

**APPROVED – MINUTES  
NASHUA REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION  
March 16, 2022**

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

**Members Present:**

Jason Hennessey, Amherst  
Will Ludt, Amherst  
Tamara Sorell, Brookline  
Bob Larmouth, Hollis  
Venu Rao, Hollis  
James Battis, Hudson  
Kara Roy, Hudson  
Michael Croteau, Litchfield  
Kim Queenan, Litchfield  
Burton Reynolds, Lyndeborough  
Karin Elmer, Merrimack

Tim Tenhave, Merrimack  
Chris Costantino, Milford  
Janet Langdell, Milford  
John Shannon, Milford  
Camille Correa, City of Nashua  
Dave Hennessey, Pelham  
Nick Germain, Wilton  
Peter Howd, Wilton  
Kermit Williams, Wilton

**Others Present:**

Leigh Levine, FHWA  
Danielle Pray, Amherst

**Staff Present:**

Jay Minkarah, Executive Director  
Camille Pattison, Assistant Director  
Gregg Lantos, Principal Transportation Planner  
Matt Waitkins, Senior Transportation Planner  
Kristin Wardner, Administrative Assistant

**1. Welcome and Introductions**

Tenhave opened the meeting at 7:03 p.m. with introductions.

**2. Privilege of the Floor**

No members of the public were present to speak.

**3. Approval of Minutes – December 15, 2021**

**Langdell motioned, with a second from D. Hennessey,**

**THAT the minutes of December 15, 2021, be approved as amended and placed on file. A roll call vote was conducted. J. Hennessey, Ludt, Williams, and Croteau abstained.**

Amendments:

- Page 1, last line; insert “Camille”
- Page 4, Line 9; insert “then”
- Page 5, Commissioner’s Roundtable; replace “Langdell” with “Sorell”
- Page 5, Last line; insert “good”

The motion **carried**.

**4. Presentation - Leigh Levine, Planning and Development Manager, New Hampshire Division Office, Federal Highway Administration: Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill, Overview of Funding Opportunities**

Leigh Levine, Planning and Development Manager, New Hampshire Division Office, Federal Highway Administration, gave a presentation on the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL). He highlighted what is new and some programs of interest.

Regarding the “Safe Streets and Roads for All” grant, Langdell asked if the “safety action plan” is referring to local governments’ master plans and Levine stated that he believes it is referring to something more standalone to leverage further funding by identifying projects within action plans. He said they are waiting for guidance on many of these programs.

Williams asked if the bill includes the Toll Credit Marketplace Act. Levine stated there is provision for it. Williams said NH has about \$200 million in toll credits. Minkarah stated that NH has a self-funded turnpike system that is eligible for federal aid but the state does not use it. In lieu of that, the state gets a credit that can be used as part of a match for federal dollars, but there is no actual money. This act would allow the state to sell those credits to other states to get cash to spend on transportation.

Ludt asked how communities will access and apply for grants. Levine stated he has heard discussion of a coordinated state-wide approach to some of the grant programs but is not sure if that has been further developed. He said that normally a Notice of Funding Opportunity comes out in the Federal Register and then that information gets blasted out to RPCs and MPOs. He stated now that the agency is fully funded with appropriations for the year, it will be easier for them to get the information out. There will be Notices of Proposed Rulemaking released which the public can then comment on. Minkarah stated that they will get information out as they can on grants that make sense for communities and there are several groups (i.e., Clean Energy NH) that will also be pushing out information. Langdell stated it will be important for NRPC provide a timely transfer of the information and Williams stated it would be best to have coordinated grant assistance. Minkarah suggested that communities have projects in mind so they are ready for when funding opportunities are released. Langdell suggested a central white board (master list) for all the grant opportunities out there that communities can refer to. Waitkins said there is a provision in the bill for a streamlined application process to help know whether a grant is appropriate for a project or not. Levine said to keep in mind that for capital projects there are no exemptions in place from the normal federal aid requirements.

