

GRANITE STATE FUTURE
EQUITY AND ENGAGEMENT SUBCOMMITTEE

Meeting Agenda
Thursday, November 29, 2012
Local Government Center
Concord, N.H.
11:00 AM - 1:00 PM

1. Revisit the matrix to assure that we have sufficient input to submit it to the Statewide Policy Committee. Recognizing that it will be a work in progress, we want to be sure we have captured the most important information available to inform the project's needs at this stage. We will take 20 minutes or so to review and revise the current version.
2. We will use most of the rest of the time to engage the full committee in a discussion of ways to be sure we will achieve the depth of equity and engagement that we think is desirable. That discussion will be organized around the following questions:
 - Ø In the same way that pilots need a check list so they don't skip the obvious, do we need a check list of sorts for equity?
 - Ø What needs to be considered over the long haul of planning, decision making and implementation, when matters of equity and engagement are included in each of these processes?
 - Ø What needs to happen to make it more likely that equity is kept on the front burner once an initial engagement process has taken place?
 - Ø How can we insure that the issues we unearth will be considered? That engagement be integrated throughout the creation and fruition of a plan?
3. Roundtable sharing of events/news that bear on our committee's work, from committee members
4. Next Steps for this TASC
5. Next Meeting
6. Public comment

Reminder: Don't forget to report your valuable contribution of services to the project so that it can be counted as part of the in-kind match for the HUD grant. This includes meeting homework and preparation and travel to and from meetings as well as meeting time.

GRANITE STATE FUTURE

EQUITY AND ENGAGEMENT SUBCOMMITTEE

November 29, 2012 Meeting Summary
Local Government Center, Concord, NH
11:00 AM - 1:00 PM

Members in attendance:

MaryLou Beaver, Family Assistance Advisory Council
Victoria Davis, Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission
Molly Donovan, Cooperative Extension UNH; NH Listens
Sönke Dornblut, UNH: Institute on Disability
Bill Guinther, NH Housing Finance Authority
Jillian Harris, Southern NH Planning Commission
Janine Lesser, NH Dept. of Health & Human Services, Family Assistance
Bruce Mallory, Carsey Institute UNH
Michelle Mears, Strafford Regional Planning Commission
Jazmin Miranda-Smith, FHC Consultant
Rebecca Sky, Health & Equity Partnership
Barbara Salvatore, Engaging NH
Shayna Sylvia, Strafford Regional Planning Commission

Update on Activities: There was discussion on a great review of North Country activities available on the New Hampshire Public Radio web site: <http://www.nhpr.org/post/study-trying-look-north-countrys-present-and-plan-its-future>.

Molly Donovan of NH Listens gave an update of her activities in developing communities of interest. She contacted the regional planning commissions to obtain input on a list of communities of interest to interact with focus groups. NH Listens has done a couple focus groups and amended questions accordingly, especially related to youth groups but still based upon the livability principles. More focus groups will meet in early January and she anticipates finishing up with the communities of interest by the end of January. They will then move on to communities of place.

Bruce Mallory reiterated the purpose of the Equity and Engagement Subcommittee which is to “bird dog” the process to make sure equity and engagement is incorporated throughout the process and makes its way into final regional plans. Jazmin added that it’s a total paradigm shift, but everyone seems committed to incorporating equity into the process to provide a real sense of community engagement.

Molly noted that there is a companion grant to the regional plan grant which is HUD funding through the NH Housing Finance Authority for outreach and engagement in developing planning regulations and zoning ordinances including an educational process. There are 21 towns currently in the program for one or two years. It is anticipated that 15 more towns will participate in December.

Barbara Salvatore reported that an assessment of the Silver Tsunami report provides that there are three different age segments in the State: an older population in the North Country; and young population in the Seacoast area; and a middle-aged population in the rest of the state.

Matrix Update: Michelle Mears reported that the matrix is essentially complete though the Environmental section needs to be amended. Rebecca Sky apologized for not getting her updates in earlier, and she will submit them to Michelle.

Roundtable Updates: Each attendee reported on events. Regional Planning Commission representatives discussed their public outreach events. The UVLSRPC and the SNHPC both reported that their events have received very positive responses. Michelle Mears reported that the Strafford RPC is still experiencing some negative feedback though a recent public event was productive because attendees who do not like the idea of the regional planning process expressed why—they are fearful of big government. However, they also stated that the meeting was positive. Shayna described a food shelf outreach event which sounded like a great success as they obtained input from about 100 people. Sönke stated that Transportation Solutions NH with NH Listens is developing regional conversations in the spring. They want to know what language people use in talking about transportation and their willingness to engage as a community. Barbara added that education is needed as people give up independence when using public transportation as they are tied to a schedule. Sönke responded that it actually increases independence but requires more flexibility. Several members stated they sent out the Granite State Futures web address as a way to engage people. Bill described the HNH Foundation which is providing health impact training with a mix of planning and health communities. Mary Lou discussed her visits to diverse groups for a get out to vote program where she incorporated information about Granite State Futures. She is working with the Family Assistance Advisory Council, Granite Strong Child and Family Task Force to address legislation and evaluate the costs of having or not having related assistance programs.

Checklist for Equity and Engagement: The group brainstormed a checklist that could be used to make certain equity and engagement are included in public processes. Below is a list of these ideas:

- Evaluate siting of grocery stores with fresh produce for walking and public transportation access

- Equal representation of community by demographics in planning activities
- Who wins, who loses in a project? Impact assessment
- Carry soft infrastructure (human element) throughout all planning; consider all impacts on all groups
- Safe and accessible meeting space
- Consider worksheet developed by King County, Washington
<http://www.kingcounty.gov/exec/equity/toolsandresources.aspx>
- Determine who will be affected and assure their representation
- Define “engagement.” Is it just listening or does it include participation? Promote engagement on a regular basis and not just for occasional projects.
- Make participation attractive in terms of time of meeting, meeting space...according to anticipated interest groups
- Only use language that is commonly used (not “Equity and Engagement”)
- Close the feedback loop; share information gathered and what was done with it
- Build relationships and trust through listening
- Give people a role or a responsibility to engage them
- Double-check who will be impacted, don’t assume
- Determine “who” will be impacted and do more than put up a flyer as public notice
- Develop methodology using census data to determine populations
- Share methods among communities to improve all communities’ processes
- Planning scale must match decision-making scale so voices are truly included in the decision-making (e.g. town discussion might be lost in statewide decision making)
- Relationships become values of communities
- Show foundation for decisions by substantial engagement
- Language such as “Enhance Local Control”

Small Group Brainstorming: The attendees paired up to brainstorm the following three questions for 10 minutes: 1. What needs to be considered over the long haul of planning, decision-making and implementation, when matters of equity and engagement are included in each of these processes? 2. What needs to happen to make it more likely that equity is kept on the front burner once an initial engagement process has taken place? 3. How can we insure that the issues we unearth will be considered? That engagement be integrated throughout the creation and fruition of a plan?

Bruce will compile these responses for the next meeting.

Public comment/questions: There were no public attendees, and the meeting was adjourned at 1:00 PM.

Next meetings: To be determined by Meeting Doodle for January, February, and March with snow dates.

Submitted by,
Victoria Davis
Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission