

 **NRPC MINUTES-APPROVED**
NASHUA REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
December 17, 2008

Members Present:

Martin Michaelis, Amherst	George Campbell, NH DOT
Peter Baker, Hollis	Jeff Brillhart, NH DOT
Susan Durham	Nancy Mayville, NH DOT
Brion Carroll, Hudson	Janet Langdell, Milford
Howard Dilworth, Jr., Hudson	Noreen O'Connell, Milford
Bernie Manor, Hudson (A)	Mike Fimbel, Mont Vernon
Sue Ellen Quinlan	David R. Hall, Mont Vernon
James Elliott, Merrimack	Kathy Hersh, Nashua
Karin Elmer, Merrimack (A)	Brian McCarthy, Nashua (A)
Tim Tenhave, Merrimack	Mike Tabacsko, Nashua
Donald Wunderlich, Merrimack	Joe Torre, Wilton

Staff Present:

Steve Williams, Executive Director	Tim Roache, Principal Transportation Planner
Kerrie Diers, Assistant Director	Karen M. Baker, Administrative Assistant
Camille Pattison, Integrated Planning Program Manager	Steve Schaffer, GIS Manager

Noreen O'Connell, Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM and requested that folks raise there cards when speaking for recognition purposes.

Privilege of the Floor

There were no members of the public in attendance.

Introduction of New Members

There were no new members present.

Presentation by Commissioner George Campbell, NH Department of Transportation

Steve Williams introduced NH DOT Commissioner George Campbell who gave the group a brief background history on himself and his activities as Commissioner since his appointment in mid-May 2008. He also spoke about the recent power outages and his tour of the shelters in the region, specifically in Peterborough where he was happy to see a former and current selectmen volunteering. He also made it clear that he was well aware of the troubles and hardships out there due to the recent ice storm. He added that Governor Lynch was a good man to have as our CEO and pointed out his attention to detail. Campbell introduced members of his team Jeff Brillhart and Nancy Mayville also attending the meeting. Campbell went on to explain their responsibilities. Campbell also pointed out some of the challenges that DOT is facing:

- \$75 million deficit year
- Only major department that has not grown in years & currently have 125 vacancies
- Big fiscal challenge stemming from block grant problems
- Working with Rep. David Campbell pf Nashua to bridge fiscal challenge (restructuring necessary)
- Options for I-95, I-93, and the whole turnpike system need to be looked into (legislature looking into diversion)
- Only capital side will benefit from an economic stimulus package

Campbell closed by thanking everyone and saying that it was an exciting time to be in transportation because people are paying attention. At this point he addressed questions.

Brion Carroll said that an stimulus for rail and bridges from Obama could put shovels in the earth and asked if there was a way to put projects back into the 10 year plan that are critical but may have been

knocked out previously (Circumferential Highway) and if we should push for this. Campbell said yes and that any relief that you see will be targeted for capital and that this would be the time to look at those types of projects.

Mike Fimbel commented on the funding for the proposed North bridge project that was shot down due to private funding associated with it and expressed that this needed to be changed and suggested after the bridge was paid back from the tolls, that it be shifted to State ownership. Campbell responded that public vs private partnerships were looked at and referred to monetization which is used in other states. He also pointed out that this bridge project would have used equalization which can be used for jail and colleges. He added that there was a push on 3 levels from the feds:

1. Focus on interstate;
2. Balancing the rest of money left and focus on tolling; and
3. Public and private partnerships.

Tim Tenhave questioned moneys for infrastructure projects and whether the feds would be pushing the money to states or municipalities. Campbell thinks it will be on non-match and that Obama wants to see more Green projects. He also provided a bit of information regarding transportation use:

- 21 cents of every dollar is used for transportation
- Poorest pay 30 cents for every dollar
- For every 1 billion in new construction 35,000 jobs are created.

Approval of Minutes - October 15, 2008

Chairman O'Connell asked if there were any comments on the minutes of October 15th, 2008. Suellen Seabury asked that Richard Quinlan's name in the list of attendees be changed to reflect his actual last name of "Quintal". In addition, there were some grammatical errors that would be forwarded to the recording secretary later for finalization pending approval. There were no further comments and it was moved by Janet Langdell and seconded by Kathy Hersh:

THAT the minutes of October 15th, 2008 be approved with amendments.

