



MINUTES

NASHUA REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

November 20, 2002

Members Present:	Frank Bolmarcich, Chairman, Nashua Marilyn Peterman, Amherst Martin Michaelis, Amherst John Harvey [for Anne Krantz], Amherst Howard Dilworth, Jr., Hudson Ann Seabury, Hudson Suellen Seabury Quinlan, Hudson Jean Serino, Hudson Andy Prolman, Litchfield Jean Weston, Merrimack	Norm Carr, Merrimack Donald Wunderlich, Merrimack Bill Parker, Milford Cynthia Herman, Milford Mike Fimbel, Mont Vernon Kathy Hersh, Nashua Steve Farkas, Nashua Diane Nilsson, Wilton Becky Ohler, NH DES
Others Present:	Carol Murray, Commissioner, NH DOT Ansel Sanborn, NH DOT	Jeff Brillhart, NH DOT Jim Moore, NH DOT
Staff Present:	Andrew Singelakis Ryan Friedman Ray Guarino Betsy Hahn Steve Heuchert Koren Melfi	Camille Pattison Shirley Vance John Vogl Matt Waitkins Steve Williams

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM. He noted the passing of Dan McManus from Hollis, a former member of the Board of Selectmen and a past member of the Commission, and Lenny Smith, a long-time Commissioner. Lenny had served on the NRPC for over 30 years and was always a strong advocate for Hudson as well as the region as a whole. He had also been a long-time member of the Hudson Planning Board and served as a State Legislator for 22 years. A moment of silence was held in memory.

Privilege of the Floor

There were no members of the public in attendance who wished to speak.

Introduction of New Members

Norm Carr, representing the Town of Merrimack was introduced.

Approval of Minutes - August 21, 2002

It was the moved by Don Wunderlich, seconded by Becky Ohler:

THAT the minutes of the meeting held on August 21, 2002
be approved.

The motion carried unanimously.

Chairman's Report

Frank Bolmarcich pointed out the renovations to the rest-room area of the office. He introduced and welcomed two new staff members: Camille Pattison, Transit Planner and Ryan Friedman, Transportation Planner.



Discussion of Transportation Projects

Rail Project: Andrew Singelakis introduced Carol Murray, Commissioner of the NH DOT. Commissioner Murray discussed the status of the Lowell-Nashua Commuter Rail Project. At a recent meeting, the Executive Council voted 3-2 against approving a \$76,000 contract extension for a continuation of preliminary engineering work to complete the environmental assessment for the project by Parsons-Brinckerhoff (the State's consultant). Those voting against were Ruth Griffin, Peter Spaulding and Ray Wieczorek. This action places a halt to this work. Funding for this project was being matched by gas tax revenues. Revenue from the gas tax have been used on other non-highway related projects, but the trucking industry is now suing because they believe the purpose of these funds is only for direct investment in highways, not other projects. The issue will be going to court for a determination. The MBTA, Guilford Transportation, Governor-elect Benson, the Mayor and towns in the area are all in support of this project. Commissioner Murray assured the Commission that the NH DOT stood behind the project and that the NRPC should continue in its planning efforts for commuter rail. Discussion then followed relating to funding of other projects, the traffic relief by taking potentially 900 vehicles/day off the road, etc. It was asked if it would be prudent to meet with the Executive Councilors representing our region to discuss this issue. After more discussion, it was moved by Marilyn Peterman, seconded by Kathy Hersh:

THAT the Executive Committee be granted permission to meet with Councilors Wheeler and Wieczorek to have an informal discussion with regard to moving forward with the rail project.

The motion carried unanimously.

State's Ten-Year Transportation Plan (STIP): Jeff Brillhart, who has recently replaced Bob Greer as the Director of Project Development, discussed the State's Ten-Year Plan. There are more projects than dollars. The question is how to deal with it. The DOT works with the Regional Planning Commissions in the State to get the word out to municipalities about the Plan. The first three years of the Plan is a program, the rest is a plan. There is some flexibility to it. Project costs are always rising and more amenities are being added to projects such as landscaping, mitigation, and right-of-way costs. The outlook for federal funding is not good. The revised STIP will be released in early December.

Ansel Sanborn distributed handouts about the upcoming draft STIP for the years 2005 through 2014. He noted that the STIP to be released in December can be used as a starting point for RPCs to consider their transportation priorities and needs. It is suggested that updates and additions to the Plan be judicious and reflect the priorities of the region. If new needs are identified, projects could be proposed to address those needs. If a previously identified need no longer exists or has become less of a priority, planned projects might be reassessed. Evaluating the new needs and validating the existing needs is a worthy goal of this update process, and keeping with the idea that the STIP is a plan.

He then discussed the State's Mission Statement which is as follows: *"To plan, construct, operate and maintain the best possible transportation system and State facilities in the most efficient and economical manner, utilizing quality management techniques consistent with available resources and mandated controls."*

The development of a Long Range State Transportation Plan (LRSTP) and the various plans for individual transportation modes will further facilitate and supplement the development of the LRSTP. Mr. Sanborn distributed a handout which indicated the phases of a project.

- Identify Problem/Need
- Begin Planning and Milestones
- Planning
- Begin Project Development



- Scoping
- Public Hearing
- Design
- Advertising
- Construction
- Project Completion

After further general discussion, the Chairman thanked the DOT for their presentations and information.

Pennichuck Water Works Merger and Regional Water District

The purchase of Pennichuck Water Works by Philadelphia Suburban is scheduled to go before the PUC on February 28, 2003. NRPC, along with several other agencies and municipalities, has been an intervenor in this process before the PUC. We have also been involved with the Mayor's internal committee on the evaluation of the Pennichuck System, have worked with the Merrimack River Watershed Council (MRWC) on proposed conditions of the merger, and also have been assisting with the efforts of Barbara Pressly who is interested in forming a regional water district. Legislation has been filed on behalf of this group (LSR #2003-H-0050-L) that would modify chapters 330B (Municipal Revenue Bonds), 38 (Municipal Gas, Electric and Water Systems) and 53-A (Agreements between Governmental Units) to enable such districts to utilize future earnings from ratepayers to bond without impacting the bonding capacity of member communities. A resolution to pursue public ownership of the water system will be voted on by the Nashua Board of Aldermen on November 26. The City would like to see regional participation. After more discussion it was moved by Marilyn Peterman, seconded by Kathy Hersh:

THAT the Nashua Regional Planning Commission write a letter of support for the proposed legislation (LSR #2003-H-0040L).

Howard Dilworth, Jr., opposed the motion because he did not think it was an appropriate position for the NRPC to take. He supports public ownership of a utility. Kathy Hersh respectfully disagreed. This resolution would enable us to form agreements as an entity with other communities and she strongly supported the proposed resolution. After discussion, it was then moved by Andy Prolman, seconded by Marilyn Peterman:

TO call the question.

The proposed motion as stated above then carried, with Jean Weston, Howard Dilworth, Jr., Norm Carr, opposing, and Don Wunderlich abstaining.

It was then moved by, Mike Fimbel, seconded by Jean Weston:

THAT the meeting be adjourned at 9:20 P.M.

The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrew Singelakis, Official Recorder



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