

BARRINGTON
BROOKFIELD
DOVER
DURHAM
FARMINGTON
LEE
MADBURY
MIDDLETON
MILTON



NEW DURHAM
NEWMARKET
NORTHWOOD
NOTTINGHAM
ROCHESTER
ROLLINSFORD
SOMERSWORTH
STRAFFORD
WAKEFIELD

**Strafford Regional Planning Commission
September 25, 2008 Public Hearing/Meeting
Minutes**

FINAL

SRPC Members Present: Edmund Jansen, Jr. (Rollinsford), Sandra Keans (Rochester), Elaine Lauterborn (Rochester), Kenn Ortmann (Rochester), Lou Vita (Middleton), Carol Vita (Middleton), George Snyder (Somersworth), Rick McMenimen (Newmarket), Paul Parker (Farmington), John Law (Farmington)

SRPC Members Proxy Votes: Peter Stanhope (Durham), Tom Crosby (Madbury), Charles Moreno (Strafford) and Scott Martin (Northwood)

SRPC Staff Present: Cynthia Copeland (Executive Director), Dan Camara (GIS/Transportation Analyst), Myranda McGowan (Transportation Planner) and Marilyn Barton (Administrative Assistant).

Guests: Nick Alexander (NH DOT), Becky Ohler (NHDES-ARD), Charlie King (Farmington), Rad Nichols (COAST), Thomas Dube (Wakefield), and Paul Fandoukis (FHA)

Chairman L. Brown called the public hearing to order at 7:25 PM.

Public Hearings to Solicit Public Comments

Introductions were made around the room with people giving their name and municipality or agency they were representing.

L. Brown gave a brief overview of the documents up for adoption.

A. The Land Conservation Plan for New Hampshire's Coastal Watersheds

Copeland stated in August 2006, Strafford Regional Planning Commission (SRPC) and Rockingham Planning Commission (RPC) worked in partnership with the Forest Society and The Nature Conservancy to develop a science based conservation plan for the forty-six communities in the coastal

watersheds. The New Hampshire Estuaries Project (NHEP), the New Hampshire Coastal Program and the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation funded the project. Copeland stated there had been a series of meetings during the development of the plan and to introduce the plan approximately a year ago. SRPC is looking to adopt this document as an appendix to the SRPC Regional Master Plan.

Copeland stated Commissioners had received copies of the Executive Summary of the plan in their packets, and the plan was available on the SRPC website and copies were available at the SRPC office. Copeland stated the result of this project was the identification of seventy-eight core focus areas. She stated there were four criteria used to select these areas: forest ecosystems, water quality, coastal resources, and wildlife and endangered species. Copeland gave an overview of the Plan.

P. Parker asked that a copy of the plan be mailed to him, and Copeland stated that would be done.

B. Draft 2009-2035 Metropolitan Transportation Plan

It was determined the PowerPoint presentation would not be available due to technical difficulties and Copeland stated paper copies would be mailed to each Commissioner and on the SRPC website the following day.

McGowan stated that until the summer of 2007, the Seacoast Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) was a shared MPO between SRPC and Rockingham Planning Commission. Now, there are two MPOs coterminous with the regional planning Commission boundaries. She noted MPOs are responsible for transportation planning purposes and are required with population centers greater than 50,000. McGowan encouraged new Commissioners or anyone with more questions on the MPO to visit our office as SRPC has many documents that would help them learn what their role is in the MPO.

McGowan described the Metropolitan Transportation Plan development and public involvement process. She stated that the TAC recommended endorsement of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan. McGowan noted public comments were received regarding projects in Farmington in the long-range project listings.

McGowan proceeded to give a synopsis of the PowerPoint presentation. The plan was being updated per the requirements of SAFETEA-LU using eight planning factors including safety and security. McGowan stated interviews were conducted with federal, state, and business stakeholders during the update process. SRPC staff provided a presentation to the Natural Resource Coordination Agency for their review of the environmental chapter. McGowan stated this chapter included a section on Access Management and Memorandums of Understanding (MOU's). McGowan noted two communities, Barrington and Northwood, have Memorandum of Understanding (MOUs). McGowan stated Access Management looks at where driveway and curb cuts are located in relation to state roads.

Copeland stated MOUs are reviewed by the State Attorney General and are an agreement between the municipality and New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT). Copeland stated it ensures timely communication and better solutions between parties. Copeland noted the major goal this year is to work with other communities if they wish to pursue an MOU.

L. Brown wanted to bring attention to the variety of agencies that SRPC works with and is impacted by. L. Brown asked if there were any questions or comments.

In summation, Copeland stated there were thirteen chapters in the Metro Plan, including alternative fuels, financial plan, and freight and travel demand management. Copeland stated all the federal planning documents by statute are required to be fiscally constrained, and that the MPO documents are fiscally constrained.

