



**APPROVED – MINUTES
NASHUA REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
Held at the NRPC Office
9 Executive Park, Suite 201, Merrimack, NH
December 19, 2018**

Members Present:

Dave Hennessey, Pelham	Tim Tenhave, Merrimack	Bob Larmouth, Hollis
Ed Weber, Nashua	Sarah Marchant, Nashua	Tamara Sorell, Brookline
Hal Lynde, Pelham	Mary Ann Melizzi-Golja, Nashua	Kim Queenan, Litchfield
Venu Rao, Hollis	Kermit Williams, Wilton	Michael B. O’Brian, Sr., Nashua
Dillon Dumont, Hudson	Bill Boyd, Merrimack	Mike Fimbel, Mont Vernon
Jim Kofalt, Wilton	James Battis, Hudson	

Others Present:

Tim White, NHDES
Suzanne Fournier, Brox Environmental Citizens

Staff Present:

Jay Minkarah, Executive Director	Matt Waitkins, Senior Transportation Planner
Sara Siskavich, Assistant Director	Mason Twombly, Regional/Envir. Planner
Gregg Lantos, Principal Transportation Planner/MPO Coord.	

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS:

Battis opened the meeting at 7:05pm with introductions and welcomed the new faces in the room.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR:

No members of the public wished to speak.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES – SEPTEMBER 19, 2018

Battis asked if there were any comments on the minutes of September 19, 2018. Tenhave noted a capitalization error on Sylvia’s von Aulock’s name. Jim Kofalt was omitted in error from the attendance. Hennessey motioned with a second from Fimbel:

THAT the minutes of September 19, 2018 be approved as amended and placed on file for audit.

The motion **carried** with abstentions from Weber, Tenhave, and Dumont.

PUBLIC HEARING: 2019-2045 METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION PLAN

At 7:10 at the request of Battis, Boyd moved, with a second from Hennessey:

THAT the Public Hearing on the 2019-2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan be opened.

The motion **carried**.

Lantos began the presentation with background information about the MTP process and role it plays. He proceeded by explaining the major sections of the MTP.

There was discussion around the reason for the high projected growth in Hudson as compared to other communities in the region. Lantos and Waitkins explained that the model uses the amount of buildable commercial and industrial land, of which Hudson has the most in the region, particularly around Route 3A.

There was discussion around what was meant by Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS). Lantos explained that ITS is centered around tracking traffic and accidents along the roadway, and the state is already doing this on some major corridors.

In response to a question on the open-road tolling project, Lantos explained that the toll plaza is in Bedford, but because of its direct impact on transportation to Merrimack and points to the south it was included. He noted that in the plan it does acknowledge that the project is located in Bedford.

Melizzi-Golja brought up the Exit 36 S project. She explained that people in South Nashua really want to see it built as it would alleviate traffic stress on other local exits. Lantos explained the Exit 36 S project is unlikely to move forward soon as NH Turnpike dollars cannot be spent on roadway that is outside state boundaries, as its benefits primarily affect populations in New Hampshire.

Lantos explained that next step in the MTP process is to incorporate the comments that have been received, and he is expecting comments from the Federal Highway Administration. Those comments would be incorporated as well and the MTP would be presented as a final product February 20th.

Hennessy asked whether or not we had received a waiver for air quality analysis. Tim White, NH DES, explained that the Nashua Region does not need to complete air quality analysis in this round but does need to include an Air Quality Conformity Determination that is based on the latest planning assumptions (update of land use forecasts, modeling methodology), participation in the interagency consultation process, participation in interagency consultation and implementation of required Transportation Control Measures (in NH, the inspection/maintenance program).

Battis mentioned that the action needing to be addressed is approving the draft MTP with any amendments generated in this session. He asked the group if anyone else had any questions or comments.

Queenan asked what was meant by environmental mitigation. Twombly explained environmental mitigation is essentially making sure that any damage to the environment is offset.

Sorrel mentioned that she did not see anything in the MTP mentioning electric charging stations. White explained that the state will receive funds from the Volkswagen settlement from which a portion would be allocated to charging stations. Sorrel explained she thought electric vehicles will become more common and planning for their use is important.

Tenhaven expressed that on page 8 of the plan there is a thorough description of current conditions but there is no vision. He explained that without a vision we don't know what is being aimed for and what it means for the future.

Marchant explained she would like to see more support for the passenger rail efforts in the document.

Lantos responded that he would include in the MTP that the Commissioners had previously motioned to support Commuter Rail in the region.

At 8:21 at the request of Battis, Fimbel moved, with a second from Hennessey:

THAT the Public Hearing on the 2019-2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan be closed.

The motion **carried**.

Boyd motioned, seconded by Rao:

To approve the 2019-2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan, as amended.

The motion **carried**.

TRANSPORTATION PROJECT UPDATE

TEN YEAR PLAN PROCESS

Lantos presented the project updates and project submissions for the State's Ten Year Plan.

UPWP UPDATES FOR 2019

Lantos explained that updating of the UPWP (Unified Planning Work Program) would be addressed in 2019.

