



**MINUTES**  
**NASHUA REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION**  
**Executive Committee**  
**April 16, 2008**

**Present:** Kathy Hersh, Chair  
Tom Collins  
Howard Dilworth  
Nelson Disco  
Karin Elmer  
Mike Fimbel  
Noreen O'Connell  
Joe Torre

**Staff:** Stephen Williams, Executive Director  
Kerrie Diers, Assistant Director

**Guest:** Brad Vear

**I. Call to Order:**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Hersh at 6:02 pm.

**II. State Transportation Improvement Program Amendment #6:**

- A. Staff Report:** Williams reviewed the memo from Tim Roache, Principal Transportation Planner, dated April 16, 2008, which details the proposed amendments to the STIP in the Nashua Region. The projects affected include Hollis, Hudson, Milford and Nashua. Williams explained that some of the projects need to be pushed back due to the fiscal constraints in the State budget, and others have been changed due to requests by the municipalities.
- B. Public Hearing:** Hersh opened the public hearing at 6:08 pm. No one from the public was present at the hearing. Hersh closed the public hearing at 6:09 pm.
- C. Executive Committee consideration:** Torre moved to approve the amendments to the 2007-2010 NRPC Transportation Improvement Program. Fimbel seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

**III. Minutes of March 19, 2008:**

The Executive Committee noted that Dilworth's name was misspelled in several places. Torre moved to approve the minutes as amended. O'Connell seconded the motion. The motion passed with Fimbel, Elmer and Disco abstaining.

Minutes of non-public Session of March 19, 2008: It was noted that in the future, the Executive Committee should make an announcement of action taken in non-public session. Collins made a motion to approve the minutes of the non-public session of March 19, 2008, which was seconded by Torre. The motion passed with Fimbel, Elmer and Disco abstaining.

**IV. March Finance Report and Balance Sheet:**

The March Finance report will be distributed to the committee at the next meeting. Shirley has been out of the office for the last three weeks due to a family matter.



**V. Preliminary Draft Budget:**

Williams presented the draft FY 2009 budget. Hersh recommended that the Executive Committee review the budget items very carefully in light of the upcoming financial needs of the Commission. Williams explained that the draft April budget is very preliminary but based on the contracts that we have a reasonable level of confidence that we will receive over the coming year.

FY 2008 was a difficult year in terms of expected contracts that did not materialize, such as the contract for hazard mitigation planning and several contracts from NH DOT that have been stuck in the "Front Office" with no movement.

Fimbel asked if NRPC could expect additional work due to State Agencies farming out projects that they can accomplish within their agencies given the personnel hiring freeze. Williams explained that the state agencies that have federal funding should not be affected as much as those that rely on general funds. However, it has had an effect on processing our contracts in a timely manner.

Hersh requested that the next draft budget show a comparison of what was approved for the FY 2008 budget. Williams reviewed the anticipated resources and expenditures in the draft budget. Included in the budget are additional expenses to deal with moving as well as expected new resources.

**VI. NRPC Facility**

Hersh welcomed Brad Vear, who has been assisting NRPC in our facilities search. Vear summarized the process since the March meeting. Vear entered into a second round of negotiations with the properties that the Executive Committee was interested in investigating further. As the negotiations progressed, it became clear that one of the Merrimack locations was not going to be a good fit for the Commission due to the significant unknown costs for fit up, maintenance, and future monthly costs. Negotiations went further with the two remaining properties. The Main Street property and the Executive Park drive property are the final candidates for selection.

Williams and Vear reviewed the "Comparison of Facility Costs" spreadsheet that Williams prepared. Williams asked the Committee to consider how important is it to be located in downtown Nashua given the increase in cost. Dilworth stated that the biggest consideration for Commissioners and others who come to NRPC for training and other meetings is parking. Adequate nearby parking is a high priority.

The Executive Committee conducted a site walk to the Main Street property to view the rear parking area and discuss the options. Upon return, O'Connell stated that in her opinion, it was in NRPC's best interest to pursue the Main Street location, but only if the parking issue could be resolved. Vear suggested that Indian Head plaza parking lot might provide an option for evening overflow parking. The Committee conducted a straw poll to determine member positions on the decision.

Fimbel - Main Street  
Collins - Main Street  
O'Connell - Main Street  
Disco - Main Street  
Torre - Main Street  
Elmer - Main Street  
Dilworth - not decided



The next steps in the process are to enter into detailed negotiations regarding the issues the Committee discussed, and resolve the issues of signage, lighting, security, and parking. The negotiations would then be reduced to writing, and this would be vetted between the attorneys. NRPC will also begin negotiating the sublease with the Chamber.

