



APPROVED – MINUTES
NASHUA REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
Held at the NRPC Office
9 Executive Park, Suite 201, Merrimack, NH
June 21, 2017

Members Present:

Michael Dell Orfano, Amherst	Robert Larmouth, Hollis	Janet Langdell, Milford
Martin Michaelis, Amherst	James Battis, Hudson	Mike Fimbel, Mont Vernon
Susan Ruch, Amherst	Kim Queenan, Litchfield	Sarah Marchant, Nashua
Jill Adams, Brookline	Thomas Young, Litchfield	Dave Hennessey, Pelham
Tom Rogers, Brookline	William W. Boyd, Merrimack	Hal Lynde, Pelham
Venu Rao, Hollis	Karin Elmer, Merrimack	Kermit Williams, Wilton

Staff Present:

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

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS:

Chairman Hennessey called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM with introductions. He informed the group that the Executive Committee asked Jen Czysz to step in as Interim Executive Director and she graciously accepted. Hennessey added that they were very confident in Czysz.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES – MARCH 21, 2016

The Chair asked if there were any comments on the minutes of March 15, 2017. Battis noted that the words “a single” should be before “selectman” and the sentence after should just read “The vote failed.” and remove “2-3” in the Commissioner’s Roundtable Hudson paragraph on page 5. Langdell stated that the word “to” should be omitted and “BOS” should be replaced with “voters” in the Commissioner’s Roundtable Milford paragraph on page 5. After further discussion, Battis motioned with a second from Young:

THAT the minutes of March 15, 2017 be approved as amended and placed on file for audit.

The motion **carried** with one abstention.

PUBLIC HEARING: AMENDMENT # 2 TO THE ADOPTED NASHUA METROPOLITAN AREA 2017-2020 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM AND THE 2017-2040 METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION PLAN (ACTION REQUIRED)

Hennessey asked for a motion to open the public hearing at 7:06pm. Young motioned with a second from Boyd.

Chizmas provided a presentation to the group on Amendment #2 noting that there is only 1 Regional Project:

- Merrimack: NH101A Improvements - Moving all FFY2017 PE to FFY2018 (not needed until FFY2018) and reducing ROW (removing 1 year of inflation). They are also moving \$2M in FFY2020 construction to FFY2021 (to maintain Fiscal Constraint).

She noted that she did receive public comment from Merrimack, who were disappointed in continued delays on this project and encouraged a meeting with NHDOT to relay importance of 101A improvements to the region.

Chizmas stated that amendment #2 also has 3 statewide projects.

- Commuter/Intercity Bus Replacement: Revised figures based on actual contract amounts.

- Statewide Pavement Marking: Added PE Phase with \$5,000 in each FFY 2018 – 2020 and Reduced Construction by \$5,000 in each FFY 2018 – 2020.
- Statewide Transportation Innovation Councils (STIC) Incentive: Added FFY2017 funding.

Chizmas noted that at their June 14th meeting TTAC Recommended approval by the Commission with the following caveats:

- Per Merrimack's comments, request a meeting with NHDOT Project Manager/Consultant to address comments from Merrimack.
- NRPC act as "project champion" for the NH 101A improvements and provide status updates on the projects at the monthly TTAC meetings.

Lastly, Chizmas noted that Amendment was noticed in the Telegraph and on the NRPC website. In addition, all projects in TIP Amendment #2 are fiscally constrained and meet applicable conformity requirements.

Williams asked for a brief synopsis on the regional project and what it entails. Chizmas explained that it is for traffic calming between 2 intersections and an extra 3rd turning lane. Langdell commented on the 1/8 mile until the traffic signal and asked how much of positive impact will there be. Chizmas noted that it was modeled by FST and the LOS was still not great in that area. She added that it is important to sit with DOT to make sure that effective improvements are implemented. She added that they removed the signal portion of eastbound improvements with the additional lane. Langdell asked if the meetings with DOT have started. Chizmas wanted to wait for the consultant project manager to come on board to make sure all the key players are at the table. Larmouth commented on the 2 lanes to 3 lanes and then back to 2 lanes and how could this improvement alleviate congestion. Chizmas said she wants to make sure the solutions are still effective and the reason to have the meetings with DOT. Boyd commented on 2016 emails from Amherst and Milford on safety concerns and wanting to keep traffic moving smoothly on 101A. He added that Merrimack has no objection to Amendment #2, but wants the meeting to happen with DOT. Ruch talked about timing and that it might make sense to inform the new consultant of the process to get him on board with DOT. Chizmas said she would reach out to the current project manager.

