health and Medical Services, and the CT Association of Directors of Health. According to the agreement CADH will provide staffing support for that group.

Members discussed the proposed amendment and asked for additional information as to the source of the municipal contribution. Then on a motion made by Rudy Marconi and seconded by Pat Llodra, the October 20 financial statement was approved without the proposed amendment.

Vote on Nominating Committee of Three with Chair: Matt Knickerbocker noted that as is done each November, a nominating committee of three with chair is voted upon to make a recommendation as to officers for the upcoming calendar year.

He recommended that the two committee members remaining from last year, Clay Cope and Pat Murphy, be included. It was agreed that Curtis Read would be the third member and serve as chair. Then on a motion to that effect by Pat Murphy and a second by Julia Pemberton, the committee of three was unanimously approved.

Proposed Membership Dues for FY2015: Jon Chew reviewed an agenda attachment on this topic documenting past dues levels and recommending no dues increase. As additional OPM funds have arrived an increase at this time is not justified, he said.

Regarding the increase in OPM funding, he noted that other groups have plans for it, that the MORE Commission views this new resource as assisting regions that lose their MPO funding during the upcoming MPO reorganization, and that the October CT OPM boundary report views this same funding as a base for reestablishing regional water supply planning.

Also that regional consolidation grants from OPM have ended with this increase now to fill that need, and that the SWRPA - HVCEO dues differential should be addressed before dues rates are changed.

There was then discussion, followed by a motion of approval to retain current dues rates, motion made by Bill Davidson and seconded by Pat Murphy, all aye.

Meeting Schedule for 2014: The meeting schedule for calendar 2014 was presented.

Process for CT DOT LOTCIP Project Development: Dave Hannon provided background information on the new CT DOT "Local Transportation Capital Improvement Program" grant source. A solicitation for projects is to be made soon, he said.

There was then a discussion of various potential projects.

Status of I-84 Environmental Impact Statement: Jon Chew reviewed the status of this issue, noting that the lack of progress with I-84 improvements was a key concern expressed at the October HVCEO meeting with Lieutenant Governor Wyman.

Lieutenant Governor Wyman recognized the need for a definitive completion schedule and offered to obtain such from CT DOT. He reported that the Lieutenant Governor held a meeting with CT DOT Commissioner Redeker on the matter and that information from CT DOT would be forthcoming soon.

Connections to Nutmeg Network:

Staff noted that high speed internet fiber cable is already in place and serves all ten Greater Danbury municipalities. However this state owned service has to date been reserved for municipal educational and emergency management facilities, not general municipal operations.

Municipal governmental offices are now allowed to connect. An info packet on the connection and grant processes was distributed. There was town by town discussion

Staff also reported that the nearby Council of Governments of the Central Naugatuck Valley was holding an information meeting on 11/25 on the Nutmeg Network with Department of Administrative Services speakers on this topic and offered seats to HVCEO towns.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT UPDATE

Dave Hannon reported on recent coordinating activities between Danbury Hospital and municipal videoconferencing systems. He also reported on progress with preparing municipal hazard mitigation plans.

Pat Murphy reported on the relocation of the CL&P service center from New Milford to Newtown and New Milford's and related towns view that this action weakens emergency storm response. Complaints are being prepared for filing with the CT Public Utilities Regulatory Authority.

HVCEO - SWRPA MERGER PROGRESS

Matt Knickerbocker stated that he had received a call from OPM Secretary Ben Barnes who stated that he is requesting both SWRPA and HVCEO to consider allowing Greater Bridgeport to merge with them.

However, that if they do not wish to expand to a three way merger, the two way merger they jointly applied for in September will still be approved.

There was then considerable discussion of this issue.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, on a motion duly made and seconded the meeting was adjourned at 1:50 P.M.

Western Connecticut Economic Development Alliance Advanced Manufacturing Focus Group

June 18, 2013 Meeting Notes
1:30-3:00 p.m.

The following chart lists the participants at the focus group:

Participants		
Name	Title	Organization
Leslie Cosgrove	Associate	Garnet Consulting Services, Inc.
Joe DeFeo	Advanced Manufacturing Technology Center Coordinator	Naugatuck Valley Community College
Luigi Fulinello	Director of Economic Development	Town of New Milford
David Hannon	Deputy Director	Housatonic Valley Council of Elected Officials
Emily Hutter	Reliability Strategy Leader	Kimberly-Clark
William Joyce	CEO	AFS
Hal Kurfehs	Vice President Chairman	Coldwell Banker Commercial Western CT Economic Development Alliance
Jim Leonard	Reliability Coordinator	Kimberly-Clark
Frank Richards	VP-Finance/Operations	Pharmco-Aaper
Neal Riley	HR Manager	Pharmco-Aaper
Joe Young	Principal	Tier ONE, LLC

Hal Kurfehs, Chairman of the Western Connecticut Economic Development Alliance opened the meeting and welcomed the participants and provided a brief history of the organization and the purpose of this focus group as a public outreach process in creating the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS).

The economic indicators for Advanced Manufacturing in the Western Connecticut region that had been prepared by CERC were distributed and contained:

- A -24% decline in annual average employment from 2001 to 2012
- A -16% decline in the number of manufacturing establishments from 2001 to 2012
- Manufacturing is one of the top five industries by employment in the region (11%)

Co-leader Joe DeFaoin introduced himself and provided some background information. He explained that there are four (4) advanced manufacturing centers in Connecticut. At his center there were 57 students that had signed up for the program which offers an Advanced Manufacturing Certificate, of which 40 have graduated and as of this date, 26 have full time jobs. This particular curriculum was designed by manufacturers. There will be 1,000 NVCC students at the Danbury campus in September and it is anticipated that Abott Tech will be used as a temporary location. He is working with a number of Danbury area businesses and hopes to assist them in obtaining skilled workers completing the certificate program.

He was asked where he finds students for the program and reported from informational sessions, newspapers and the Workforce Investment Board (WIB) with a range of 21 to 70 years in age.

Joe asked what was on the minds of the manufacturers and stated that we are here to listen to them and not to “sugar coat” their responses.

The participants provided positive and negative feedback:

Positive	Negative
Great place to live	Connecticut is business unfriendly
Good schools	Cost of doing business
Good quality of life	Time frame to prepare a traffic study
	Length of time to obtain permits
	Unions
	Cost of utilities
	Lack of qualified work force
	Cost of health care
	Requirements of government lending programs
	Classification of high tech companies

There was a discussion about the length of time to obtain various State of CT permits required to start, expand and operate manufacturing businesses. Dave Hannon informed the group that the State Traffic Commission was abolished in 2012 and replaced with the Office of the State Traffic Administration within the CT DOT. This reorganization may result in reduced time requirements for obtaining CT DOT permits needed for major traffic generating operations.

Several of the representatives of the companies present stated the lack of skills in the workforce. Obtaining skilled workers is critical to their businesses.

