



**APPROVED MINUTES
NASHUA REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
Executive Committee
April 20, 2016**

Present:

Dave Hennessey, Chair
Karin Elmer, Treasurer
Mike Fimbel, Vice Chair

Jim Battis
Janet Langdell
Tom Young

Absent:

Dan Kelly
Susan Ruch

Sarah Marchant

Staff:

Tim Roache, Executive Director
Jennifer Czysz, Assistant Director

Sara Siskavich, GIS Manager

Others Present:

Dan Weeks

1. Call to Order:

Hennessey called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

2. Public Hearing: Amendment # 3 to the Adopted Nashua Metropolitan Area 2015-2018 Transportation Improvement Program

Roache noted that there are no projects within the NRPC region included in Amendment #3. The NRPC is amending the TIP to account for changes to Statewide projects and to maintain consistency with the Statewide TIP (STIP).

Statewide project amendments include:

- Statewide Pavement Marking Annual Project – increased construction funding in FYs 2017 and 2018, updates the FY 2018 funding source
- Recreational Trails Fund Act- Projects selected annually – added inflation to funding in FYs 2017 and 2018, changes phases for unobligated funds across all FYs to “other”
- RWIS (install Road and Weather systems around the State) – added a preliminary engineering phase in FY 2016 with Turnpike Capital Funds

Additionally, a new dataset was been provided by the NH DOT that listed the communities within which each TIP project is located. Upon review of this dataset, the staff realized that there are several SNHPC TIP projects located in the Nashua Urbanized Area (UZA) that should be listed in the Nashua MPO TIP per federal requirements. In summary the projects to be added to the TIP include:

- CART public transit in the Derry-Salem region (2 projects)
- Design, engineering right-of-way, and construction associated with I-93 expansion, exit 4A, and various other associated interchanges (16 projects)
- FTA Section 5307 funding for the Boston UZA (1 project)

- Multi-use trail in Windham and Salem (1 project)

SNHPC maintains fiscal constraint of these projects through their TIP; therefore, they are not included in the Nashua MPO TIP's fiscal constraint analysis. Additionally, these projects are not located within the City of Nashua and therefore do not trigger a new conformity determination of the City of Nashua Carbon Monoxide Maintenance Area. The Nashua MPO proposes to formally add these projects to its TIP project listing through this Amendment. Note, project 13065 was listed in the State's TIP amendment proposal but is currently included in the Nashua MPO TIP as proposed in the State's amendment.

The proposed amendments to the Statewide projects are primarily administrative in nature and are necessary to ensure that the TIP and STIP reflect the anticipated project schedule and maintain fiscal constraint requirements. NH DOT has confirmed that fiscal constraint has been maintained. The proposal to list the SNHPC projects located within the Nashua UZA is also administrative in nature and meets the fiscal constraint requirements.

NRPC placed a legal notice in the Nashua Telegraph and on the NRPC website. A public comment period was held from March 13, 2016 through April 8, 2016; no public comments were received. TTAC recommended the EC adopt the amendment. The proposed amendment was also reviewed and discussed at the March 2016 Transportation Technical Advisory Committee (TTAC) meeting and the TTAC unanimously passed a motion recommending the Executive Committee approve the proposed changes in TIP Amendment #3.

Roache also noted that all of New Hampshire is unclassifiable/attainment for the 2008 8-Hour Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standard and that the 1997 ozone standard was revoked for transportation conformity purposes in the Boston-Manchester-Portsmouth (SE) NH area. NRPC has confirmed that the proposed changes made by STIP Amendment 2 conform to the City of Nashua Carbon Monoxide Maintenance Area. Additionally, the New Hampshire Department of Transportation has maintained fiscal constraint of the STIP.

There were no members of the public present at the time of the hearing and thus no further public comment was received.

Elmer made a motion to approve TIP Amendment 3, second by Young. The motion passed 6-0-0.

3. Strategic Planning Discussion

Roache gave an overview of progress to date noting that the Committee requested to review the first three goals of the Action Plan at the meeting. Since that time Siskavich has worked on a framework to add greater context to the overall process. Siskavich explained that the outline included in meeting packets and the draft circulated at the meeting is based upon a Strategic Plan template for GIS that she used previously. She reduced the outline to focus on the traditional content sections. The Strategic Plan document builds the case for the identified goals and objectives and recognizes that goals need to be tied to measurable outcomes. This helps to narrow the scope of planned work. Hennessy added that budgetary impacts should also be factored into the Action Plan.

