

NOTICE OF MEETING

WHO: Nashua Regional Planning Commission

WHEN: Wednesday – September 20, 2023 @ 7:00 P.M.

WHERE: NRPC Conference Room, 30 Temple Street, Suite 310, Nashua, NH. If you are unable to attend in-person, you may participate remotely using the link below:
<https://nashuarpc.zoom.us/j/89527817370>

AGENDA

7:00 pm - Call to Order

1. Welcome and Introductions (7:00)
2. Privilege of the Floor (7:05)
3. Approval of Minutes – June 21, 2023 (***action required***) (7:10)
4. Presentation - Christa Tsechrintzis, Executive Director, Greater Nashua Habitat for Humanity: Potential housing development sites in the NRPC Region. (7:15)
5. MPO Policy Committee (7:30)
 - a. NRPC Title VI Civil Rights Program – update of the NRPC Title VI Plan (***action required***)
 - b. NH FY 2025-2034 Ten Year Transportation Plan - GACIT hearing schedule.
 - c. NRPC FY 2023-2050 Metropolitan (long range) Transportation Plan (MTP) update.
 - d. Nashua, NH-MA Transportation Management Area (TMA) Certification Review.
 - e. Other transportation updates
6. Statement of Strategy Update (8:15)
7. Commissioner Recognitions (8:20)
8. Other Business (8:25)
9. Commissioners Roundtable (8:30)
10. Adjourn (9:00)

Next NRPC Commission Meeting: Wednesday, December 20, 2023



**DRAFT – MINUTES
NASHUA REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION**

June 21, 2023

Held in-person and via Zoom, an in-person quorum was present

Members Present:

Jason Hennessey, Amherst

Danielle Pray, Amherst

Tamara Sorell, Brookline

Joe Garruba, Hollis

Dillon Dumont, Hudson

Tim Malley, Hudson

Michael Croteau, Litchfield

Kim Queenan, Litchfield (Vice Chair)

Karin Elmer, Merrimack

Thomas Koenig, Merrimack

Tim Tenhave, Merrimack (Chair)

Chris Costantino, Milford (via Zoom)

Janet Langdell, Milford

John Yule, Milford

Tim Berry, Mont Vernon

Dave Hennessey, Pelham

Peter Howd, Wilton

Kermit Williams, Wilton

Lucy St. John (via Zoom)

NRPC Staff Present:

Jay Minkarah, Executive Director

Camille Pattison, Assistant Director

Kristin Wardner, Administrative Assistant

Others:

Robin LeBlanc, RHL Strategies

1. Welcome and Introductions

Tim Tenhave opened the meeting at 7:12p.m. with introductions.

2. Privilege of the Floor

No members of the public were present to speak.

3. Approval of Minutes – March 15, 2023 & May 17, 2023

Amendments to March 15, 2023, minutes:

- Next meeting date on last page should be June 21, 2023.

Jason Hennessey motioned, with a second from Tim Berry,

THAT the minutes of March 15, 2023, be approved as amended and placed on file. A roll call vote was conducted. Chris Costantino, Lucy St. John, John Yule, Joe Garruba, Dillon Dumont, Tim Malley, Tom Koenig, Tim Berry and Peter Howd abstained.

The motion **carried**.

Amendments to May 17, 2023, minutes:

- Next meeting date on last page should be June 21, 2023.
- Add Kermit Williams to the list of members present.

Tim Berry motioned, with a second from Peter Howd,

THAT the minutes of May 17, 2023, be approved as amended and placed on file. A roll call vote was conducted. Chris Costantino, Lucy St. John, Michael Croteau, Dillon Dumont, Tim Malley, and Tom Koenig abstained.

The motion **carried.**

4. Statement of Strategy Update: Discussion with Robin LeBlanc

Jay Minkarah introduced Robin LeBlanc from RHL Strategies who was brought in to assist with the update of NRPC's Statement of Strategy. LeBlanc explained that a Strategic Plan survey that went out to stakeholders and she then reviewed some highlights from the survey about awareness of what NRPC does. She highlighted some of the important themes that emerged from the results: housing, education for smaller towns, the need for rural specific planning, and how to maintain services and infrastructure with limited funds. She stated the responses were overwhelmingly positive and the survey included questions about now and going forward. She did 30-minute interviews with 8 people who indicated in the survey that they would be interested in participating in a follow-up discussion. [Click here to view the Survey Summary.](#)

The next step in the process is a virtual forum on July 13th. An invitation was sent to all those who took the survey and expressed interest. LeBlanc encouraged all Commissioners to attend. There was further discussion about survey outreach.

