



**MINUTES – APPROVED
NASHUA REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
December 14, 2011**

Members Present:

Martin Michaelis, Amherst	Janet Langdell, Milford
Brad Vear, Amherst	Andy Seale, Milford
James Battis, Hudson	Mike Tabacsko, Nashua
Howard Dilworth, Jr., Hudson	Mike Fimbel, Mont Vernon
Peter Baker, Hollis	Ed Gleason, Pelham
Tom Young, Litchfield	David Hennessey, Pelham
Charles Moser, Mason	
Karin Elmer, Merrimack	

Others Present:

Nancy Mayville, NH DOT

Staff Present:

Kerrie Diers, Executive Director	Tim Roache, Assistant Director
Camille Pattison, Principal Planner	Julie Chizmas, Transportation Planner
Jen Czysz, Senior Regional Planner	Karen Baker, Program Assistant

Call to Order

Chairman Langdell called the meeting to order at 7:06 PM.

Privilege of the Floor:

There were no members of the public in attendance.

Introduction of New Commissioners

Chairman Langdell introduced 2 new Commissioners present. New Commissioners were James Battis, Conservation Commission member from Hudson and Thomas Young, Planning Board Member from Litchfield. Langdell welcomed everyone and proceeded with the meeting.

Approval of the Minutes – September 21, 2011

The Chair asked if there were any comments on the minutes of September 21, 2011. It was moved by Gleason and seconded by Seale:

THAT the minutes of September 21, 2011 be approved.

The motion **carried** with 4 abstentions.

Presentation and Discussion: Draft Population and Net Migration Projections for the NRPC Region

Diers introduced new Senior Regional Planner Jen Czysz and gave a brief background of her work history. Roache then provided a brief explanation of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan.

Czysz provided a brief overview of the Draft Population and Net Migration Projections for the NRPC Region. NRPC developed a population projection model, utilizing the Cohort Component Method, for each town in the NRPC Region. The model's base data includes the 2010 U.S. Census population for each town and births and deaths data queried from the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services' online database. Additionally, survival rates were obtained from NH OEP's past population projections. However, NRPC must also generate a set of unique projected net migration rates for each town to complete the required base data needed to run the projection model. Population projections serve as one of many components to forecast future traffic conditions and transportation demand. They are used specifically in the region's Travel Demand Model as future year totals. Two current trends across New Hampshire are the declining net migration and natural population decreases, which could likely create a shift in future transportation needs.

A summary of the questions/discussions during the presentation are provided below.

Seale questioned the age range of 15 to 45 of "all women capable of childbirth". Czysz confirmed that this is the standard age range used by the Census Bureau and other statistical models.

Fimbel questioned the effects of the recently built Bedford High School and the tax implications as well as the kids that use to attend Manchester West. Elmer, also a Town Planner for Bedford pointed out that the taxes in Merrimack were higher than Bedford and they were only higher in Bedford for the first year the High School was built and have since leveled off.

Seale asked how the net migration was defined. Czysz said the Net Migration is the number of people that move into the community minus the number that move out. It is calculated by taking the difference of 2 Census years, subtract the natural population change, and the result is the net migration.

Fimbel asked if doing these projections was something new. Czysz said that past projection information was from the Office of Energy & Planning State Data Center, but they are no longer doing projections, just estimates. NRPC needs projections for the Travel Demand Model. Also, OEP had been running State level projections, but not at the municipal level and then allocating a share to each municipality based on the State level projections.

Seale asked if the numbers could be broken out by age groups in which Czysz answered yes. She added that Pelham was the only town showing an upward trend and soaring populations were not showing for the future.

Michaelis referred to the wild miscalculations on population that happen in Amherst in the 70's resulting in a population projection for 1985 of 20,000. He added that the population currently for Amherst is only 12,000.

Dilworth commented that building permit projections is a way to measure vacant housing stock. Czysz said that would require knowing what the average vacancy rate is. Dilworth commented that they thought they had more residents in Hudson than they did and asked how you could get a more accurate population projection. Czysz referred to information not taken into consideration and by using those considerations it would be possible to get more accurate projections. She added that NRPC would be talking with each of the communities as an effort to get more information for the projections. Hennessey spoke about using population by age in different towns. Czysz said that information is there and used for the model.

Langdell asked how policy change is incorporated into net migration. Czysz said that it is a more subjective decision point.

Roache spoke a bit about accuracy and that they were in good shape as far as getting data for projections. He added that this projection data will be in the Metropolitan Transportation Plan first with all the data from Czysz and VMT. Fimbel asked if there was any forecast yet on VMT. Roache said it has yet to be seen. Czysz added that to date, she had met with the Milford, Merrimack, Pelham, and Brookline planning departments. Dilworth suggested talking to the Selectmen as well in Hudson.

Program Reports

Diers said that with a lot of work from Jen Czysz and Stacey Doll from the NH Climate Collaborative, the NRPC, as lead applicant on behalf of the 9 NH Regional Planning Commissions, was awarded a \$3.37 million grant from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development's Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant Program. The goal of HUD's Sustainable Communities grants is to help communities and regions improve their economic competitiveness by connecting housing with good jobs, quality schools, and transportation. The Regional Planning Grant program encourages grantees to integrate housing, land-use, economic and workforce development, transportation, and infrastructure development, through regional planning efforts, in a manner that empowers regions to consider how these factors work together to create employment and economic opportunities. The program will place a priority on partnerships, including the collaboration of arts and culture, philanthropy, and innovative ideas into the regional planning process.