Kimberly-Clark needs skilled workers and identified the particular occupation:

- Machinists
- Welding,
- Rigging
- Electricians

Hal referred to the recent issue of *CEO Magazine* that cited Connecticut for:

- Negative growth 2 years in a row—the worse in the nation.
- Various surveys of business friendliness rate us anywhere from 45th to 47th in the country.
- Spending per capita is highest in the nation.
- Biggest problems are taxes, over-regulation, energy cost, and a general high cost of doing business.

Collective Comments:

- Connecticut is a nice place to live for his family, but he wouldn't start a business here.
- The top two things the state should do includes:
 - Ease regulations
 - Improve the quality of the workforce
- The only reason he has a business in the state is that his wife likes living here.

Joe asked if there was a need to create an advanced manufacturing association in the region? One business representative commented that they have an alliance through CONNSTEP. Joe gave the example of the Small Manufacturers' Association in Waterbury with 300 members that meet on a monthly basis and is a good network.

Recommendations:

- The state has issues and challenges and legislators should concentrate on those areas where they can make a difference.
- Encourage towns to give tax breaks to encourage business development.
- Emphasis should be placed on retention of businesses.
- The state should carefully pick their targets for recruitment in the area of high technology.

- Change the classification restrictions for high tech companies (LLC's do not qualify for some incentives because they are not corporations).

Bill Joyce commented that the average annual increase in business productivity is 3%. Companies win above the 3% and loose if below it.

**Western Connecticut Economic Development Alliance
Affordable Housing Focus Group**

June 20, 2013 Meeting Notes
1:30-4:00 p.m.

The following chart lists the participants at the focus group:

Participants	
Name	Organization
Jonathan Chew	Housatonic Valley Council of Elected Officials
Leslie Cosgrove	Garnet Consulting Services, Inc.
Joe DaSilva	DaSilva Realty
Dave Hannon	Housatonic Valley Council of Elected Officials
Hal Kurfehs	Coldwell Banker Commercial & Western Connecticut Economic Development Alliance
Marie Miszewski	Regional YMCA of Western Connecticut
Robert Morey	Remax Right Choice
Mark Nolan	Nolan Real Estate
Christy Rubenstein	Partnership for Strong Communities
Mary C.Sistrunk	Danbury Housing Authority

Hal Kurfehs, Chairman of the Western Connecticut Economic Development Alliance (WCEDA) opened the meeting and welcomed the participants and provided a brief history of the organization and the purpose of this focus group as a public outreach process in creating the **Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)**. He explained that the focus group on affordable housing was one of four that is being held.

The economic indicators on affordable housing that had been prepared by CERC were distributed and included:

- Affordable Housing Units in 2012 for the ten (10) WCEDA communities
- WCEDA Housing Permits in 2012
- WCEDA Household Statistics (2007-2011)
- WCEDA Charts on General Housing Statistics

Mark Nolan had been identified by WCEDA as the Affordable Housing Focus Group Leader and extended invitations to a cross section of people in the public and private sectors. Housing should be a key part of that strategy and as part of this planning process this focus group was created. He noted that there are a number of people that were not available for today's meeting and would like to provide input.

Christy Rubenstein, Senior Policy Analyst for the Partnership for Strong Communities passed around a chart on funding initiatives that their lobbyist had prepared gave an overview of the state legislation that had just been passed and prefaced it with the comment that sequestration at the national level has had a negative impact on housing programs:

- \$136 million in capital funding to develop or rehabilitate affordable housing across the state
- \$60 million in bonding as years two and three of a ten year commitment of \$300 million to preserve and upgrade public housing
- \$20 million to develop 100 new units of supportive housing with an annualized \$1 million for rental assistance subsidies and \$1 million for services.
- Funding for 312 new vouchers (significant)
- \$136 million for the Trust Fund

- \$2 million for Home CT initiatives
- Final authorization was granted to consolidate the state housing programs/functions into the new Department of Housing. (It will have a staff of 37.)

While significant investments in affordable housing that have been made over the past three years, it is not enough.

If towns have adopted housing incentive zones, then they are eligible for Home CT Initiative.

New Housing in the Region/Area

Several were identified:

- Laurel Hill in Brookfield received tax credits and will have 72 units of rental housing and 13 condominiums.
- ToleBrothers are using market rate and the affordable housing component for a project at Exit 26 in Prospect.
- Joe Silva reported that the City of Danbury had approved 21 units next to the hospital.

Marie Miszewski, CEO of the Regional YMCA of Western Connecticut, gave a brief history of the organization and spoke about the desirability of having a YMCA in a community because it brings recognition and stability. Their service area is comprised of 22 communities and they serve 12,000 people on an annual basis including 1,500 children in the summer. They have been located in Danbury for 52 years.

There was a good exchange of information, a good dialogue took place and it was noted to keep people in the loop.

The state statute 8-30g was discussed at length. HVCEO has tried to get modifications in the law to more realistically and effectively address the issue in the region. A number of people were happy to work on this issue regionally.

Jonathan Chew, Director of the Housatonic Valley Council of Elected Officials (HVCEO) passed out ***The Greater Danbury Housing Market Assessment*** for use by housing advocates that was prepared in 2009 for the Housatonic Valley Council of Elected Officials. Dave Hannon, Deputy Director, had made copies of the table of content and a summary of recommendations in the report and distributed them. The location of the full report was available online at:

http://www.hvceo.org/housing_market_assessment.pdf

It was noted that the communities have a history of working well in the region and also in particular in the area of affordable housing.

When asked if there was an agreed upon definition of affordable housing in the region, the following was stated: *Housing choices for the population that exists in the communities.*

There was a discussion of the status of the 2006 Danbury Plan to End Homelessness. It was noted that that Plan included regional strategies, one of which was briefly in operation several years ago.

That strategy was for area towns to achieve budgetary efficiencies by cooperatively supporting services to persons and families at risk of homelessness. It was agreed by the towns that the regional point of entry would be the Dream Homes Community Center in Danbury.

Jonathan Chew noted that in 2008 several suburban towns did fund this process (see * note). He said that it was never clear why the cooperative funding ended. In his view the answer may be as simple as there was no designated agent to prepare and send annual budget requests to municipalities, that perhaps there was no knowledge that renewing the request annually was a necessity in the municipal budgeting process.

There was also a discussion of regional coordination and technical support for municipal affordable housing efforts. In the Greater Danbury Area health directors, public works directors and emergency management directors all have professional groups with regular meeting schedules. There was support for a similar process being introduced for affordable housing personnel.

Jonathan spoke about interest from three communities (Bethel, Ridgefield & Redding) interest in transit oriented development (TOD).

Robert Morey from REMAX stated that there is a need for education of commissioners in the communities and stressed the importance of continuity. He also gave some examples. This discussion continued after the meeting was adjourned.

It was noted that the urban areas are providing 95% of the services for the region and this has become a burden for the City of Danbury. It would be helpful if the other towns helped with the lower tier of housing. The towns have teachers, police and service people that do not always have adequate incomes to afford housing within the communities in which they work.

