

Regional Plan Advisory Subcommittee

**February 26, 2013
3:00 – 4:30 pm
NRPC Conference Room**

AGENDA

1. Update on Regional Plan Progress
 - a. Transportation Workshop – summary of February event
 - b. Housing Workshop – March 29 event plans
 - c. Economic Development/Community Vitality Workshop – April event discussion
2. Outreach and Engagement
 - a. Outreach Strategy
 - b. Website and social media updates
 - c. Neighborhood Conversations
3. Regional Visioning Process
 - a. Local Master Plan Vision Review
 - b. How do we tell our story?
4. Committee Schedule of meetings
5. Comments
6. Adjournment

Granite State Future Regional Advisory Sub-Committee
February 26, 2013
3 to 4:30 PM
Nashua Regional Planning Commission Office
9 Executive Park Drive, Merrimack, NH

ATTENDEES:

Beth Todgham, Southern NH Services – Community Action Program
Liz Racioppi, Nashua Art Commission and the NH Creative Communities Network
Bill Parker, Town of Milford
Kerrie Diers, NRPC
Jen Czysz, NRPC
Mary Brundage, NRPC
Tim Roache, NRPC

Meeting Start: 3:07 PM

Diers opened the meeting and gave an overview of the agenda items.

Update on Regional Plan Progress

Transportation Workshop

Roache discussed the Transportation Workshop that was held on February 12. The workshop started with a review of existing conditions and future projections from the transportation plan. The themes of Mobility, System Sustainability and Quality of Life were discussed in small group breakout sessions. Each group discussed what currently works and what needs improvement. The following is a breakdown of those discussions:

Mobility:

What works?

- Little road congestion
- Transit

What needs improvement?

- East/west travel is not easy
- Rt. 101 A congested
- Freight
- Lack of river crossings

Quality of Life:

What works?

- Ease to get around
- Urban/rural balance (access to recreation)

What needs improvement?

- Not many alternative transportation options
- Not enough housing to accommodate transit-oriented development

System Sustainability:

What works?

- Recent efforts to address maintenance fixes
- Towns have been responsive

What needs improvement?

- Signaled timing
- Funding

Racioppi asked about revenue. Roache explained that the money from tolls can only support the turnpike system. There was some discussion on the gas tax as a potential revenue source.

The next steps for the Transportation Committee will be to go over the goals and see if the current projects are in line to bringing the region closer to the vision and goals.

Diers mentioned that the Rail Transit Authority will be hosting a series of public hearings in the spring. The outcome of these hearings will also tie into the regional plan.

Housing Workshop

Czys discussed the upcoming Housing Workshop scheduled for March 29, 11:30 AM – 3 PM. It will be structured similar to the Transportation Workshop. It will start with an educational piece with Ben Frost, NH Housing Finance Authority, and Chris Wellington, consultant to NHHFA and NH Legal Assistance, speaking. The Regional Housing Needs Assessment will also be discussed. There will then be break out groups on the three themes of Supply, Demand and Existing Conditions; Affordability; and Access to Opportunity to discuss what works and what is needed.

Economic Development Community Vitality Workshop

Diers talked about the Economic Development/Community Vitality workshop which would be the next workshop after the Housing Workshop. Tentatively, the workshop planned for April. Since the NH Listens event is scheduled for April 30th, it was decided to push out the workshop until May so that the feedback from the event could be used. Parker mentioned that Milford is in a process of doing survey on how to market the Town of Milford for businesses.

Outreach and Engagement

Outreach Strategy

Brundage discussed the Outreach Strategy. The Outreach Strategy outlines what the goals of outreach, what has been done for outreach to date, and what will be done going forward. Racioppi asked if we have been satisfied with the outreach that has been done so far. Brundage answered that the events were very successful in getting input. Parker asked about how other RPCs were doing. Czys said that the RPCs were at different stages. For instance, UVLSRPC already had committees in place so are a bit ahead of other RPCs that needed to set up their Leadership Team and other committees.

Neighborhood Conversations

Diers talked about the Neighborhood Conversations that would be happening as part of the Outreach Strategy. NRPC is looking to present at already existing meetings to get input on various themes. Great American Downtown and Renaissance Downtown were a couple groups to add to the list.

Website Updates

Czysz showed the online forum that is projected to be live by the end of the following week. There is a map based forum where people can pinpoint a location and give input. There is also a theme based forum where someone can post about a particular theme in the region that is not necessarily location based. For both, users can provide direct feedback in the form of selecting thumbs up or thumbs down for existing comments or provide a new comment.

Regional Visioning Process

Local Master Plan Vision Review

Brundage discussed the process of reviewing the Master Plan vision statements and goals for each community. The matrix shows themes that were discussed in the Master Plan. Also, another spreadsheet shows the Vision Statement and Goals for each community. She explained that each community's Master Plan varies in format and also the towns widely vary in the date that they were last updated. She also pointed out a couple Master Plans were over ten years old.

A few of the common themes were that most that most communities had incorporated something about rural or small town character into their vision statement. Second to that was preserving natural beauty. Transportation, housing and economic development was also common themes.

How do we tell our story?

Diers explained that the goal of reviewing the Master Plans and doing outreach was to try to come up with ways to tell our story about the region, to try to come up some common themes. Racioppi mentioned that Ray Cohen will be discussing the Arts and Economic Prosperity Report in a couple workshops on March 12th and 13th. One will provide an overview of how to utilize the data and findings of the Report in local and regional planning and implementation efforts.

Future Meeting Dates/Times

There was some discussion on the next meeting date. It was decided to combine the March and April to April 9th so that the outcome from the Housing Workshop could be discussed and could plan for the NH Listens event. The next meeting will on Tuesday, April 9, 2013, from 1 to 3 PM.

The meeting adjourned at 4:35 PM.