Langdell asked if the Intercity Bus under that Statewide projects is Boston Express. Chizmas was not sure. Langdell had concerns with transparency of facts.

The public hearing closed at 7:22pm.

Williams motioned with a second from Langdell:

THAT, Amendment #2 to the 2017-2020 Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) & the 2017-2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) Minor Update, be approved with the caveat that request a meeting with NHDOT Project Manager/Consultant to address comments from Merrimack and NRPC act as "project champion" for the NH 101A improvements and provide status updates on the projects at the monthly TTAC meetings.

The motion **carried**.

PASSENGER RAIL DISCUSSION

Roache summarized the letter from Mayor Donchess included in the agenda packet noting that the City cited Governor Sununu's comment on getting rail from Lowell to Nashua. He added that the City of Nashua is asking that the NRPC support the City's efforts to explore the feasibility of an incremental approach to implementing passenger rail along the entire Capitol Corridor. Roache stated that NRPC was very vocal and active on rail back in the Steve Williams era. He added that we have an opportunity to look at this in a different lens now and take this a step at time.

Roache stated that the NRPC TTAC discussed the advantages and disadvantages of an incremental approach to implementing passenger rail at their May meeting and recommended that the NRPC Executive Committee support the City in exploring the feasibility of this approach. He added that at the May Executive Committee meeting, they motioned to recommend that the NRPC Commissioners support the City's efforts to explore the feasibility of an incremental approach to implementing passenger rail along the entire corridor.

Langdell stated that it sounds like it is to get more information and that was the reason that the Commission did not support rail a year ago. Hennessey asked for a motion to accept or any comments. Lynde commented that rail is needed to expand business; adding rail will provide transportation and workforce. Fimbel noted that Commissioners are representatives of the towns but also represent the region. He added that being a Commissioner, you hear a lot but it is important to vote on your conscience and not necessarily what your selectmen may think. Williams commented that economic development is a focus for Commission and identified in the strategic plan and therefore, rail would be important to Nashua and to economic development for the region and a reason to support. Dell Orfano felt it should be supported and it will bring economic development to the region. He added that Nashua is a destination City and it can bring workforce. He felt that it would be a downward spiral to zero if there is no support for economic development. Boyd read from the Mayor's letter and asked if the Commission is supporting the City in the environmental study incrementally? Roache stated that we are not endorsing the letter word for word; we are supporting them in their efforts. Marchant commented that the Mayor would be very pleased if approved. She added that the City would be using their own money to pull numbers and data. Hennessey added that they are not asking for support of the train, but if it is feasible to figure out. Adams asked if there would be a connection to Boston. Roache said the goal is to connect in with Lowell. She also felt that MA had the worst public transportation system and had very unfriendly commuter times. Boyd talked about successful areas where rail has been either added or expanded and the economic effect. He added that he would support a motion noting that Donchess was putting a second term on the line in order to get support. Dell Orfano said he would like to see the board become more than just a cheerleader and see more advocacy to help economic development for the region. After further discussion, Dell Orfano motioned with a second from Boyd:

THAT the NRPC Commission support the City of Nashua's efforts to explore the feasibility of an incremental approach to implementing passenger rail along the entire Capitol Corridor.

The motion **carried**.

ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING:

FY2018 Budget and Work Program (action required)

Roache stated that the budget is balanced and pretty strong and in pretty good shape overall. He added that there was a big push this last FY to build relationships and this has paid off in more local contracts. He noted that Federal contracts are down as well as general grants, but local planning contracts are up and referred to Brookline's Melendy Pond and the Hollis Master Plan contracts. Roache also noted that DOT money is up to help with the TMA status. In addition, NRPC is getting more money for Hazard Mitigation Plans and is still waiting to hear whether we've been awarded an EPA Healthy Community's grant for a Household Hazards program which would be \$25,000 over 2 years.

Roache stated that the expenses don't change except for salaries and insurance which he accounted for a 15% increase on health and 5% increase in dental but there was only a 1-2% increase on the health insurance last year and a 0% increase on dental. He noted the number of employee changes attributed to fluctuations in salaries and benefits. Staff development is increased from \$4,000 to \$10,000 to retain continuity and staff. Fimbel asked Roache if he thinks staff is balanced or tight. Roache said you always would like to have about

THAT the Executive Director be authorized to file applications with federal, state and local governmental units and other agencies to implement the FY 2018 work program of the Commission, and to execute agreements to receive funds for such purposes.

The motion **carried**.

Setting of the FY 2019 Dues (action required)

Roache referred to the proposed NRPC FY 2019 Local Dues Assessment sheet included in the agenda packet. He noted that he has worked with Reinert and Czysz over the past 2 years to create clarity and transparency on where your dues go and proposed to continue to hold the dues at \$163,000. He explained how the dues are calculated using each community's weighted percentage of the region's estimated population and equalized assessed valuation. Hennessey commented on the discussions the Executive Committee has had in the past years on time and effort and dollar impact the pipeline had on the budget and the reason for the additional line items added to account for MS4 and economic development work. He added that if it becomes too much of an impact, they will have to increase the dues assessments. Hennessey also noted that for FY2019, the only changes were in the assessments to the towns. Langdell asked Roache to explain the overall cost of the pipeline related work and assistance provided to the Commissioners, particularly new members. Roache said the cost was about \$25,000 over the last year and the previous year was less. He also stated that another reason to better track dues expenditures was to make informed decisions. If we had increased assessments, it would not come into effect until the next fiscal year. Rogers asked why staff development went from \$4,000 to \$10,000. Hennessey explained that staff development is the core strength of the NRPC and the reason for the increase to invest in and retain staff. After further discussion Battis motioned with a second from Fimbel;

THAT the Nashua Regional Planning Commission FY2019 Dues remain flat and be approved.

The motion **carried**.

Election of FY18 Executive Committee Officers (action required)

Hennessey informed the Commission that the nominating committee nominated the following slate of officers for FY18:

Susan Ruch, Chair

Karin Elmer, Vice Chair

Jim Battis, Treasurer

Boyd motioned with a second from Larmouth:

THAT the Nashua Regional Planning Commission FY2018 slate of officers be approved.

The motion **carried**.

Hennessey informed the Commission that his term as EC member was up all together, but he would be willing to stay on unless another Commissioner wished to fill the vacancy. He stated that they can put their name forward and he will step back. Langdell and Roache reviewed the responsibilities. Hennessey also informed that both Boyd and Young wished to continue on as members. Ruch noted that approval for renewal on Young and Boyd would be required. She also commented on the oversight and support that the EC provides and added that any Commissioner interested in the position will be considered by the Nominating Committee who will along with the Executive Committee make a recommendation for appointment by the full Commission at the September meeting. She noted that it is a 3 year term. Langdell suggested anyone interested take a look at the Bylaws on the NRPC website. After further discussion, Ruch motioned with a second from Williams:

THAT Tom Young and Bill Boyd be appointed to a 3 year Executive Committee term ending on June 17, 2020 and THAT Hennessey will step down as EC member if someone wants to become a member.

The motion **carried**.

Langdell suggested an email be sent out to Commissioners with a link to the Bylaws for the Executive Committee Vacancy. Hennessey briefly summarized the Executive Director process noting that they have reviewed all resumes but it may take a little longer for the Executive Director search due to vacations.