Although the meeting was scheduled to end at 3:00 p.m., the participants continued the discussion and adjourned at 4:00 p.m. Mark Nolan was thanked for heading up this effort and inviting the participants to the focus group.

*Note

(Research shows the municipal contributions were to be Bridgewater and Sherman at \$1,350 each, Redding \$4,275, New Fairfield \$4,500, Bethel and Brookfield at \$5,175, New Milford and Newtown at \$6,075, Ridgefield at \$6,525 and Danbury at \$50,000 for a total of \$90,500).

**Western Connecticut Economic Development Alliance
Health Services Focus Group**

Location: Greater Danbury Chamber of Commerce
August 20, 2013 Meeting Notes
8:15 a.m.

The following chart lists the participants at the focus group:

Participants	
Name	Organization
Deborah Aconti	Bethel Health Care
Brian Carney	Western Connecticut Home Care
Leslie Cosgrove	Garnet Consulting Services, Inc.
Brian Carney	Western Connecticut Home Care
Katie Curran	Connecticut Institute for Communities, Inc. & Greater Danbury Community Health
Jaime Del Grosso	Blue Sky Behavioral Health LLC
Bernadette DaSilvera	Laurel Ridge Rehabilitation & Skilled Nursing Facility
Carla Dunford	Pope John Paul II Care & Rehab Center
Liz Durkin	Urgent Care of Connecticut
Janene Einbush	Maplewood Senior Living
Peter Evangelisti	Village Crest
David Hannon	Housatonic Valley Council of Elected Officials
Marianne Haynes	Laurel Ridge NCC
Erin Healy	Village Crest
Hal Kurhehs	Western Connecticut Economic Development Alliance
Bob Langley	Western Connecticut Health Network PHO
Judy Malin	Bethel VNA
Frank Malone	Hancock Hall/Filosa
Jen Malone-Seixas	Hancock Hall/Filosa
Karen McGregory	Candlewood Valley Health & Rehab
Andrea Wilson	New Milford VNA Hospice

Hal Kurfhehs, Chairman of the Western Connecticut Economic Development Alliance (WCEDA) opened the meeting and welcomed the participants and provided a brief history of the organization and the purpose of this focus group as a public outreach process in creating the **Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)**. He spoke about the other three focus groups that had been held previously and a business survey that had been distributed through the various chambers of commerce.

Hal introduced Robert Langley, Executive Director of the Western Connecticut Health Network PHO who will be the facilitator for the session, and he asked the participants to speak what is on their minds and to discuss how to make health care more viable in the region.

Bob asked the group to identify themselves and their businesses.

The economic indicators on affordable housing that had been prepared by CERC were distributed and included key points:

Employment:

Overall employment in healthcare expanded significantly in the WCEDA Region, 34%, from 2001 – 2010. Employment growth in the WCEDA Region grew at a faster rate than the Danbury Labor Market Region, Litchfield County, and Fairfield County.

Establishments:

The number of healthcare related establishments (62) grew by 21% from 2001 - 2011. Comparably, the Danbury Labor Market Area number of establishments grew at a faster rate (25%). The numbers of establishments in Litchfield and Fairfield counties expanded at slower rates.

Industry Trend Indicators:

- Affordable Care Act
- Expansion of Medicaid coverage
- Patient-centered medical home initiatives
- Expansion of health food oriented stores
- Aging population
- Technological advancements and product innovation
- Rising incidence of chronic diseases

Bob asked the group about the strengths and challenges in the health care field and the following chart lists both that were identified at the meeting:

Health Care Strengths	Health Care Challenges
Labor pool	Can't find employees with right skills
Strong hospital network	Turnover rate in health care industry (home care)
Quality providers in area	Documentation out of control
Cost of care in region is better than in other areas in the state	Reimbursement for services
Healthy respect for primary care	Uncertainty
Great variety of health care with all levels of care represented	Can't find staff to service people who are sent home
Assisted living growing	Employee burnout is common
	Expectation to see more unregulated health care services especially to the elderly
	Regulation

Bob asked if having only one hospital was good. Some of the responses included:

- There was a healthy alignment of building "feeder fish" to the hospital.
- The response time is much faster.
- On the provider end there is skilled nursing available.
- Most draw is from Danbury Hospital.
- The continuity is good.

There appears to be a larger share/growth opportunity in the area of dementia. Other questions posed included:

- How do we build these services together?
- How do we address the needs of the aging population?
- How are you going to pay for these services?

One participant who lives in Waterbury sees fragmentation in that area and doctors are sending their patients to Danbury.

Also discussed:

- People are living longer.
- Government is reducing the reimbursement.
- The status of self-pay is changing.
- Uncertainty in the field.
- More staff is needed 24/7, 365 days a year.
- The burnout rate is high.

- There is a waiting list for services.
- The government is pushing back on hospitals and there are projections that hospitalized days are going to be reduced.
- Change in the health field is difficult.
- Care at nursing homes has become much more acute care.
- Providers are stepping up providing more acute services.
- The hospital needs to understand the capability of the providers.

There was a good exchange of information. One participant gave an example she had learned from a speaker at a conference citing Johns Hopkins Hospital providing home care with by a collaboration of various area service providers.

A question was posed if the area providers are ready for the influx of people who will need care?

Hal Kurfehs spoke about his wife's experiences as a RN.

Connecticut's record of Medicare reimbursement was in the top 4 or 5 thus specialists do not participate in the program.

The right to die issue was discussed with various states' more aggressive approach in regulations. There appears to be a trend in having a health care coordinator at home.

Bob Langley stated that growth will come if we as a community are:

1. Efficient
2. Caring
3. Doing the right things

There was a consensus that the participants would like to work together to coordinate which may be a recommendation in the area's strategic plan (WCEDA CEDS) that is being created. Bob asked permission to send the participants the list of invitees to the focus group that had been put together by Sally Herlihy and Michelle Johnson at WCHN. Leslie Cosgrove also mentioned that the meeting notes would be distributed to the participants.

All were thanked for their time and it was the consensus that it was a meaningful discussion.

**Western Connecticut Economic Development Alliance
Life Sciences Focus Group**

Location: Brookfield Town Hall
October 18, 2013
8:15-10:15 A.M.

Meeting Notes

The following chart lists the participants at the focus group:

Participants	
Name	Organization
Robert Bedoukian	Bedoukian Research
Marcy Macdonald	Memry Corporation- V.P. Human Resources
Joan Petrini	Western CT Health Network Biomedical Research Institute
John Schosser	Memry Corporation- V.P. Controller
Elizabeth Stocker	Newtown Director of Economic & Community Development
Hal Kurfehs	Chair, Western CT Economic Development Alliance
Janice Chrzescijanek	Town of Bethel Economic Development Director
Bruce Tuomala	City of Danbury Economic Development Director
David Hannon	Housatonic Valley Council of Elected Officials, Deputy Director

Hal Kurfehs, Chairman of the Western Connecticut Economic Development Alliance (WCEDA) opened the meeting and welcomed the participants and provided a brief history of the organization and the purpose of this focus group as a public outreach process in creating the **Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)**. He spoke about the other four focus groups that had been held previously and a business survey that had been distributed through the various area chambers of commerce.

