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ROCHESTER
ROLLINSFORD
SOMERSWORTH
STRAFFORD
WAKEFIELD

**Local Solutions for the Strafford Region
Advisory Team**

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

01/30/2013

MINUTES

Local Solutions for the Strafford Region Members Present: Lisa Henderson, John Scruton, Victoria Parmele, Sam Reid, Deanna Strand

Members Absent: Christine Davis, Karen Pollard

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. Advisory Team Role and Responsibilities

M. Sullivan reviewed the Regional Master Plan Process with the aid of an on-screen Powerpoint. He explained that the role of the Regional Advisory Team is to: guide Commission staff outreach activities, review outreach products, and synthesize data metrics and information from the work of the Statewide Data Team into a usable regional product. The Regional Advisory Team will recommend and approve members for Regional Technical Advisory Teams in each plan appendix. Those Technical Teams will examine statewide data and recommend further metrics to be examined and/or used in the *Local Solutions for the Strafford Regional Plan*.

The Advisory Team will recommend adoption of the final *Local Solutions for the Strafford Region Plan* to the full Strafford Regional Planning Commission in 2015.

Team members were asked to recommend possible members for the Regional Technical Advisory Teams.

3. Review of Regional Planning Commission Scope of Work

M. Sullivan reviewed Project Year One of the grant process and provided the team with a brief status update of Staff's work in each area. He noted that Statewide Technical Advisory Subcommittee groups are completing their scope of work of contributing to the Regional Plan Framework (discussed in agenda item 8).

M. Sullivan explained that the Equity and Engagement subcommittee will continue to convene into year 2, as the NH Listens activities progress. He noted that as part of pre-plan development, regional planner Greg Jones has been analyzing the master plans of communities in the Strafford Regional Planning Commission region.

M. Sullivan stated that data gathering was currently going on at the statewide level. After a statewide set of metrics is finalized, Strafford Regional Planning Commission will have the ability to examine the products of those metrics and choose a direction for further data collection and computation efforts at a regional level.

4. **Review of Outreach Activities/Results to Date**

M. Sullivan said outreach/engagement efforts had been hugely successful, especially with the help of new Outreach Intern Shayna Sylvia. Michelle Mears noted that the Communities of Place event will be taking place on March 5th of 2013, most likely in Dover. She said all Advisory Team members are invited to attend the Communities of Place events and will be integral in marketing the event in the region.

M. Sullivan introduced the draft Public Outreach Plan, and reviewed the sections of the plan, which include the following: Project Introduction, Regional Master Planning, NH Livability Principles, Advisory Team members, Target Outreach Groups, NH Listens Activities, Listening Boxes, Online/Print Media, and an Outreach Events Appendix.

Victoria Parmele inquired as to the reasoning behind putting together such a detailed Outreach Plan for this project. M. Sullivan explained that because Strafford Regional Planning Commission has decided make a large resource investment in pre-plan public involvement and outreach, Staff believed that it was necessary to create a product to both guide and track outreach. He said when the plan was brought to the full Commission, and was revisited in the future, it would be important to be able to point to where SRPC received input for the plan. Cynthia Copeland added that when the grant was submitted, a qualitative approach was chosen in place of a typical quantitative survey-based mode. It was noted that this approach provides a unique opportunity for the citizens of our region to tell their story.

Shayna Sylvia reviewed the methods of community outreach that Staff has used to date, including both events and listening boxes. She reviewed the *Local Solutions for the Strafford Region* display used at all outreach events, and explained the staff protocols for such events. She noted that after each event, a report with results was compiled by staff. It was noted that the response sheets filled out by staff during events have been updated to allow for quantitative data as well as qualitative statements.

S. Sylvia described response trends from the outreach events that have been held to date:

- Newmarket Heritage Festival
- Dover Apple Harvest Day
- Seacoast Business Expo
- NH Local Government Center Conference
- Gerry's Pantry Turkey Day, Rochester Senior Center Luncheon (Neighborhood Conversation)
- St. Anthony's Senior Luncheon (Neighborhood Conversation)
- Seacoast Eat Local Winter Farmer's Market.

It was noted that all Listening Boxes have been collected, and will be re-launched following a re-design of the comment cards. The responses from comment cards are entered into an online database where they are stored for future use and analysis. Approximately 600 individuals have been reached through all methods of outreach.