Elmer moved to give Williams the authority to enter into negotiations with the landlord at the Main Street location. Fimbel seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

#### **VII. Gateway Industrial Development Corporation**

Williams reviewed his memo to the Executive Committee dated April 16, 2008 regarding Economic Development roles in the NRPC region. This discussion is prompted by the recent decision by CDFR to no longer recognize GIDC as the economic development entity in the region. They have decided to split the Nashua Region between the Rockingham Development Corporation and the Mondanock Development Corporation. It is hard to conceive that the Nashua Region would be adequately served under such an arrangement.

Williams posed several questions for the Executive Committee to consider: Should NRPC attempt to build a role in economic development? Should NRPC step in to take on economic development in the region? Williams stated that in his opinion, there is value in pursuing economic development for the Nashua Region and that in the current situation, it would not be a staff intensive process for NRPC to assume this role. Dilworth stated that in his opinion, we should let the GIDC fold. This has been attempted unsuccessfully in the Nashua Region several times and we should let it go. Disco recounted his understanding of the history of CED and the attempts for economic development in the region.

Williams felt that an effort by NRPC would be successful because NRPC has a successful track record of publicizing and marketing efforts, has more access to resources, and there is a strong organizational model that we already have in place with the Regional Solid Waste Management District.

Dilworth did not see the benefit to NRPC to take on this role. O'Connell is concerned about taking staff time to take on this role. Given the budget discussion we just had, we should not be looking at adding a staff person for this. Fimbel asked if there are any obligations that NRPC would assume by heading in this direction. Williams stated that the insurance on GIDC board members would be approximately \$4000.00 if the board began to become successful with a revolving loan fund.

In order to move forward with this, we would need to receive CDFR approval, and amend the NRPC Articles of Agreement which would need to be approved by the member municipalities. We would need to look into insurance for the board members when we start developing loan packages.

Elmer moved to direct Williams to begin investigating the possibility of NRPC assuming a role in regional economic development in discussions with member municipalities, and resolve the issue of co-existing or collaborating with the City of Nashua program. O'Connell seconded the motion. The motion carried with a vote of 6 - 2.



**VIII. Souhegan Valley Non-emergency Medical Transportation:**

Williams reviewed a memo to the Executive Committee dated April 16, 2008, regarding a request for assistance by non-emergency medical transportation pilot program. A group of volunteers from Milford have developed a pilot program to provide transit service to meet non-emergency medical transportation services to Souhegan Valley residents. The group needs an incorporated entity to act as fiscal agent to receive and disburse grants, donations and other funding that they might receive. They have asked if NRPC might be interested in providing that service. In return, NRPC would receive an administrative fee, with the initial proposal being a 10% admin fee.

Torre moved to authorize Williams to develop an agreement between NRPC and the participating towns for NRPC to serve as fiscal agent for GSOP. The motion was seconded by Disco. The motion carried with O'Connell abstaining.

**IX. Other Business:**

- The Committee accepted, with regret, the resignation of Ray Peeples from the Executive Committee. The Committee expressed its appreciation for the time and effort that Peeples has given NRPC over the years.
- Williams shared the letter that he had written in opposition of SB 342 and will be drafting a similar one for HB 1472. As it currently stands, the RPCs are the only ones presenting opposing testimony, so it is likely that it will pass in the legislature. Williams asked what the sentiment is from the municipalities. The Executive Committee expressed that the bills are not in the best interest of the communities. Williams stated that municipalities are not indicating that at the hearings on the bills.
- Williams would like a representative to attend the NHARPC meeting on May 9, 2008 at the Minary Center in Holderness as Fimbel has a conflict and cannot attend that day. O'Connell volunteered to attend in Fimbel's place.
- Williams requested volunteers to serve on a selection committee to procure a new auditor. Fimble and Dilworth volunteered to serve.
- Dilworth reported that the public hearing process for the Pelham Center project has been postponed due to issues with the location of the fire station.
- Dilworth reported that RSA 155:E requires that applicants register a plan with the Planning Board as part of the gravel taxation process.
- Fimbel reported that there will be a Household Hazardous Waste Collection in Milford on May 3. The brochure for the events is very clear and well written. O'Connell is volunteering at the event.

X. **Next Meeting:** The next meeting will be May 21, 2008.

**XI. Adjourn:**

Motion to adjourn was made by O'Connell and seconded by Disco. Meeting adjourned at 9:30 pm.