

New Hampshire Association of Regional Planning Commissions

Summary Minutes

Meeting of January 21, 2021

I. Call to Order

Chairman Steve Buckley announced that today's meeting would be conducted using a Zoom format and Rich Clough from SWRPC would assist by monitoring the meeting. Rich Clough read a document entitled *Authority for Conducting a Meeting Electronically* (copy attached). He announced that all votes would be conducted by roll call.

Chairman Buckley called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. and asked members to identify themselves, explain why they are attending today's meeting remotely, note where they are, and state if anyone is in the room with them. Members introduced themselves as follows.

Tim Moore, Barbara Kravitz (RPC); Sylvia von Aulock (SNHPC); Steve Buckley, Mike Tardiff (CNHRPC); Larry Robinson, Tim Murphy (SWRPC); Victoria Parmele, Donald Hamann, Jen Czysz (SRPC); Patricia Higgins, Michelle Moren-Grey (NCC); Meghan Butts (UVLSRPC); Jay Minkarah (NRPC); Bob Snelling, Jeff Hayes (LRPC); Becky Baldwin (staff).

Guests: Janet Langdon NRPC; Cordell Johnston (NHMA); Mike Klass (NH OSI); Tim Corwin (NHPA).

Chairman Buckley emphasized the importance of confirming their attendance at meetings to assist staff with logistics in advance of the meeting.

II. Minutes of October 21, 2020 Meetings

Motion: To approve the minutes of October 21, 2020 as submitted.

Motion by Larry Robinson, seconded by Tim Moore. Approved by unanimous roll call vote with Patricia Higgins, Victoria Parmele, Bob Snelling, Barbara Kravitz, and Sylvia von Aulock abstaining.

III. NHARPC - NHMA Partnership

A. Town and City Articles and Webinars - Proposed topics and schedule for calendar year 2021

Chairman Buckley explained that the RPC directors had been asked at the October 21st meeting to develop a list of topics for articles to be featured during calendar year 2021 in NHMA's Town and City magazine. He noted that the list is included in today's agenda packet for consideration by the membership. Tim Murphy provided an overview and described the list as a proposed schedule for the year that could be modified should the need arise. He noted that the January/February article on what services the RPC's can provide to their communities has been published and recognized Jen Czysz's efforts in coordinating preparation of the article. For the March/April edition the topic is a focus on Hhousing and is currently being worked on as a joint effort by NCC, SNHPC, SWRPC, and UVLSRPC. Members reviewed the proposed list which includes Mobility During a Pandemic (May/June), Recreation Planning (July/August) Local Master Planning (September/October), and Sidewalk Planning

(November/December). Meghan Butts noted that the perspective of a rural RPC should be included in the Mobility During a Pandemic article and volunteered to have UVLSRPC added to the list of contributors.

It was the general consensus of those present to proceed with the proposed list of topics as presented. It was also agreed that should something arise during the year that warrants changing the schedule, it could be brought before the membership for their consideration.

IV. NH OSI Collaboration for Training

Chairman Buckley noted that he participated in a recent meeting between NHMA and NH OSI to discuss training programs for municipal land use board members. He called on Mike Klass of NH OSI to provide information on proposed initiatives that will involve potential collaboration between NH OSI and the RPC's regarding training.

Mike Klass noted that NH OSI is taking the lead on collaborating with other partners including NHMA, the RPC's, NH Housing, and UNH Extension on developing a training program. Meetings are being held with each individual RPC to determine important modules that should be included in the initiative. To date planning board and zoning board of adjustment basics have been identified as two of the most important sessions. Plans are being made to conduct monthly webinar sessions covering various subjects. He encouraged the membership to contact him if they have specific things that should be included in the training. Several suggestions were made including reinstating the former "citizen planner" sessions, providing guidance to citizen members of boards and commissions as to what their roles are and providing training to board members on how to think regionally. Mike Klass noted that NH OSI is in the process of planning a virtual training conference sometime in May that will have tracks for both planning and zoning as well as a monthly webinar series. He added that the webinars will be recorded for future use. Chairman Buckley noted that developing sessions based on hypothetical situations that can be discussed utilizing remote technology has proved to be an effective training tool.

