



APPROVED – MINUTES
NASHUA REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
Held at the NRPC Office
9 Executive Park, Suite 201, Merrimack, NH
December 17, 2014

Members Present:

Martin Michaelis, Amherst	Daniel Del Greco, Merrimack	Sarah Marchant, Nashua
Mike Dell Orfano, Amherst	Karin Elmer, Merrimack	Ed Gleason, Pelham
Susan Ruch, Amherst	Anant Panwalkar, Merrimack	Dave Hennessey, Pelham
James Battis, Hudson	Janet Langdell, Milford	Kermit Williams
Michael Croteau, Litchfield	Mike Fimbel, Mont Vernon	
Thomas Young, Litchfield	Jim Donchess, Nashua	

Others Present: Gene Porter, LMRLAC Chair Nancy Mayville, NHDOT

Staff Present: Kerrie Diers, Executive Director Tim Roache, Assistant Director
 Jen Czysz, Senior Regional Planner Karen Baker, Program Assistant

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS:

Chairman Elmer called the meeting to order at 7:04 PM with introductions.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR:

Members of the public present did not wish to speak at that time but introduced themselves.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES – SEPTEMBER 17, 2014

The Chair asked if there were any comments on the minutes of September 17, 2014. Langdell referred to 3 instances of grammatical errors on page 2 & 3 and said that "...over 55 discount..." in the last paragraph before the close of the public hearing on page 6 should read "...over 55 **housing**..." Gleason motioned with a second from Langdell:

THAT the minutes of September 17, 2014 be approved as amended including grammatical corrections.

The motion **carried with 5 abstentions.**

PUBLIC HEARING AND ADOPTION: 2015-2040 MTP, 2015-2018 TIP, & 2015 NASHUA REGIONAL PLAN

7:08 PM ELMER OPENS PUBLIC HEARING

MTP and TIP: Roache provided a presentation to the group which summarized the process of the MTP and the TIP. He explained that the MTP is serving a dual role; 1) as the Metropolitan Transportation Plan; and, 2) as the transportation chapter of the Regional Plan. He said to think of the MTP as a policy level document designed to guide transportation investment in the region through a 20 year planning horizon. This plan contains analyses of future travel demand, a fiscally constrained project list to guide implementation, is required under Federal law in urban areas over 50,000 population, and serves as the transportation component of the Regional plan. Overall, this plan represents a holistic approach to the transportation planning problem. Roache summarized the timelines for the Transportation Planning Process for the TIP and MTP:

ODD YEARS: Notice of intent and review projects → Review regional needs and solicit projects to meet needs
→ Submit proposed projects to NHDOT and GACIT Hearings on Draft Ten Year Plan.

EVEN YEARS: Legislative & Governor Approval and NHDOT releases STIP to MPO's → MPO develops TIP and MTP, Fiscal Constraint Analysis → MPO opens a 30 day comment period and public hearing and approval by the MPO

Roache also provided definitions of the transportation planning documents:

- The **Metropolitan Transportation Plan** lists multimodal projects over a 20-year planning horizon and is the source from which specific projects are identified, prioritized and selected for funding through the Ten Year Plan and TIP and is required by Federal law.
- The **Ten Year Plan** lists projects funded through both state and federal programs “intended to be under construction in the next 10 years” and is required by State law.
- The **Transportation Improvement Plan** lists federally and regionally significant funded projects programmed for implementation in the next 4-years and is also required by Federal law.

Roache informed the group that a comprehensive approach was taken consistent with the MTP goals: Mobility, Quality Of Life, System Sustainability, and Implementation.

Roache moved onto the TIP explaining that The Transportation Improvement Program is the list of all federally funded transportation projects and programs in the Nashua Region. The projects included in the TIP are regionally significant and/or scheduled to receive federal transportation funds within the next four years. This is a short term project list that must be consistent with the MTP, covering at least 4 years, fiscally constrained, federally funded and all regionally significant w/ Federal action. The TIP can also be amended to adjust, add, or remove projects and is the implementation vehicle for the MTP. He continued touching on the 2015-2040 Implementation process which will focus on the specific projects that have been identified in past plans and discuss the relative priority in the region. He summarized the changes in both the MTP and the TIP as outlined in the memo included in the agenda packet.

Langdell questioned the difference in projects included in the TIP vs the MTP and TYP. Roache explained that it was based on regional significance and whether a project is federally funding or not adding that a State Aid Bridge does not need to be in the TIP. Fimbel questioned the Hudson Train Depot project asking if the train was coming. Roache explained that the building is a historic transportation structure that is an old TE project and has been around for a long time. The Town of Hudson is about to advertise for bids to restore the outside of the building which sits on a permanent foundation as there is no money to do the interior.

Roache wrapped up the MTP & TIP presentation informing the group that both documents were released for a 30 day public comment period on November 17th and reviewed by TTAC at both the November and December meetings. The TTAC made a motion to recommend the Nashua Regional Planning Commission adopt the 2015-2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan and 2015-2018 Transportation Improvement Program. Lastly, he informed the group that action would be required for the MTP and TIP.

2015 NASHUA REGIONAL PLAN: Diers passed around a “cheat sheet” which summarized the chapters of the Nashua Regional Plan. She briefly summarized each chapter starting with the NRPC: A Story Worth Telling - Executive Summary. She informed the group that NRPC would be looking for direction for implementation and what types of research and data the Commission would like to see from NRPC as the focus over the next few months. She pointed out the amount of tools in the Environmental chapter for communities and referred to the REMI Model included as an appendix in the Scenario Planning chapter and the Regional Broadband Plan which were both rolled into the Regional Plan. She referred to the lack of Broadband in the western part of the region and the economic development aspect for areas with broadband. She referred to the Broadband Forum held in Mason.

