



**MINUTES – APPROVED
NASHUA REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION**

March 21, 2012

Members Present:

Martin Michaelis, Amherst	Janet Langdell, Milford
James Battis, Hudson	Andy Seale, Milford
Howard Dilworth, Jr., Hudson	Mark Cookson, Nashua
Richard Maddox, Hudson	Kathy Hersh, Nashua
Jeff Rider, Hudson	Dan Kelly, Nashua
Kate Thorndike, Lyndeborough	Mike Tabacsko, Nashua
Charles Moser, Mason	Ed Gleason, Pelham
Karin Elmer, Merrimack	David Hennessey, Pelham
Anant Panwalkar, Merrimack	

Others Present:

Nancy Mayville, NH DOT	Leigh Levine, FHWA
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Staff Present:

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

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Langdell called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR:

There were no members of the public in attendance.

INTRODUCTION OF NEW COMMISSIONERS

Chairman Langdell introduced 3 new Commissioners and 1 former alternate that had recently become a full member. New Commissioners were Jeff Rider from Hudson, Kate Thorndike from Lyndeborough, Dan Kelly from Nashua and Mark Cookson, now a full Commissioner representing Nashua. Langdell welcomed everyone and asked NRPC staff to introduce themselves and tell the group what they do at NRPC. Langdell proceeded with the meeting.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES – DECEMBER 14, 2011

The Chair asked if there were any comments on the minutes of December 14, 2011. Gleason said on page 3, 4th paragraph from the bottom, 2nd & 3rd sentences do not make sense and should be clarified. The 2nd sentence should read “He questioned if the problem was a regional or local issue and if it was due to development”. The 3rd sentence should read “Pattison commented that Pelham is the worst 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”. It was moved by Gleason and seconded by Battis:

THAT the minutes of December 14, 2011 be approved as amended.

The motion **carried** with 5 abstentions.

NRPC MISSION AND GOALS

Langdell referred to a presentation from Hersh last fall on the NRPC Mission Statement and Strategic Plan and passed the floor to Diers. Diers reviewed the mission statement and goals as well as corresponding actions developed as a result of the presentation. She has received no comments outside of the Executive Committee and that she was seeking input or clarity from the Full Commission. She pointed out that the Executive Committee suggested adding “coordinate” to the first paragraph, first sentence as the clarification. Maddox commented that it would be helpful to add language encouraging Commissioners share experiences with other towns when dealing with and writing ordinances on certain complicated subjects as Hudson had to do recently. Elmer felt #6 of the goals and actions was equally important and necessary for sharing and exchanging of

information.

Diers continued to review the goals and actions adding that #4 may be tweaked to be more reflective of the shared coordination of experiences and data. Diers said there was really no vision for the region and she would work with the group on this. She added that # 2 should read consider renaming the "Commission" (not the Region). Langdell talked about perception in relation to the Commission and it being called the "Nashua" Regional Planning Commission. Thorndike said she was there because Lyndeborough thinks they belong in Keene and she wanted to get more information.

Battis felt that the goals should be rearranged and that Goals 3 & 5 should be moved up to strengthen goals and the rest were not goals, but actions. Hennessey referred to an exercise he did at a conference and suggested "Mission – Objective – Strategies" as an idea for reorganization. Mayville commented that funding was not mentioned and that should include "work collaboratively with federal, state and non-profit".

Michaelis commented on the confusion of Manchester being Southern and NRPC being Nashua. He felt that unless Southern changed to Manchester and we become Southern, the Commission name is a good one. He added that the original name of the Commission was Hudson/Nashua RPC. Langdell suggested calling it "Greater Nashua" RPC.

Hersh provided some feedback on #5 & 6 saying they were short-term and should be long-term. She also felt that the region has changed significantly in the past 5 years and that we need to change to see how we can fit in that future; to get in tune. Kelly asked what the difference was from the past mission statement. Hersh said there was not one and the Commission went by Federal and State requirements. Kelly asked if the State had a vision. Diers said that OEP was supposed to have a State development plan, but she was not sure when the last vision for State was adopted. Czysz said it was in 2000. She added that the work that the RPC's are doing with the Regional Plan will include coming up with a vision for the State as a whole.

Langdell asked about #7. Gleason said it would be beneficial to Pelham, other towns and to NRPC to have the next full Commission meeting in Pelham. Mayville said that Lakes Region RPC rotates their meetings. Hersh felt rotating the meetings was a great idea and suggested having something at the beginning of the meeting as an introduction or something for non-Commissioners present at the meetings.

Thorndike asked if there was an email connection between everyone on the Commission. Langdell said that for the longest time, sharing of email addresses was not allowed. Thorndike said they have a setup of this type in Lyndeborough which helps the boards stay connected.