Hal introduced Elizabeth Stocker, Director of Economic and Community Development for the Town of Newtown, who acted as the facilitator for the session. Elizabeth welcomed the participants and asked each to introduce themselves and encouraged each to speak candidly about suggested actions that would help businesses in the Life Sciences sector of the area's economy to be more competitive and prosperous.

The regional economic indicators on the Life Sciences sector of the area's economy prepared by CERC were distributed and briefly discussed. Overall employment in the Life Sciences sector has expanded significantly in the WCEDA Region. The Pharmaceutical and Medicine Equipment Manufacturing subsector grew by 40% from 2001 – 2011 and the Medical Equipment and Supplies Manufacturing subsector grew by 18% from 2001-2011.

Elizabeth asked the group to talk about the relative strengths and challenges their business finds in being located within the WCEDA region. The following chart summarizes comments made at the meeting:

Regional Strengths	Regional Challenges
Available labor pool within reasonable commuting distance.	Can't find employees with right skills. CT DOL training program requirements are onerous.
Good area to live in: schools, services, amenities.	High cost of local housing forces employees to commute into the region.
Overall cost of doing business, while high in CT, is lower than in other areas, such as CA.	Requiring CT DOL approvals for job trainers at local business sites is unnecessary and a burden
Availability of high quality educational resources in the Northeast is a major plus in finding and attracting employees.	Local, regional, state educational programs should prepare students for anticipated area job openings.

Employees have more corporate loyalty in CT relative to other areas of the country and world.	Ability to attract & retain skilled labor is difficult given high housing costs.
Major research institutions have the ability to attract highest quality talent from around the U.S & World for bio-med research.	State funding for bio-med research is going to UCONN and none to this area.
The area has a good infrastructure system. Transportation infrastructure is good for commuters and for shipping by truck.	Excessive regulation concerning business and building expansion at State & local levels of government. Translates to inability to develop an acceptable & accurate timeline for facility changes and expansions.
	Lack of greenfield development opportunities to accommodate business ownership/expansion and relocation plans.
	Lack of financial support from CT DECD for consolidation and expansion of local businesses. State tax structure eliminates many R&D expansion initiatives within CT.

Elizabeth asked the participants why their business is located in the Greater Danbury area. Responses included:

- One business was started 41 years ago when I-84 was being constructed. The location in Commerce Park had good accessibility to labor force and markets.
- Danbury Hospital saw a need and an opportunity to develop a hospital affiliated, state of the art, biomedical research facility.
- One business has been in the area for many years and there would be a very high cost to relocate, due to federal government (FDA) regulation/recertification requirements for that type of industry.

Two businesses expressed a desire to relocate into new buildings that they would then own. They could not find any local vacant buildings that would suit their needs and they do not want brownfield sites due to long-term liabilities that come with the properties. They cannot find greenfield opportunities to construct new facilities within the WCEDA region.

The participants of the focus group expressed their appreciation for the opportunity to have the discussion. Elizabeth thanked everyone for their time and the meeting adjourned, with several follow-on side discussions that may lead to providing assistance to those with expansion aspirations.

Meeting Notes were prepared by David Hannon of the Housatonic Valley Council of Elected Officials.

**Western Connecticut Economic Development Alliance
Retail & Downtown Services Focus Group**

June 18, 2014 Meeting Notes
8:15-10:00 a.m.

The following chart lists the participants at the focus group:

Participants				
Name	Organization		Name	Organization
Helen Brickfeld	A New Beginning/AVEDA Wellness Salon and Day Spa		Hal Kurfehs	Coldwell Banker Commercial Western CT Economic Dev. Alliance
Manuel Carreras	City Center Danbury Commission		Nancy O’Connell	Ridgefield Chamber of Commerce & retail owner
Leslie Cosgrove	Garnet Consulting Services, Inc.		Dev Patel	Cloud 9
Larry Craybas	Bethel Board of Education & Gift Cottage		Kim Ramsey	The Toy Room
Dennis Daugherty	City Center & SCORE		Marion Roth	Ridgefield Chamber of Commerce
Sarah Gager	Naugatuck Valley Community College		Maura Ruby	Danbury Mall
Andrea Gartner	City Center Danbury		Lisa Scails	Council of the Arts in Western CT
Jody Haliskoe	Danbury Ice Arena		Stephanie Scavelli	HARTransit
David Hannon	Housatonic Valley Council of Elected Officials		Bill Struss	Williams-Sonoma
Laurie Hornbecker	Naugatuck Valley Community College			

Introductions & Statistics

Maura Ruby & Andrea Gartner, Co-leaders for the Retail & Downtown Services focus group welcomed the participants and asked each to introduce themselves and their business. A wide range of participants from the 10-town region were present. Maura and Andrea made some observations about the economic indicators that CERC had provided:

- 17% of jobs in the WCEDA are in the retail sector.
- There has been some slippage in the number of retail trade establishments in the last 10 years.

Folks were asked to identify three positive things and three negative things in their business or with the retail sector.

Positive	Negative
Economy turning around	Loss of the smaller tourism district
More cooperation	Services of Fedex
Bethel was cited as a safe community having great attributes with amenities	People shopping on the Internet
Ridgefield landowners are talking about a mix of businesses and helping one another	Parking always an issue
Recognition of importance of buying local --Fairfield was cited as a good example	Zoning Commissions with their signage & regulations
Use of Internet- advertise/shop local, appointments, e-mail lists, ...	Perception of safety in Danbury
	Unfriendly business environment in state

Having a downtown with too many pizza shops or consignment shops does not contribute to the vibrancy of the area.

Landlords play a major role in retail and those that are able to encourage diversity and be farsighted have an advantage. George Shaeffer was cited as a good example.

The owner of a yarn shop established 8 years ago was able to double her business by developing a contact list and using it to develop relationships with her customers.

The use of social media was given as a good example in marketing. One business owner uses social media and promotes buying local to expand the experience for her services. A confirmation on the appointment is either texted or by e-mail and after the service is performed, a quick survey is sent out. That is a good way to keep on top of what customers' perceptions. The use of social media creates powerful messages. She challenged the folks in downtown Danbury to use banners and Andrea spoke to the progress being made in this area.

Bill Struss, General Manager of Napa Sonoma at the Danbury Mall noted that they are concentrating on the experience of the customer. The challenge is driven by e-mail and a need to educate the consumer. They continue to work on getting their name out and empowering their employees to take care of the customers. Their staff of 20 when they opened is now 80. A key thought was to not mislead the customer and if an employee does not know the answer, tell them that you will get back to them with the correct answer.