Diers informed the group of the comments from the Lower Merrimack Local Advisory Committee that were incorporated into the Environmental Chapter from the public comment period held in September. She added that all the comments were addressed and incorporated into the chapter referring to the NRPC working with all the Local Advisory Committees to promote sound rivers corridors and implementation. Dell Orfano asked if the most recent comments from December 6th had been incorporated. Gleason asked also if they would be due to the extensive amount and that there should be response. Diers said the comments from Dec. 6th had not yet been incorporated, but they would be and the recommendations and strategies had already been incorporated. Donchess questioned the changes incorporated from the previous public comment period. Diers reviewed the changes included in the agenda packet, with the group. There was some discussion on the kind of development on the sides of the river and the Nashua CSOs and accuracy of them. Diers felt the comments from December 6th were more general and not as specific referring to the comments from Gene Porter, chair of the LMRLAC, included in the agenda packet. Porter commented that the plan was superb and well done in regards to collecting such a large amount of data. He thanked NRPC for taking so much time to address the comments and looked forward to working with NRPC on implementation. He summarized his 3 goals for the LMR:

- Increased public access to the river with seasonal docks
- Extension of the Heritage Rail Trail to both sides of the river
- A modern boat launch somewhere on the Merrimack River

Porter added that NRPC could be the catalyst to make this happen. He added that he would be willing to work with the City to get the Nashua River designated as a major river.

Williams summarized the Broadband grant informing the group that the grant was awarded to UNH who subcontracted it to all 9 RPC's with Southwest RPC as the lead. The requirement is that all 9 RPCs develop a Broadband Plan for their region. He felt that first part was boiler plate, but the second part which included the NRPC Broadband Plan for the Nashua region he was a little constrained on: Improving Broadband access in the western part of the region and keeping up on the eastern part. He explained that his problem with this was the text in the plan stating that 96% of the region has Broadband access. He felt this was very optimistic and felt that the providers would use this data to say it is not necessary to improve on the Broadband access. Diers explained that this is reported out by all folks within a census block. She was aware that this does not accurately portray the Broadband access in the western parts of the region. She referred to the Broadband Forum held in Mason and Carol Miller's emphasis that town leadership needs to assess their communities and come up with what they want and be very creative and pro-active about it and that it is unlikely that someone will come to help, but she would be there to help, but towns need to know what they want first. Ruch suggested using some qualifying data. Diers pointed out the maps in the plan with paragraphs describing each map and the data shown. Williams said the maps shows that western pieces of the region are covered, but some people have access and some don't. He mentioned a piece that he read about how what shows in a census block may not be truly depicted. Dell Orfano said that as a region, they should do a standardized contract to have service delivered and service providers to stop cherry picking. Diers informed the group of the Broadband postcard going out to 5,500 people in the state as part of a way to get more accurate data on access in the areas lacking Broadband that asks folks to take the speed test. Moriarty was happy with his Broadband access but commented on the difficulty of getting high definition. There was comment on the Executive Summary implying that even though there are issues, 96% have Broadband with small pockets that do not and asked that it be made not so optimistic. Diers said the Executive Summary can be amended. Panwalkar suggested that if the maps were old to take them down. Diers said that a map update could be done periodically and incorporated into the plan. Ruch felt not just the maps should be updated, but all of the plan. Williams felt the maps would change faster than other parts of the plan. Diers spoke about the qualifying language in the plan about the inaccuracy of the maps. Hennessey had an issue with the 6Mbps saying it was an inaccurate number and it shows that number as being served, but it is not sufficient.

Marchant suggested the group do a conditional approval with the changes to the Executive Summary and approve the plan. After further discussion, Gleason made a motion with a second from Dell Orfano:

THAT the 2015-2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), the 2015-2018 Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP), & the 2015 Nashua Regional Plan be approved as amended with the recommended modifications to the Executive Summary of the Regional Broadband Plan for the Nashua Region Chapter of the Regional Plan and the 3 goals defined by Chair, Gene Porter of the LMRLAC incorporated into the Regional Plan Environmental Chapter.

The motion **carried**.

The Public Hearing Closed at 8:10 PM

Diers passed around a letter from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development that recognized the accomplishments of the Granite State Future under the HUD FY 2011 Regional Integrated Planning Grant Program. She then presented a trophy to Czysz for all of her work on a 3.73 million dollar project that included 9 Regional Planning Commissions.

Diers also referred to the URISA Award that was presented to the NRPC GIS team, congratulating GIS Manager Sara Siskavich and her GIS team.

8:20 PM - COMMISSIONER'S ROUNDTABLE

The Commissioner's Roundtable held at 8:15pm.

ADJOURN

Diers referred the Pipeline and having some regional coordination and forming a sub-committee. She also referred to the NRPC webpage which included dates of meetings, presentations about the pipeline and a list of resources. She suggested starting with an Ad-Hoc Committee then having the group see where to go from there as a Commission. Diers informed folks to coordinate with Sara Siskavich. An email would go around for information on first meeting and then a schedule can be established on how often to meet and a subcommittee charter. Kinder Morgan will be committing the resources.

The next NRPC Commission meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 18, 2015 at 7:00pm at the Nashua Regional Planning Commission office in Merrimack. Motion to adjourn came from Dell Orfano with a second from Ruch. The meeting adjourned at 8:42pm.

Respectfully submitted

Kerrie Diers, Official Recorder: _____