



**APPROVED/FINAL  
NASHUA REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION  
September 20, 2023**

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

**Members Present:**

Will Ludt, Town of Amherst  
Danielle Pray, Town of Amherst  
Steve Russo, Town of Brookline (virtual)  
Tamara Sorell, Town of Brookline  
Joe Garruba, Town of Hollis  
James Battis, Town of Hudson  
Dillon Dumont, Town of Hudson  
Ralph Boehm, Town of Litchfield  
Micheal Croteau (A), Town of Litchfield  
Kimberly Queenan, Town of Litchfield  
Charlie Post, Town of Lyndeborough

Karin Elmer, Town of Merrimack  
Tom Koenig, Town of Merrimack  
Tim Tenhave, Town of Merrimack  
Chris Constantino, Town of Milford  
Janet Landell, Town of Milford  
John Yule, Town of Milford  
Tim Berry, Town of Mont Vernon  
Camille Correa, City of Nashua  
Jaie Bergeron, Town of Pelham  
Dave Hennessey, Town of Pelham

**NRPC Staff Present:**

Jay Minkarah, Executive Director  
Camille Pattison, Assistant Director  
Matt Waitkins, MPO Coordinator  
Ned Connell, Senior Regional Planner  
Tyrell Borowitz, GIS Analyst  
Kathy Kirby, Administrative Assistant

**Others:**

William Rose, NH DOT (virtual)  
Christa Tsechrintzis, Habitat for Humanity  
Mary Ann Melizzi-Golja, Habitat for Humanity

**1. Welcome and Introductions**

Tim Tenhave opened the meeting at 7:02 p.m. with introductions.

**2. Privilege of the Chair - Commissioner Update/Recognitions (7:07)**

Tenhave moved agenda item #7 up to #2. Peter Howd, the commissioner from the Town of Wilton, has resigned.

Martin Michaelis, former representative of the Town of Amherst, has passed away. Martin had been an NRPC commissioner for many years starting in the 1980's.

Resignation – Dave Hennessey (Pelham) is leaving the Commission. This will be his last meeting. Hennessey joined in 2010 and has served on the Executive Committee several times. There is an opening on the Executive Committee. Please send your name to Tim Tenhave if interested.

No members of the public were present to speak.

**3. Approval of Minutes – June 21, 2023 (7:11)**

- p. 4 last line – Regional *Coordination* Council (delete “Coordinating”)
- p. 5 Line 13 – NH DOT *negotiated* (delete “negotiations.”)
- p. 6: section d. – 7 *open* seats, (delete “opening)
- p. 1: Lucy St. John – add *NH DOT* after her name to help explain some of her abstentions during some of the meetings. Her abstentions are a personal preference.

**Karin Elmer moved, with a second from Chris Constantino:**

**THAT the minutes of June 21, 2023, be approved as amended and placed on file. A roll call vote was conducted. William Rose, Michael C, Ralph B, Camille C, Jaie, Charlie, Jim, Will, and Dave abstained.**

The motion **carried**.

**4. Presentation – Christa Tsechrintzis, Executive Director, Greater Nashua Habitat For Humanity: Potential Housing Development Sites in the NRPC Region. (7:19)**

Christa was joined by Maryann Melizzi-Golja, board member. The reason they joined the meeting was to present how they can work together with the NRPC. The Greater Nashua affiliate area covers almost the same area as NRPC. Founded in 1994 with the office in Hollis. Purpose: provide homeownership for local families who must prove they can pay an affordable mortgage at 30% to 60% of their area median level income. Funding comes from a diverse collection of funding (partnerships, donations, volunteers, grants, corporations, events, and partner family's own sweat equity. Last year's duplex was built, and two female vets took ownership. The current Granite St. house is done in partnership. Critical home repairs are provided with free labor and discounted materials from vendors. Reasons – so seniors can age safely, and for those who cannot afford repairs, they provide weatherization, and floor repairs, for example. They partnered with other non-profits for community improvement, such as the United Way and Nashua Food & Shelter.