Maura asked how the retailers feel about the online tax. Most like it and a comment was made that people won't know until the holiday time when they will not have as much purchasing power.

Comments:

- A good retail has to look for the next best thing.
- You must think ahead of the curve.

Having the presence of higher education in the downtown was cited as positive because it brought in some foot traffic/young people. The downtown location of Naugatuck Valley Community College (NVCC) in Danbury has grown from 200 to 1000 students over the last five years and the growth is coming from outside the city. The interplay between NVCC and WCSU has been positive. The need for a coffee shop by the students was cited. The tuition cost of \$3,800 was viewed as being reasonable.

Parking & Parking Enforcement

Each town handles parking differently and how stringent some of the towns enforce it were viewed as being negative. There is good parking at the Danbury Mall in a garage and it appears to be a draw from NY shoppers especially those from the Westchester area because the Danbury Mall has a better parking arrangement than the Westchester Mall and easier for the consumer to navigate.

Challenges in parking in the center of Danbury were noted. NVCC students complain about the distance they have to walk to class although it is less than a city block. Andrea spoke about the trends in "way finding". Merchants parking in key spaces were cited as a problem in some communities and Sarah Gager gave an example in Washington, Connecticut where the municipality constructed a lot in the village center (Washington Depot) just for retail employees which freed up spaces for customers.

Unfriendly Business Environment

Having an unfriendly business environment affects the small business owner. Connecticut was cited as not being business friendly. The retailers were encouraged to meet with their legislators although they often are so involved with their business and not able to take the time to do so. Some schools and businesses have switched from using oil to gas as a cost savings and having legislators think about taxing it was cited as discouraging.

Stephanie Scavelli, Transportation Planner for HARTransit gave an overview of their services:

- 34 ft. busses on a fixed route from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. mainly for people going to work.
- Small busses on demand (also serving the disable and elderly) with loops in evenings up to 10:00 p.m. including Sundays.

Dave Hannon noted that HART has a good reputation for working with towns and Ridgefield was given as an example. Ridership increases each year and presently it has over 1 million passengers. HART is looking for ways to better serve the area downtowns.

Issues/Topics Identified:

- Aging of population represents an opportunity for all in the room.
- Difficult to get retailers to take time to express their voice to legislators.
- The minimum wage increase to \$9 in 2015 may not have an impact to smart retailers since they pay their employees a better salary because of their ability with customer service.
- Health Care was cited as an issue because the unknown cost for small businesses and affects consumer confidence.
- Retail is dependent upon the weather.
- The area is blessed with the arts and it is an opportunity to bring in foot traffic.
- Occurrences of panhandling in downtown Danbury is a deterrent to attracting business patrons.
- The use of art in vacant store windows is good and should be encouraged.

At the end of the session, Maura and Andrea thanked the participants for taking their time to take part in the focus group.

Alliance focuses on area's economic future

Dirk Perrefort

Updated 10:20 p.m., Thursday, March 22, 2012

DANBURY -- While the area was clawing its way out of the worst recession in recent memory, a group of business leaders began working on a common goal -- to ensure the economic vitality of Greater Danbury for generations to come.

The group created the Western Connecticut Economic Alliance two years ago to represent the interests of 10 area towns, including Bethel, Danbury, Newtown, New Milford, Redding and Ridgefield.

Hal Kurfehs, chairman of the Brookfield Economic Development Commission, said while this area fared better than most during the recession -- in part because of a diverse industry base and a highly talented labor pool -- now is not the time to sit idle.

"Yes, we have an edge," said Kurfehs, chairman of the alliance. "But we don't want to lose that edge going forward."

By working together, he said, the strengths of each town can be identified and promoted.

"The idea is to maximize each town's potential," he said.

Because each town has its own strengths, marketing the area as a whole can make it more appealing to companies, according to Allen Morton, a member of the alliance and dean of Western Connecticut State University's Ansell School of Business.

"It makes the entire area look more attractive to future employers who could bring with them investment, jobs and community involvement," he said. "The towns can complement each other, instead of compete with each other."

Stephen Bull, president of the Greater Danbury Chamber of Commerce, said, "It's imperative that we work together."

He noted that some towns have restrictive zoning that prevents industry, while other towns encourage industrial development. Some towns have housing stock to meet the needs of different employment sectors.

"Redding, for example, needs Danbury to be successful, while Danbury needs Redding," Bull said. "There is a symbiotic relationship in the region that is very important and shouldn't be overlooked."

<p>Join us for Partners in Education Breakfast Keynote Speaker: Stefan Pryor Connecticut Commissioner of Education Topic: Education Reform Thursday, March 29, 2012 8 am to 9:30 am Matrix Conference & Banquet Center 39 Old Ridgebury Rd., Danbury</p>	
<p>CLICK HERE TO PURCHASE TICKETS</p> <p>Involving, empowering & supporting parents to improve the lives of children.</p> 	

The group, according to Kurfehs, is in the process of raising \$120,000 to pay for a comprehensive economic development strategy.

While the exercise can help the area identify its strengths, which can then be marketed to potential employers, a comprehensive economic development strategy is also a document that's become increasingly important for municipalities attempting to access government money for everything from revitalization efforts to transportation improvement projects.

Joy Strand, vice chairman of the Ridgefield Economic Development Commission, said the document can help bring a greater variety of jobs to the area by uncovering untapped potential for industrial sectors that could be developed or highlight sectors that have a limited future.

That, in turn, will help higher education officials determine what skill sets will be required by the area's workforce.

Both the state and federal governments have been encouraging regional approaches, Strand added, noting many grant programs give additional weight to towns with a regional economic plan.

"By coordinating our efforts, it reduces the redundancies that would result from everyone doing their own thing," she said. "Many of the problems communities face today are bigger than any one municipality can solve on (its) own."

Elizabeth Stocker, one of the founding members of the Western Connecticut Economic Alliance, said area towns can build on each other's successes.

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"It's something that will benefit all our communities, our residents and our businesses," she said. "It's really about getting everyone to move forward together."

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Focus Groups Planned as Part of Enhancing Danbury-New Milford Area Economic Development

Published: Tuesday, June 11, 2013
By Alice Tessier

The Western Connecticut Development Alliance (WCEDA), a regional group focusing on enhancing economic development initiatives in the Greater Danbury-New Milford area, will be holding four focus groups next week, seeking input from retail and downtown services, as well as the life sciences, advanced manufacturing, and affordable housing sectors.

The focus groups will take place Tuesday, June 18, and Thursday, June 20, at the Greater Danbury Chamber of Commerce office, located at 39 West St.

“This public outreach is part of our Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for the region,” said Hal Kurfehs of Brookfield, the chairman of the alliance.

The alliance, with representation from the public and private sectors, was formed in 2010 to strengthen economic development throughout the 10-municipality region, comprising Bethel, Bridgewater, Brookfield, Danbury, New Fairfield, New Milford, Newtown, Redding, Ridgefield and Sherman. It is now serving as the CEDS Committee, which is charged with creating the strategic plan and a regional economic development agenda.