Diers said she would take care of assembling the information gathered and will bring back a final draft in June. She said she would also be looking for participants of all skill levels. Langdell asked that it be sent out via email prior to the June meeting.

PROGRAM REPORTS

HUD Grant and the Nashua Regional Plan

Czysz provided a presentation of the Regional Plan through the HUD Grant. Below are the key points:

Overview:

The NRPC and the 8 other regional planning commissions will be developing regional plans for each of their respective regions, as is our responsibility under NH law. The name of the overall project is "A Granite State Future." The topics to be addressed are the same as local master plans: housing, transportation, land use, environmental, economic development. The final products of the project will be Regional Plans within each region and a document that shows the snapshot of these topics statewide. Pattison will be the Regional Manager for the program and Czysz will be the Statewide Manager.

Framework:

All of the 9 regional planning commissions agreed to use a consistent planning framework to be able to show consistency of analysis and data collection between regions. Statewide documents, such as the State Development Plan, Wildlife Action Plan, Climate Action Plan, Water Primer, and others will be reviewed and analyzed for policy considerations. The Regional Plans will be consistent with Local Master Plans by using the same content topics. This means we will include chapters on Vision & Goals, Housing, Transportation, Water Infrastructure, Environment, Economic Development, Climate Change, Energy Efficiency, Scenario Planning, and finally, Implementation.

Livability Principles:

The proposed planning process will use the NH Livability Principles as guiding principles to break down traditional silos, look at the various plan components through the framework and show the interconnections between each.

The Granite State Future Regional Planning Process will have 3 Phases:

Phase 1 – Statewide coordinated plan and process framework (including metrics & communications). RPCs work with the PC and 7 TASCs to develop Statewide Planning Components including:

- Planning Process Policy Framework and Template
- Coordinated Statewide Policy Priorities
- Planning Methodology
- Method to Prioritize Implementation Projects
- Common set of Metrics and Evaluation Measures
- Data Collection and GIS Framework
- Statewide Existing Conditions and Trends Assessment
- Develop a Common Communications Framework

The three primary responsible parties in Phase 1 are the executive committee, policy committee, and Program Manager. It will be important to have a meaningful role for RPC staff in the development of the Phase 1 products. By completing this phase, all RPCs can ensure the end products are truly applicable statewide and reflect the consensus among all regions.

Phase 2 – 9 Regional Plans

- The Policy Committee and TASCs act as advisors to the RPCs throughout the Plan Development Process.
- The RPC's develop 9 regional plans for sustainable development, engage local partners – form regional advisory teams, establish regional strategy for outreach, and ensure equity and review and customize statewide products for regional use:
 - Existing Conditions, Plans & Trends
 - Planning Process Template
 - HEAL Action Strategies
- Regional Visioning Sessions
- Comprehensive Regional Needs Assessment
- Develop Regional Goals and Priorities
- Develop Regional Plan Components
 - Housing & Impediments to Fair Housing
 - Transportation
 - Water Infrastructure
 - Environment
 - Economic Development
 - Climate Change Impact Assessment

- Energy Efficiency and Green Building
- Scenario Planning
- Complete Regional Implementation Strategies and Prioritize Projects
- Implementation Pilots (SNHPC)

Phase 3 – 1 Consensus based Statewide Vision Document

- Review 9 Regional Plans within overall framework
- Develop Statewide Vision
- Regions adopt Regional Plans
- Seek endorsement of Statewide Vision
- Provide ongoing Technical Assistance
- Seek local implementation

Organizational Structure

- Policy Committee – Advisory and help to synthesize the policy recommendations from various expert groups
- TASCs Advisory Technical groups organized around the livability principles and tasked with identifying resources and information for use by RPCs
- RPCs will share the responsibilities of staffing the TASCs – 2 per RPC
- RPCs will provide the day to day operations of the program and plan development and also serve as a conduit between local and state input
- RPCs will create their RAC as a sounding board and RET to help improve outreach and integration of equity
- Municipal and County partners serve as the foundation for which the plans are being created
- Throughout, the RPC directors will serve as the Executive decision making body for the project

Roles and Responsibilities

- Executive Committee
 - Allocate resources
 - Set goals
 - Alignment between regions
 - Monitor progress
 - Establish common methodologies
 - Ensure coordination & efficiency
 - Resolve Differences
- Policy Committee
 - Incorporate work of Transportation Land Use Roundtable
 - Recommend consistent statewide policy framework
 - Ensure consistency between TASCs & RACs
 - Review Regional Plans
 - Consolidate 9 Plans into Statewide Policy
- TA Subcommittees
 - Technical Assistance on livability principles
 - Conduct and collect statewide studies
 - Coordinate statewide initiatives with regional planning
 - Research methodologies and issues
 - Identify potential leadership team members
 - Aid in statewide outreach
- RPCs

