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**Granite State Future: Local Solutions for the Strafford Region
Advisory Team**

Strafford Regional Planning Commission
Rochester Community Center
150 Wakefield Street, Suite 12
Rochester, NH

03/28/2013
8:30am-10:00am

Minutes

Local Solutions for the Strafford Region Members Present: Victoria Parmele, Sam Reid, Christine Davis

Members Excused: John Scruton, Karen Pollard, Deanna Strand, Lisa Henderson

Strafford Regional Planning Commission Staff Present: Cynthia Copeland (Executive Director), Michelle Mears (Regional Planner), Kyle Pimental (Regional Planner), Matt Sullivan (Regional Planner), Greg Jones (Regional Planner), Shayna Sylvia (Outreach Intern)

1. Welcome/Introductions

Regional Planner Matt Sullivan stated that the meeting is being recorded for staff use and as a resource for meeting minutes. Staff and Advisory Team Member introductions were given around the room.

2. January 30th, 2013 Draft Minutes Review

Victoria Parmele stated that all should review the Minutes from the Advisory Team meeting of January the 28th, 2013. M. Sullivan noted that the meeting minutes are contained within the packet. All members came to consensus that the Minutes were correct.

3. Match Log Tutorial

V. Parmele introduced M. Sullivan to provide a brief tutorial on the completion of the project In-Kind Match Form, to be completed throughout the month by all Team members. Team members should place their name in the leftmost column for all task items. All tasks should have their own line. Time should be recorded in 15 minute increments with each 15 minute block represented by ".25" hours. At the end of each month, match forms should be signed, dated, and returned to Strafford Regional Planning Commission in either a digitally scanned or hard format. M. Sullivan reviewed some key dates within the past month that e-mails were sent to Team members. V. Parmele inquired as to how Adobe documents could be signed electronically. M. Sullivan responded by saying that he will put together a match form that can be signed electronically by members. C. Davis added that travel time can be included in time for meetings that are attended.

4. Metropolitan Transportation Plan Coordination Report

V. Parmele requested that Cynthia Copeland discuss the coordination between the *Local Solutions for the Strafford Region* and Metropolitan Transportation Plan efforts. C. Copeland stated that according to federal law, Strafford Metropolitan Planning Organization (SMPO) is required to update the long range transportation plan, the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (2013-2040). The process was started on January 1st, 2013 and all staff members are assisting in the update of this document. The Transportation Plan and Regional Plan will be completed via parallel efforts. C. Copeland noted that when the visioning process is discussed for the Regional Plan, a

similar process is being considered for the Metropolitan Plan. The Metropolitan Plan is scheduled to be completed by December 31st, 2013. All long range project updates were completed last year. The federal Planning Factors are now being reviewed. MAP-21 Planning Factors are being transformed into individual fact-sheets that can be distributed to stakeholders. These fact-sheets will identify and describe the relationships between safety, transportation, land use, economic development, and others. The goal is to link these two processes, but also to produce products that can be used by our communities. V. Parmele inquired as to where these products might be distributed. C. Copeland stated, when we visit communities, concerns can be addressed by these fact-sheets and the information therein. V. Parmele asked if these will be available during the outreach process for the *Local Solutions for the Strafford Region* effort. S. Reid asked why the timeframe, 2013-2040, is used for the Metropolitan Transportation Plan. C. Copeland stated that, according to federal law, this must be updated every four years.

M. Sullivan added that the Existing Conditions and Needs Assessments for both the Metropolitan Plan and Regional Master Plan will be developed through similar data research efforts. As the foundation for these assessments, the work of the Granite State Future Data Team, and its Core Metric List, is being examined by both the transportation and regional master plan staff teams. Wayne Prindle added that at the federal level, performance measures are supported that identify the relationship between transportation and other planning areas. These performance measures allow for the tracking of progress over a length of time, and are extremely beneficial to planning.

5. Outreach Update

S. Sylvia reviewed the Outreach Events for Strafford Regional Planning Commission since the previous Regional Advisory Team meeting including: University of New Hampshire Memorial Building, Wentworth Farmers Market, and Communities of Place event. At UNH, Strafford Regional Planning Commission staff spoke with over 200 students, who identified recreation, sense of UNH community, public transportation, and more cultural opportunities as their primary concerns. M. Sullivan asked whether any students expressed concern over their ability to obtain employment following education. S. Sylvia stated that only two students expressed these concerns. However, Strafford Regional Planning Commission is currently drafting an article highlighting the work of New Hampshire organizations such as StayWorkPlan NH, and WorkReadyNH, which assist students in finding housing, employment, and recreation opportunities in the state after graduation.