Czys asked the committee's preference: proceed as planned with the Action Plan or focus on the strategic goals and outline compiled by Siskavich? Langdell said first we need to ask whether the

three strategic goals identified in the new document that tie together the Action Plan's programmatic goals, are the right goals. Battis stated the three strategic goals are missing an understanding of what our communities want. Perhaps create an additional goal or strategic goal #2 could be redrafted to focus on building a mutual understanding of both NRPC and municipality roles, etc. Elmer asked have we ever asked what communities would like from NRPC or what their top 3 requested services are. Langdell and Elmer brainstormed who that survey could be sent to such as planners, town admins, and local boards. Emer suggested such input could be used to restructure dues or adjust the budget to cover municipal wants and needs. Hennessey said it is time to put the word out that NRPC is considering a tiered dues structure that provides increased services for a higher dues level.

Langdell, returning to the draft Strategic Plan's three goals, asked where does quality of life fit. Hennessey, replied that it is in the mission, vision, and core values. Langdell followed up that it perhaps fits in at the project or implementation level. Langdell further asked where the work that NRPC currently does fit in the strategic goals. As drafted she didn't see that it fit in the three proposed strategic goals. Hennessey noted that much of the focus is on support not leadership.

Returning to Strategic Goal number two, Battis suggested it could be revised to represent the mutual understanding of what NRPC does as well as what communities need. Fimbel, also returning to what different communities are looking for, asked what are other RPCs doing for their communities that might be services that we should be offering. Do we do everything the others do? Roache replied we were leading the field with the energy aggregation programs and SNHPC is now promoting a Solar Up NH project. But that each of the regions have distinctly different needs.

Czys returning to Langdell's comment that a goal is missing, agreed that as drafted the 3 goals focus primarily on our relationships and how we work, but do not address what we do. Langdell suggested perhaps there be a fourth strategic goal that reads to the effect of "NRPC will provide excellent services to meet the needs of the member communities as they implement their local mission and vision." Roache proposed making this the first goal of the Strategic Plan and support it with a completed SWOT analysis, then return to the Action Plan which will provide the implementation level detail.

Siskavich suggested holding off on filling out the SWOT analysis section of the Strategic Plan. The NH Association of Regional Planning Commissions will be holding a SWOT and Strategic Planning discussion in May. Czys noted that the May event will focus on the interaction of the nine RPCs and will be more external to our operations, whereas the NRPC SWOT analysis should be focused more internally and distinct from the NHARPC SWOT. None-the-less, the two processes should be informed by one another.

Roache proposed that staff continue to fill in the Strategic Plan outline, prepare a more complete version for the Committee to react to at their next meeting, then when the Strategic Plan is complete return to the Action Plan. Elmer offered to have an extra meeting night to work exclusively on the Strategic Plan in a work session if needed.

4. Business

i. Minutes – March 16, 2016

The Executive Committee reviewed the minutes from the March 16, 2016 meeting. Motion to approve the minutes with one typographic correction by Langdell, seconded by Fimbel. The motion passed 6-0-0.

ii. February/March Dashboard and Financial Reports

Roache reviewed the most recent Dashboard and noted that bank balances remain healthy. Over the course of the last month staff attended the Complete Streets Coalition Meeting, Playable Cities talk, and the Milford Oval public input session. Additionally, staff presented at the Nashua Public Health Annual Meeting, Plan4Health Complete Streets Training, as well as presented SVTC Service to the NH Association of Regional Planning Commissions.

The Nashua public health project was approved; the project's intent is to provide health professionals strategies to reach vulnerable populations impacted by climate change effects such as heat, flooding and tick borne illnesses. Web traffic is and Live Maps have seen a significant increase in visitors. Hennessey suggested including a link to the DES website for PFOA contamination on the NRPC website.

Karen is continuing to review the list of Constant Contact subscriptions and is reviewing one town at a time. Elmer suggested connecting with the local Chambers of Commerce. Langdell suggested inserting an article in Chamber newsletters promoting the NRPC newsletter. Social media remains constant, slowly growing the number of followers. Currently we are reaching approximately 1,500 newsfeeds and post engagement was up 37% in the last month. Roache is going to continue to monitor engagement levels. Hennessey encouraged Committee members to repost and share NRPC posts.