“We are taking a regional approach to improve the economy of the Housatonic Valley municipalities of Western Connecticut,” said Mr. Kurfehs, who was tapped to join the alliance when it was first established, through the cooperative efforts of the Housatonic Valley Council of Elected Officials.



Hal Kurfehs of Brookfield,
Chairman of the Alliance.

The regional strategic plan enables the group to apply for federal and state monies.

“A regional approach will also enable our area to meet new requirements by the Connecticut General Assembly that give priority for state infrastructure grants to economic development activities derived from regional, no longer just municipal, economic development plans,” the WCEDA stated on its Web page (www.hvceo.org/economicplan.php).

Among the core group were Vincent Nolan, who was New Milford’s economic development

supervisor at the time and became the WCEDA's first chairman; Elizabeth Stocker, the director of Newtown's Economic and Community Development Office; and Wayne Shepperd, the chief of staff for Danbury's Mayor Mark Boughton.

This is not the first focus group series the alliance, assisted by Garnet Consulting Service, Inc. and the Connecticut Economic Resource Center, has planned, according to Mr. Kurfehs.

"We've held others, about a year ago, as well as issue-based meetings, and we're been gathering information for quite a while. We contacted all 10 municipalities and asked for relevant data and information about a range of things, to help up understand what they've done and what initiatives are currently important to them, such as the Four Corners in Brookfield," said Mr. Kurfehs, who is the chairman of Brookfield's Economic Development Commission.

"Our consultants have provided information about the demographics of the region and economic statistics, and now the alliance will be doing an online survey to gather more information from businesses—and beyond business, because Western Connecticut State University and the Western Connecticut Cultural Alliance are also important participants in the regional initiative," he said.

The retail and downtown services focus group will be held June 18 at 8:30 a.m., and the facilitators will be Andrea Gartner and Maura Ruby. The life sciences group will be held that day at 10:30 a.m., facilitated by Sally Herlihy, of Western Connecticut Health Network. These will be followed by the advanced technology focus group, facilitated by Ms. Stocker and Joe DeFao. The affordable housing focus group will be held June 20 at 1:30 p.m. and will be led by Mark Nolan.

"We want to get perspectives from those who have an impact in the marketplace," Mr. Kurfehs said, explaining that "life sciences" in particular is a "rather broad category, but a good part of it would be health care."

Anyone interested in participating in a focus group should contact Leslie Cosgrove of Garnet Consulting at lcogrove@snet.net.

Public outreach is instrumental in creating a meaningful strategic plan, according to Mr. Kurfehs.

In the alliance's prepared statement, he noted that through this avenue the alliance seeks "information regarding the current economy, future economy, resources available for meeting challenges and capitalizing on opportunities, issues impacting economic development in the region, what individual communities see as their current situation and potential, and how municipalities in the region can better work together."

Michael Boyle, the president of Base Technologies and chairman of Bethel's Economic Development Commission, is leading the Coordinating Committee the alliance has created.

In WCEDA's news release regarding the focus groups, he stated, "This CEDS will guide our regional economic development efforts over the next five years and input from the region's business community, residents, and other interested stakeholders is an essential part of creating the plan. We intend to work with all the region's chambers of commerce and economic development commissions to gain maximum input. The business survey included as part of this

process will help the consulting team gain a clearer understanding of the major strengths and weaknesses of the Western Connecticut region as a place to operate a business, as well as helping them to identify the primary opportunities for economic growth.”

When asked whether there have been any surprises regarding the information the alliance has obtained to date, Mr. Kurfels, an area resident for more than 30 years who has been employed in commercial real estate for 26 years and previously worked in corporate management and had his own business, said, “When you’re involved in something, you get fewer surprises. If you’re not, the world opens up.”

The U.S. Economic Development Administration, HVCEO, the alliance’s membership municipalities and private sector support has provided funding for WCEDA’s strategic plan and action agenda

Business

THE NEWS-TIMES | NEWS-TIMES.COM/BUSINESS | Sunday, October 27, 2013 | Section B

EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

Restaurants cooking up healthy job growth

Report: Full-service eating establishments leading the way in employment creation in Danbury region

By Dirk Perrefort

DANBURY — It's no surprise to Eli Hawli that the restaurant industry has been leading the charge in job creation for the Greater Danbury area, a trend that is expected to continue in coming years.

Hawli, the owner of several restaurants, including the Market Place on Mill Plain Road, said he's created nearly 100 new positions with the three restaurants he's opened in recent years.

He expects to open several new establishments in the years ahead.

"Our group continues to grow and we continue to hire more people," he said. "We are paying a lot more salaries than we did four years ago."

According to a preliminary report by the Western Connecticut Economic Development Alliance, full-service restaurants have hired more employees than almost any other industry in the Danbury area in the past four years.

The WCEDA's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy report defines the Danbury area as 10 towns, including Bethel, Brookfield, Bridgewater, Danbury, New Fairfield, New Milford, Newtown, Redding, Ridgefield and Sherman.

Restaurants are expected to continue leading the region's employment growth for the

Substantial growth is expected in coming years in medical practices, particularly in the area of insurance billing and coding.

next three years, along with grocery stores and doctors' offices, according to a draft of the alliance's CEDS obtained by Hearst Connecticut Newspapers. The final report is due to be completed by the end of the year.

Mark Thompson, executive director of the Fairfield County Medical Association, said substantial growth is expected in coming



Tyler Sizemore/Staff photographer
Line cook Devin Mulhall prepares food at Market Place Kitchen & Bar in Danbury. The restaurant industry has been near the top of the list of businesses that have hired the most employees in recent years and expect to hire the most in the future.

years in medical practices, particularly in the area of insurance billing and coding.

Those who understand and are certified in new coding procedures that are being implemented throughout the industry, he said, "will be worth their weight in gold."

"These are people who will be highly desirable and sought after by medical practices throughout the region," he said.

And while coding jobs command higher salaries than other industries on the list, local economist Nick Perna noted that many of the industries with recent and anticipated employment growth are "dominated by jobs with low salaries."

"The only negative in that sense is that it doesn't dramatically add to the overall income level of the area," he said. "But there are several industry categories that would be good-paying jobs by any standard. These days you take what you can get."

It's also no surprise, he said, that many of the industries creating employment are service related.

"Danbury is quite attractive as a moderate cost-of-living community for those who work in financial or other professional services in lower Fairfield County," he said. "They work down county, but spend their money here on the services they need."

While restaurant jobs are typically considered lower paying, Hawli notes that some of his full-time wait staff can make as much as \$1,000 a week or more. About 20 percent of his staff is full time, he said.

