



MINUTES-APPROVED
NASHUA REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
March 19, 2008

Members Present:

Martin Michaelis, Amherst
Bradley Vear, Amherst (A)
Jay Hennessey, Amherst
Tad Putney, Brookline
Linda Saari, Brookline
Peter Baker, Hollis
Susan Durham, Hollis
Brion Carroll, Hudson
Howard Dilworth, Jr., Hudson
Suellen Seabury Quinlan, Hudson

James Elliott, Merrimack
Tim Tenhave, Merrimack
Janet Langdell, Milford
Noreen O'Connell, Milford
Bob Canaway, Nashua
Kathy Hersh, Nashua
Brian McCarthy, Nashua
Michael Tabacsko, Nashua
Tom Collins, Pelham
Joe Torre, Wilton
Leigh Levine, FHWA

Staff Present:

Steve Williams, Executive Director
Kerrie Diers, Assistant Director
Steve Schaffer, GIS Manager

Camille Pattison, Integrated Planning Program Manager
Tim Roache, Principal Transportation Planner
Karen M. Baker, Administrative Assistant

Kathy Hersh, Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

Privilege of the Floor

Members of the public in attendance did not wish to speak.

Introduction of New Members

Chairman Hersh asked Alderman Brian McCarthy to introduce new members Bob Canaway of the Planning Board and Alderman Mike Tabacsko both with the City of Nashua.

Approval of Minutes -September 19, 2007

It was moved by Tim Tenhave, seconded by Noreen O'Connell:

THAT the minutes of September 19, 2007 be approved.

Peter Baker commented on an error under Members Present, that Tad Putney was listed as a representative of Hollis instead of Brookline.

The motion carried unanimously.

Transportation Safety Plan

Tim Roache gave a summary and explained the premise for the Transportation Safety Plan. In the fall of 2006 NRPC received SPR funding to begin a study of the safety of the regional roadway network and develop a Transportation Safety Plan for the Nashua Region, (leading the state as the first RPC to develop a regional safety plan). The plan identifies transportation safety issues throughout the region and proposes approaches for NRPC, member governments and the NH DOT to use in improving the safety of the region's transportation system. The draft plan was reviewed by member governments, state and local police and emergency response agencies, NH DOT, and the FHWA. Roache added that results of this study have provided us with a useful model for NHDOT and NRPC communities. We know which locations need more attention when transportation improvements are proposed and this plan puts us in an excellent position for future analysis as data quality improves. Future analysis could result in specific

actions to be taken at high crash locations. Roache continued saying that our next steps would be to monitor and stay involved in the development of improved data collection procedures, continue to work with the steering committee as a regional safety advisory group to investigate the human element and driver behavior, and look into FHWA Planning Programs. Tim informed the members that the plan was sent out in October of 2007 to all communities (planning and safety) and received great feedback from Bernie Manor from the Town of Hudson as well as NHDOT and FHWA. In addition, TTAC met on November 29 and recommended that the Commission adopt this plan.

Brion Carroll questioned the percentages of accurate vs. non-accurate data. Williams explained that we were only getting 30% of the crashes to generate a record in the database.

Carroll asked if there was anything to influence getting more accurate data. Williams said the focus was on getting better crash data from the state. Carroll asked how often data would be collected (every 5 years?) and felt it should be looked at again when there is a better data base.

Alderman McCarthy referred to the completeness and incompleteness of the data and asked if there was any valid statistical data. Steve Schaffer said there was a good geographic distribution, but it was hard to say exactly caused certain records to be dropped and that most likely it was incomplete information reported from the community. Williams added that 3 years of data was looked at and that a complete data set would enable us to start looking at trends.

Peter Baker asked if there were any law enforcement data standards that would enable us to get better reports/data. Williams said that police departments are not required to submit reports.

Howard Dilworth felt that recognizing that the data is incomplete at best as part of the adoption and that it should also be recognized that the numbers should be looked at again. He added that in a lot of communities, the police departments are just looking to get a new cruiser, instead of laptops in cruisers as a better method of generating more accurate crash data. Dilworth said we should recognize these limitations of collecting more data and suggested looking for grants. Hersh referred to Chapter 2, page 4 of the safety plan which talks about limitations of data.

Alderman McCarthy suggested talking to the insurance companies. Williams said they could be mandated, but data would be skewed due to uninsured vehicles. He added that some data you can't get out of insurance reports (alcohol or drug as indicated fault).

Bob Canaway asked if the data was credible and if not, could we get 100%. Hersh asked Roache if this was reflected in the Safety Plan. Roache said the value is there and will get better with time.

7:21pm - Public Hearing: Hersh asked if any members of the public present wished to speak.

Leon Barry of Litchfield asked if all of the towns in the region were notified of the study and did we get data from each town. Williams answered yes and that data was collected from both the DOT and from individual police departments in the towns. Dan Kelly of Nashua and a former police officer said that over \$1000 worth of damage to vehicles has to be reported and did we get these records. Roache said we requested and received data from all towns in the NRPC region. Kelly added that any police department knows their hazardous intersections and they could report to their town. Roache said the Safety Committee would still be active and its members consist of police officers from the towns in the region. There were none others wishing to speak. **Public Hearing ended at 7:26pm.**

It was moved by Brad Vear, seconded by Susan Durham:

THAT the Transportation Safety Plan be adopted by the Nashua Regional Planning Commission.

The motion carried unanimously.

Ten Year Transportation Plan Update

Roache presented a summary of the draft version of the 2009-2018 Ten Year Plan pointing out that it continues to be revised by NHDOT. NHDOT was asked to develop a plan of project needs that could be completed within the ten year time frame based on the anticipated funding. The result of this action is additional delays, reductions in scope and phasing to the projects proposed in the Draft Plan. NHDOT did produce a version of the Ten Year Plan that could in fact be completed with the total funding expected over the next ten years. Many of those suggested project delays and reductions were restored to the Ten Year Plan by GACIT. This puts us back to having a plan with more projects than can be completed based on anticipated ten year funding. This version of the plan has passed the House and is moving on to the Senate where we expect that it will be approved. This keeps us on track for a June Approval of the Ten Year Plan. Moving forward from there NRPC will update our Long Range Transportation Plan and Transportation Improvement Program to ensure consistency with the Ten Year Plan. By September, we will bring all of that information back to the Commission for a public hearing and approval. Roache referred to the flip side of the memo which showed a comparison of the funded projects in the current Ten Year Plan and the status in the draft 2009 - 2018 Plan. Williams referred to the NH 101 safety improvements explaining that Bedford was trying to get the entire \$10 million for themselves but that he went to a hearing and explained the safety issues in Wilton, Milford, and Amherst. Carroll asked if the reduction was proportional across all regions of the state. Williams said yes, nobody was happy and that it reflected substantial cutting on I-93. Williams added that every region in the state was hit fairly. Vear questioned the increase shown for the Nashua Rail project. Williams explained that in the last ten year plan, there was a question if the project was going to actually move on. He added that the project was originally moved down, but the state committed to moving it up again.

Proposed NRPC Bylaws Amendment

Williams explained the reason and need for this proposed revision to the NRPC Bylaws (*see memo in agenda packet*) was due to a lawsuit entered against NRPC by a member of the public for non-compliance with the provisions of RSA 91-A, the state Right to Know law. The court found for NRPC, that we were providing proper notice and were in compliance with RSA 91-A. Williams added that the Executive Committee adopted a "Meeting Policy Notice" (*provided in agenda packet*) at the February 20th meeting which would be added to the NRPC Bylaws. After further discussion on making NRPC's compliance with RSA 91-A more obvious, it was moved by Suellen Seabury Quinlan, and seconded by Brion Carroll:

THAT the amendment to the NRPC Bylaws will reflect in the new section titled "Meeting Notice Policy" be approved by the Commission.

Tenhaven asked why not 72 hours for posting of meeting notices in member communities. Williams replied that state law is 24 hours. Tenhaven asked if the law required posting the agenda. Williams answered that the law did not require posting the agenda but that NRPC does in fact do that. Tenhaven informed Williams that it was easy to find meeting notices on NRPC's website, but harder to locate the minutes. Williams informed Tenhaven and the group of two binders available in the lobby which contain all of the NRPC Commission and Executive Committee meeting minutes back to 2000 as well as the agendas. He added that all of the information is also available on the website.

All were in favor and the motion carried.

Jay Hennessey referred to the bylaws and the required 2/3 vote and 7 days written notice. Hersh got a count confirming the 2/3 and Williams said the 7 day written notice was done. Hennessey still questioned and Hersh said the Executive Committee would look into this.

A member asked what the legal challenge was asking what area of information was not being provided. Williams said the person could not find the information on the website.