V. Legislative Matters

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

Chairman Buckley announced that the Commission to Study Barriers to Increased Density of Land Development that was formed by SB 43 has filed their final report which is included in the agenda packet for today's meeting. Jen Czysz reviewed the high points of the report that could manifest into future legislation including the re-establishment of the housing and conservation planning program, increased TBG funding for RPCs to provide technical support to our municipalities and provide for the continuation of the work of Commission. The group acknowledged the work of Jen Czysz and Sylvia von Aulock in representing the RPCs by participating as members of the Commission and attending their numerous meetings. Sylvia von Aulock noted that there was a lot of conversation based on the services that could be performed by the RPCs and the lack of funding that is currently provided to perform those services.

B. 2021 Legislative Session

Chairman Buckley recognized Tim Moore, Mike Klass, Cordell Johnston and Tim Corwin and asked them to share any information they might have regarding the 2021 legislative session.

Tim Moore reported that more than 800 LSRs have been filed for this session of which there are approximately 100 we might be interested in. These bills include changes to planning board and zoning board of adjustment procedures, roughly a dozen energy related bills, environmental proposals regarding drinking water quantity and quality, recycling and solid waste, and housing. He suggested that we might want to monitor HB 132 relative to acreage required to build certain single family housing, HB 189 - relative to accessory dwelling units. and HB 341 relative to permissible residential units in a residential

zone. He explained that there are 500-600 House bills that have recently been released. Regarding Senate bills, 50-60 of them do not yet have text available.

Mike Klass reported that NH OSI continues to host informal meetings with representatives from NH Housing, NHMA, NHARPC, and NHPA to discuss proposed legislation. The first meeting for this session is scheduled for next week.

Cordell Johnston reported that both the House and Senate have begun holding hearings. Committee members will be able to participate either in person or remotely utilizing a Zoom format whereas any members of the public wishing to attend or testify will need to do so remotely using the links provided on the General Court website. He explained that the Senate is currently going through the process of combining similar bills to be more efficient and allow them to be presented at a single hearing. He drew attention to HB 586 relative to training and procedures for zoning and planning boards and relative to financial investments and incentives for affordable housing development that is the combination of two bills from the previous session that were placed on the table due to COVID-19. A change in the new bill no longer makes the training mandatory. The hearing for this bill is scheduled for February 1st. Another change is that hearings will be conducted all day, Monday through Friday rather than just 2-3 days per week because of the technology limitations regarding bandwidth. Cordell Johnston explained that there are four bills that address allowing public bodies to continue to meet remotely even after the pandemic has ended. He referenced the Legislative Bulletin that is published by NHMA weekly as a source to follow items of interest.

Jen Czysz reported that the NHPA Legislative Committee meets on a bi-weekly basis to discuss legislative matters and will be holding a brown bag session this coming Friday on the legislative process. Chairman Buckley noted that the NHPA website will be hosting a listing of bills that they are tracking which will be up in the near future.

Mike Klass reported on a couple bills that directly affect and are being tracked by NH OSI including one on tiny houses as they relate to ADU's, the training component of HB 586, revamping of the Housing and Conservation program, and a bill relating to third party inspections.

Barbara Kravitz expressed interest in knowing more about the Housing Appeals Board that is now conducting business, what type of things they are meeting on and what decisions they have made. Chairman Buckley noted this would be an interesting topic for a future meeting.

Tim Murphy drew attention to HB 153 – relative to establishing a committee to study universal Internet access for New Hampshire. He noted that should the committee be formed it calls for them to seek expert advice from the State Regional Planning Commission which he assumes would be NHARPC so we might want to watch this one.

Bob Snelling asked for clarification as to the role NHARPC is playing in the legislative process and questioned if it is one of bringing awareness to our communities or actually testifying at hearings on particular bills. Tim Murphy responded that this is something that has been discussed by the membership for the past several years. We have agreed to bring awareness to our communities on initiatives being brought forward and also play an educational role from a professional planners perspective. Rather than advocate or take a position on a particular bill, explain the considerations that should be taken into account by legislators in making their decisions. Chairman Buckley agreed noting that in the past year and a half we have written very few letters to legislative committees taking a position on a piece of legislation.

VI. Other Matters

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

VII. Next Meeting

Chairman Buckley asked if a date has been set for the next meeting. Tim Murphy noted that we have been meeting every other month which would bring us to March when more information on the current legislative session might be available. Chairman Buckley proposed that the next meeting take place on March 18th at 1:00 p.m. utilizing a Zoom format. Those in attendance agreed.

VIII. Public Comment

No public comments at this time.

IX. Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 2:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca I. Baldwin

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On Behalf of NHARPC