NRPC can help GNHFH by working together: to identify land for purchase or donation. NRPC could provide GNHFH with recommendations for home repairs – GNHFH has done renovations and sold them to families. GNHFH takes other types of referrals. Cars For Home program is an example. They would like referrals to add to the teams to help with the Homebuilds and Critical Repair programs, helping in our office, and the auction event at Nashua Center for the Arts on December 1<sup>st</sup>. They encourage donations (esp. building materials, monetary donations, labor). Melizzi-Golja added that their agency needs labor and will train. They have team-building opportunities. Teams (corporate and non-profit organizations) make a monetary donation and build for the day with GNHFH with lunch provided. Interested organizations/groups should contact us to coordinate a team build.

Sites are built one house per year; the limitation of land is a factor. GNHFH would love to build triplexes and more duplexes. The land has not been secured for the next project (build). The Granite Street build started last month. Our first referral partnership was with Meals on Wheels, and they started with single-family homes. Janet mentioned they see the need in transit and have

become aware of ramp needs passed along. They will be at the Milford Pumpkin Festival and other community events. There are five other Habitats for Humanity in the state of NH. Land purchases are funded through donations. The agency asks for donations first. Funding from the mortgages we hold goes into a home fund for land purchases, building, etc. An attorney is available to work with anyone/any town looking to donate land who is very knowledgeable and works pro-bono. Tenhave offered NRPC resources to help narrow down land acquisition opportunities.

**5. MPO Policy Committee (7:40)**

**a. NRPC Title VI Civil Rights Program – update of the NRPC Title VI Plan (*action required*)**

At 7:40 Tenhave opened the public hearing.

Matt Waitkins led the discussion on the Title VI Program Update. NRPC must have a Title VI program because they receive federal funds. Requires non-discrimination for all federal program involvement, specifically no regard for race, color, or national origin. NRPC is ahead of the required three-year review process because they wanted to get all the recipients on the same schedule for compliance, so we are doing it this year instead of next year with NHDOT. RLS & Associates is the consultant group for the NHDOT that NRPC has worked with, and it has been a positive experience. Office of Fed Compliance had a name change.

The update process schedule included a written public comment period which ended 9/19/23. Individuals could also provide verbal comments at the 9/20/23 NRPC meeting. The 2017-21 census survey brought about the updates which include the removal of discrimination identifiers other than race, color, and national origin, and an update to the Language Assistance Plan adding a description of Limited English Proficiency (LEP). A tracking log has been added for complaints. NRPC has not received a complaint in its entire history. Donna Marceau (NRPC) is attending lots of outreach meetings in our region. A summary of the minority population in the region was presented which showed minority residents comprise approximately 16.9% of the NRPC region. Limited English Proficiency is 4.4% of people in the NRPC region. 1,000 or 5% of the LEP population are in the LEP Language Group as threshold “Safe Harbor” above which vital documents should be provided in translation. Thus, NRPC will translate vital documents into Spanish based on the updated LEP demographics. These are public notices that must be clearly visible on the NRPC website and outside the NRPC office on the bulletin board. NRPC municipalities must post the Spanish-translated meeting notices in the same manner. NRPC and its municipalities must consider reasonable requests for additional language translations when reasonable, effective, and with reasonable resources. NRPC has a translation function on the NRPC website that towns can access. Title VI limits the translation of documents to posted documents. Tenhave asked if anyone from the public wished to participate. No one from the public responded. Tenhave asked if any NRPC members have any comments. Garruba stated that the purpose of the document and the updates therein outline non-discrimination, yet the document

categorizes and identifies demographics based on race and language. It seems counterintuitive that if you were making decisions about things (translations), it would be better to make decisions about things without having race and everything included in the document. Tenhave responded that this is the program document explaining how NRPC is going about it and that we understand who those members of our community are. In subsequent documents, we have pledged to not single out or remove any of those bodies or groups.

Garruba responded that the document that Tenhave cited is the metric. NRPC is required to provide Spanish documents.

8:03 p.m. public hearing was closed to act on this item.

**Janet Langdell moved, with a second by Tim Berry:**

**THAT the Nashua Regional Planning Commission adopts the updated NRPC Title VI program.**

**A roll call vote was conducted with Joseph Garruba in opposition.**

The motion carried.