There were no significant changes to the working budget this month, at this point changes more likely to occur to 2017. Turning to the Profit and Loss report, billing increased in February, however, in February we incurred the annual settle-up for common area maintenance that is over and above our monthly rent. There are several years remaining on the lease. As a potential compromise Roach is interested in inquiring whether it would be possible move the office to a downstairs suite that is smaller and more affordable. Looking to the end of the fiscal year it appears we will nearly hit annual targets with a potential small loss of approximately \$5,000. One option is to reduce DOT staff time and instead incur additional overhead costs to apply for new grant funds for fiscal years 2017 and 2018, this would allow us to roll unspent FY2016 DOT funds over to fiscal year 2017.

Fimbel made a motion to accept and place the report on file, second by Battis. The motion passed 6-0-0.

Fimbel departed at 7:00 PM.

iii. FY 2017 Preliminary Draft Budget

Roache noted that the resource side of the budget is in pretty good shape for this time of year. There are a few highlighted rows that are placeholders for potential projects that NRPC is still working to secure for FY 2017. DOT funding will remain flat. New projects added to the budget

include the public health grant, NHCF tool belt, and hazard mitigation planning. As previously stated, NRPC is still looking for additional opportunities.

Committee members asked for clarification on new projects listed. Roache and Czys described each of the new projects.

Roach has made a few assumptions on expense side including a projected 15% increase in health benefit costs to occur in January 2017 and a similar 5% increase for dental insurance. Salary for the regional planner to be hired is budgeted for an entry level full time staff person. Additionally, Roache further reviewed detailed expenses with Reinert to update to actual expenditures rather than just carry forward FY16 budgeted amounts. Changes in postage and printing to reflect what we are currently seeing for expenses, printing projected to be lower because we have a new printer that is less costly. The budget does not account for any significant unforeseen expense increases for rent or common area maintenance.

Hennessey asked about adding video services for meetings and presentations. Roache suggested that perhaps NRPC could use local cable access groups to do the work opposed to add costs for private services. Committee brainstormed cost effective options.

Battis noted that there is a reserve fund in the FY16 budget but not for FY17. Roache replied that he is waiting until budget is finalized and will then take any surplus from the budget and place that into reserve.

iv. Staffing Update

Roache noted we are interviewing two individuals next week for a new entry level regional planner. Parker will remain on through the fiscal year as a part time employee and then Roache will reassess.

5. Other Business

i. Retirement Plan Update

Roache reported that he's been working to identify potential alternatives to ICMA as a retirement plan provider. TDBank is anticipated to provide a proposal for a retirement plan option. NRPC has received a list of potential retirement plan providers that Roach will contact.

ii. Other Items

Solarize New Hampshire – led by Smart Power has been leading a Solar Up campaign in SNHPC's region. SNHPC had proposed to extend their program across Hillsborough County. Roache requested that SNHPC collaborate and let NRPC take the lead in its communities if there is interest. Roache explained the methodology behind the initiative where the RPC essentially receives a fee for sales leads gained by an installer that is vetted, selected and endorsed by the RPC and community. Through the program there is one preferred installer selected by each participating community. Langdell asked how a RPC can effectively vet an installer. The upside is you do help promote alternative energy supply in the region. Hollis and Brookline's energy committees are potentially interested in the program. Langdell supports municipalities that choose to engage in the effort, but hesitates to accept any liability at the RPC level. Roache is considering conducting a conference call or webinar with the program operators in DC to learn more.



Roache noted that NRPC staff have traditionally participated in Old Home Days and have mixed impressions of the value gained for the associated cost. Battis noted that the Hudson Conservation Commission has stopped participating in their Old Home Days and Langdell said SVTC has stopped attending the Pumpkin Festival. The Committee expressed greater interest in exploring other outreach technologies instead of the Old Home Days.

As an update to the Ten Year Plan's progress, Roache noted that the Capital Corridor rail study had been removed from the plan by the House. It is uncertain whether the Senate will add the study back into the plan.

Czysz listed Metropolitan Transportation Plan project listing workshops scheduled for June. All workshops will be conducted from 6-8 PM as follows:

- June 9, 2016 – WEST at *Wilton Town Hall* (Lyndeborough, Mason, Mont Vernon, Wilton)
- June 16, 2016 – CENTRAL at *Milford Town Hall* (Amherst, Brookline, Hollis, Milford)
- June 30, 2016 – EAST at *Hudson Town Hall* (Hudson, Litchfield, Merrimack, Nashua, Pelham)

6. Adjourn

Motion to adjourn was made by Young with a second by Battis. The motion passed 6-0-0. The meeting adjourned at 7:42.