Langdell asked about the TIGER program mentioned on the Local and Regional Project Assistance Program slide. Levine stated the current RAISE (Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity) program was previously known as TIGER and BUILD. The Notice of Funding Opportunity for this grant was issued and the deadline for applications is April 14, 2022.

Minkarah clarified for newer commissioners that Nashua Regional Planning Commission is an MPO.

The presentation can be viewed on our website: [https://nashuarpc.org/agenda\\_detail\\_T30\\_R193.php](https://nashuarpc.org/agenda_detail_T30_R193.php)

## 5. MPO Policy Committee

### a. Congestion Management Process for the Nashua, NH Transportation Management Area Hearing

Lantos stated NRPC has recently completed the draft of the updated Congestion Management Report which was last updated in 2010 and gave a presentation on the Congestion Management Process (CMP).

Williams asked what the sources of data are and who sets the criteria. Lantos stated the Department of Safety is the source for crash data, fatalities come from a federal database, speed data is from NPMRDS (National Performance Management Research Data Set), and physical traffic counts conducted by NRPC. Lantos noted that NRPC, along with other MPOs, have purchased an enhanced dataset.

Roy asked what NTS stood for, and Lantos replied it is the Nashua Transit System.

Lantos stated the TTAC has reviewed and approved the Congestion Management Process, although without a quorum.

The presentation can be viewed on our website: [https://nashuarpc.org/agenda\\_detail\\_T30\\_R193.php](https://nashuarpc.org/agenda_detail_T30_R193.php)

**Williams motioned with a second from Battis,**

**THAT the Congestion Management Process for the Nashua, NH Transportation Management Area, be approved. A roll call vote was conducted with all in favor.**

The motion **carried.**

### b. Nashua Regional Planning Commission MPO Transportation Planning Prospectus

Lantos reviewed the recommended changes to the MPO Transportation Planning Prospectus which includes changed to community membership and quorum conditions for TTAC. The change in membership would give Hudson and Merrimack 2 members instead of 1 each. Langdell expressed concern about the quorum recommendations and questioned whether it complies with RSA 91-A.

After discussion, it was decided to defer the approval of the MPO Planning Prospectus to the June meeting with the understanding that the issue of what constitutes a quorum will be researched.

The presentation can be viewed on our website: [https://nashuarpc.org/agenda\\_detail\\_T30\\_R193.php](https://nashuarpc.org/agenda_detail_T30_R193.php)

### c. Transportation Project Updates

Lantos stated NRPC is wrapping up the turnpike Exit 12 study and an Amherst town center study. Waitkins stated they are working on a feasibility study of developing and incorporating a volunteer driving program into the regional transportation network. The study is being funded with Federal Transit Administration (FTA) 5305(e) funds. He will be meeting with a group about electric vehicle charging and critical corridors, with plans to develop a municipal electric vehicle charging toolkit. In anticipation of the next 10 Year Plan development, he will be assisting with reviewing the project selection process criteria from 2 years ago to see if it needs adjusting. Field work season is

approaching. The RFQ for On-Call Engineering is in process now and closes March 25<sup>th</sup>. NRPC will be looking to fill a new position soon – Regional Mobility Manager, with funding from NH DOT.

In response to Ludt, Lantos explained the 10 Year Plan process will start in May. NRPC initiates project solicitation from communities to submit to the state 10 Year Plan, which is separate from the federal process of updating the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), although the 2 plans work together. Any application to the 10 Year Plan, whether funded or not, goes into the MTP so it is there for the future. Minkarah explained that NRPC is doing the RFQ for on-call engineering so when communities submit projects, a third-party can review them and their associated cost estimates for feasibility.

## **6. Other Business/Items of Information**

### **a. Staffing Updates**

Camille Pattison is NRPC's new Assistant Director. Sara Siskavich has decided to step back and focus on GIS. NRPC has hired a new regional planner, Sheena Duncan. She will be the circuit rider for Mason. NRPC still has vacancies. Gregg Lantos is retiring at the end of May.