Kermit Williams asked what the result will be of this process. LeBlanc said it would be to create a high-level plan detailing where NRPC should focus the next 3-6 years. From the plan, she will develop and provide a dashboard to allow the Commission to measure progress and outcomes. Peter Howd asked Minkarah whether 3-6 year time frame is realistic. Minkarah stated they do need to be realistic about what can be accomplished in that time period. He said some things from the survey jumped out at him, for example grant writing assistance (a service that NRPC doesn't normally provide) while some other things may be easier to shift duties for NRPC staff and then some will require more of an investment (additional staff training, etc.). In regard to water quality (an area cited in the survey that NRPC should focus more on), Janet Langdell stated the Commission needs to think about what NRPC staff can do that is not already available out in the community and needs to be realistic about what can be offered. Minkarah agreed and added they need to be realistic about what role makes sense and adds value to members.

Joe Garruba stated typically at the town level they do master plans on a 10-year schedule and asked about the shorter frequency of this plan and how often it was done previously. Minkarah didn't believe there has been a consistent schedule and stated the last plan was done in 2016. LeBlanc said the general wisdom currently is that 10 years is too long for strategic planning. Tenhave confirmed the last plan was approved in 2016 with the vision of it being a 5-year plan.

Tamara Sorell said she believes there are things that can be done to improve water quality. Howd, a member of SoRLAC, explained the Souhegan River watershed affects all the municipalities, and the Commission has the ability to educate and possibly influence through education to look at water resources in a holistic sense (regionally) rather than town-by-town.

5. Regular Business

a. Proposed Bylaw Amendments

Following are the proposed amendments to the NRPC Bylaws:

- Article IV. Officers, Section A delete: *“No officer shall be eligible to serve more than two consecutive terms in the same office but may hold other offices at the will of the Commission.”*
- Article V. Meetings, Section B: Amend Order of Business
- Article VI. Committees, Section B: Change Board to Committee

Tenhaven explained that he is bringing forward the change removing term limits for officers himself, not on behalf of the Commission or Executive Committee. He is suggesting the change because it is difficult to identify officers willing to serve and it reflects the way most local boards operate – officers are elected annually, allowing roles to be changed when and if needed. He believes they are self-imposing a restriction that the Commission’s annual process will take care of no matter what.

Tenhaven stated changing the order of business is being done to reflect how it has been done for some time.

In response to Koenig’s question on term lengths for officers, Tenhaven said that it is 1 year.

Tim Berry motioned, with a second by Kermit Williams,

THAT the proposed Nashua Regional Planning Commission Bylaw amendments be approved as presented.

On the motion, Garruba said that he believes in turnover and doesn’t think removing the term limits is a good idea. Discussion ensued about there being little interest from commissioners to be on the Executive Committee. Jason Hennessey suggested breaking out the term limits and the remaining amendments. It was agreed upon.

Tim Berry motioned, with a second by Karin Elmer,

THAT the proposed Nashua Regional Planning Commission Bylaw amendment to Article IV. Officers, Section A to remove the wording *“No officer shall be eligible to serve more than two consecutive terms in the same office but may hold other offices at the will of the Commission.”* be approved as presented.

On the motion, J. Hennessey suggested extending the term limit to 4 years. Dave Hennessey said removing the term limits will eliminate potential hurdles and said the Commission will vote out someone who is incompetent. Kim Queenan pointed out that the Bylaws could be changed again in the future if needed. Howd pointed out that Executive Committee term limits are 3 years, and a 4-year term limit would extend beyond that.

A roll call vote was conducted with Jason Hennessey in opposition. Lucy St. John abstained.

The motion **carried.**

Kermit Williams motioned, with a second from Tom Koenig,

THAT the proposed Nashua Regional Planning Commission Bylaw amendments to Article V. Meetings, Section B and Article VI, Committees, Section B be approved as presented. A roll call vote was conducted. Lucy St. John abstained.

The motion **carried.**

6. Annual Business Meeting

a. FY 2024 Budget and Work Program

Minkarah reviewed the details of the proposed FY 2024 Budget and Work Program. Highlights to Revenue include:

- Local dues - there was an increase approved last year – the first in a number of years.
- Federal contracts - largely flat
- Other grants - The Regional Housing Needs Assessment has been completed. The Robinson Pond Water Quality grant will be ending this fiscal year. The Souhegan River Management Corridor Plan is new in the coming year. Minkarah explained that NRPC staff runs support for the Household Hazardous Waste program for the Nashua Region Solid Waste Management District. He noted there is not an actual increase, it is a fluctuation in the number of events held per fiscal year, which varies between 5 and 7.
- Local planning contracts - Some of these are circuit riding and then various others. Minkarah said there are projects in almost every community. He noted the Wilton and Brookline HOP contracts and gave a brief explanation on HOP grants, explaining that they are Housing Opportunity Planning Grants made available through InvestNH.
- Other income - Interest income increased due to switching funds to the NH Public Deposit Investment Pool (NHPDIP).

J. Hennessey asked for bank account balances: Minkarah stated there are 2 checking accounts with approximately \$254,159 in TD Bank and \$3,662 in Bar Harbor, and the NHPDIP fund has \$272,717. Total cash on hand is \$671,287.

- State contracts - No change in the NH Office of Planning & Development contract. Minkarah explained the UPWP (Unified Work Program) is a 2-year contract with NH Department of Transportation which lays out how NRPC will spend, over a 2-year period, the federal transportation dollars funneled through NHDOT to NRPC. It is the largest amount of funding NRPC receives. All categories are increasing except 200 Policy & Planning. There is a significant increase in 500 Technical Assistance & Support, which is the transportation work directly for communities at their request. Overall, the increase is just under \$200,000, which is the first increase in at least 12 years.

There is a significant decrease in Mobility Management. Langdell explained the funding was the initiation of a new statewide program; they were able to advocate as a group to the State Coordinating Council to get funding that was equal across all 8 NH regions. That funding is going away so the FY24 amount is down to the original NH DOT proposal of \$50,000 per region. She stated that is through the Regional Coordinating Council, of which NRPC is the lead agency.

The total Resources for the proposed budget is \$2,115,596, an increase of \$187,718.

Minkarah then reviewed Expenses:

- Dues /subscriptions - the increase is mainly due to software licenses.
- Total employee benefits - The budget reflects a net increase of one staff person and that is reflected in the salary and benefits lines.
- He stated that the changes are based on known or anticipated costs.
- Professional services - The increase is due to the cost for HHW contractor and cost for the Brownfields program environmental consultant.
- Rent & CAM - decrease is due to Utilities getting double counted in last year's budget.
- Depreciation - auditors suggested no longer counting depreciation of equipment.

Langdell asked if the NH DOT negotiations upcharge has changed and Minkarah stated it did not change from the 123% but may next year.

Karin Elmer motioned, with a second from Tim Berry,

THAT the Nashua Regional Planning Commission FY 2024 Budget and Work Program be approved as presented. A roll call vote was conducted. Lucy St. John abstained.

The motion **carried.**

b. Annual Grant and Contract Authorization

Minkarah explains that this authorizes him to apply for any grants and sign contracts on behalf of the Commission.

Peter Howd motioned, with a second from Tim Berry,

THAT the Executive Director be authorized to file applications with federal, state, and local governmental units and other agencies to implement the FY 2024 work program of the Commission, and to execute agreements to receive funds for such purposes. A roll call vote was conducted. Lucy St. John abstained.

The motion **carried.**

c. Setting of FY 2025 Dues

Minkarah stated there was an increase approved last year and are not proposing one for this year. He explained the dues amount is calculated with a formula based on population and equalized valuation ratio and is recalculated each year.

Tim Berry motioned, with a second from Janet Langdell,

THAT the Nashua Regional Planning Commission FY 2025 Dues Assessment be approved as presented with no increase.

On the motion, Garruba asked about rational for equalized valuation. Minkarah said the formula has been that way for as long as he knows and assumes it is because it relates to the strength of the tax base of the community – a proxy for a town’s ability to pay. Minkarah stated if there was interest, the formula can be updated in the future. It was noted that the handout passed out during the meeting reflects the correct total for Equalized Valuation (\$36,823,884,160), not the amount on the table in the agenda packet.

A roll call vote was conducted with Joe Garruba in opposition. Lucy St. John abstained.

The motion **carried.**

d. Election of FY 2024 Executive Committee Officers

Tenhave stated that before officers are voted on, the Commission needs to address Executive Committee members terms that have lapsed and need to be updated. He explained the role of the Executive Committee. He said there are 7 opening seats out of 9 and stated the Nominating Committee is bringing forward 5 names and looking for additional volunteers. Kermit Williams and Tim Berry volunteered. Tenhave stated based on that the Nominating Committee recommends Tim Berry, Karin Elmer, Jason Hennessey, Janet Langdell, Kim Queenan, Tim Tenhave, and Kermit Williams. Coming off the Executive Committee is James Battis, Venu Rao and Tamara Sorell, and staying on are Dave Hennessey and Camille Correa. There is another opening anticipated in November.