C. Draft 2009-2012 Transportation Improvement Program

McGowan stated the draft Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) covers transportation projects including transit projects for the years 2009-2012. McGowan noted these projects are listed in the State Ten Year Plan. It is a lengthy process the program goes through every two years, including project solicitation from local governments, businesses, and various state and federal agencies.

Copeland described the structure of the project listing and the data available for each project or municipality. She noted an example of a project in Somersworth, showing project phases and years, funding amounts and source of funding. Copeland stated this allows a person to track projects. She stated that the TIP is a fiscally constrained document as required by federal law. Copeland described the assumptions used in the TIP. One assumption is an inflation rate of 3.2% per year, the same one used for the Ten Year Plan

D. Draft Air Quality Conformity Analysis

L. Brown noted this document relates to the Draft 2009-2012 TIP and impacts and interfaces with the Metropolitan Long-Range Plan. L. Brown opened the discussion for comments.

McGowan stated the Draft Air Quality Conformity Analysis was completed with the Rockingham Planning Commission, using the Seacoast Travel Demand Model, which looks at past and future transportation projects and how air quality is affected in the region. McGowan noted six communities in our region (Rochester, Somersworth, Rollinsford, Dover, Durham and Newmarket) are part of the Southeast New Hampshire Moderate 8-Hour Non-Attainment Area. McGowan noted the conformity analyses are part of the federal requirements and determine if the region is over budget or under budget for the state air quality plan. She noted we are under budget. McGowan stated that B. Ohler, DES Air Bureau, was working with staff to ensure the document was in compliance.

Copeland stated federal regulations require an MPO in areas of non-attainment under the Clean Air Act to prepare Air Quality Conformity. Copeland stated this was to ensure our plans and programs conform to all applicable federal air quality requirements. Copeland stated this analysis ensures these requirements are being met. Copeland stated SRPC received comments from Leigh Levine of Federal Highways Administration on September 15, 2008 and those were handed out to everyone attending the meeting. Copeland stated comments were received from Becky Ohler of DES-ARD on September 24, 2008 and preliminary responses had been done. Copeland noted SRPC was still in discussion with B. Ohler to ensure that all projects were in the correct tables. Copeland stated this entire process needs to be done so federal funds are available for projects in NH.

L. Brown stated the emphasis is on technical detail, and further information is available through SRPC and their website. L. Brown asked if there were any comments or questions.

R. Nichols stated TAC voted to recommend approval of the documents with their full support.

P. Parker had a question regarding Chapter Four, Road Network. P. Parker stated he read through the document and noted there were several key corridors listed in that chapter and noticed Route 11 was not

among them. P. Parker asked if there was a specific reason for that. Copeland stated Route 11 needs to be added and an amendment would be done. P. Parker stated Route 11 should be regarded as a major corridor.

Copeland stated not only does this plan include local and regional interests but it includes NHDOT priorities. Copeland stated NHDOT has a long-range plan and in that plan they identify regionally significant corridors of statewide importance, including Routes 16, 125 and 4 in our region.

N. Alexander stated the intent of the NHDOT long-range plan is to identify the most significant regional corridor. Some parallel routes serve the same purpose as the regional corridor routes that were identified, and are included in that manner.

S. Keans asked about page sixty-six of the Metropolitan Plan and what that meant in relation to parallel corridors. Copeland stated that section pertained to classifications of roads and highways.

L. Brown stated that Route 11 would be added to the Plan.

E. Jansen, Jr. stated that Rollinsford is a non-attainment town and that there are no projects listed in the TIP for Rollinsford and asked how this would be explained to others in his Town. E. Jansen stated it would be difficult to identify local impact on air quality.

B. Ohler stated air pollutants used to evaluate this plan were ground level ozone. B. Ohler noted the particular pollutants that cause ground level ozone organic compounds and nitrogen oxide compounds. B. Ohler stated ground level ozone is a regional problem and gave an example that pollutants from Nashua that drift over to Rollinsford may not be the same pollutants as they may experience a chemical change. B. Ohler noted this non-attainment area isn't just SRPC but is also Rockingham, Southern NH Planning Commission and Nashua Planning Commission and affects the entire southern area of NH.

B. Ohler requested that the order of the agenda be changed so the Strafford Metropolitan Planning Organization Policy meeting could go before the Strafford Regional Planning Commission Meeting as the documents that were up for discussion during the public hearing would be voted on during the MPO portion of the meeting. She stated that those individuals needed for the SMPO portion of the agenda do not need to be present for the Commission meeting. The consensus of attendees was in agreement with the change.

L. Brown closed the public hearing at 8:15 pm.

L. Brown called to convene as the Strafford Metropolitan Planning Organization Policy Committee at 8:20 pm. [See Strafford MPO Policy Committee Minutes for September 25, 2008]

L. Brown called to reconvene as the Strafford Regional Planning Commission at 8:31 p.m.

1. Introductions

Introductions were made previously at beginning of the public hearing.

