



**FINAL/APPROVED  
MEETING MINUTES  
NASHUA REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION  
December 20, 2023**

**Held in-person and via Zoom. Live on Facebook and recorded. An in-person quorum was present.**

**Members Present:**

Jason Hennessey, Town of Amherst  
Will Ludt, Town of Amherst  
Danielle Pray, Town of Amherst  
Tamara Sorell, Town of Brookline  
Alan Rosenberg, Town of Brookline  
Joe Garruba, Town of Hollis  
James Battis, Town of Hudson  
Tim Malley, Town of Hudson  
Dillon Dumont, Town of Hudson  
Ralph Boehm, Town of Litchfield  
Micheal Croteau, Town of Litchfield

Kimberly Queenan, Town of Litchfield (V)  
Charlie Post, Town of Lyndeborough  
Tim Tenhave, Town of Merrimack  
Chris Constantino, Town of Milford (V)  
Janet Langdell, Town of Milford  
John Yule, Town of Milford  
Tim Berry, Town of Mont Vernon  
Jeff Gowan, Town of Pelham  
Camille Correa, City of Nashua/NTS  
Kermit Williams, Town of Wilton

**NRPC Staff Present:**

Jay Minkarah, Executive Director  
Matt Waitkins, MPO Coordinator  
Ned Connell, Senior Regional Planner  
Kathy Kirby, Administrative Assistant

**Others:**

William Rose, NHDOT (V)  
Robin LeBlanc, RHL Strategies (V)  
Jessica Wilcox, NHDES (V)  
Stef (V)

**1. Welcome and Introductions**

Tim Tenhave opened the meeting at 7:01 p.m. with introductions.

**2. Approval of Minutes – September 20, 2023 (7:03 p.m.)**

Tenhave asked for a motion from the floor to approve the minutes. The following edits were identified by the commissioners:

Page 6, Section 8, para 2., the first sentence should read, *We have a 216-unit upscale apartment complex that is almost through the Planning Board.* Further, in the same paragraph, “The Brox property land acquisition by Milford...” should read *The solar project at the Brox property fell apart because the solar company was not able to obtain state regulatory approval authorizations.*

Top of p. 2: “Karen B” – should be *Karin Elmer*. Change in the attendance list as well.

Page 1, Section 2, second paragraph, last sentence: delete the “e”.

Change bars appeared when draft minutes were printed. Make sure the final draft does not have change bars when printed.

Bottom of Page 2, last paragraph – “Granite State Build, started last month a source of funding...” It should be Granite *Street* Build... – check the recording/minutes and edit accordingly.

Page 3, at the start of section 5 – an opening of the public hearing needs to be added.

Litchfield entry in Section 8. Commissioners Roundtable – replace the sentences, “So, we have a committee for Economic Development. We also have an Energy Committee,” with, *We have started an Economic Development Committee and an Energy Committee.*

Page 6, “Brookline” – “The CVA...” change to: *The Zoning Board...*

Page 4: add the word *by* in front of Tim Berry.

Page 7: Bergeron spoke for Pelham regarding Old Home Day. Dave Hennessey closed the Commissioners Roundtable with some remarks.

Langdell moved the motion, with a second from Yule:

**THAT the minutes of September 20, 2023, be approved as amended and placed on file. A roll call vote was conducted. Croteau, Hennessey, Rosenberg, Malley, and Williams abstained.**

The motion **carried**.