Tim Tenhave motioned, with a second from Karin Elmer,

THAT the Commission accept the nominations of Tim Berry, Karin Elmer, Jason Hennessey, Janet Langdell, Kim Queenan, Tim Tenhave, and Kermit Williams to the NRPC Executive Committee. A roll call vote was conducted. Lucy St. John abstained.

The motion **carried.**

Langdell suggested providing the list of Commission members and terms in January moving forward.

Tenhave stated that the Nominating Committee is recommending the following officers:

Tim Tenhave - Chair

Kim Queenan -Vice Chair

Janet Langdell -Treasurer

Tim Tenhave motioned, with a second from Kermit Williams,

THAT the Commission approve the Executive Committee officers as recommended. A roll call vote was conducted. Lucy St. John abstained.

The motion **carried.**

e. Slate of Directors for the NRPC Foundation

Minkarah briefly explained that the NRPC Foundation was established as the non-profit arm of NRPC to allow access to grants only made available to 501(c)(3)’s and to accept private contributions. There

is a 7-member governance board made up of Executive Committee officers, 2 Commissioners, and 2 citizens-at-large. He explained that Dave Hennessey's term is expiring this year and Karin Elmer has volunteered to replace him.

Peter Howd motioned, with a second from Tim Berry,

THAT the Nashua Regional Planning Commission appoint Karin Elmer to the NRPC Foundation Board of Directors. A roll call vote was conducted. Karin Elmer and Lucy St. John abstained.

The motion **carried.**

7. MPO Policy Committee

a. Long Range Transportation Plan (MTP) Update

Minkarah stated NRPC is in process of updating the Long Range Transportation Plan (MTP). It is a minimum 20-year plan and is federally required. He explained that all projects in the state Ten Year Plan are already in the MTP, but the goal is to add/develop additional projects so when funding is made available there is a pool of projects already. Minkarah stated that NRPC is currently in the process of meeting with town staff about project ideas. Also, a Transportation survey is live – trying to get as much input as possible.

b. CMAQ Projects Update

Minkarah explained that all CMAQ projects, minus the EV applications, are moving forward into the Ten Year Plan, per NH DOT.

8. Other Business

None

9. Commissioners Roundtable

NH DOT - St. John stated that UPWP contracts are signed and the Ten Year Plan process is starting.

Milford - Langdell stated that Hitchiner Manufacturing has purchased 2 more properties and will have 25-100 new jobs. An application for 216-unit apartment complex has been accepted.

Hollis - Garruba stated that a 35-unit development just came to the Planning Board.

Litchfield - Croteau stated there is a new project with 172 townhomes that is going to be extending into Hudson. He said the town is forming an economic development committee. Queenan stated the town is reassessing impact fees. Litchfield is starting an energy commission and a social media policy.

Amherst - Pray stated there is a new proposed 55-unit development. Continuing to look into Amherst Village - there are a lot of safety concerns, and they are looking at ways to slow traffic, etc. They are forming a new committee to address it and are also forming an energy committee.

Brookline - Sorell stated that a 55+ development has been cleared. Pedestrian bridge over Mason Road is under construction.

Wilton - Williams stated the town received a HOP grant and thanked Camille and Caleb for their work. He expressed that the town feels they need a community plan, not just a master plan – a coordinated look at the future.

Hudson - Dumont said that Hudson has a lot of similar issues as other towns.

Merrimack - Koenig said the Planning Board just approved 175 additional units at Park Place (near outlet mall). They are in the middle of their Phase III, IV, V sewer upgrade. He said there are quite a few apartments under construction (about 1,000 units) – some workforce, mostly marketplace – 1000 units. He also said that the turnpike expansion is getting closer to Merrimack and will start to affect traffic in town.

Pelham - D. Hennessey said that Pelham is reviving their Economic Development commission as well as an energy committee. He discussed how the state housing board has overturned some of the town's Planning Board decisions.

Mont Vernon - Berry said there 3 houses before the planning board.

10. Adjourn

Motion to adjourn was made by Tim Berry, with a second from D. Hennessey, all in favor. The meeting ended at 8:58 p.m.

The next Commission meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 20, 2023, at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Kristin Wardner, Administrative Assistant

MEMORANDUM

TO: NRPC MPO Policy Committee
FROM: Matt Waitkins, MPO Coordinator
SUBJECT: **Draft** NRPC Title VI Program Update
DATE: September 15, 2023

Background

The NRPC Title VI Program guides NRPC efforts to ensure that its programs and services are provided without regard to race, color, and national origin, specifically,

- To ensure the level and quality of transportation service is provided without regard to race, color, or national origin,
- To promote the full and fair participation of all affected populations in transportation decision making,
- To prevent the denial, reduction or delay in benefits related to programs and activities that benefit traditionally underserved populations, and,
- To ensure equal access to programs and activities by persons with limited English proficiency.