- Coordinate with the TASCs
 - Assist in the development of statewide products
 - Conduct local and regional outreach
 - Develop regional leadership teams
 - Conduct regional visioning, goal and policy development
 - Prepare Regional Plans
- Reg. Leadership Teams:
- Meet the individual needs of each RPC
 - Conduct and facilitate the RPCs outreach process
 - Review local information
 - Prioritize implementation
 - Participate in plan process
 - Track progress
 - Recommend Plan adoption
 - Ensure the voices of underserved, underrepresented and marginalized populations are reflected in the Regional Plan
 - Aid in outreach and education at the local and regional level

Next Steps

- Create Regional Advisory Committee (spring)
- Create Regional Leadership teams (spring)
- Communications Development (spring)
- Establish Regional Outreach Strategies (summer)
- Assist Statewide Framework Development (summer)
- Listening Sessions (summer-fall)
- Regional Visioning Sessions (fall)
- Perform Regional Needs Assessment (fall-winter)
- Begin Plan Writing (fall-winter)

Initial committees should be composed by summer; however, these groups won't likely become active until the fall. Contact Camille Pattison to participate. Plan Development will begin with visioning, likely in the fall, and after much of the communications training and framing is complete. The Carsey Institute will be helping with the initial public input listening sessions. Once these are complete, plan writing will commence.

Questions/Comments:

Seale felt that the word Equity would raise red flags and some folks would not know the purpose. Seale also suggested incorporating utility groups; the National Guard adding that it would be nice to have alternatives.

Hersh asked if HUD determines the Livability Principle chapters for the plan and referred to the Regional Housing Needs Assessment and how no one is doing anything different in Nashua as a result of the assessment. Czysz explained that pulling together all the principles is part of their requirements of the grant. She also shared the same concern as Maddox regarding spending all this time to put this plan together with the potential of not getting State-level endorsement. She used the Climate Change Action Plan and Rail as examples. Langdell suggested going to 2 to 3 of the largest employers in the region. She also felt that developers should be involved. Hennessey said firms that are doing the plans should be involved. Hennessey wanted to see more formal recognition in regards to housing adding that towns are about to get hit with plans that are represented by only a handful of engineers. He added that they need to get involved. Diers said she would be in contact with him for more information on contacts, etc. Maddox felt builders had their own forum and would go to their legislators and felt it would be hard to pull off. He referred to the difficulty with the 10 Year Plan and its contents. He said that this plan would be just part of a feel good project. Hennessey disagreed and felt it would be the opposite.

Maddox asked what the budget was. Czysz said 3 years with \$300,000 per RPC. Langdell asked that the presentation be added to the website for Commissioners that were not present.

TRANSPORTATION NEEDS SURVEY

Roache referred to the Transportation Needs Survey included in the Agenda packet adding that it is a result of the update to the Long Range Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) that NRPC is working on. The MTP update will assess needs related to all modes of surface transportation within the 13-community region, including driving, bicycling, walking, rail and bus transit, and rail and truck freight, for the period covering 2013 – 2040. Your thoughts, ideas & input about regional transportation issues in addition to the results of the survey will be used in the MTP development process. Roache also informed the group that the Existing Conditions chapter to the MTP was pretty much completed and on the NRPC website. He added that 2040 is the planning horizon and he would need help with assumptions on stuff like gas prices in 2040. Population trends would be looked at next and would be used in the travel demand model. Roache said he wanted input from folks and that TTAC liked at the survey last week and provided some comments. TTAC suggested there be a more holistic multi-modal approach. Roache reviewed what TTAC had provided for comments. He added that rail was not included in this but it would be included as part of the long range list. He asked for comments back to him by Wednesday, April 18th and asked the group to complete the survey and give it to 5 of your closest friends. After all the data has been compiled and incorporated into the plan, Roache was hoping to have the MTP adopted at the December meeting. Roache said the survey would be in the paper. A suggestion came from the group to be at the poles to get more folks to take the survey. Langdell said there were surveys at the poles during the last election in Milford, for a recreation project and a library project. Dilworth suggested having booths at Old Home Days and summer events held in the municipalities. An interview with a local access cable channel was also suggested.

8:35 PM - COMMISSIONER'S ROUNDTABLE

The Commissioner's Roundtable was held.

ADJOURN

The next NRPC Commission meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, June 20, 2012 at 7:00pm. Motion to adjourn came from Hennessey with a second from Seale. The meeting adjourned at 8:55pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kerrie Diers, Official Recorder