The motion carried unanimously.

Update of Regional Housing Needs Assessment

Williams reviewed the Regional Housing Needs Assessment included in the agenda packet with the Commissioners. He summarized saying the NH Legislature has recognized that a balanced supply of housing to meet the needs of all income levels is an important state interest and that the planning for its development should be coordinated at the local and regional level. At the regional level, regional planning commissions are required to compile a regional housing needs assessment every five years (see RSA 36:47). This assessment must address the overall regional need for housing for persons and families of all levels of income for the foreseeable future. He added that this is an update from the previous version adopted by NRPC 5 years ago. He continued further explaining Steps 1-4 of the Assessment. He called attention to pages 9-11 and tables 7 -11 explaining in detail. Williams also pointed out the new additions to RSA 674. Williams added that the document was basically a mathematical analysis.

Brian McCarthy had several issues with the assessment as well as Kathy Hersh and several others in attendance. Williams along with staff members addressed the concerns and issues of the Commissioners. Williams also emphasized that the assessment was not a quota, but just a planning tool. The members of the commission had a wide ranging discussion of the draft document and related issues.

Williams direct quoted the statutory regulations under RSA 36:47 when asked by McCarthy asked what they were. Another member asked if the municipalities would be in compliance if they accepted the numbers listed in the tables of the document. O'Connell emphasized that the document was just an assessment, NOT a requirement.

Seabury agreed with comments from O'Connell, that the document is unenforceable and just a planning tool and referred to 40B in Massachusetts saying that if NH communities do not recognize the

requirements of the RSA, then the State will come in. She added that they need to understand this and the Commission should recognize the need that all communities will have all levels of housing.

Dilworth suggested the group to vote it down. Baker was uncomfortable as well. Wunderlich motioned to table the document to a special meeting. Williams said he would need more specifics and that he heard several different issues pertaining to the document. Williams reminded the commissioners that the document was a requirement and that something would eventually need to be adopted. NRPC would be back before years end due to the fact that the document was a requirement of NRPC. Torre suggested saying what the document is NOT adding that the intent was not to provide quotas, just a tool. Seabury was not in favor of remaining and emphasized again that the document was no binding to the communities, was for planning purposes only, not intended to create a quota or address a fair share concept. O'Connell suggested a cover letter with disclaimers. Seabury suggested under the title with the words "pursuant to the statute"

There were several issues from a number of the group in regards to adoption, and being held to the numbers listed in the tables or the content itself, as well as several attempts for motions and amendments to motions for adoption. After further discussion a motion could not be agreed upon. 7 members were in favor of the document and 8 that were not in favor. Instead, it was moved by Wunderlich and seconded by Joe Torre

THAT the Regional Housing Needs Assessment for the Nashua Region be tabled and a special meeting or workshop be held on February 4th at 6:00 pm at the Nashua Regional Planning Commission office.

The motion carried with Hall opposed.

O'Connell informed the Commissioners of the upcoming Legislative Forum being held on Thursday, January 15th, 2009 at 6:30pm at the Anheuser-Busch Brewery in Merrimack, NH

Final comment from Hersh was her concern on the Assessment and whether it was an update on the Regional Housing Needs Assessment or was it on workforce housing. Carroll agreed. O'Connell suggested that they look at various caveats to make it stronger. Langdell requested a copy of the previous assessment.

Williams addressed the group saying that he had not heard consistent set of answers and was reluctant to work on the document yet or publish a document that did not have the title "Regional Housing Needs Assessment" on it. He also had concerns the impact to the budget, stating that the agency did not have funding to develop another version of the document prior to the work session. He concluded his point reminding the group of his statutory requirements and suggested the group look at the 2004 assessment and the possibility of incorporating recent version as a chapter.

Commissioners' Roundtable

A commissioner's roundtable was held.

It was moved by Wunderlich and seconded by Langdell:

THAT the meeting be adjourned at 9:50 pm.

The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephen Williams, Official Recorder