

# MONADNOCK REGION FUTURE

## LEADERSHIP TEAM MEETING

### MINUTES

February 19, 2013

**Present:** Dick Berry, Ben Daviss, Elaine Levlocke, Ed Merrell, Tom Mullins, Larry Robinson, Judy Tomlinson, *SWRPC Board of Directors*; Susan Ashworth, *Home Healthcare, Hospice and Community Services (HCS)*; Ryan Owens, *Monadnock Conservancy*; Amanda Littleton, *Cheshire County Conservation District*.

Staff members present were Tim Murphy, Executive Director; Rebecca Baldwin, Office Manager; J.B. Mack, Principal Planner; Lisa Murphy, Senior Planner; Tara Germond, Senior Planner; Rebeckah Bullock, Community Development Specialist; Jamison Cook, Planning Technician; and Jimmy Howard, Intern.

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

Larry Robinson called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m., welcomed those in attendance and introductions were made.

#### **II. Minutes of December 18, 2012**

The minutes of December 18, 2012 were approved by unanimous vote.

#### **III. Confirmation of Leadership**

Tim Murphy explained that since this is the fourth meeting of the Monadnock Region Future Leadership Team he feels the group should formally select a Chairman and Vice-Chairman. He thanked Larry Robinson for agreeing to chair the meeting today as well as those held previously.

**Motion: To appoint Larry Robinson as Chairman of the Monadnock Region Future Leadership Team.**

Motion by Elaine Levlocke, seconded by Ed Merrell. Approved by unanimous vote.

It was agreed that choosing a Vice-Chairman would be placed on a future agenda when more members could be present.

#### **IV. Updates**

Staff member Tara Germond provided brief updates on the following activities:

### **a) Monadnock Region Future Outreach**

Neighborhood Discussions: As previously reported staff anticipates conducting 10-15 informal neighborhood discussions at selected sites throughout the winter months. To date seven of these discussions have been scheduled representing cross sections of the population that include seniors, economically disadvantaged, disabled, young professionals, families and other citizens.

Art Contest: Tara Germond introduced Jimmy Howard who has been brought on to work on outreach and promotional materials related to the Monadnock Region Future project. Logistics for the Art Contest are well underway with the focus being on high school students throughout the region and what they like best about their communities. A poster describing the event has been completed and prizes have been secured.

Regional Visioning Sessions: Staff is currently working on plans to conduct 6-8 small workshops that will be open to the public to gain their perspective on the values, concerns and opportunities within the region. Workshops will be held between the months of April and June.

Topic Workshops: Staff will be meeting with the Planning Commission's Advisory Committees to solicit their assistance in conducting several topic related workshops. Proposed topics for the workshops will include transportation, housing, economic development, the environment, and energy.

Review of Master Plans: Tara Germond shared a list of various master plans and other documents that are being reviewed by staff to provide background information for various aspects of the project including the creation of the Regional Comprehensive Needs Assessment. She encouraged team members to contact her if they know of any additional documents that should be added to the list.

### **b) Communities of Place**

The Carsey Institute in conjunction with the UNH Cooperative Extension has scheduled a communities of place event entitled "NH Listens" for April 2, 2013. The event will take place at the Keene Public Library's Heberton Hall and will be a facilitated discussion that will encourage those attending to share their concerns about the future of the region. Although staff will not participate in conducting the actual event they will be on hand to observe and assist with any logistics. Team members were encouraged to attend and participate in this event.

### **c) Regional Needs Assessment**

Tara Germond provided an overview of the existing conditions and trends for the Regional Needs Assessment. She noted that the Assessment will be used as a basis for future work and will help with the establishment of goals and prioritization of projects.

### **d) Other**

Tara Germond reported that it has been suggested that a monthly newsletter be prepared to keep people up to date on the activities being conducted through the Granite State Future project. Those in attendance agreed that this would be a good idea since things appear to be happening quickly.

## **V. Group Exercise: Topic Oriented Discussion**

Tara Germond explained that this item on the agenda would involve breaking out into four smaller groups for a facilitated discussion on the topics of transportation, housing, economic development and environment. Staff members provided a snapshot on current trends and conditions that were then discussed by the individual groups. After a specified time the groups reassembled and shared their observations as follows:

Transportation: Ed Merrell reported that his group felt the major problem facing our transportation system is the deterioration of the roadways due to insufficient funding available to maintain them. It was observed that if the gas tax were to be increased high enough people might begin utilizing under used bus systems. Elaine Levlocke noted that the aging population and their needs for a means of transportation adds to the problem and we need to find a way to provide them with some of the modes that were available in the 90's such as bus and rail. Tim Murphy observed that we were more multi-modal in the past than we are now.

Housing: Ryan Owens reported that his group was concerned with the lack of affordable housing. It was noted that the lack of innovative zoning deters from viable developments and we need to provide more affordable housing for our healthcare and emergency services providers so they can live in the communities where they work. Our services need to be structured to accommodate greater density at a lower cost and we shouldn't lose sight of focusing on renovating existing structures.

Economic Development: Amanda Littleton reported that her group focused on the change in employment sectors. There has been an increase in hospitality, education and health care workers in the state and there is a lack of available high paying jobs with good benefits. There is a need to focus on increasing quality jobs for people in all demographic areas.

Environment: This group reported that they are concerned with the impact development is having on our resources and there is a need to focus on regulations to improve air quality and protect our water. There is also a need to look at ways to protect our resources on a regional basis rather than by each individual town. Looking toward the future we need to develop a mechanism to determine what resources are necessary and what purpose we want them to serve.

## **VI. Other Matters**

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

## **VII. Next Meeting**

The group discussed what would be the best date for the next meeting and agreed to hold it in conjunction with the May Board of Directors meeting.

## **VIII. Public Comments/Questions**

No public comments were made at this time.

**IX. Adjourn**

Meeting adjourned at 5:20 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rebecca I. Baldwin  
Office Manager