John Scruton asked if comment card result numbers include online responses from the website. S. Sylvia was unsure but stated she would find an answer to the question. V. Parmele asked if staff had considered recording conversations with individuals. M. Sullivan stated that we have, but there are challenges associated with recording because consent is required.

5. **Future Outreach Events**

S. Sylvia introduced the incentive program for listening boxes that Strafford Regional Planning Commission will be implementing in the future. Due to low response numbers from the first listening box launch, we will now offer a raffle opportunity at each listening box location. Donations have already been received from the Portsmouth Brewery and Hannaford. S. Sylvia introduced the two new comment card templates to the group.

S. Sylvia presented planned and potential future outreach activities, including senior center luncheons, an event with Dover Adult Learning, and an information table in the UNH Memorial Union Building. J. Scruton said “Hay Day” in Farmington might be another possible opportunity to get public input. Deanna Strand noted that Red’s Race in Dover was a possible opportunity.

S. Sylvia introduced the two new comment card templates to the group, and there was detailed discussion on them by the Advisory Team and Staff. After the discussion, M. Mears summarized that the card top will read “*Local Solutions for the Strafford Region* would Like to Hear From You”. The card will then ask the participant to rank their top 3 choices for likes/dislikes. At the bottom of the card, for raffle purposes, there will be a request for contact information by phone or e-mail. As a last task, a watermark identifying our region may be added on either the front or back of the card. S. Sylvia added that the raffle prize will be advertised on the box itself in some location.

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6. **Data Team Progress**

M. Sullivan described the process of selecting the core data metrics and purpose from the statewide data team. Each Regional Planning Commission is responsible for a category of metrics – SRPC is computing water resource metrics for the entire state of New Hampshire. He provided a presentation of the data methodology document. Data is organized by category in the document.

He then explained that one Regional Planning Commission staff member will be responsible for calculating each data metric for the entire state rather than their own region. M. Sullivan added that these metrics are required to be included in the regional master plan, but the Regional Advisory Team, in addition to Regional Technical Advisory Teams, will have the ability to identify additional, more regionally applicable, metrics for use in the Plan.

L. Henderson asked whether each metric will have a red line or deficient mark, and how this will be determined. M. Sullivan stated that this will be up to each region to decide individually.

7. **Master Plan Analysis**

Greg Jones reviewed the Master Plan Analysis matrix he is using in analyzing community master plans. The matrix is organized around the NH Livability Principles, determined by the New Hampshire Transportation Land Use Roundtable. All eighteen communities have been included, in addition to several Regional Plans currently in existence (Piscataqua Region 2010 Comprehensive and Conservation Management Plan, Coordinated Public Transit and Human Services Transportation Plan, Strafford-Rockingham Region ITS Strategic Plan Update, Strafford Metropolitan Planning Organization 2013-2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan, Land Conservation Plan for New Hampshire’s Coastal Watersheds 2006, Stafford Regional Planning Master Plan, SRPC CEDS). The next step is to bring the matrix to town planners, selectmen, and planning boards for their review and approval.

V. Parmele asked how communities that are currently in the process of updating their master plan are handled in the matrix. G. Jones stated that we are only able to use what is currently adopted by the town. However, if the community adopts the new plan before the conclusion of the process, we will analyze the revised plan.

8. **Discussion**

M. Sullivan explained that the Regional Plan Framework document that has been developed follows the structure of what the SRPC Regional Plan will likely look like, and is a review of all of the statewide Technical Advisory Subcommittee work from the past year. He noted that the document is broken down into Technical Appendices, and said within each Appendix category, the document identifies existing resources, goals, and implementation strategies.

M. Sullivan stated that we must begin to bring together our Regional Technical Advisory Team members. Each Team will be about 3-5 members in total.

9. **Future Meeting Dates/Times**

M. Sullivan asked if the date/time is appropriate for all. S. Reid added that the Doodle Poll is an excellent way to coordinate the best dates/times for future meetings.

V. Parmele asked for a quick review from Staff of what the Advisory Team should be working on in the next month. K. Pimental stressed the importance of identifying Technical Advisory Team Members. M. Sullivan added that he would be sending both the data metrics and the regional planning framework along to the group for consideration over the next month.

M. Sullivan explained that the Team should begin to consider how we would like to structure the Regional Plan document, using the Regional Plan framework as a model.

10. **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 10:00am.

Respectfully Submitted,

Matthew Sullivan

Regional Planner

An electronic version of this meeting is available upon request.