**b. NRPC FY 2023-2050 Metropolitan (long range) Transportation Plan (MTP) Update**

Ned Connell, NRPC presented MTP Update. Note: Long Range Plan & MTP are the same. Updates are done every five years. October 3: draft MTP Goals to TTAC; October 11: TTAC Meeting; Review & Approve MTP Goals; November 1: Draft MTP to TTAC; November 8: Review & Approve MTP; November 20 – December 19: 30-day public comment period; December 20: MPO meeting to review & approve MTP. Tenhave mentioned he would like to see the “MTP Update – 2023 to 2050” slide extracted and sent around to show the difference between MTP, TYP, and TIP. Minkarah stated that NRPC is the only TMA (Transportation Management Area) in NH. We have local authority over how federal funds are spent and designate projects in our region.

Connell reviewed the Update Schedule for 2023 to 2050 MTP. The key thing – the pipeline of projects. Staff met with all towns to discuss potential projects for inclusion.

Tyrell Borowitz presented the MTP integrative map, a new tool to collect public comments on transportation-related issues. It allows anyone to access it at websites where it will be posted and identify an issue or put forth an idea and pinpoint it on the map. Users can see other comments and upvote or leave a reply. Borowitz demonstrated how to use the map and view the list of transportation comments. Click on a comment, the map comes up with the area related to the comment. The location is identified, and leave a reply comment, if desired. Each category (ex: Congestion, Biking, Walking, etc.) has an icon associated with it. Langdell commented that types of public transit are missing. Borowitz stated it could be added. Garruba asked about the categories Biking, Walking, and Driving – shouldn’t these categories be part of congestion as well? Minkarah stated that it is indeed related, but NRPC will come up with the right way to phrase it. The map will be in the next newsletter and is already on NRPC’s Facebook page. Borowitz stated

that NRPC is making a second version of the map (Minkarah said in November). Users will be able to make comments on the MTP project list. The NRPC website has the project viewer and those will be added for user comments. Langdell pointed out the map makes people aware that there are projects already in the works that they see as necessary. Elmer asked about how NRPC will reach people besides posting it on the NRPC website and newsletter. Suggestions included: communicate perhaps with the Rotaries and other groups; present to the state reps and have them let their constituents know. Langdell suggested the use of QR codes on flyers, local access stations, YouTube videos, etc. As part of the distribution, produce a video tutorial and a description of the purpose of the map. Brainstorming about locations of QR codes ensued to expand participation. Community media should be contacted to broadcast the map.

**c. NH FY 2025-2034 Ten-Year Transportation Plan – GACIT Hearing Schedule**

Waitkins presented the 2025-2034 Ten-Year Plan Draft. Over the past 18 months, NRPC solicited, prioritized, and submitted projects to the NHDOT. Between December 2022 through February 2023, NH DOT did their review and gave their feedback. In March 2023, the list was reprioritized by NRPC and sent back, and in September 2023, the draft plan was released by the NHDOT, and twenty-five GACIT hearings began. There is a public hearing with presentation and commentary scheduled in the NRPC region in Hudson at 7 p.m. on October 16th. It is open to the public and hosted by our Executive Councilor Dave Wheeler. The GACIT meetings are an open opportunity to weigh in on the projects within the region. Jaffrey has the final District 5 meeting on October 17. Janet stated that for your project to have an impact, you should go to the Hudson or Jaffrey meeting because our councilor is there. There are five projects that NRPC prioritized that are in the plan totaling \$7.39 million. Four projects have been removed from the draft plan. These projects were included in the NHDOT initial plan totaling \$5.26 million, but they have been temporarily removed. It is important to advocate at the GACIT meetings to have the four projects put back into the plan. Minkarah explained in the past councilors had more of a role in determining what was included – there was more funding, and it often covered all the projects presented. The councilors should make their decisions on which projects will be added back into the plan with a vote in the December 2023 meeting.

It is important to advocate in person for your projects at the remaining GACIT meetings, but comments will be accepted in writing by the councilors. The governor will review GACIT's amended plan and submit it to the State Legislature for review and public hearings. The Plan will likely be adopted in late June or early July 2024.

**d. Nashua, NH-MA Transportation Management Area (TMA) Certification Review**

Waitkins updated everyone that NRPC has a quadrennial TMA review (a federal audit) coming up in November. NRPC has been preparing for it.