The NRPC Title VI Program must be regularly updated (at least every three years).

The updated NRPC Title VI document was released for public comment on August 18th, 2023, and the 30-day public comment period continues through September 19th, 2023.

A public hearing will be held on September 20th, 2023, at 7:00pm at the NRPC office.

The NRPC MPO will consider adoption of the updated Title VI Program following the public hearing.

NRPC staff will provide a summary of the updated NRPC Title VI Plan at the September 20th public hearing and will be seeking adoption of the updated plan by the NRPC MPO Policy Committee following the public hearing.

The NRPC Title VI project page can be found [here](#).

Please don't hesitate to contact me with questions or concerns at (603) 417-6566 or mattw@nashuarpc.org.

MEMORANDUM

TO: NRPC MPO Policy Committee
FROM: Matt Waitkins, MPO Coordinator
SUBJECT: Draft FY2025-2034 NH Ten Year Transportation Plan – GACIT hearings
DATE: September 15, 2023

Background

The Governor’s Advisory Commission on Intermodal Transportation (GACIT) has begun hearings to gather public input on the Draft FY2025-2034 NH Department of Transportation Ten Year Transportation Plan.

There will be 25 hearings throughout the State during September & October.

There will be one hearing in the NRPC region:

- **October 16th @ 7:00 – 8:00 PM @ Hudson Community Center, 12 Lions Avenue, Hudson**

This is your chance to provide input and learn more about the draft 2025-2034 Ten-Year Transportation Improvement Plan as recommended by NHDOT to GACIT.

You may also attend any of the other GACIT meetings around the State.

The transportation projects that were selected during the regional projection selection process have been included in the draft plan. These are the projects that were selected:

NRPC MPO Final Prioritized List of Projects for the FY2025-2034 NH Ten Year Transportation Plan				
Community	Project Scope	NHDOT Estimated cost (Year of Expenditure)		
		Federal	Local*	Total
Amherst	Roundabout & 650 foot side path at the intersection of NH122 & Merrimack Road	\$2,230,643	\$557,661	\$2,788,304
Hudson	Sidewalks on NH 102 (Derry Road) from St. Patrick Cemetery to Alvirne High School & Rectangular Rapid Flash Beacons	\$2,912,560	\$728,140	\$3,640,700
Litchfield	NH3A/Corning Rd Intersection improvements	\$2,017,102	\$504,275* Turnpike Toll Credits	\$2,521,377
Merrimack	Naticook Rd/Camp Sargent Rd intersection realignment PRELIMINARY ENGINEERING PHASE	\$198,972	\$49,743	\$248,715
Merrimack	US3/DW Highway over Souhegan River (Chamberlain Br) - Replace Bridge	Funded Via State Bridge Aid Program		
		Biennial Allocation: \$7,393,412		
		Total Federal: \$7,359,277		
		Available Balance: \$34,135		

*The project will be funded at 100% federal funds with Turnpike Toll Credit (TTC) match

The projects that were selected during the FY2025-2028 Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) project selection process and included in the original draft of the Ten-Year plan have been removed by GACIT. This is hopefully a temporary removal.

NHDOT has explained the reason for the removal of the projects as follows:

- At the August 23rd GACIT meeting in Hampton, there were concerns expressed by Councilors about their lack of say in the selection of CMAQ projects.
- NHDOT explained that there was enough funding available to fund the projects, but the Councilors wanted more time to review & discuss the CMAQ applications before they became part of the Ten-Year Plan.
- For that reason, at this time, the Draft 2025-2034 Ten-Year Plan does not include the NHDOT recommended CMAQ projects.
- It appears likely that all CMAQ projects that were eligible will be added.
- However, it will still be valuable for the public to comment on their applications as part of the GACIT process.

These are the CMAQ projects from the NRPC region that were selected, and that have been removed:

Project Sponsor	Scope	Type of project	Cost
Town of Amherst	multimodal sidepath along the north side of Amherst St (NH 122)	Bicycle-Pedestrian	\$1,221,600
City of Nashua 1	Intersection signal coordination at 64 locations	Signal Coordination	\$2,200,000
NRPC	Fixed route transit service westward along Route 101 A from Nashua to Milford, NH.	Transit	\$960,000
Town of Wilton	Steel-truss pedestrian bridge spanning the Souhegan River	Bicycle-Pedestrian	\$880,000
		Total:	\$5,261,600

NRPC staff will provide additional information at the September 20th MPO Policy Committee meeting.

Please don't hesitate to contact me with questions or concerns at (603) 417-6566 or mattw@nashuarpc.org.