### **3. Statement of Strategy: review of the final draft with Robin LeBlanc (7:13)**

Robin LeBlanc presented the 2023—2028 Statement of Strategy. The purpose of the plan is to direct and prioritize work for the commissioners going forward – “this is your specific work; a lot of thought went into this and I applaud you all for your contributions.” Starting on page 4, there are priority areas. LeBlanc referred to “The Strategy Going Forward.” There will be principles that will continue to underpin work in the commission, particularly in the area of transportation as an MPO, advancing the GIS program, and the Circuit Rider program, etc. The new “Priority Areas” are not taking away from these principles. A survey was conducted last spring; the survey went out to 400 potential respondents and received over a 25% response. One-on-one interviews were conducted with a wide range of people with broad perspectives. A forum was held in July comprised of self-selected people and generated robust conversations. Priority areas were identified after working closely with the Commission and Minkarah. Priority number 1 is grant funding - pay attention to it and what can be done to make it better. Under Grant Funding, these are high-level strategies - a broad view, not only about the Commission’s goals and objectives, and impacts. Commission and community grant programs should finance and support health and vitality, and there should be access to funding for these programs in communities. Action items: 1) formally establish a grant writing program to provide technical assistance – many communities don’t have the bandwidth to do that. 2) Support a grant database of community-relevant grant opportunities. 3) Regular updates to a grant funding database to pass along the grant funding information.

Priority 2 is about protecting and enhancing water quality and supply - it is so big. What is the role of the Commission? What can the Commission possibly do to manage, protect, and enhance water quality and supply, including drinking water, rivers, lakes streams, etc? The long-term impact is that communities will have sufficient clean water supply to meet their current and future needs, and surface waters will be swimmable and fishable. Shorter-term impacts: land use regulations are updated to reflect changing conditions, state and federal rules – best management practices. Stormwater and mitigation management practices will be updated in each community, including MS4 compliance. Businesses and property owners throughout the region will be made aware of potential challenges and threats to water resources. Five actions are identified to get to these short and long-term impacts: (1) raising awareness of pollutants, (2) completing three to five water resources management plans by 2028, (3) providing technical assistance to identify and map stormwater management assets, (4) providing technical assistance to communities for protecting

the water supply, including source-water protection planning, local land-use regulation updates, and mapping. (4) Obtaining funding for further watershed and river management plans, because sometimes the funding needs to be there...some of them are more robust in getting funding, (5) Pursue opportunities to engage and collaborate with potential regional partners...NH is like a small town. Where can the Commission work with other people who are already working in this arena? What gaps can be filled in, and what gaps does the Commission have that can they fill in? How can expertise be leveraged?

Comments on the water supply – Williams: in the Short-term Impacts, it calls out MS4 compliance. It seems to me that it should be called out in Action 3 which is about stormwater mapping, because compliance is a different element in MS4. Minkarah concurred. Include/add-in Action 3 - ...to assist with MS4 compliance. Garubba stated that MS4 is an unfunded mandate that is coming down on towns. We certainly don't want to be adding it as an Action to enforce compliance. Enforcing compliance is the role of the EPA. So given that, should the word *compliance* be in the Short-term Impacts section? Williams stated that it doesn't imply that the Commission will enforce MS4, but certainly, towns that are required to have an MS4 permit – those towns have to meet the requirements and certainly we have seen already NRPC assist with that process. Williams stated it's an ongoing thing and it will only get bigger, so more assistance is expected. Minkarah suggested including, *...and providing assistance to communities in achieving MS4 compliance*. Minkarah stated that even though there are urban areas before the 2020 census that are no longer urban, the EPA requires compliance with MS4. Adding Gowan's suggestion, *“...to provide technical assistance to communities to identify and map stormwater assets, as well as provide support to communities subject to MS4 requirements.”* Langdell asked, “So what are we doing in Action 3?” LeBlanc replied, “That is Action 3. I would be adding on to Action 3.” Minkarah stated Action 3 is a different thought – it refers to identifying and mapping the stormwater mitigation. He suggested just adding an Action 6 that is specific to assisting communities subject to MS4 compliance. Tenhave pointed out that there are two Action 4s. Minkarah stated that the “Short-term impacts” are what we just reworded. LeBlanc asked if an Action 7 will be added. Minkarah stated, “That's a different thought. We reworded *Stormwater mitigation*...(bullet two, under Short-term Impacts), and now we are adding an Action 7 that is specific to assisting communities with MS4 compliance...technical assistance.” Tenhave asked Minkarah to work with LeBlanc for the correct wording after the meeting.

