

# MONADNOCK REGION FUTURE

## LEADERSHIP TEAM MEETING

### MINUTES

**December 18, 2012**

**Present:** Dick Berry, Ben Daviss, Elaine Levlocke, Ed Merrell, Tom Mullins, Larry Robinson, *SWRPC Board of Directors*; Susan Ashworth, *Home Healthcare, Hospice and Community Services (HCS)*; Bob Baker, *Keene State College*; John Harris, *Franklin Pierce University*; Rhett Lamb, *City of Keene*; Ryan Owens, *Monadnock Conservancy*; Jen Risley, *Hannah Grimes*.

Staff members present were Tim Murphy, Executive Director; Rebecca Baldwin, Office Manager; and, Tara Germond, Senior Planner.

#### **I. Welcome and Introductions**

Larry Robinson called the meeting to order at 4:15 p.m., welcomed those in attendance and introductions were made.

##### **a. Minutes of October 16, 2012**

The minutes of October 16, 2012 were approved by unanimous vote.

##### **b. In-Kind Documentation**

Staff member Becky Baldwin explained the importance of meeting the in-kind match portion of the Granite State Future contract. She distributed copies of the in-kind distribution report and asked those in attendance to fill out either the professional service or volunteer time portion for their attendance at any Monadnock Region Future events. Tara Germond noted that time spent preparing for, traveling to and attending meetings and events related to Monadnock Region Future are eligible in-kind activities.

#### **II. Outreach and Engagement**

##### **a. Listening Boxes & Comment Cards**

Tara Germond asked Leadership Team members to share their feedback and observations about the Granite State Future Listening Boxes. Larry Robinson noted that the listening boxes might be more successful if someone were standing beside them to explain the program. Ed Merrell agreed that the word is not out there for people to know what they are about. Tara Germond asked people to bring any comment cards they have collected to the next meeting. She noted that individuals could continue to move the boxes to new locations in their community if they choose to. However, she acknowledges that the boxes have generated little interest or response from community members.

## **b. Monadnock Region Future Outreach**

Tara Germond briefly reported on the following Monadnock Region Future outreach activities.

Comment Cards: Tara Germond reported that staff continues to attend functions and community events throughout the region and, to date, have collected approximately 250 completed comment cards. Of the cards collected, responses related to natural resources, community character, and arts and culture were most frequent to the question, 'What is best about this area?' Responses related to economic development and transportation were among the most frequent to the questions, 'What could make this area better?'

Granite State Future Website: Tara Germond distributed promotional cards to those in attendance that provide an overview of Monadnock Region Future and direct people to the Granite State Future website for more information about the program. She previewed the website showing the on-line comment card and public input tools that allows people to provide input on a specific area in a given community. Rhett Lamb questioned if there might be a negative aspect to this format if you were to put in a comment and it gets criticism instead of support. Tara Germond noted that she is unsure of whether it is possible to get responses once they are entered. She will gather more information about the administrative controls of this tool. She noted that individuals must submit some demographic information prior to entering the site.

Neighborhood Discussions: Staff is preparing to conduct informal neighborhood discussions at ten to fifteen selected sites between January and March 2013.

Art Contest: An art contest is being planned for students to express what they like best about their community. Ed Merrell suggested including the Sharon Arts Center and the Keene Arts Association. Tim Murphy pointed out that if we were going to expand the contest beyond students, different tier levels for participation would likely need to be established and that might make the exercise overly complicated.

Regional Visioning Sessions: Plans are underway to conduct 6-8 workshops beginning in April that will be open to the public in an effort to identify values, concerns and opportunities within the region. These sessions would be an opportunity to engage in a facilitated dialogue with the public beyond comment cards and informal conversations. Tara Germond explained that the workshops will be held at various locations throughout the region and it would be helpful if leadership team members volunteered to help facilitate these events, which would involve small group discussions.