She added that this would be a three year project that will coordinate previous long range planning efforts for transportation, land use, economic development, housing environment, energy, cultural and historic resources,

public health, and environmental planning into a common comprehensive framework, engage local communities to work together to develop a comprehensive plan for each of the 9 regions, and culminate with an overall vision for New Hampshire's future. Diers added that the NRPC would be looking for local and regional partners to form a Regional Advisory Committee and a Regional Equity Team of which NRPC would be asking members of the Commission to serve on. Jen Czysz would be the Sustainable Communities Project Manager with Camille Pattison leading NRPC's efforts to develop a Regional Plan for Sustainable Development in addition to a lot of work from Julie Chizmas. She expected the project would be starting in January/February. Diers provided a 2 page handout for the group.

Roache spoke of the recent MPO 101 Information Session held on November 30th at the NRPC office. He added that it was filmed and hoped to have it available for cable access. Langdell asked if it could be streamed on the web. Roache said maybe the slides.

Pattison spoke about the collaborative energy purchasing project that Longval was working on where energy needs are pooled. On Nov. 16, NRPC issued a Request for Proposals on behalf of the municipalities and school districts in the region. The RFP was open to competitive electricity suppliers, brokers, and aggregators currently registered with the NH Public Utilities Commission. 10 bids came in with a potential 30% savings on supply of electricity. 11 communities are represented as well as school districts, with a short term 12 month contract due to town contracting rules. Some very good bids came in and PSNH would be the distributor. Pattison added that they were also working on getting a good rate for Pelham. From here, folks will have to go their BOS to have the Master Agreement signed and with rates being set in January and taking effect in February.

Fimbel asked if this meant that another entity will be the owner and will be sent by the supplier. Diers said there would still be a distribution fee to PSNH.

Pattison referred NRPC's collaboration with NH DES on a Pre-Disaster Mitigation grant to perform river condition assessments in the Souhegan River watershed in New Hampshire. In each watershed, field assessments will be conducted to delineate fluvial erosion hazard (FEH) zones along the rivers and identify those areas at greatest risk for river erosion effects that can potentially impact property and infrastructure during large floods. As part of these assessments, stream crossings will also be assessed (bridges and culverts) to identify those that are undersized for the rivers that flow through them, as undersized culverts can blow out during high flows, creating potential public safety impacts to landowners and infrastructure downstream. The information collected on the Souhegan River mainstem and many of its tributaries will be presented to the communities in the watershed and used to update their hazard mitigation plans.

Gleason referred to the Pelham flooding problem and the study they are working on and asked if other towns were experiencing the same issues in regards to flooding in other places. He questioned if the problem was a regional or local issue and if it was due to development. Pattison commented that Pelham is the worse for flooding; in other towns there are small issues or none at all and the DPW's in those towns with issues have taken care of the problems by doing their own infrastructure.

Pattison concluded by mentioning the NRPC Master Plan Menu of Services currently being developed and hopefully completed in January.

Diers informed the group that NRPC is currently wrapping up preliminary coordination efforts for the Broadband Rural Addressing project. The goal is to create the first publically available master address point dataset in New Hampshire. The project is one arm of the New Hampshire Broadband Mapping and Planning Program. The data collected will help refine broadband availability mapping and analysis as well as improve the efficiency of basic local mapping projects.

The next steps are to finalize subcontracts with the other planning commissions in the State and to begin coordinating the volunteer effort for collecting the actual data in the field. NRPC is looking for volunteers who would like to collect GPS data beginning in the Spring of 2012. Free training will be provided on various equipment. Langdell asked if this was not already done previously and couldn't we get the information from 911. Diers said the 911 will not share this data and added that if anyone has any data, we would take and use all that any town has and is willing to share.

8:14 PM - Commissioner's Roundtable

The Commissioner's Roundtable was held.

Final Comments/Information

Roache informed the group of January summit or workshop for the 3rd crossing of the Merrimack River with representatives from Hudson, Litchfield, Nashua & Merrimack. The goal would be to come to some type of an agreement as to where a 3rd crossing should be.

Mayville talked about monies available for transportation and the 325 page Draft Requirements Manual Version 1.1 available on the DOT website. She added that she expected to see the 1st revision by the end of January. In addition she informed the group of the Public Comment Session to be held on January 11th at NHDOT at 3:00pm. Additionally, and as part of the Federal Requirements and FWHA on using DOT grant monies, it will be required to have an appointed town person as manager who will have to attend day training sessions. This will also apply to consultants.

Mayville concluded by talking about Block Aid Grant and how predictions per year are used to determine the amount, then adjustments based on previous and future years. She informed the group of the large negative this year and that letters went out informing of the less revenue. Gleason asked if current projects were grandfathered in. Mayville said mostly documentation is the issue in regards to requirements. Mayville concluded the TYP process was moving along.

Diers referred to the NHARPC and legislation happenings and that currently there is an LSR out there to eliminate RPC's. She said we will be reviewing the proposed text when available.

Diers concluded by informing that the Executive Committee discussed and decided that there would not be a legislative forum in February this year.

Adjourn

The next NRPC Commission meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 21, 2011 at 7:00pm. Motion to adjourn came from Hennessey with a second from Elmer. The meeting adjourned at 8:50pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kerrie Diers, Official Recorder