S. Sylvia reviewed the Communities of Place events that took place on March 5th, at the Horne Street School, in Dover. Approximately 30 individuals were in attendance, forming five break-out groups. Proper training for skilled workers, public transportation, sustainable infrastructure, workforce housing, property taxes, and more public involvement in planning were all identified as concerns by attendees. C. Davis asked for a demographic breakdown of the session's attendees. M. Mears stated that the group could have been more diverse; however, all age groups were represented. V. Parmele asked if any attendees were coming from outside of the region. C. Copeland responded affirmatively, stating that the groups were in fact geographically diverse.

The group viewed an online video, reviewing the NH Listens Communities of Place Event.

S. Sylvia gave an update of the Listening Box/Comment Card progress. She said cards have now been placed on 10 COAST buses throughout the Strafford Region. S. Sylvia added that she had ridden the bus for one day to spread the word, which was highly successful. She said that in conversations, riders emphasized recreation, more bus routes, community farming, and better programs for youth in the region. C. Copeland added that Strafford Regional Planning Commission is currently the only RPC in the state performing a transit survey under the regional planning effort.

S. Sylvia reviewed the Wentworth Farmer's Market results, highlighting recreation and agriculture concerns from all participants. V. Parmele suggested the Northwood Beanhole Bash as a possible future outreach event.

6. Regional Technical Advisory Team Update

Greg Jones provided the Team with an update of the Regional Technical Advisory recruitment efforts. Some 15 members have been contacted and have confirmed membership. These meetings will begin sometime in May/June of 2013, and continue through the plan-writing phase of the project in 2014. M. Sullivan opined that, because many of the identified individuals are extremely busy, the meetings may actually evolve into one-on-one conversations via phone or Skype. This process allows us to work with volunteers on an 'as needed' basis. G. Jones added that these conversations will need to be tracked via documentation. Meetings or calls will be during the day, not at night. Kyle Pimental asked if the Core Metric List from the statewide Data Team will be brought to the Regional Technical Advisory Teams for approval/input. M. Sullivan responded, saying that these Teams will have the ability to suggest additional metrics to those in the Core Metrics list for consideration in the Regional Plan.

V. Parmele asked if any of the Technical Team members would actually be drafting elements of the plan. G. Jones answered, stating that the individuals we have recruited have unique expertise areas that will lend to assisting in the writing of specific plan components. V. Parmele asked if each Technical Team will be asked to look at the Vision Statement. M. Sullivan stated that each technical appendix will have its own Vision Statement, in addition to the document's broad Vision Statement.

V. Parmele inquired as to whether these individuals will be asked to think about concepts outside of their Technical category assignment. M. Sullivan responded by saying that the livability principles require you to think outside of each given category. These linkages must be considered by all Technical Advisory Team members. M. Mears asked if there was concern from the Granite State Future Executive Committee regarding the coverage of Historical/Cultural Resources in the existing Regional Plan Content Outline. C. Copeland stated that this could be discussed during the next agenda item, if customizing our Regional Plan content outline is something the group would like to pursue.

7. Regional Plan Content Outline (10 Minutes)

M. Sullivan reviewed the following Regional Plan content outline:

- Vision Statement
- Telling Our Story (Land Use)
- Regional Existing Conditions and Needs Assessment:
- Implementation
- Technical Appendices
 - Housing:
 - Housing Needs Assessment
 - Fair Housing and Equity Assessment
 - Transportation
 - Water Infrastructure (Utility and Public Service)
 - Environment (Natural Resources, Water Resources, Recreation)
 - Economic Development
 - Climate Change Impacts Assessments (Natural Hazards)
 - Energy Efficiency and Green Building (Community Facilities, Energy)
 - Scenario Planning
 - Outreach Plan

M. Sullivan noted that Strafford Regional Planning Commission has the ability to change this content outline as it sees fit. He pointed to inclusion of the Outreach Plan in the Technical Appendices, an element that is currently only being included by Strafford Regional Planning Commission. S. Reid asked if the Outreach Plan is a plan for future outreach or a results document. M. Sullivan stated that the Outreach Plan is a strategy document identifying the modes of outreach, while also cataloguing the outreach results from all events attended thus far. K. Pimental opined that it may be important to include information in the Outreach Plan related to how the results of this process might be used in the future by communities. C. Copeland stated that we are beginning to integrate our social media and venture into the blogging realm as an organization. Strafford Regional Planning Commission's website designer will be exploring the options available for solidifying Strafford Regional Planning Commission's brand through our social media outlets.

M. Sullivan explained that the Housing section of the content outline actually includes a Regional Housing Needs Assessment and Fair Housing Equity Assessment. However, in contrast with a typical Fair Housing Equity Assessment, New Hampshire is hoping to in-depth research on age and income demographics rather than simply minority populations, as that demographic is less meaningful for our state.