### **b. Annual Forum**

Save the date emails went out for the Annual Forum, to be held May 11 at LaBelle Winery. The theme this year is energy and the format is cocktail hour, buffet style dinner and then speakers. More details to follow.

### **c. Project Updates**

Minkarah stated the biggest project happening now is the Regional Housing Needs Assessment. It is required to be updated every 5 years and all the RPCs in the state are doing them at the same time. The project must be completed by the end of 2022.

### **d. Website Updates**

NRPC is getting a new website that will hopefully be live in April. The goal of the new site is to improve accessibility and use and make it mobile friendly.

## **Commissioners Roundtable**

Milford – Langdell stated Milford is conducting a recount for one of their selectmen seats due to a 5-count difference. Planning Board members will continue to be appointed, as the petition warrant article to make it an elected board did not pass. Shannon stated the town planner is leaving so they will be looking for someone new.

Amherst – Danielle Pray (Amherst selectman) stated in the recent election, the town's budget passed but almost everything for the school was defeated, including bonds for a new school and renovations to an existing school. The town recently hired a new planner. She believes they are the first town to have an appeal before the Supreme Court for a Housing Appeals Board decision. Ludt stated the Amherst Master Plan Subcommittee will have a draft plan for public comment next month and are planning to

complete it by June/July. He discussed he is on a state stone wall subcommittee to identify all the stone walls within the NH using GIS crowdsourcing.

Wilton – Williams discussed the community power aggregation plan that passed at the town meeting and is now waiting for PUC final approval. It is based on recent legislation which allows municipalities to replace Eversource as the default provider. Everything passed at town meeting except for SB2.

Langdell inquired how many other communities have been approached for community energy. Williams stated there are 2 companies, but they are using Standard Power. That company manages the energy aggregation through NRPC. Rao suggested they be brought in to speak to the commissioners.

Litchfield – All warrant articles passed for town except for a fire engine, and all passed for the school. Had 6 zoning amendments that all passed. Queenan stated that they have a lot of development happening right now.

Lyndeborough – Reynolds stated that all warrant articles passed.

Nashua – Correa stated that she will bring updates to the next meeting. She said that Nashua has several open positions. She appreciated the opportunity for communities to come together for these meetings.

Tenhaven stated there are 2 new Nashua commissioners that are aldermen and there is still one vacancy there.

Hollis – Larmouth stated that all the warrant articles passed. Of note, one of the articles was for 2 major (non-state) roads that are slated for complete reconstruction. There has been discussion of adding lights to crosswalks like Nashua has.

Brookline – Sorell said all their warrant articles passed except for one school article. There are new school board members and several zoning amendments passed regarding lot size, growth, and anti-workforce housing. She stated that Town Administrator Tad Putney is retiring.

Pelham – Hennessey stated Pelham's town administrator (Brian McCarthy) will be leaving the first week in April. Jenn Beauregard is now the Planning Director after being in that position interim. Hal Lynde was defeated in election as selectmen by his wife. Master Plan update has just begun. Most warrant articles passed including one to purchase conservation land.

Hudson – Roy stated that both the town and school's operating budgets failed in the recent election. Some of the zoning amendments passed along with the police department renovation. A petition warrant article to put 100% of change use tax to conservation passed by 1 vote, so it is in recount right now. The hand count ballot petition warrant article failed and there were no changes to the selectboard.

Merrimack – Tenhaven stated that Merrimack votes in April. There is really nothing of note except some Wastewater updates on there that will require bonds, but those costs are covered by sewer fees. There continues to be development along DW Highway. The old Brookstone building is slated to be developed into a housing.

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Wilton – Howd said that things with Zoning have been quiet but that the Planning Board is busy. They are struggling with RSAs and local zoning ordinances and how to deal with RSA violations in the context of planning board approvals. Minor changes to zoning ordinance passed at election.

**Adjourn**

Motion to adjourn was made by Williams with a second from Battis, with all in favor. The meeting ended at 9:01 p.m.

**The next Commission meeting will be held on Wednesday, June 15, 2022, at 7:00 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Jay Minkarah, Executive Director