



MINUTES
NASHUA REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
Executive Committee
October 20, 2004

D R A F T

Present: John Eresian, Chair
Howard Dilworth, Jr.
Nelson Disco
Marilyn Peterman
Mike Fimbel
Andy Prolman
Bill Parker

Absent: Kathy Hersh
Frank Bolmarcich

Staff: Stephen Williams, Executive Director
Roger Hunt, Assistant Director

The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. Williams distributed a revised agenda.

Minutes of the August 18, 2004 Meeting (revised)

The revised minutes were reviewed by the members of the Executive Committee. Group consensus was that the revisions were appropriate and acceptable. Motion by Disco, second by Prolman to approve the minutes; passed unanimously.

Minutes of the September 1, 2004 Meeting

The minutes were reviewed by the members of the Executive Committee. Group consensus was that the minutes were appropriate and acceptable. Motion by Parker, second by Disco to approve the minutes; passed unanimously.

Strategic Plan/Board Retreat

Williams outlined the multi-stage process proposed by staff to seek input from stakeholders, leading to creation of a new NRPC Strategic Plan. The timeline would begin soon and would extend to next June for adoption by the full Commission, with a retreat for the full Commission to take place in April.

Committee members generally agreed that the strategic plan was a good idea. The proposed timeline caused some concern. Peterman indicated that seeking questionnaire responses and scheduling meetings in November and December would conflict with the busiest time of year for many towns, due to budget discussions and preparation for town meeting in March. Dilworth agreed and pointed out that town planning boards need to have zoning proposals ready in mid-December. Fimbel indicated that a delay of 30 days or 60 days would allow the full Commission to see and comment on the process.

Members agreed that a 30-day delay would be appropriate. They also agreed that the survey should be addressed to recipients by name. Having Commission members speak with the stakeholders in their respective towns should help bring response rate to more than 20 percent. Executive Committee members will give Williams their own lists of stakeholders; he will supplement by contacting the towns not represented at the Committee meeting.



New Hampshire Association of Regional Planning Commissions Planning Principles

Williams outlined his recent meeting with NHARPC and the decision to formulate a draft set of Planning Principles. He noted that there are three concepts underlying the Principles: the NHARPC should “Stand for something”; the need for marketing the organization; and the need for legislative effectiveness. A possible concrete outcome of adopting the principles would be increasing member dues in each RPC by about \$2-3,000 per member, with the gross going to NHARPC so they could hire a state legislative lobbyist. Williams said that this list of principles is just a first cut and that further discussion by NHARPC will be forthcoming and a vote taken in November.

Members expressed some concern about the legislative aspects. Prolman asked if this would duplicate the work of the New Hampshire Municipal Association. Williams said that there would be some overlap but some issues are unique to RPCs. Peterman commented that this is a very ambitious undertaking, and that NHMA has a full slate of committees for similar aims. Dilworth asked what happens when regional policies run counter to those of individual municipalities; he also noted that the list doesn't mention transportation. Disco indicated that key issues will be different from one locality to another – schools, for example.

Williams noted that this is an informational item – he will note comments and report developments as they happen.

Grant Writing for Merrimack Valley Regional Water District

Williams provided basic information on this item. Namely, although actual policy/implementation for the District is on hold due to the Pennichuck Water issues. The Water District still has a need for grant-writing assistance, which NRPC has the capability to provide. Dilworth cautioned that the District is still controversial and that he is concerned about the appearance of being too deeply involved. He also noted that it might appear to be a conflict of interest if NRPC advocates for the District and then derives consulting revenue from it. Peterman said that if a vote on this item were to be taken tonight, she would abstain.

Williams noted comments as given. He also mentioned that NRPC is working with the Pennichuck Water Company as well as the Milford, Manchester, Hudson and Merrimack Village districts on a system interconnectivity study for emergency services. Williams stated that he believes that the availability of water in the region in the future is the key issue and that he felt that no matter the organizational structure in the future the information developed as part of any grant funded study would further that purpose.

Statewide Development Plan Input Session

Williams provided basic information about Ben Frost's upcoming visit and invited all to attend on Wednesday, November 10 at noon at NRPC's office.

Next Commission Meeting November 17, 2004

Williams described the state transportation planning activity slated for the next full Commission meeting and indicated that it would be a large group and likely will consume our entire meeting time. Some discussion was held about a suitable location, and general consensus was that Nashua High School – North should be a likely choice. Dilworth pointed out that November's meeting would cover the revised budget also.



Finance Report for September 2004

Williams distributed a revised report with some minor changes, and explained how to interpret the various spreadsheet columns. The Committee accepted the report as informational.

Capital Purchases

Williams said that this budget item was originally to be used for a new copier; however, our copier is fine but other equipment is failing (e.g., our voice-mail system died last week). The Committee agreed that redirecting the capital equipment funds to the needed areas was appropriate.

Audit Committee

Williams asked if the group was still interested in forming an Audit Committee. General consensus was that the Audit Committee is still a good idea. Dilworth suggested that the nominating committee could also seek candidates for audit membership.

Correspondence with Town of Milford Regarding Dues

Williams distributed for informational purposes copies of the letter received in September from Bill Parker and his (Williams') response of last week. Parker indicated he had no further information for the record at this time. In response to a question from Eresian, Williams said that if they choose not to be members, Milford would receive no services from NRPC except those mandated by law. Group consensus was to wait and see how events unfold in Milford.

Other Business

Williams told the Committee that Shirley Vance had just completed her 30th anniversary with NRPC and asked that a suitable acknowledgement be considered for the November full Commission meeting. Dilworth agreed to coordinate efforts toward an appropriate celebration.

Adjournment

There being no further business, Prolman moved and Disco seconded adjournment; motion carried unanimously.