2. Draft Minutes of May 29, 2008 Commission Meeting

L. Brown entertained a motion of adoption of the May 29, 2008 Commission meeting minutes. K. Ortmann made a motion and J. Law seconded that motion. All in favor, motion passed unanimously. It

was noted there were three abstentions: P. Parker of Farmington, G. Snyder of Somersworth and R. McMenimen of Newmarket as they were not Commissioners at the time of the May 29, 2008 meeting.

3. Draft FY2010 Dues

Copeland stated every year at the first quarter meeting in September the Commission reviews the draft dues as recommended by the Executive Committee. Copeland stated there were two versions of draft FY2010 dues discussed at the September 12, 2008 Executive Committee meeting. Copeland described the two factors used in determining the dues: population change and Consumer Price Index applied to per capita rate. Copeland stated the first factor, population estimate, was from the Office of Energy and Planning State Data Center. Every year OEP staff compiles a population estimate. Copeland stated for the FY2010 dues SRPC showed the difference between the estimated 2006 population and the estimated 2007 population. She stated the population change for the region was 843. Copeland stated the next step is to use the estimated 2007 population and apply a per capita rate for the population. Copeland stated there is one rate for population up to 5000 and a reduced per capita rate for population over 5000. Copeland noted the communities that fall into the second tier were: Rochester, Dover, Durham, Somersworth, Newmarket, Barrington and Farmington. Copeland stated the second factor that changes is a financial factor that is calculated using the CPI rate, which has been used for the last eight years. Copeland noted it was the US City Average, all items including food and energy. Copeland stated the June 2007 to June 2008 US City Average, all items rate was 5%.

Copeland stated an alternative dues calculations using a CPI rate of 2.4% was also given to the Executive Committee for their consideration, representing the U.S. City Average, all items less food and energy from June 2007 to June 2008. She stated the CPI rate for All Urban Customers for the Boston area and Boston-Brockton-Nashua areas was provided as well as a history of dues calculations. Copeland noted she brought that packet of information with her to the meeting in case of additional discussion at the Commissioner meeting. Copeland stated after much discussion by the Executive Committee regarding which CPI rate to use, the one used since 1999 was recommended for the consideration of the full Commission.

K. Ortmann stated he wished to make three comments and asked if a motion should be made first. L. Brown entertained the motion for adoption of the Draft FY2010 dues. K. Ortmann stated for purposes of discussion to make a motion for adoption of the Draft FY2010 dues. L. Vita seconded the motion.

K. Ortmann stated one of the reasons for adopting the 5% rate for the dues is because the dues historically have been a low percentage of operating budget. He stated the Commission should strengthen its financial position on an ongoing basis. K. Ortmann stated the other reason for supporting the 5% rate is that the difference for any community between 2.4% and 5% increase is small, and while the SRPC dues are a small part of municipal budgets; they are not a small amount for the SRPC budget. K. Ortmann noted that the CPI is really geared toward individuals or families and not businesses. K. Ortmann stated at next year's Executive Committee meeting he is going to suggest they use an index more appropriate for the business.

L. Vita stated he seconded the motion because there would be food and energy factors directly or indirectly affected. L. Vita stated there are employees who would be affected. L. Vita noted in order for employees to stay current with inflation they are under a larger burden this year than last year. L. Vita stated this was a one time year event. L. Vita noted if the Commission were to go with the 2.4% rate, it would put a fiscal constraint on the budget and for the good of the budget, the Commission should look at the 5% rate.

R. McMEnimen stated he opposes the 5% rate as he has not had the opportunity to speak with his town to get their thoughts. R. McMEnimen stated he supported the 2.4% rate as the town he represents is trying to cut back on their budget.

S. Keans stated she was interested in learning that the state used the 3.2% rate and thought Rochester used that as well. S. Keans stated it would be hard to justify using the U.S. All Cities CPI rate.

P. Parker stated there were good points made during the discussion and agreed with R. McMEnimen that there are difficult times existing within many of the communities. P. Parker stated he supports the 2.4% rate and would vote against using the 5% rate.

G. Snyder stated he supports the 5% rate but was unsure about voting as he was not a Commissioner prior to this and thought he should abstain.

E. Jansen stated he supported the 5% rate for a couple of reasons. E. Jansen stated this rate was important to the SRPC budget as there is no place to cut back. E. Jansen noted this budget was similar to a school budget in that it was all salaries and benefits as primary costs, and there would be difficulties for the employees. E. Jansen noted the rate of 5% was important for the SRPC budget. E. Jansen stated next year this should be closely looked at and shared the same concerns as Farmington and Newmarket.