## **c. Communities of Interest & Communities of Place**

Tara Germond explained that UNH Cooperative Extension is facilitating a series of three Communities of Interest events in the Southwest Region. These events encourage the participation of specific sectors of the region's population in facilitated dialogue about their needs and values. UNH Cooperative Extension held the first two of these events. The first event was at a site providing meals to senior citizens in Troy. The second was at Railroad Square Senior Housing and was composed of residents of Southwestern Community Services' senior housing developments. A future event will focus on the needs and opinions of people with disabilities.

Susan Ashworth reported that there was a very lively exchange of opinions at the event held in Troy and the senior citizens appreciated being invited to participate. Tara Germond noted that

concerns expressed at the Keene event included the need for public transportation, improved wheelchair accessibility of stores and streetscapes in Keene, and recycling in Senior Housing developments. Tom Mullins questioned what mode of transportation was of concern and Tara Germond responded that participants would like to see the Friendly Bus service extended to nights and weekends and affordable transportation that provides a connection between Keene and Manchester. Susan Ashworth noted that the same topic came up in Troy. Participants at this event expressed concern about maintaining independence without a personal automobile.

Tara Germond reported that the UNH Carsey Institute will be working with UNH Cooperative Extension to conduct the Communities of Place event tentatively scheduled for March 19, 2013. This event will be a three-hour facilitated discussion, open to the public, to engage individuals in addressing needs, values, and concerns about the region and its future. Tara Germond will let team members know what the venue will be once it has been determined. Susan Ashworth asked if the entire region will be involved and if transportation to the event will be provided to people in outlying areas. Tara Germond responded that the event will be open to all residents within the region and although transportation is an important consideration it hasn't been addressed at this point.

#### **d. Other**

Tara Germond reported that other outreach events are under development at this time. They will include topic orientated workshops on transportation, housing, economic development, environment and energy.

Tara Germond shared copies of an editorial on the Granite State Future project that was published in the December 5, 2012 edition of the Keene Sentinel. She noted that it was a very positive article.

### **III. Advocates for Equity and Engagement**

Tara Germond reviewed the discussion that took place at the last meeting where it was suggested that a sub-committee be formed to address the equity and engagement portion of the project. Staff is recommending that rather than form a sub-committee, advocates be identified to work with staff on an on-going basis. The advocates would serve as a resource to staff that could be called upon for advice and suggestions. Tim Murphy explained that we would be looking for 3-4 volunteers from the Leadership Team to serve in this capacity to help keep us on track as opposed to forming a sub-committee to meet separately. He asked that anyone interested in volunteering contact either Tara Germond or himself.

### **IV. Regional Comprehensive Needs Assessment**

Tara Germond explained that the regional comprehensive needs assessment will provide an overview of existing trends and set the framework for establishing goals and prioritizing projects. She noted that the first step will be to review existing plans, reports and studies related to social, land use, transportation, economic, climate change, housing, health, and safety needs. She highlighted several plans that we will be looking at and asked team members to contact her with any that they feel should be added to the listing. The review is planned to be completed by March and will be used as a basis for future work. Rhett Lamb suggested that natural resources should be added to the regional needs assessment list. Jen Risley suggested that documents related to climate should be added to the list of those being reviewed.

It was suggested that the powerpoint presentation from today's meeting be made available as a source of reference and for those members that were unable to attend the meeting.

#### **V. Other Updates**

No other updates were presented to the group at this time.

#### **VI. Next Meeting**

Tara Germond noted that leadership team meetings are scheduled to take place on a quarterly basis and have been working well when held in conjunction with SWRPC Board of Director's meetings. Tim Murphy suggested that the group plan to meet in either February or March. Those in attendance agreed to schedule the next meeting for February 19<sup>th</sup> at the conclusion of the SWRPC Board of Director's meeting.

#### **VII. Public Comments/Questions**

No public comments were made at this time.

#### **IX. Adjourn**

Meeting adjourned at 5:05 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rebecca I. Baldwin  
Office Manager