Priority 3 - Expanded Choices & Places to Live. LeBlanc provided the following commentary on the Long-term and Short-term impacts: Sometimes people see things and think that that is the way it is and as you know that isn't always so. Just making sure that the community has a chance to weigh in...what are those needs for right now and for the future? So people say, “Why can we just do this, that, and the other thing?” Well, it just isn't possible – sometimes it's a physical constraint; sometimes it's zoning.

Action 1- Provide technical assistance not just to update their master plan, but also to bring information to them to be thinking about. Action 2 – you are doing this through your housing needs assessment, the data from NH Housing, and other places like that.

Action 3 – it is really important, because as you know, if you are going to change zoning in your community, you've got to have buy-in. Not only the political will but the public will. The only way you are going to achieve this is that they understand the situation what is this addressing and how is it going to make life better. What's it going to do and for whom?

Garuba stated, so under Long-term Impacts, it looks like we are kind of weighing in in favor of employers or somehow providing employers with workers? Is that the intent there? LeBlanc

stated that we left it in there because it came up in the surveys that employers are being hard hit by the lack of housing options that meet the needs of workers. This is not to ignore older adults that are needing to downsize and find places that meet their needs, whether it's one-floor living, etc. Young families coming in – certainly, all of that's about meeting the future needs of residents. The one line above it is to reflect that employers are having a hard time right now. Garruba stated he liked the first line, and questioned if it belonged there. Langdell responded that she thinks it does from her perspective because one of the other pieces to this is economic development. Many of the things we and NRPC focus on all weave together, i.e. transportation whether it be to get to our jobs or get freight moved, whether it's housing for people who are aging in place, or for people who want to live in the community they are working in, etc. so I think it is worthwhile keeping it in there. It is one of the major factors we hear from our employers in the Town of Milford. LeBlanc: economic development is about creating communities that are welcoming to businesses and that includes welcoming people who want to and can live there...transportation, housing, and daycare for seniors and children. Having those three can contribute to robust economic development. Gowan questioned the use of hyphens in the document - on page 6 under "Short-term impacts," we have decision-makers vs. no hyphen. Page 6, Long-term impact: "cost-effective" vs. cost-effective under "Short-term impact" further down on Page 6. Sorrell said to hyphenate if it is an adjective. LeBlanc stated she would look at it again to be consistent. Minkarah stated that if anyone has comments on presentation and punctuation, please send us an email and we will take care of it. Gowan agreed.

Energy Planning – LeBlanc read through the Impacts and Actions. Comments: number 5 should be number 4. Garruba stated that the promotion of electric vehicle infrastructure could be problematic to safety due to fires – the difficulty in putting them out. They also have environmental impacts in the construction of electric vehicles, the mining of lithium, and the cost of entry to the cars to residents. For those reasons, I think Action 3 should come off the list. Sorrell stated that she disagreed. She stated that not having the infrastructure to support EVs will affect tourism. People will not travel to those places where they cannot charge their cars. Yule suggested that since natural gas vehicles are also available, change Action 3, deleting "Electrical" to *Alternative Vehicle* infrastructure. Garruba stated he could go with that language. Williams suggested stating something about community choice to provide the infrastructure. Minkarah – stated change Action 3 to: *Provide technical assistance to communities and support to advance their goals for deployment of alternative fuel vehicle infrastructure.*

Rosenberg asked under Long-term impacts: "...1% of growth per year to a 1% decrease of growth consumption." Is it a time period? Of what? Is it a specific time period? A rolling time period? Where does this come from? LeBlanc stated that it was taken from the 2022 NH ten-year state strategy. Rosenberg stated it is confusing because it includes both growth and consumption measurements with no timeframe. LeBlanc stated she could go back and check, thinking she lifted it. Rosenberg stated it would be surprising to learn that it is what the state said. Minkarah stated they will double-check but assume it is annual. Wilcox asked to go back to electric vehicle infrastructure and the concern about fires in charging. Wilcox stated the NH State Fire Chief has been convening a roundtable that includes the state police, fire chiefs, and different agencies that have been putting together action plans. What they have found is that there have been only two EV fires in the state of NH and they were manageable. Further, she reminded everyone that there is much federal money for electric vehicle charging coming to the states. NHDES has applied for funding for community-based EV charging. Wilcox stated it's important to make communities

aware that the funds are for alternative and electric vehicles. Tenhave asked if we can move ahead with consensus. Berry stated we are not sure if the funding will include alternative and electric vehicles. Boehm stated *alternative* includes electric vehicles. Langdell stated that it is important for NRPC to keep us aware of the available grants via their website, newsletter, email, and social media and we should be talking about it through other means in whatever we are doing.