Town of Mason

Williams informed the members that the Town of Mason voted to leave the Southwest Planning Commission to join the Nashua Regional Planning Commission effective July 1, 2008. The next step is for the Governor to approve an Executive Order authorizing the change. Once that is done, Mason be the 13th municipality in the Commission.

NRPC Facility

Williams explained that NRPC's lease at the current facility expires at the end of December 2008 and that the Executive Committee and staff have been investigating alternative locations. Williams went into detail with the help of Vear, who is assisting NRPC in finding a suitable location based on our needs, cost and appropriate space requirements. Recently, it was narrowed down to 4 locations which Vear had requested for proposals. At the Executive Committee meeting held earlier in the evening Williams informed the members that they decided to eliminate one location and will be going back to the 3 remaining and asking them to sharpen their pencils some more on the proposals. By June he would know where NRPC would be moving to with a move time in August. He added that our current location was not up for consideration but notified the members of the towns of the three potential locations. Vear spoke up and asked if anyone knew of a facility or a company that would like to share a space to let him know. Williams informed the members of the issues we have currently with parking and conference room space. Parking being the bigger problem and finding a space with a conference room of about 750 to 800 sq ft to be able to house the amount of people on the Commissioner's list.

Hennessey asked if NRPC was leasing or buying. Williams said that he looked into buying, but preferred not to get into the landlord business, but it was possible that one place could be considered for purchase. Hersh said that this is the time to do this if choosing to buy. Leon Barry asked if NRPC had to stay in Nashua. Williams replied "no".

NRPC TV

Williams summarized what had been done with NRPC TV to date informing the members that we were still in the pilot phase. He added that NRPC would be distributing to community cable stations, posting on the NRPC website and distributing DVD copies. Williams then turned to Schaffer to show a brief presentation of what is available through NRPC TV on the website and how to use it. Schaffer spoke of the 4 trainings/ workshops done to date and showed the members where to access them on the NRPC website. He added that future material will be project specific and that DVD's can be made of what is available now for towns to show at their board meetings. Schaffer referred to the "NRPC TV Season One Programming" sheet included in the agenda packet as NRPC's goal for future programs. Carroll asked if a T-1 line would be needed. Schaffer responded that NRPC does not host their own website, so a T-1 line would not be necessary. Schaffer said there was interest from Pelham, Amherst, and Nashua and stated that a letter explaining what is available so far from NRPC would be sent to the Planning Boards, Boards of Selectmen, Town Councils and Board of Aldermen. Canaway asked if Schaffer was the one behind NRPC TV. Schaffer gave him Jill Simonetti's name. Canaway said he was familiar with editing and would speak to Jill about easy software and affordability. Hersh asked if NRPC was on the bottom of the videos throughout. Schaffer said only in the beginning and at the end. Tenhave asked if NRPC was looking to streamlive. Schaffer said not at this time but we were not that far off from being able to streamlive video.

Nominating Committee

Per the Bylaws, each year the Chair of the Commission appoints a nominating committee that makes nominations for the Executive Committee and officers. Hersh announced that the nominating committee would be herself, Tom Collins and Joe Torre as the nominating committee and they would report at the June Commission meeting. Torre asked if anyone was interested to contact him.

New NH State Program - IZIP

Kerrie Diers informed the members of iTRaC being the subject of the month on the NRPC website and passed around the latest fact sheet #13 on Inclusionary Zoning which led to her informative discussion on the new state program developed by New Hampshire Housing called IZIP (Inclusionary Zoning Implementation Program), which she also passed around an information sheet on. The program was developed due to the requests from municipalities for assistance in creating and adopting local inclusionary zoning ordinances (*see Inclusionary Zoning Implementation Program handout for more details*).

Program Reports

Williams pointed out the program reports were included in the agenda packet. Updates on GIS, Land Use/Environment/Integrated Planning, Regional Plan, and Transportation were among the reports included in the agenda packet. Williams asked if there were any questions on any of the reports. Durham asked if members would be getting a copy of the Public Opinion Survey and Draft Transportation Report. Williams said once it is done, they would get copies and hoped it would be ready in a few months.

Williams informed the members of a House bill that passed by a voice vote on legislation to enact a liability cap for passenger rail. This would cross to the Senate in the next week and that he was cautiously optimistic about its chances of passage.

Commissioners' Roundtable

A commissioner's roundtable was held.

It was moved by Jay Hennessey and seconded by Noreen O'Connell:

THAT the meeting be adjourned at 8:46 pm.

The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,



Stephen Williams, Official Recorder