"It's definitely more money than you'll make working in the mall or at a grocery

Average wages

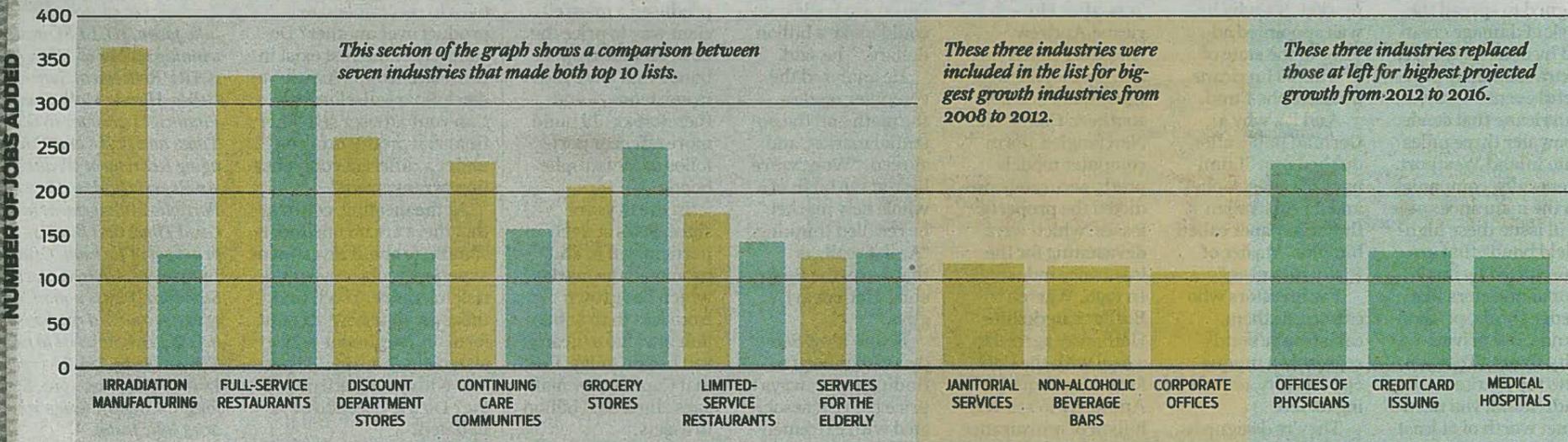
- ▶ Discount department store \$25,016
- ▶ Continuing care communities \$36,349
- ▶ Full-service restaurants \$25,676
- ▶ Grocery stores \$34,110
- ▶ Physicians' offices \$106,116
- ▶ Medical hospitals \$79,658

SOURCE — WCEDA

See Restaurants on B2

Actual and projected: Ten highest growth industries for employment in the Danbury region

Towns Included in the Western Connecticut Economic Development Alliance (WCEDA) are Bethel, Brookfield, Bridgewater, Danbury, New Fairfield, New Milford, Newtown, Redding, Ridgefield and Sherman



ACTUAL NET GROWTH IN TOP 10 INDUSTRIES 2008-2012

PROJECTED NET GROWTH IN TOP 10 INDUSTRIES 2012-2016

Daryn Rowley/Staff graphic

SOURCE: ECONOMIC MODELING SPECIALTIES INTERNATIONAL, 2013

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Such bonds are designed to spread the risk of damage created by extremely rare, extraordinarily powerful events — say, a hurricane that sends seawater three miles into inland Westport. Generally, companies in the insurance space will issue these high-yield bonds that are purchased by institutional investors like hedge funds, pension funds and private-equity firms. (To wade into the market as an individual, you need a net worth of at least

explain the cat-bond market. It's why he was appointed adviser to the state of Florida's Hurricane Catastrophe Fund. And it's why a German publication dubbed him "Jurni-nary of Catastrophe" and an Australian financial paper called him the "Master of Risky Business."

For investors who can access them, catastrophe bonds represent a unique opportunity, according to Seo. They're designed

emerged in the mid-'90s, after Hurricane Andrew ravaged Florida and the Northridge Earthquake rattled southern California. Newfangled storm computer models pretty accurately predicted the property losses, which were devastating for the insurance industry. In 1996, Warren Buffett's Berkshire Hathaway agreed to a deal with the California Earthquake Authority to sell \$1.5 billion of reinsurance

non dollars on a single trade. We figure if we do 100 trades, we could make a billion dollars," he said. He analyzed the computer models, the math and the potential market, and agreed. "Wow, we're here at the birth of a whole new market," he recalled thinking. "And it really is thanks to (the Berkshire Hathaway) guys."

Before long, Seo devoted himself to finding better ways to price the risk associated with extremely

proving software for modeling storms, he produced a more efficient way to price the 20 or so catastrophe bonds that were then in existence — and therefore could build more efficient portfolios of catastrophe bonds.

In the 13 years since, Seo's actively participated in and promoted the market, which has grown from less than \$1 billion in value to nearly \$20 billion today. Fernat Capital now manages about \$4.5 billion in assets.

adviser is paid? Whether he receives sales incentives to recommend one product over another? Do conflicts of interest exist in the relationship? Are there disciplinary disclosures? Can your adviser sell other financial products to you under a different compensation arrangement?

At the meeting, confirm that there are no misunderstandings about investment experience, objectives and risk tolerance. You'll find those on your new-account form or investment-policy statement. Are they consistent with your understanding? Do they need to be updated?

sure that you understand what to expect of each other.

Julie Jason, J.D. LL.M., award-winning author of "The AARP Retirement Survival Guide: How to Make Smart Financial Decisions in Good Times and Bad," and "Managing Retirement Wealth: An Expert Guide to Personal Portfolio Management in Good Times and Bad," is principal of Jackson, Grant Investment Advisers, Inc. of Stamford. Please e-mail her with questions at readers@julieason.com or write to her c/o The Advocate, 94 Riverbank Drive South, Box 4910, Stamford, CT 06907. Copyright 2013 Julie Jason.

Restaurants drive employment growth in Danbury area

Continued from B1

store," he said. "It's not going to get you rich, but many of our full-time staffers can help to support their families on the money."

Another industry that is expected to see a significant increase in employment in coming years as the population ages is the continuing-care retirement communities. The communities are an emerging industry with tremendous growth potential, according to Mag Morelli, president of the LeadingAge Connecticut industry group.

Morelli explained that unlike

traditional assisting-living facilities or nursing homes, residents typically "buy in" to a continuing-care community.

The resident then receives an apartment and whatever services they require, from dining and housekeeping at first to assisted living and nursing care as their needs change.

"The continuing-care retirement community model is growing in the state as people are aging and choosing this new lifestyle," Morelli said.

She added that a wide variety of skilled employees are needed

in such communities, from cooks to housekeeping, transportation, maintenance and nursing.

As more communities are established in the Danbury area, Morelli said, the need for employees will only increase.

More than 150 new jobs are expected in the sector in the next three years, according to the WCEDA report.

The industry that created the most jobs in the past four years, meanwhile, was irradiation manufacturing.

But while that industry, which makes X-ray equipment and other

radiation-related devices, led the way in new employees from 2008 to 2012, its fortunes are expected to turn. It falls to ninth on the list for industries expected to increase their employment rolls through 2016.

John Brenna, president of Danbury-based Topex, which makes X-ray equipment and components, said there is always a demand for replacement and upgraded equipment as newer technologies emerge.

"There is always a global demand for good X-ray systems," he said. "Not just for the medical

industry, but also for industrial equipment."

Hal Kurfels, chairman of the WCEDA, said the final Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy report that contained the employment data will be completed by the end of the year.

The report, he said, will serve as a blueprint to the region's economic strengths and weaknesses. "We can use that information to communicate our strengths to the outside world and improve upon our weaknesses," he said. "It will serve as a guide for the region for years to come."

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Ethan Allen upbeat despite drop in net income

Ethan Allen Interiors, Danbury-based interior design company, manufacturer and retailer, reported net income of \$9.03 million, or 31 cents per diluted share, for the three months ending Sept. 30, compared with \$10.06 million, or 35 cents a share, for the same period in 2012. Net sales decreased 3.1 percent from the prior year to \$181.7 million, but Farooq Kathwari, chairman and CEO, said it reflected lower

backlogs compared with the same quarter last year and that the company is repositioning from furniture to a home fashion business. Traded on the New York Stock Exchange under the ticker symbol "ETH," the company's stock rose 4 cents, or 0.14 percent, to \$27.63 in Friday trading.

Cartus vice president, team win training award

Cartus' global learning and development vice president, Tricia Small, and her

team were recently named winners of the 2013 Pike's Peak Performance Award for the training they provide to Cartus employees. The award was presented by the Bob Pike Group, an organization that has trained more than 100,000 trainers over the past 30 years. The award was presented at the 20th annual Creative

Training Techniques Conference in Minneapolis. Cartus was also recognized by Training magazine in 2013 as one of the Top 125 companies for the 12th consecutive year.



Contributed photo

Tricia Small, left, global learning and development vice president at Cartus, a Danbury-based relocation provider serving the corporate market, accepts the Pike's Peak Performance Award for employee training.

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Columnists

Western Connecticut leading with a roadmap for the future

Hal Kurfehs
Published 6:12 pm, Friday, August 9, 2013

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We are blessed to live in a region that has a high quality of life, convenient proximity to the world class city of New York, a high level of educational attainment, and a superior mix of businesses that tend to moderate downturns.

Even though we were not immune to the "Great Recession," our Housatonic Valley Region of Western Connecticut has nevertheless fared better than most, with an unemployment rate in the low 6 percent range -- far better than the nation or our state.

That's the good news! The bad news is that we are not an island--we are part of Connecticut. By definition the state has a significant influence on our economic well-being. And the state has dug a financial hole for itself that threatens to suck us into it.

Let's look at some parameters that will illustrate the point.

Last year, Connecticut was the only state in the U.S. that had a shrinking economy (-0.1 percent) and it ranked last in economic growth.

There were a couple of national surveys that ranked the states by their business friendliness, and most recently CEO Magazine put Connecticut at 45 out of 50 states. The biggest negatives cited were taxes and excessive government regulation.

At the other end of the scale Connecticut is # 1 in the U.S. in per capita government spending, a dubious distinction. And there seems to be little restraint in future government spending at the state level. A budget was just passed by the Legislature that used an accounting change to allow state spending to break through the Constitutional cap on spending increases.

The state government's tax burden, outstanding debt, unfunded pension and retirement health care costs are \$50,900 per taxpayer, the highest in the country. Further, Connecticut is 48th in the cost of living, has the second highest energy costs, and the second

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slowest growth in personal income in the nation.

There was a stir recently when high profile governors of Texas and Florida conducted a brazen raid on our businesses. Quite frankly, they smell blood and they hope to rip out a few dissatisfied companies and lure them to their own state.

But that is only the tip of the iceberg. For every one raid by a governor, there may be hundreds of other lower level vultures picking at our bones. Let's not act horrified, though, since we should recognize that Connecticut would do the same thing if the shoe was on the other foot, and another state looked like it was ripe for the taking.

On the home front in Western Connecticut there is much that we can do to keep our own regional house in order. About three years ago a public/private group of more than 20 leaders formed the Western Connecticut Economic Development Alliance (WCEDA) for the express purpose of funding and conducting a major Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for the region comprised of our 10 municipalities.

Members came from the various economic development directors, Western Connecticut Health Network, Danbury Fair mall, Western Connecticut State University, Berkshire Corporate Park, Cultural Alliance of Western Connecticut, Greater Danbury Chamber of Commerce, Housatonic Valley Council of Elected Officials, and various banking, commercial real estate, labor union and Northeast Utilities interests.

We raised funds for the study from the U.S. Economic Development Administration, the member municipalities, and private industry. A consulting team consisting of Garnet Consulting and CERC was retained. The CEDS is expected to be published this fall.

We expect that the report will not be relegated to the bookshelf when completed. It is meant to be the Roadmap of Economic Development & Prosperity for our region. A follow up plan to the report includes a website, promotional materials, and out-reach to encourage investment.

How can this CEDS make a difference in our regional market?

First, we have done a ton of homework. Data and plans have been collected, assimilated and analyzed from all the municipalities. Demographics and economic trends were investigated. Separate focus group sessions were conducted and a quantifiable survey was developed for widespread distribution by the region's Chambers of Commerce to the entire market.

Despite the undertow of the negatives that we have to deal with on the wider playing field, we feel that Western Connecticut by itself has a lot to offer. The intent is to identify and promote our strengths. It is almost equally important to assess our weaknesses, so that they can be shored up to the extent that they can be added to our strengths.

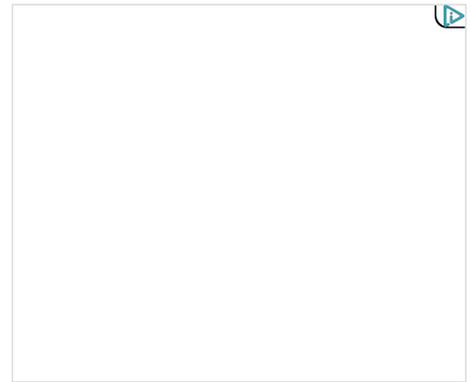
There are many different economic strategies that can be harnessed. As one example, we will look for "clusters" of healthy business activity already existent in the market.

Let's say, for instance, that a certain hi-tech industry is already starting to be established in the market. This particular budding industry is building expertise and it is attracting a high level of talent. Vendor firms that service that industry start to form. What we have then is an emerging area of strength. Knowing this, we may be able to entice other like-minded firms to establish themselves in our region. Success begets further success!

The Western Connecticut Region is a beacon of hope in a state that needs to reform its ways.

If our region can show even greater success with good policy perhaps it will influence the state to follow suit. That is certainly better than doing it alone.

Hal Kurfehs is chairman of the Western Connecticut Economic Development Alliance, chairman of the Brookfield Economic Development Commission, and vice president of



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