

# **New Hampshire Association of Regional Planning Commissions**

## **Summary Minutes**

Meeting of December 19, 2019

### **I. Call to Order**

Chairman Steve Buckley called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. Members introduced themselves as follows.

Glenn Coppelman, Tim Moore, Barbara Kravitz (RPC); Peter Griffin, Sylvia von Aulock (SNHPC); Steve Buckley, Mike Tardiff (CNHRPC); Tim Murphy (SWRPC); Donald Hamann, James Burdin (SRPC); Danica Melone, (NCC); Susan Slack (LRPC); Jay Minkarah, (NRPC); Steve Schneider (UVLSRPC); Becky Baldwin (staff).

Guests: Cordell Johnston (NHMA); Noah Hodgetts (NH Office of Strategic Initiatives); Ben Frost (NH Housing).

### **II. Minutes of October 17, 2019 Meeting**

**Motion: To approve the minutes of October 17, 2019 as submitted.**

Motion by Peter Griffin, seconded by Glenn Coppelman. Approved by unanimous vote.

### **III. 2019 Annual Commissioner's Convening - Follow-up**

Tim Murphy reported that NHARPC held its fourth Commissioner's Convening on October 17<sup>th</sup> with a focus on economic development. Each RPC in attendance provided a brief account of activities related to economic development. This was followed by an address from guest presenter Taylor Caswell, Commissioner of the NH Department of Business and Economic Affairs. Becky Baldwin noted that approximately 30 people attended the event that was held at NHMA.

Chairman Buckley asked for feedback from those that attended the event. Peter Griffin noted that although he was personally disappointed by some of the remarks made relative to rail, he felt it was a good event and complimented SWRPC for organizing the logistics. Glenn Coppelman stated that he feels the event is worthwhile but expressed concern that there has been lower attendance over the last two years and perhaps having it every year is too frequent. Tim Murphy pointed out that a few people commented that the event should be held at a venue that a greater selection of beverages during the social hour. Peter Griffin suggested that we might want to consider having a speaker from outside our area and Barbara Kravitz suggested having a panel discussion. It was also suggested that hearing from our counterparts in nearby states might serve as an interesting topic for a future event.

Chairman Buckley suggested that we plan to discuss a 2020 Commissioner's Convening at our next meeting.

#### **IV. Affiliate Conference Support - Follow-up**

##### **A. NHMA Annual Conference**

Chairman Buckley asked if anyone had any comments to make regarding NHARPC's sponsorship of the NHMA Annual Conference. He added that Mike Tardiff and himself conducted a session entitled *Economic Development Tools 101* that was well attended. Glenn Coppelman noted that he helped to staff the NHARPC booth at the conference and although a lot of people are only looking for free handouts there is a value to our being there. Becky Baldwin agreed reporting that several people stopped to compliment us on the work that the RPCs do. She added that it is always a challenge to get volunteers to assist in staffing the booth and thanked those who participated this year. Tim Murphy noted that in 2018 we shared a booth with OSI who assisted with the staffing but this year they were unable to join us. Noah Hodgetts asked that we keep them in mind for future conferences.

##### **B. NNECAPA Annual Conference**

Becky Baldwin shared correspondence that we received from NNECAPA thanking us for helping to sponsor their annual conference. Tim Moore noted that he attended the meeting and suggested that in the future we might want to consider placing items on our sponsor table that indicate who we are and what we do. Jay Minkarah pointed out that unlike NHMA this conference is attended strictly by planners who already are aware of who we are and what we do. Chairman Buckley noted that it was unfortunate that the NNECAPA and NHMA conferences were in direct conflict this year. Approximately 120 attended this year's conference.

#### **V. NHARPC-NHMA Education Partnership for Planning - Upcoming Town & City Articles**

Chairman Buckley drew attention to the chart that was distributed at the beginning of the meeting that indicates the articles we've committed to provide for upcoming Town and City editions through 2020. (see attached) He noted that the next article will be on housing needs and is being prepared by UVLSRPC for the March/April edition and has a January 15, 2020 deadline. Since more than one RPC will be working on the remaining articles for 2020 the importance of coordination and meeting deadlines was suggested. Chairman Buckley asked for any feedback on the NHARPC sponsored articles that have been in Town and City editions. Tim Murphy indicated that he has received positive feedback from the health community on the article SWRPC recently contributed on public health. Jay Minkarah asked if digital copies of the articles are available for distribution and Chairman Buckley said they are available through both the NHARPC and NHMA websites.

#### **VI. Legislative Matters**

Tim Murphy noted that in the past NHARPC has participated in informal legislative monitoring activities in conjunction with OSI, NHMA and NHPA. He has reached out to those organizations and they are in favor of continuing this coordination. Last year Tim Moore had agreed to participate on behalf of NHARPC and he indicated that he would be willing to continue to serve in that capacity. Noah Hodgetts noted that OSI is planning on hosting meetings beginning in January for the 2020 legislative session.

**Motion: To appoint Tim Moore to represent NHARPC as a participant in the legislative coordination efforts sponsored by OSI and to report results back to the membership on a regular basis.**

Motion by Tim Murphy, seconded by Glenn Coppelman. Approved by unanimous vote.

