

MONADNOCK REGION FUTURE

LEADERSHIP TEAM MEETING

MINUTES

February 11, 2014

Present: Eileen Fernandes, Vice-Chair, *Cheshire Medical Center*; Ben Daviss, *SWRPC Board of Directors*; Susan Ashworth, *Home Healthcare, Hospice and Community Services (HCS)*; and Ryan Owens, *Monadnock Conservancy*.

Staff members present were Tim Murphy, Executive Director; Rebecca Baldwin, Office Manager; Lisa Murphy, Senior Planner; Tara Germond, Senior Planner; Rebeckah Bullock, Community Development Specialist.

I. Welcome and Introductions

Vice-Chairman Fernandes called the meeting to order at 3:35 p.m., welcomed those in attendance and introductions were made.

II. Minutes of December 17, 2013

Due to the lack of a quorum the minutes of December 17, 2013 will be placed on the agenda of the next meeting for approval.

III. Updates

Tara Germond provided an update on the various plan components noting that drafts have been completed for both the long range transportation and economic development strategy sections. She explained that the climate change, environment, water infrastructure and energy sections have been combined into one component that a draft of is near completion. Work has begun on the housing section and is anticipated to be completed by the end of February. She noted that a regional vision statement has been drafted; however, both the telling the story and implementation sections remain to be developed. Tara Germond noted that we appear to be on track with the project. She reminded the group that a draft version of the Regional Plan needs to be completed by the end of June.

Tara Germond noted that the Planning Commission is working with the NH Department of Employment Security to conduct economic modeling for the project utilizing a software program called REMI. Tim Murphy provided an example of the scenarios that will be modeled. He explained that we are interested in examining the potential economic impact of reducing the Region's reliance on single occupant vehicles by reducing vehicles per household (currently 1.85 in 2012) by 1% annually over a 20 year period, so that by 2032 our region has 20% less vehicles per household (1.48 vehicles per household) than we do today. He noted that it costs approximately \$9,000 per year to operate a motor vehicle and it will be interesting to see how the model distributes this additional expendable income.

Vice-Chairman Fernandes asked if there were a limit to the kinds of information that can be used for the scenario planning. She was told that REMI is an input - output model that forecasts

potential changes to labor and industry in the region. There are numerous scenarios that can be modeled; however, in all instances the inputs and outputs are primarily economic factors.

IV. Regional Plan Component Development - Staff Updates

Natural Resource Plan: Tara Germond reviewed the sections that are being incorporated into the Natural Resource Plan. She noted that the plan describes the Region's predominant natural resources (water, forest lands, air, wildlife, agriculture, open space) and highlights the most pressing challenges currently facing these resources. It explores the needs and issues related to Region's water infrastructure, including drinking water, waste water, and storm water. It focuses on the efficient use, management and conservation of energy resources in the Region. Finally, it reviews the predicted changes to our Region's climate and related impacts on the environment, public health, and economy. The content of the plan will serve as a resource for our communities by exploring existing conditions, issues, opportunities and tools for communities.

Water Infrastructure Plan: Rebeckah Bullock explained that the Water Infrastructure Plan will focus on drinking water, stormwater and wastewater. Concerns that will be addressed in the Plan were derived from information gathered at a focus group meeting comprised of primarily public works and wastewater treatment plant operators. Vice-Chairman Fernandes asked which communities participated in the focus group and was told there were representatives from Hinsdale, Troy, Jaffrey, Swanzy and Nelson.

V. Discussion Topic: Regional Priorities, Goals & Strategies

Tara Germond explained that we are at the point in the process where we need to determine how we are going to organize our identified goals and what level of specificity we plan to assign to them. To accomplish this we need to determine how easy they are to understand, how they will integrate information and goals addressed in supporting plan components, and how communities and others will utilize these goals.

She noted that we have considered two approaches to organizing plan goals - a values based approach and a topic oriented approach. She provided examples of both methods. Tim Murphy noted that although the topic oriented approach is more traditional, we have the capability of using either one and asked members which they prefer. Ben Daviss and Vice-Chairman Fernandes noted that the values approach forces people to look at things differently and, therefore, might encourage them to be more creative. Tim Murphy cautioned that we don't want to take an approach that is too foreign and Vice-Chair Fernandes noted that if we use the values approach we might need to provide training sessions that explain the reasoning for creating something that is different than the way people are used to seeing things. Tim Murphy suggested that if we used the values approach we might be able to cross-reference it to a topic oriented approach. Lisa Murphy noted that this might confuse people using the document and that people will want the ability to look things up quickly. Susan Ashworth agreed noting that if we want towns to use the information it will need to be in a format they are familiar with or will need good cross-referencing. Vice-Chairman Fernandes asked if the question could be answered at the next meeting when more members would be present to weigh in. Tim Murphy noted we would like to start working on the structure of the document but explained it could be changed at a later date if people were having problems with it.

Tara Germond provided samples of three different plans that she has reviewed showing the different styles used to deliver the plan's message as follows:

The Resilient Region Plan from Central Minnesota: This plan is organized by themes and identifies issues and goals as well as making recommendations and proposing action steps.

The Metro Future Plan from the Metropolitan Area Planning Council in Boston, MA: This plan incorporates seven themes that are organized into very specific goals and detailed action steps.

Plan for Progress from the Pioneer Valley Region in MA: This plan is organized by strategic goals and provides background information as well as long and short term recommendations and implementation steps.

Ryan Owens noted that he likes the idea of providing implementation steps and thinks it would be good to have them refer to individual action steps. Susan Ashworth noted that we are dealing with volunteers and the information provided can't be overwhelming. Tim Murphy questioned if there can be a level that doesn't overwhelm but gives a varied choice of approaches. Tara Germond noted that there is a tendency to want to include everything but we need to focus on what will be the most meaningful without leaving out anything of importance. Vice-Chairman Fernandes noted that she likes the idea of including implementation steps and noted our intent should be to keep the goals, objectives, and strategies general enough so they apply to the entire region. Tara Germond observed that we need to meet both regional and local needs at the same time.

VI. Revisiting the Regional Vision

Tara Germond reviewed the regional vision statement that was discussed at the December 17th meeting and asked if there were any additional comments or changes. No changes were suggested and Tim Murphy asked that members contact staff with any additional thoughts or comments. Ryan Owens stressed the importance of connecting with individual readers rather than taking a general approach. He added that people need to see the "me" component when they are reading the document.

VII. Next Meeting

The next meeting was scheduled for March 18, 2014 to be held at 4:00 p.m. following the March Board of Directors meeting.

VIII. Public Comments/Questions

No public comments were made at this time.

IX. Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rebecca I. Baldwin
Office Manager