DISCUSSION: CENSUS 2020 COMPLETE COUNT COMMITTEE

Marchant opened a discussion about the Complete Count Process for the 2020 Census. The federal Census is extremely important for the distribution of federal funding, including transportation dollars. The 2020 census is being conducted with 2/3 the budget of the 2010 census which is a major concern moving forward. The budget constraints may make it difficult to attract census workers especially in the already tight job market. Offices will be opened in Concord, Manchester, and Nashua. The Complete Count Committee is an initiative by the City to help raise census awareness in the greater Nashua area. The group will be looking for input on how to best get the word out about the census such as the suggestion to put signage in town halls. Siskavich echoed support for Census and reminded the group about NRPC's current participation in two key programs: the Local Update of Census Addresses (LUCA) program helps ensure an accurate enumeration, and the Participant Small Area Program (PSAP) is the chance to react to and influence the delineation of census geography such as blocks, block groups, and tracts that directly affect statistical aggregation and the definition of urbanized boundaries. Marchant concluded with a brief summary of the Committee's projected timeline: Spring-Summer 2019 groundwork will be done, census post cards will be mailed out in support of Census Day, April 1, 2020, and all work will conclude before the final census lands on the President's desk before January 1, 2021.

GENERAL UPDATES:

JILL LONGVAL DEPARTURE

Minkarah explained that that long-time environmental planner Jill Longval had left NRPC at the end of November. He explained her primary duties were the HHW program and electricity aggregation, and that the commission had hired Regional/Environmental planner, Mason Twombly, who would be heading the HHW program moving forward with support from the staff. Jill left detailed notes about tasks moving forward and worked to ensure a smooth transition; all the programs are in excellent shape.

OFFICE MOVE

Minkarah announced that NRPC had signed a lease to move to 30 Temple St in Nashua in April 2019. The new space includes ample parking, transit access, and an excellent location in Downtown Nashua.

PROGRAM UPDATES

Minkarah updated commissioners on various projects noting the HHW and traffic counting programs had wrapped up for the season in November. Circuit riding was moving smoothly bringing master plan updates and

zoning amendments for March town Meetings. Annual town reports would be coming in December and January which would include the breakdown of activities by community.

PRIORITIES NEXT QUARTER

NRPC's work program priorities for the next quarter include UPWP contract updating for FY2021; the Community Technical Assistance Program (CTAP) grant for Transit Demand Management; the Nashua Transit Expansion Study with a large public outreach component; the kickstart of the "Toxic Free is as Easy as 1,2,3" program supported by EPA Healthy Communities, and the NHDES Sourcewater Protection Grant.

OTHER BUSINESS

Weber posed a question about what if we had thought about a food waste program, explaining he had recently watched a webinar on a successful program in Wilmington, DE. His opinion is that building food waste management capacity was important, and restaurants are interested particularly to lower their bills for waste disposal.

Justin Munroe, Executive Director of Nashua Grows that has a program dealing with food waste, was mentioned as a resource. The discussion then turned to the future of recycling will be in the regional in light of escalating costs. Minkarah told the group that NRPC will be hosting a Regional Recycling Roundtable at 12pm on January 23rd. It will be an opportunity for town officials to discuss the issues at hand and how things can move forward.

Minkarah also announced the date of the NRPC Reginal forum: February 21st 6-8PM at the Courtyard Marriot in Nashua, with keynote speaker Victoria Sheehan, Commissioner, NH Department of Transportation.

COMMISSIONERS ROUNDTABLE: 9:40PM

NHDES – White: Clean Diesel DEERA program had budget increased to 1.2 million. 13 projects applied, and they are in the process of review.

PELHAM – Lynde: Engineer for intersection of 128 and Sherburne Rd project has been selected. 3 bridge projects in Pelham.

HOLLIS – Rao: Heat pump and solar panels installed on school.

MERRIMACK – Tenhave: Development is moving forward in Merrimack, particularly along the Old Route 3. Flatley project as well as several hundred other units in town.

Boyd: Budget season is coming. NHDES is looking to schedule public hearing about PFOAS and PFAS numbers.

Water quality issues and projects have been avoided too long. Need to do repairs to keep the town growing.

NASHUA –Marchant: BAE partnership with Nashua Transit, Downtown Connector has been well received. The 1.2 Mile East Heritage Rail Trail project is moving forward. Holiday Stroll had its 25th annual event it was estimated that 38,000 people attended. Performing Arts Center kickoff of the project would be after the New Year. Grow Nashua and urban chickens ordinance.

Melizzi-Golja: Fixing the Greeley park boat ramp. Nashua is still working toward commuter rail.

LITCHFIELD – Queenan: Business as usual. Planning board is working on the community design chapter, the next chapter to be updated will be transportation. The town is having its first tree lighting ceremony.

MONT VERNON – Fimbel: There is much work being done to and around the town's soldier's memorial.

HUDSON – Battis: Warrant articles have a lot on the table this year. The Hudson Boulevard project, rehab of high school. Town meeting should be interesting.

WILTON – Williams: How can Wilton work better with NHDOT? Constant opposition from DOT on town plans to attract people to the center of town. The town is also having a hard time with DOT on the development of the tourist train that had operated in the early 2000s.

ADJOURN

Motion to adjourn came from Boyd with a second from Rao. The meeting ended at 10:04pm. The next Commission meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 20, 2019 at 7:00pm.

Respectfully submitted

Jay Minkarah, Executive Director: _____