#### **SB 152 - Relative to third party inspections conducted pursuant to a planning board approval.**

Tim Moore reported that this bill has been re-referred with an amendment and although he wasn't sure of the current status, feels it will be fast moving. Chairman Buckley reminded the group that, in its

participation in legislative matters, NHARPC's primary intent is to provide education rather than taking positions for or against. He added that any individual RPC wishing to take a position are welcome to do so.

Cordell Johnston joined the meeting and confirmed that he is willing to continue to provide updates on legislative matters at NHARPC meetings when his schedule allows. He noted that there are several pieces of proposed legislation already that might be of interest to members including:

- **HB 1129 - Relative to notice requirements for certain municipal public hearings.**
- **HB 1276 - Relative to ex-officio members of budget committees and planning boards.**
- **HB 1439 - Relative to notification of zoning determination announcements and to appeals to the zoning board of adjustment.**
- **HB 1450 - Relative to the powers of the zoning board of adjustment.**

He also anticipates that there will be several pieces of proposed legislation dealing with tiny houses and short-term rentals.

Ben Frost joined the meeting.

## **VII. Update on Commission to Study Barriers to Increased Density of Land Development (SB 43)**

Chairman Buckley asked if the NHARPC representatives to the SB 43 Commission would provide an update to the membership. Mike Tardiff noted that the Commission is currently in a fact-finding mode and Sylvia von Aulock added that they are trying to become more educated so they can sort fact from myths. Chairman Buckley asked if a deadline has been set for the Commission to present their report and Noah Hodgetts noted they plan to have proposals for the upcoming legislative session. Ben Frost, who keeps the records for the Commission, explained that once the interim report is completed it will be posted on the NH Housing webpage. The final report is due on November 1, 2020. He added that the formation of the Commission represents the first time that legislation has been created to support planning and zoning efforts for municipalities. Glenn Coppelman asked if meetings will continue to be on a weekly basis and Ben Frost noted they will become less frequent in one to two months. Ben Frost suggested that once the interim report is posted that any comments be forwarded to himself and copied to Senator Fuller-Clark. Sylvia von Aulock asked if the Commission plans to look into school housing and the cost of education and Ben Frost replied that a presentation on that subject is scheduled for sometime in January.

## **VIII. Governor's Housing Task Force**

Chairman Buckley acknowledged Ben Frost and Noah Hodgetts who are members of the Governor's Housing Task Force to provide information on what the group has been doing. Together, Ben Frost and Noah Hodgetts noted that the task force was formed by the Governor this past summer to look into and make recommendations regarding the housing shortage in New Hampshire and the effect it is having on our economy. Reference was made to the executive summary portion of the task force report that identifies concerns and proposed recommendations. The task force also discussed proposed legislation with a bipartisan group of state legislators and two pieces of legislation have been drafted including HB 1629 and HB 1632.

### **HB 1629 - Relative to training and procedures for zoning and planning boards.**

Ben Frost and Noah Hodgetts noted that current legislation only requires that zoning and planning board members be residents of the community they serve. The proposed legislation addresses concerns that there needs to be some level of training and testing for newly appointed or elected zoning and/or planning board members. Those currently serving would be grandfathered. If individuals do not meet the testing requirements and become qualified within one-year they will be allowed to remain on the board but will

not be entitled to vote. Opponents to the legislation state that this will make it more difficult to recruit and maintain board members. There is also anticipated opposition to the legislation from home builders and realtors pertaining to proposed changes in the timeline to make decisions and definitions for workforce housing. It was noted that the proposed legislation also requires the posting in a public place of all associated fees such as impact fees. Sylvia von Aulock asked if portions of the proposed legislation can be changed or removed. Ben Frost replied that would be up to the legislators.

### **HB 1632 - Relative to financial investments and incentives for affordable housing development.**

Ben Frost and Noah Hodgetts reviewed some of the tax incentives related to affordable housing development including reduction of the real estate tax for first time home buyers, increasing the incentive time period related to the community revitalization tax and the establishment of a NH housing championship certification program. Barbara Kravitz asked if municipalities will be required to adopt portions of the proposed legislation. Ben Frost replied that some parts of the proposed legislation are enabling and other parts are mandatory and the municipalities will not be able to pick and choose.

Tim Murphy observed that both HB 1629 and HB 1632 have fiscal notes which means costs will be associated with them which typically fall on the municipalities. Ben Frost replied that several agencies will be working together to identify what costs will be associated with the proposed legislation. Barbara Kravitz asked what will be expected of the RPCs and Sylvia von Aulock commented that additional requirements may become a funding issue for the RPCs.

Chairman Buckley thanked both Ben Frost and Noah Hodgetts for attending today's meeting and providing information on various pieces of proposed legislation.

### **IX. Other Matters**

No other matters were brought before the Association at this time.

### **X. Next Meeting**

Chairman Buckley suggested that dates be established for the next three NHARPC meetings to be held in conjunction with the RPC Executive Director's meetings. Dates established were February 13, 2020, April 9, 2020 and June 11, 2020. He noted that dates would be subject to change due to any extenuating circumstances.

### **XI. Public Comment**

No public comments at this time.

### **XII. Adjourn**

Meeting adjourned at 3:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca I. Baldwin  
On Behalf of NHARPC