L. Brown asked K. Ortmann if there were other indices that would lend more authority to the 5% rate or should the Commission be looking at the costs to the Commission such as salaries, utilities and technical aids and would that be different than looking at household CPI rates. K. Ortmann stated there aren't enough Planning Commissions in the country to determine what would be the best number to use. He stated CPIs should not be looked at so broadly but used as a tool for certain pieces of information. K. Ortmann noted the business index used by the City of Rochester had a higher increase than the CPI increase for this area for this past year. K. Ortmann stated businesses use different goods and services than a family, and that creates the difference.

Copeland stated the dues, once approved by the Commissioners, are sent to municipal officials, such as Board of Selectmen or Town Councils. She would work with communities at their direction to provide further information.

E. Lauterborn asked what would happen if a community didn't pay their dues in terms of services to their community. Copeland stated that, as part of the Strafford Metropolitan Organization, through the Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration, a community still maintains their membership in the organization with one vote allowed in the SMPO Policy Committee and TAC. Copeland stated they are allowed to vote due to federal and state statutes and continue their membership. However under the Commission by-laws, a nonmember community can attend Commission functions but as a non-voting participant. E. Lauterborn asked if that meant the community would not lose the services provided by the Commission despite not belonging to the Commission?

K. Ortmann gave an example that if SRPC had more requests for traffic counts than time, the community supporting the Commission would receive work. Copeland stated the Commission tries to be fair and equitable and look at various factors. State discretionary funds go first to member communities as does local dues.

E. Lauterborn asked if it was previously said that the Commission must exist by federal law. Copeland stated the Strafford MPO is required through federal law. E. Lauterborn asked if no community paid its dues, how would the law be met? Copeland stated the funding for the work that is done through the

MPO is a significant percentage of the budget, and the Commission is required to provide local match. Copeland stated that currently the NHDOT provides ten percent and the Commission provides ten percent using the dues for federal highway funds. Copeland stated federal transit funds also require a twenty percent local match, and no money is received from the state. Copeland noted the amount of funding used for federal highways, federal transit, Coastal program, local hazard mitigation plans equals sixty percent of FY2009 dues.

K. Ortmann stated if no communities paid dues, there would be no match. K. Ortmann noted if other planning commissions in other sections of the state or other parts of the country have that match, they are more likely going to get the federal transportation funds apportioned to the state. K. Ortmann stated in order for all the communities to benefit, cooperation and good will is needed.

E. Jansen stated if Dover is not paying their dues they should at the very least provide the match for projects. Copeland stated she addressed that when she met with Dover's City Planner in February 2008 and her presentation to City Council at budget hearing.

J. Law asked if this was something that needed to be voted on at that time, as he wanted to discuss with the selectmen in his town before making a vote. Copeland noted there were four communities waiting to hear what the decision was on the dues as they are in the middle of budget planning.

L. Brown called for a vote on the motion for adoption of the draft FY2010 dues at 5%. K. Ortmann called for a show of hands for voting; seven in favor of the 5% rate and three opposed and four proxy votes to vote along with the majority in favor of adoption of the draft FY2010 dues at the 5% rate. Motion passed. It was determined there was a quorum established.

4. The Land Conservation Plan for New Hampshire's Coastal Watersheds

L. Brown entertained a motion to adopt The Land Conservation Plan for New Hampshire's Coastal Watersheds. S. Keans made a motion and E. Jansen, Jr. seconded the motion. All in favor, motion passed unanimously.

5. Other Business

Copeland stated for the communities of Somersworth and Wakefield the contract with the Bureau of Emergency Management was approved last week by the Governor's Council to update their local hazard mitigation plan.

Copeland stated she received notification from the Department of Environmental Services (DES) on September 25, 2008 that SRPC has been approved to work with the Oyster River Watershed Association. Copeland stated the Commission received a Clean Water Act 604b grant to do the river nomination documents for the Oyster River.

Copeland stated SRPC received notification from Steve Couture, manager of the NH Rivers Management and Protection Program, that a recommendation is going forward to the Commissioner of DES for the protection of the Cocheco River for his decision. Copeland noted after approval is met from the Commissioner at DES, it would be forwarded to the General Court.

Copeland stated D. Camara and she had been recruiting for GIS Analyst for land use and natural resources. Copeland stated they had three interesting and productive interviews and looking forward to a fourth interview on Monday, September 29, 2008.

It was noted the 2008 Commissioners handbooks were available at the meeting.

There was no other business.

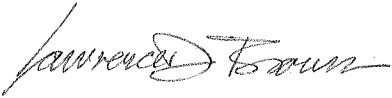
6. Adjournment

L. Brown entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:10 p.m. K. Ortmann made the motion and L. Vita seconded the motion. All in favor, motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,



Marilyn Barton
Recording Secretary



Larry Brown
Strafford Regional Planning Committee Chair