8:26PM COMMISSIONERS ROUNDTABLE

Hennessey-Pelham

- The last of 5 Statewide Welcome Home meetings was held in Hudson and they put on a great show with a lot of community involvement at Alvirne. The Governor was there with 2 State Senators.

Rogers-Brookline:

- BOS voted last year to accept a \$580,000 grant for a sidewalk & trail project. The town voted on a warrant for the 20% (\$145,000) match and it passed. BOS just voted not to accept the grant and shut down public comment at the most recent BOS meeting.
- Town is closing on a 78 acre parcel to protect the Nissitissit River.

Lynde-Pelham:

- There was a provision for 55+ housing that was rescinded due to a technicality. According to state law if a change impacts fewer than 100 properties in a district then all properties must receive notification by mail. This notice was not provided. The re-vote is this coming Saturday.
- 2 Road safety projects Sherburne/Marsh/Mammoth and Talent/Tenney/Keys Hill. NRPC assisting. Chizmas to work with Gowan to present preliminary results to BOS in July or August.

Marchant-Nashua:

- Accepting comments on the website for the Downtown Urban Waterfront project.
- Working on 25 Crown Street Park N Ride.
- Exit 7 removal of jug handle is almost done and through a public/private partnership.
- CMAQ Round Grant letters of intent is due July 7th. (NRPC would like to be copied on letters for those interested in applying)
- NTS Hampton Beach runs were a huge success and only \$5.
- Performance Arts feasibility study being done at former Alec's.

Boyd-Merrimack:

- Re-elected to 3rd term on Merrimack Town Council.
- New highway garage passed by voters-spring of next year for completion.
- ZBA granted a special exception for 282 unit apartment complex at old hotel site on Executive Park Dr.
- Close to a resolution regarding PFOA's Saint Gobain.
- MS4 still in a holding pattern (reached out to a Senator).
- Conservation Commission finalized purchase of property along Merrimack River.
- Hope to repair and widen a failing culvert on Amherst Road.
- Bringing Cell Tower ordinance with guidelines to Town Council in July or August.

Dell Orfano-Amherst:

- Working on a re-vamp of the Towns Zoning Ordinance.

- On committee to re-assess all town owned property.
- Working on a Frisbee Golf Course.

Langdell-Milford:

- Public Service Announcement: Avoid eastern part of Elm Street near Fletcher. They are paving and hope to be done by July 1st.
- July 15-16th 550 Swimmers will be in town for the Milford Rotary Swim Meet.

Larmouth-Hollis:

- Re-constituted the Land Use Committee.
- Rao-Work has started on the 200 KB Solar project and PB members felt 1 acre was too much for ground based solar systems but they never asked input from the Energy Committee and now they are going the other way.

Fimbel-Mont Vernon:

- September 23-24 town is hosting a Vintage Baseball Day with 1860's rules to commemorate Doc Adams who was born in town. Police Chief will umpire one of the games. Zoe Fimbel and the granddaughter of Doc Adams will be doing a presentation.

Queenan-Litchfield:

- 42 multi-family and 35 single being constructed.
- Working on Community Design Chapter of the Master Plan.
- A light construction company backed out of project due to cost of pole for service. Young-there is service on the property, but they refuse to upgrade.

Williams-Wilton:

- Summerfest in Wilton.
- Major remodel of Town Hall.
- River Walk beginners park to be developed.
- NH Plan Charrette to be held in Wilton in July with NRPC.
- Working on SRTS Project with NRPC.

Williams informed the group that Nancy Mayville had retired from NHDOT and that NRPC should write a letter. Hennessey motioned with a second from Langdell:

THAT NRPC write a letter to recently retired Nancy Mayville, NHDOT
Transportation representative on the NRPC Commission.

The motion **carried**.

Roache thanked the Commission for all their support in the past 11 years. Hennessey thanked Roache for all he has done.

ADJOURN

Motion to adjourn came from Boyd with a second from Fimbel. The meeting ended at 9:04pm. The next Commission meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 20, 2017 at 7:00pm.

Respectfully submitted

Tim Roache, Official Recorder: _____