5) Economic Development: Long-term impact also includes short-term impacts. Williams stated the primary catchphrase is to provide technical assistance and Action 1 ought to include that catchphrase along with developing toolboxes because otherwise, people might assume that it is a canned thing that is available. However, NRPC already provides technical assistance in economic development. LeBlanc asked if Action 1 is to include technical assistance. Minkarah stated it should read: *Provide technical assistance and toolboxes...*

LeBlanc reviewed “Implementation Considerations.” Tenhave stated that we should replace the word “focus” with the word *priorities*...each *priority area* to be consistent with what was reviewed already. LeBlanc read the bulleted ideas to support ways to make all this happen at the bottom of page 7.

“The Process” - the rest of the document deals with background information that supports the statement of strategy which LeBlanc reviewed. Tenhave highlighted a few things in the document: cover page – delete “2023” and change to 2024. Bottom of page 3 – last sentence – is it a section header? It seems out of place. LeBlanc said it could be a section header. Tenhave and Boehm stated that it was extraneous and asked for it to be deleted. Gowan referred to “Values”, the third bullet down – *ombudsmanship*, not “ombudsman.” Delete the period at the end of the bulleted item. Also, “State and Federal” should be edited to read *state and federal*. Berry stated we should change “Ombudsman” (or Ombudsmanship) to *Coordinate*. Tenhave stated on page 4, the word “framework” should be *strategy*. Delete the word, “strategic” (page 4, end of second paragraph) to simply read, ...*the broader picture*. The last sentence before the heading, “The Strategy Going Forward” – delete the word, “Master” and replace it with *comprehensive*.

Page 19, under “Also:” – bullet 6: delete “IRA” and replace it with *Inflation Reduction Act*. The IRA definition should go in the glossary. Tenhave thanked LeBlanc for all her work. LeBlanc will make the edits working with Minkarah to finalize the document and get it back to the Commissioners.

**Janet Langdell moved, with a second by Kermit Williams:**

**THAT the Nashua Regional Planning Commission accepts the Statement of Strategy as modified.**

**A roll call vote was conducted with Joseph Garruba in opposition. William Rose, Michael Croteau, and Alan Rosenberg abstained.**

The motion **carried**.

**5. MPO Policy Committee (8:12 p.m.)**

**The Public Hearing opened by Tenhave at 8:12 p.m.**

**Items 5a., 5b. & 5c. pertain to one presentation that is [linked HERE](#).**

**a. FY2023-26 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendment 3**

Waitkins referred everyone to the memorandum titled, “FY2023 – 2026 TIP Amendment #3 – Analysis” in the December packet and summarized the content of the memo, including the Timeline, and why it is being done (thresholds). Waitkins presented updated slides of various projects. The proposed NRPC regional projects, statewide projects, and programmatic projects are highlighted and shared in the Commission packet. Langdell asked, does this modify the agreement that NTS has with Lowell and that split on funding? Waitkins responded no, it is part of the March MOU agreement. Ludt pointed out that there seems to be a shift towards programs going outside the TIP timeframe. Why? Waitkins stated that it is because of a variety of reasons, moving funding around for fiscal constraints and project schedules. Ludt asked for confirmation that as a whole our projects are getting worked on and moving forward. Minkarah stated that work is getting done on these projects, but the timelines are getting pushed out. Berry stated that projects often get pushed out because there are not enough state contractors. A brief discussion ensued about a motion to adopt Amendment 3.

