



**Regional Planning Commission Meeting
(Formerly Known as Representatives)**

August 16th, 2017

Littleton Senior Center
77 Riverglen Lane
Littleton, NH

**Draft
Minutes**

Present:

Jo Lacaillade, Chair, Haverhill
Robin Frost, Secretary, Gorham
Vicki Delalla, Treasurer, Stratford
Oliver Brooks, Bath
Peter Higbee, Berlin
Evan Karpf, Carroll
Neil McIver, Plymouth
Dennis Lunn, Stark
Carl Martland, Sugar Hill
Sam Chase, Whitefield
Chuck Henderson, Representative for Senator Shaheen
Barbara Robinson, Executive Director
Tara Bamford, staff
Nick Altonaga, staff
Michelle Moren-Grey, staff
Greg DiSanto, staff
Regan Pride, staff
Kathleen Frenette, staff
Robert Morency, guest

1. Welcome and Introductions – Chairperson Lacaillade called the meeting to order at 4:40 PM and led a round of introductions.
2. The minutes of June 21, 2017 were reviewed and no corrections noted.
3. Barbara Robinson reported that Tara Bamford will be leaving NCC at the end of the month and thanked her for her 10 years of service to the organization. Tara presented “New Ruralism – What is it? And what does it have to do with New Hampshire’s North Country.” She gave the background on this initiative of the Northern New England Chapter of the American Planning Association

(NNECAPA) that was launched in 2013. In 2016 NCC and its partners in Vermont and Maine wrapped up a pilot project designed to collect information on innovative approaches being used by communities to solve day-to-day challenges, such as aging-in-place, energy and economic development. Tara managed the pilot project, criteria development, NH case studies, and developed the web pages. She shared some highlights of the case studies that are on necapa.org under Resources and pointed out that three of the four NH examples are in the North Country. The pilot project was funded by NNECAPA and the APA Chapter Presidents Council. Tara reported that the project was chosen by APA's Small Town and Rural Planning Division (STAR) for their slot at the annual National Planning Conference in New York this spring.

Tara explained that New York was the first step in broadening the conversation to the rest of the county, and, she hopes, to Canada someday. As an outgrowth of that conference, the topic has been picked up by the publication of the American Society of Landscape Architects and Planetizen. She handed out copies of the STAR Division newsletter featuring her article on New Ruralism. There is discussion with a major publisher about a book, and the STAR Division has agreed to help gather nationwide examples.

Tara summed up with the following take-aways:

- a. The great things going on in the region aren't happening in isolation, but are part of a greater trend, and NCC had a part in giving a name to that.
- b. NCC should be sure to stay connected to the larger planning community, not just NHPA and NHARPC, but nationally. Staff should be encouraged to participate in organizations and present at conferences to be part of the conversation.
- c. You can grow an idea if you put enough time and work into it and engage the right partners.

Tara also thanked everyone she had worked with over the years on the staff, on the Council, planning boards and other groups.

4. Michelle Moren-Grey reported on the 2020 Census Local Update of Census Addresses (LUCA) Operation Information. She encouraged towns to take advantage of the opportunity to comment on the residential address list for their community to ensure the count is as complete as possible. Letters were sent out to all towns about signing up and lots of training is available. Michelle can provide the contact information, and can also help towns connect with guidance if needed.

5. Roundtable discussion of local needs and opportunities for regional collaboration-

Vicki Delalla – Stratford is updating their subdivision regulations using Lyman as an example.

Oliver Brooks – Bath is updating their regulations as well.

Sam Chase – Whitefield is finally seeing some new sidewalk construction and starting to work on the water system.

Robin Frost – Gorham Planning Board is working on the master plan. The town has also hired an engineering firm to put together a realistic program for improving the roads.

Peter Higbee- In Berlin the Route 16 project is being finished up. They are taking out 75 year old cement drainage. Berlin is also working on the Riverwalk north of town along NH 16. North Country Agriculture is building 2 ten-acre greenhouses. This is expected to create 80 \$30k/year jobs with benefits. The city is also working on a feasibility study for a snowmelt project using excess steam from the biomass plant to melt roads and sidewalks downtown from underneath.

Evan Karpf – Carroll is moving forward on planning for a new safety complex and new town office building at the site of the current town hall. the plan is to have something ready for the next town meeting.

Jo Lacaillade – Haverhill is working on business district revitalization. Sen. Shaheen proposed legislation that will help with the rail trail conflict. (Chuck Henderson added that the language will provide a more considered waiver process with input allowed.) Funds are now available for road repairs from the FEMA declaration on the July 1st ran event.

Dennis Lunn- The federal government is considering the POW camp site in Stark for a VA cemetery. As the Heritage Center Host Dennis hears many comments from people about how impressed they are when they visit the area.

Carl Martland – Sugar Hill will be beginning to work on the roads now that they have the FEMA approvals. He observed how popular local trails are and how this a great asset to the region with more potential. With landowner cooperation and volunteers more connections could be made between local trail systems and the larger trail networks.

Neil McIver – Plymouth is having work done on Main Street by the Common Man and I-93 exit 26. The Planning Board approved a 30-unit building for homeless veterans. Some units will be able to accommodate families. 1200 freshmen are coming into PSU which is moving toward a cluster (interdepartmental) system. This may provide opportunities for more assistance to the community. There is discussion of wildlife crossings on Tenney Mtn Highway to connect natural areas on both sides.

5. Other –

Michelle reported on the upcoming invasives workshop she organized for Haverhill.

Chuck Henderson reported on the several Northern Borders grants awarded for projects in the region. He noted that even though it is federal money it can be used as match to other federal programs.

Evan asked what other communities do for building permit applications, do they require architectural designs, interior designs, and use fees to generate revenue? The consensus was that this is not how most communities handle it. Tara reminded communities that they need to have had town meeting authorization to enforce the state building code or adopt one of their own in order to have building permits at all.

The meeting adjourned at 5:55.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Tara Bamford.