



MINUTES
NASHUA REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
September 20, 2006

Members Present:

Marilyn Peterman, Amherst
Martin Michaelis, Amherst
Jay Hennessey, Amherst
Helen Fenske, Brookline
Richard Maddox, Hudson
Howard Dilworth, Jr., Hudson
Suellen Seabury Quinlan, Hudson
Brion Carroll, Hudson

Nelson Disco, Merrimack
Noreen O'Connell, Milford
Mike Fimbel, Mont Vernon
Kathy Hersh, Nashua
Jean-Guy Bergeron, Pelham
Tom Collins, Pelham
Leo Thibeault, Pelham
Steve Dubois, NH DOT

Staff Present:

Steve Williams, Executive Director
Kerrie Diers, Assistant Director
Camille Pattison, Integrated Planning Program Manager
Steve Schaffer, GIS Manager

Shirley Vance, Executive Assistant
Matt Waitkins, Transportation Planner
Bernie Yacobucci, Transportation Planner

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

Privilege of the Floor

There were no members of the public in attendance who wished to speak.

Approval of Minutes -March 15, 2006

It was noted that Helen Fenske and Richard Maddox were in attendance at the March meeting but were not shown in the list of attendees. It was then moved by Jay Hennessey, seconded by Jean Guy Bergeron:

THAT the minutes of the meeting held on March 15, 2006 be removed from the table and approved as amended.

The motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Minutes -June 21, 2006

It was noted that both Helen Fenske and Linda Saari were not included in the list of members present, but were at the meeting. It was then moved by Jay Hennessey, seconded by Howard Dilworth Jr.:

THAT the minutes of the meeting held on June 21, 2006 be amended to include text provided by Jay Hennessey.

The motion carried unanimously.

It was moved by Jay Hennessey, seconded by Nelson Disco:

THAT the minutes of the meeting held on June 21, 2006 be approved as amended.

The motion carried unanimously.



Consideration of Public Hearing Items

Steve Williams explained that the NRPC Long Range Transportation Plan 2007-2026, the NRPC Transportation Improvement Program and the Air Quality Conformity Analysis need to be approved every two years. A 30-day public comment period has been on-going and ends today. Each document needs to be considered for adoption.

Air Quality Conformity Analysis: Matt Waitkins briefed members on the AQ Analysis. The Analysis identifies all projects from all the MPOs TIP's; distinguishes non-exempt and exempt projects; analyzes projects to identify whether conformity analysis was necessary; totals emissions from all MPOs to make sure they are beneath the budget set by EPA; and reconciles tables. He noted that the only comments received were minor ones from Becky Ohler, NH DES and they had been incorporated into the final document. Discussion followed.

NRPC Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) 2007-2016: Bernie Yacobucci presented the TIP. No new additional projects have been added to the TIP. It includes all projects from the prior TIP, identifies two new features for SAFETEA-LU compliance. The TIP includes several new TE, CMAQ and earmarked projects. It also adds an annual listing of projects as well as a short-term program list and revised tables for easier reading.

Nelson Disco asked how a project could be added to the TIP. Steve Williams said that the State has limited funding and costs are escalating faster than the funding is coming in. Marilyn Peterman said that pushing the 101 Corridor project to 2016 is unconscionable. It was the consensus of those present that change needs to take place in the manner in which projects are included in the TIP and discussion ensued as to how to accomplish that change. Williams reported that at present, the NH DOT is not in favor of allowing the RPCs to distribute the funding within their own regions. Williams reported that the MPOs have been working on a strategy for this issue. Members of the Commission asked, "What would happen if NRPC does not approve these documents?" Williams stated it would mean that no projects could move forward in the urbanized area of the state until the NH DOT and NRPC agreed on the contents of the TIP. Much discussion followed. The Executive Director will bring some suggestions to the December meeting on approaches to change the current process.

NRPC Long Range Transportation Plan

Camille Pattison reported on the Long Range Transportation Plan. She also added that the Transportation Technical Advisory Committee (TTAC) voted to recommend that the NRPC adopt the documents being presented this evening. Camille said that the Plan was SAFETEA-LU compliant, and a fair amount of language had been added to the Plan. Also added were an annual listing of projects, ITS information, a summary table and CMAQ projects for Hudson, 101 and Pelham. This is a 20 year plan which is updated every 2 years. Discussion followed regarding transportation issues in the Nashua region.

Public Hearing on Update of NRPC Long Range Transportation Plan, Transportation Improvement Program and Air Quality Conformity Analysis

There being no members of the public present, the public hearing was closed.

It was noted that the data used in the Transit Needs Analysis in Chapter 4 is 2000 Census data and should be updated. It was requested that the income levels be removed. Discussion followed. During the discussion it was determined that the data could not be updated since the census is the only source for the required data.