Tenhave asked if anyone from the public had any comments. There were none.  
**The public hearing closed at 8:31 p.m. by Tenhave to act on this item.**

**Kermit Williams moved the motion, with a seconded by James Battis:**

**THAT the Nashua Regional Planning Commission MPO adopts TIP Amendment 3 to the FY2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program.**

**A roll call vote was conducted with Joseph Garruba in opposition. Michael Croteau and Alan Rosenberg abstained.**

The motion **carried**.

**b. 2023-2050 NRPC Long Range (Metropolitan) Transportation Plan (MTP) Update**  
**The public hearing opened at 8:32 p.m. by Tenhave to act on this item.**

Ned Connell (NRPC) made [the presentation](#).

Garruba asked for clarification on the term “encourage access management.” Connell stated that it is a land use and planning principle, giving an example of a plaza with stores with several access points to the road rather than access at both ends of the lot. Minkarah added that the strategy is to minimize curb cuts which we are already doing. Ludt asked since this is a long-range plan, does it make sense for NRPC to take a position on extending the rail from MA up to Concord? Ludt would like to see the Commission take a stand on the rail extension. Minkarah explained the plan is a long-range plan. The highlighted projects we shared today are new. The list of projects in the MTP is huge. Funding has to be identified for projects. But there is a category of projects called illustrative projects that are in the planning process, and the rail project is in that category as it does not have a funding source. Berry pointed out it is on page 129. Langdell stated a summary in bullets of those items that we support would have been helpful, especially for our newer members. Also, there is some information that is not correct in the document. Some of it is dated. Some of the statistics are incorrect. Ludt asked if we could edit it tonight and adopt it with edits. Waitkins said that is possible, similar to what

we did earlier tonight. Langdell stated she could make the edits. Tenhave closed the public hearing at 8:51 p.m.

**Tim Berry moved, with a second by Ralph Boehm:**

**THAT the Nashua Regional Planning Commission MPO adopts the 2023 – 2050 NRPC Metropolitan Transportation Plan taking into account the edits that need to be made to update the accuracy of descriptions.**

**A roll call vote was conducted with Will Ludt and Joseph Garruba in opposition. Michael Croteau and Alan Rosenberg abstained.**

The motion **carried**.

**c. 2024 Highway Safety Performance Measure 1 Targets presentation (Connell)**

**Items 5a., 5b. & 5c. pertain to one presentation that is [linked HERE](#).** The highlighted information was how targets are set, the 2024 targets (5 metrics). The NRPC policy has been and remains to adopt a lower target – either the 5-year Moving Average of the Trend. All trend lines are on a downward slope. Trends do not have a direct impact on the regional commissions. The federal government looks

**James Battis moved, with a second by Tim Berry:**

**THAT the Nashua Regional Planning Commission approves the safety targets as recommended.**

**A roll call vote was conducted. Joseph Garruba, Michael Croteau, and Alan Rosenberg abstained.**

The motion **carried**.

**6. NRPC Project and Staff Updates (8:56)**

Minkarah announced the resignation of Camille Pattison, NRPC Assistant Director, effective December 15. We are very sorry to lose her. She was a long-time employee of NRPC for eight years, left for several years, and came back to NRPC within the last two years. Ludt asked if there is a deputy or if NRPC is looking to fill the position. Minkarah stated we do not as of yet.

**7. Other Business (9:02 p.m.)**

Jeff Gowan has been officially nominated to the Executive Committee. He is finishing the term of Dave Hennessey until June 2024 and potentially longer. Gowan's appointment completes the Commission roster.

**8. Commissioners Roundtable (8:52 p.m.)**

Janet stated that we all wish each other happy holidays and abstain from having the roundtable. All members agreed.

**9. Adjourn (9:05 p.m.)**

**Motion to adjourn by Tim Berry, with a second by Ralph Boehm at 9:05 p.m.**

*Next NRPC Commission Meeting: Wednesday, March 20, 2024*

Respectfully submitted,

*Kathy Kirby, Administrative/Communications Assistant*