V. Parmele stated support for this content outline, in particular the integrated approach between each section. Traditional master plan chapters are easier to understand, however, this innovate framework has a greater possible impact and meaning for planning in the state of New Hampshire. M. Sullivan asked if the draft content outline could be approved by the group to allow for work to begin on the individual chapter outlines. K. Pimental stated that the intent behind a shorter regional plan and longer

technical plan appendices was to not overwhelm readers in the first few pages with excessive details and data. S. Reid added that our constituents need to be able to read the document; therefore, it should be written in a very concise and understandable manner.

The Advisory Team approved the draft content outline.

8. Visioning

8.1. Master Plan Analysis/Outreach/Annual Meeting

M. Sullivan stated that staff has created a 3-part visioning process. Each section of Visioning focuses on an entirely different group of stakeholders, as shown below. Staff will work with the Master Plan analysis and results from our completed outreach events with a goal of synthesizing and combining results from both into a set of 3-10 draft vision statements. These vision statements will then be presented and voted upon at the May Strafford Regional Planning Commission Annual Meeting/Commissioners Meeting. V. Parmele asked what might happen in the event that the Vision statements brought to the Annual Meeting are not adequate. C. Copeland reasoned that the statements would then be taken back to Staff and the Advisory Team, whereupon adjustments will be made and a new group of statements can be drafted and presented at the following Commissioners meeting.

Draft Vision Process:



G. Jones began an overview of the newly reviewed Regional Plans, including the 2004 University of New Hampshire Campus Master Plan, and 2008 Healthy Eating Active Living Action Plan. G. Jones then led a review of the Barrington Master Plan Analysis Matrix, referencing the justification for placing statements in certain livability principles. It was reiterated that it is essential to procure the approval of communities, through Planning Boards or Planners, before performing the next step of analysis, to be discussed by M. Sullivan. M. Sullivan asked what exactly a “goal” is when referenced by G. Jones in the description of the matrix. G. Jones stated this term is variable from one community to another or plan to another. There are goals, recommendation, precepts, strategies, and other statement categories included.

M. Sullivan gave an overview of his process for selecting words and statements within the livability principle columns that will be tabulated by staff. Staff will work to develop a spreadsheet or database that documents the frequency of use for each statement or word. G. Jones noted that this is the bottoms-up foundation upon which we will structure the content of our plan. M. Sullivan stated that in the coming months, staff will be putting together a methodology and standards document for this process. K. Pimental added that he hopes this will be more successful than traditional visioning sessions, that rely upon participants physically attending an event. G. Jones reiterated that it is important to get approval from communities before we begin our analysis. V. Parmele asked where approval must come from. G. Jones answered that the Planning Board or Town Planner can endorse the document.

8.2. Scenario Planning (5 Minutes)

C. Copeland explained that Scenario Planning examines the “what if” scenarios for our communities and region. In order to look at these scenarios, we must use software packages. Community Viz, Envision Utah, and Social Justice software packages are currently available for use in visioning processes. NOAA has recently released a report that evaluates and compares these various programs. Dan Camara, Senior GIS/Transportation Analyst will be evaluating these programs in the coming months for viability in the Strafford Regional Planning Commission office. This effort will be coordinated with the Transportation Scenario Planning efforts. We will likely purchase several tools, with a specific intended use for each.

K. Pimental stated that as planners already using Geographic Information Systems software, we are extremely excited to be able to have access to this software. After the conclusion of this HUD Grant, we will be lucky to have access to this innovative software for use in modeling communities in this region. V. Parmele asked if there will be visualizations present in the plan from the scenario planning. M. Sullivan responded, stating that there will in fact be results in both the Metropolitan Transportation Plan and *Local Solutions for the Strafford Region* efforts. In addition, Scenario Planning often is done through visioning session style “chip-games”. As a result, although we are choosing to do a different style of visioning, Strafford Regional Planning Commission may in fact schedule scenario planning sessions during the next two years.

9. NH OEP Conference Registration

M. Sullivan gave a brief overview of the Spring Office of Energy and Planning Conference. It was noted that a Granite State Future presentation will be taking place, at which M. Sullivan will be presenting.

M. Mears added that NH Listens will be presenting a session called “Community Engagement” that will outline the Granite State Future Communities of Interest and Communities of Place.

C. Copeland followed, adding that Strafford Regional Planning Commission will be involved in a rain garden demonstration at Studley’s, April 20th, with Cocheco River Watershed Advisory Committee.

10. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 10:00am.

Respectfully Submitted,

Matthew Sullivan
Regional Planner

An electronic version of this meeting is available upon request.