It was moved by Noreen O'Connell, seconded by Suellen Seabury Quinlan:

THAT Chapter 4 be amended to state that the data used in the Transit Needs Analysis is based on 2000 Census data.

The motion carried unanimously.

It was moved by Suellen Seabury Quinlan, seconded by Marilyn Peterman:

THAT the draft Air Quality Conformity Analysis be approved contingent upon addressing the comments received from DES and the concurrence of the Federal Highway Administration with the demonstration of conformity for the Southeast NH 8 Hour Ozone Non-attainment area that is currently open for public comment.

The motion carried with Howard Dilworth Jr. opposed.

It was moved by Jean-Guy Bergeron, seconded by Tom Collins:

THAT the 2007-2016 Transportation Improvement Program be approved contingent upon addressing the comments received from DES and the concurrence of the Federal Highway Administration with the demonstration of conformity for the Southeast NH 8 Hour Ozone Non-attainment area that is currently open for public comment.

Nelson Disco suggested that any comments received be added to the TIP and that the vote would be contingent on the inclusion of comments. It was moved by Nelson Disco, seconded by Mike Fimbel:

THAT the 2007-2026 Transportation Improvement Plan be amended to include comments that might be received.

The motion carried unanimously.

It was moved by Marilyn Peterman, seconded by Leo Thibeault:

THAT the 2007-2026 Long Range Transportation Plan be approved contingent upon addressing the comments received from DES and the concurrence of the Federal Highway Administration with the demonstration of conformity for the Southeast NH 8 Hour Ozone Non-attainment area that is currently open for public comment.

The original motion was then moved by Marilyn Peterman, seconded by Leo Thibeault:

THAT the 2007-2026 Long Range Transportation Plan be approved as amended contingent upon addressing the comments received from DES and the concurrence of the Federal Highway Administration with the demonstration of conformity for the Southeast NH 8 Hour Ozone Non-attainment area that is currently open for public comment.

The motion carried unanimously.

At this point conversation turned to how best to deal with the situation of having more control over how transportation projects are selected for programming.



It was then moved by Richard Maddox, seconded by Tom Collins:

THAT letters be sent to the sitting Executive Councilors and candidates identifying problems with the transportation project programming process and asking that changes be made in the process to provide a direct voice for municipal governments through the regional planning commissions.

The motion **carried** with Howard Dilworth Jr., Mike Fimbel, Marilyn Peterman, and Noreen O'Connell opposed.

Brion Carroll moved, seconded by Marilyn Peterman:

THAT the Executive Director formalize a plan to be reviewed in December by the NRPC. The Executive Director would draft a unified letter to the Governor, Executive Council, DOT and legislative committees.

The motion **carried** with Howard Dilworth Jr. opposed.

Integrating Transportation and Community Planning (iTRaC)

Kerrie Diers, Camille Pattison and Steve Schaffer have created this new program called iTRaC. NRPC is the first region in the state to implement this process. It will vastly improve the ability to provide direct services to individual communities. Camille Pattison gave a program overview. It is a new approach to community planning that focuses on integrating transportation, land use and environmental planning. It was developed to assist communities in dealing with the challenges of growth in a coordinated way that sustains community character and fosters a sense of place. iTRaC consists of three components: Technical Assistance, Education and Training and Special Project. There is no cost for communities to get involved with this project.

Kerrie Diers added that communities can access free NRPC staff services through the iTRaC planning program. There are four steps to the process: 1) schedule an introductory presentation; 2) the iTRaC planning process; application assistance; and project selection and award. Funding is provided through grants from the NH DOT and OEP.

Steve Schaffer said that through this process technology will provide our communities greater accessibility to data. Fact Sheets will be added on different topics and post cards will be mailed monthly with brief descriptions of the fact sheets. All of this information will be available on our website at www.nashuarpc.org/iTRaC. The website will be the primary source of information and will have links to other sources. A lending library will also be available.

Commissioners present congratulated the staff for pushing this resource forward. They were very excited about the future of this process. At this point, Steve Williams expressed his thanks to Camille, Kerrie and Steve for their excellent job on developing the iTRaC program and he is looking forward to what will be coming out of it.



Commissioner's Roundtable

A Commissioner's Roundtable was held. Steve Williams reported that some staffing changes have been made. Camille Pattison has moved into the position of Integrated Planning Program Manager and Tim Roache has been hired as Principal Transportation Planner. He added that the Buildout Study developed by Steve Schaffer has received the NNECAPA Plan of the Year award which will be presented at their annual meeting tomorrow evening.

Other Business

Marilyn Peterman moved, seconded by Jay Hennessey:

THAT a letter to the NH DOT be written requesting that a left hand turn lane on Route 101 be added.

The motion **carried** unanimously.

It was moved by Marilyn Peterman, seconded by Jay Hennessey:

THAT the meeting adjourned at 9:45 PM.

The motion **carried** unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephen Williams, Official Recorder