**e. Other Transportation Updates**

Connell reminded everyone that DES federal program applications are due on Friday, October 13, 2023. Diesel replacement is 80% federally funded and, if replaced with an electric vehicle, it is

95% funding. Electric infrastructure is included. Langdell asked about the EV charging program status. Rose responded that the NHDOT still does not have final program guidance from the federal government on such programs, and therefore is hesitant to establish contractual relationships for funding without federal guidance. NHDOT is looking to fund projects that make sense as part of CMAQ and other federal programs.

**6. Statement of Strategy Update (8:40)**

Minkarah stated the NRPC goal is to have a statement of strategy to present at the December meeting. The first step is to develop an updated mission and vision statement. There will be a commissioner-only online session on 9/28 from 6:30 to 8 PM. NRPC will announce it via email. Tenhave urged everyone to attend the online session or send your thoughts on revisions to the mission & vision statements to Minkarah.

**7. Other Business (8:43) – none**

**8. Commissioners Roundtable (8:44)**

NHDOT – Rose commended the NRPC staff for doing a great job on the transportation updates and to stay tuned for more Ten-Year Plan news.

Milford - we have a \$16 million upscale apartment complex that is almost through the planning board. Unless board members hear objections, they will say yes, and we will have more housing in Milford. The Milford Pumpkin Festival is coming up (a three-day event). The Ghost Train ultra-marathon on the rail trail between Milford & Brookline on October 13 & 14. The Brox property land acquisition by Milford fell apart because the town was not able to obtain state regulatory authorizations. It was for the development of solar power.

Litchfield - the capital improvement planning has been resurrected and is back on track which has led to a revision of the impact fees, so we are working with NRPC on that. So, we have started an Economic Development Committee and an Energy Commission. Spooky World is open in the town.

Amherst - there is a partnership between the town and the land trust that has been approved to purchase a lot for a two-part development; one part includes an 18-unit development of 55+ single-family homes. We are still looking for a town planner. We started an energy committee that is looking into electric and solar alternatives. The planning board approved up to 39 units on another piece of land.

Hollis – a flash flood event last week with Route 130 closed for two days. Two housing developments are with the planning board, one with approximately 35 units NRPC has a TMA review (an audit) coming up in November.

Brookline – The Brookline Zoning Board has approved a 40-unit senior housing development on Route 13.

Nashua - Commute Smart Challenge: log the most miles without driving alone. Can be done by carpooling, walking, hiking, biking, and working from home. Go to [Commutesmartnh.org](http://Commutesmartnh.org) to sign up for the challenge as individuals or groups. There are prizes. Related: Community for Community Transportation in NH and the City of Nashua are celebrating alternative modes of transportation/different types of transit. More information will be pushed out in October and in the

Spring, hopefully. Minkarah: NRPC will be pushing out messaging for both. Langdell added that Souhegan Valley Transportation Collaborative will be at Lamson Farm on Saturday to celebrate (early) October alternative transportation month and give out apples.

Hudson – the Target distribution warehouse is moving forward, and the town continues to be involved with that. Traffic studies are ongoing for a new lane for the onramp for the turnpike. Old Homes Day was a success.

Pelham ( – we are wrapping up our master plan within two months.

Merrimack - lots of apartments going up right now. We are planning for the continued expansion of the Everett Turnpike and there are anticipated bottlenecks.

Lyndeborough – we are continuing to update our town’s master plan project and it should be ready by the spring. The town wants to purchase the church in the center. The town has 50% of the funding and is looking for 50% from other funding sources. Our zoning board has a lot of ADU applications and is pursuing those. Six homes are under construction along with the ADU applications. Some efficiencies in our planning board hearings having people come in in advance to discuss complicated matters. Old Home Day was a big success.

Mt. Vernon - Lamson Farm Day on Saturday from 10-3.

Will Ludt: “American 250” is being celebrated in two years (2026) but towns are encouraged to think about how they can participate in the celebration of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. Will asked about the viability of the commuter rail. Minkarah: Nashua is considering what a Nashua-only option would look like.

Pelham (Dave Hennessey): Old Home Day was a very good day – the numbers show and weather brushed us. Hennessey thanked everyone “for putting up with me all these years.” I will miss you all. (He will be missed.)

## 10. Adjourn

MOTION TO ADJOURN by Dave H/Seconded by Ralph B. Unanimous. (8:56 p.m.)

*Next NRPC Commission Meeting: Wednesday, December 20, 2023*

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Kirby, Administrative/Communications Assistant