Central NH Regional Planning Commission
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CNHRPC Full Commission Meeting DRAFT
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, September 14, 2023
7:00pm
Horseshoe Pond Community Resource Room w/ Zoom Remote Option
26 Commercial Street
Concord, NH 03301

Commission Attendees:
Barbara Randall, Town of Boscawen
Richard Bouchard, Town of Chichester
Matthew Hicks, City of Concord
Karen McNamara, City of Concord
Erle Pierce, City of Concord
Keith Johnson, Town of Deering
Ken Swayze, Town of Dunbarton
Betsy Bosiak, Town of Epsom
Scott Osgood, Town of Henniker
Susanne White, Town of Hillsborough
Clarke Kidder, Town of Hopkinton
Stephen Caine, Town of Loudon
Stan Brehm, Town of Pembroke
Kathy Cruson, Town of Pembroke
Joe Schmidl, Town of Salisbury
Derek Narducci, Town of Warner
Craig Fournier, Town of Webster
Russell Tatro, Town of Webster

Other Attendees:
Steve Fortier, NH BEA
Stuart Arnett, ADG LLC
Jason Johnson, Town of Epsom
Tim Blagden, Town of Warner
Roch Larochelle, HDR Engineering

CNHRPC Staff:
Stephanie Alexander, Senior Planner
Matthew Monahan, Senior Planner
Vince Pagano, Regional Planner
Michael Tardiff, Executive Director
Craig Tufts, Principal GIS/Transportation Planner

The meeting was called to order by CNHRPC Chair Clarke Kidder at 7:05. It was noted that a quorum was present. He then introduced the evening's first speaker - Steve Fortier from the NH Department of Business and Economic Affairs.

Speakers - Steve Fortier, Administrator of Rural Economic Development at the NH Department of Business and Economic Affairs, Division of Economic Development and Stuart Arnett, ADG LLC.

Mr. Fortier began his presentation with an overview of NH BEA offices and services, including the Office of Outdoor Recreation Industry Development, the NH Office of Broadband Initiatives, the Office of Planning & Development, and the Division of Travel & Tourism. He also summarized the InvestNH Housing program, which has funded a number of housing related planning projects in the CNHRPC region.

He then provided a summary of the Collaborative Economic Development Regions (CEDRs) program, describing how there are four regions in the state, with CNHRPC a member of the South-Central CEDR. Mike Tardiff then described how the CNHRPC region utilized funding through the CEDR program to provide local economic development committee support and support during the update of the region's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) priority projects list in Fiscal Year 2023.

Mr. Fortier then provided an update on the work of the Northern Border Regional Commission (NBRC) and noted that one of his roles with BEA is as the NBRC state program manager. NBRC is a four-state partnership (along with Maine, Vermont and New York) with the federal government created in 2008, with an overall purpose to help rural communities who are facing economic challenges. He noted that 29 economic development related awards totaling $12.5 million had recently been announced in the New Hampshire counties currently eligible for funding. Currently eligible counties are Belknap, Cheshire, Sullivan, Grafton, and Coos counties. He further described that Merrimack County is proposed to be included in the NBRC area in the upcoming Farm Bill legislation and summarized the three NBRC funding programs: (1) the Catalyst Program (all of the recent projects were funded through this program), (2) the Forest Economy Program, and (3) the Workforce Opportunities for Rural Communities program. He noted that more information of program eligibility and funding can be found at nbrc.gov.

Mr. Fortier then introduced Stuart Arnett from ADG, LLC who provided an overview of the services that ADG can provide to communities in support of the NBRC funding programs and provided an overview of the project pre-application process. He also referred to the nbrc.gov website.

The business meeting began at 7:39 PM, called to order by CNHRPC Chair Clarke Kidder.

Introductions: Introductions were made by all of those in attendance.

Approval of Minutes: Upon a motion by Susanne White and a second by Scott Osgood, the minutes of the June 8, 2023 Full Commission meeting were approved unanimously.

Report of the Chair: Clarke turned his Chair report over to Mike. Mike indicated that staff would review local economic development committee support activities later in the meeting.

Treasurer's Report: Mike noted that staff had a busy start to the fiscal year with a great deal of activity under the Invest NH housing program, master plan updates, the region's transportation planning program, and a number of local Hazard Mitigation plan updates. While the July 2023 Treasurer's Report was negative for the

month, we are pleased with the progress made on projects so far this fiscal year and we are optimistic about the FY24 budget.

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Priority Projects List: Matt Monahan presented the proposed addendum to the CEDS. Matt explained what a CEDS is, what is the plan purpose and what the CEDS can accomplish. Matt explained the types of CEDS projects and how they are grouped and how they are ranked. The project categories include Education, Energy, Transportation (the largest category), Sewer and Water, Community Facilities, including Recreation, and Other Projects. The Other Project list may include various projects such as Broadband expansion, assisted living improvements, Website development, and hazardous waste site cleanup and redevelopment.

A question was asked as to how projects are added to the list. CNHRPC solicits projects from our member towns, and there are also Southern NH Planning Commission projects because they have 6 communities in our area. Upon a motion to amend the overall CEDS with the revised CEDS Priority Project List by Ken Swayze and a second by Barbara Randall, the CEDS Amendment was approved unanimously.

New Hampshire Ten-Year Transportation Plan Update/GACIT Hearings: Craig Tufts provided an overview of the Ten-Year Plan update and shared the draft Ten-Year plan published in September 2023. Craig reviewed the upcoming schedule of Governors Advisory Committee on Intermodal Transportation (GACIT) hearings in the Ten-Year Plan. Craig indicated that a number of regional projects that are proposed to be funded under the Congestion Mitigation/Air Quality program are not currently included in the draft Ten-Year Plan, but it is hoped that the projects will be included in the next draft of the Plan. These projects include the Concord McKee Square improvement project, the Warner Rail Trail project, and CNHRPC funding support for Transportation Demand Management rideshare software (Agile Mile software).

CommuteSmart NH Buses, Bikes and Brooms Commuter Challenge: Vincent Pagano reviewed the CommuteSmartNH program and provided an overview of the upcoming Buses, Bikes and Brooms Commuter Challenge where the goal is to be the person with the most sustainable trips. Vince described how our commute smart software is powered by Agile Mile software, and the current ride matching success is about 50%. More information on the CommuteSmart NH program and the challenge can be found at commutesmartnh.org.

Staff Reports: Vincent then provided an overview of his work with economic development committees in Loudon, Boscawen and Epsom. In Loudon, staff are working with the EDC on options to provide access to faster internet. In Boscawen, staff is working with the EDC and Planning Board to develop a Tax Incentive Financing (TIF) District on Commercial Street. Key issues in Epsom include potential expansion of the water district and assistance related to starting a business. He further described that he is also the chair of the Epsom EDC as he is a resident of Epsom.

Other Business: Mike announced the next Full Commission meeting will take place on January 11, 2024 and will be held in-person and remotely by Zoom.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 8:15 PM.