

# MONADNOCK REGION FUTURE

## LEADERSHIP TEAM MEETING

### MINUTES

**March 18, 2014**

**Present:** Larry Robinson, Chair, *SWRPC Board of Directors*; Eileen Fernandes, Vice-Chair, *Cheshire Medical Center*; Dick Berry, Ben Daviss, Elaine Levlocke, Leandra MacDonald, *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; Tara Germond, Senior Planner, J.B. Mack, Principal Planner; Lisa Murphy, Senior Planner; Rebeckah Bullock, Community Development Specialist.

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

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

#### **II. Minutes of December 17, 2013 and February 11, 2014**

The minutes of December 17, 2013 and February 11, 2014 were approved by unanimous vote.

#### **III. Regional Plan Component Development – Staff Update**

Tara Germond provided an update on the status of various components to the Regional Plan. She noted that we have just received data from the State on projected housing supply needs that is necessary to complete the draft housing plan component.

Tara Germond and staff member J. B. Mack provided a brief description of the scenario planning component that is being developed with assistance from the NH Department of Employment Security (NH DES). Using REMI, which is an economic forecasting and policy analysis tool, NH DES staff is currently working to model two different scenarios for the Region. The first scenario examines economic impacts of employment increases in the agriculture/local food, creative economy, manufacturing, and travel/tourism sectors over the next ten years. The second scenario examines the potential economic impact of reducing the number of vehicles per household by 1% each year over a twenty year period. J.B. Mack noted that the geographic focus area for this scenario is Cheshire County rather than the entire Region due to data limitations. It is hoped that the results of the REMI Model for these two scenarios will be available within the next several weeks. Dick Berry asked how accurate the information provided by the model will be. Tim Murphy explained that a margin of error was not provided but that REMI has been used as a tool by economists for decades, and the program undergoes continuous calibration and testing.

#### **IV. Discussion Topic: Regional Priorities and Goals**

Tara Germond reviewed the proposed Regional Plan structure noting that the “Telling the Story” component will serve as the main body of the Plan. She showed an example of what a section of

this chapter is expected to look like. She referred to the list of the eight proposed goals for the Regional Plan that were included in the agenda packet and showed how they will be incorporated into the document. She chose two of them to review in more detail for the purpose of today's discussion.

The group reviewed and discussed the goal, "The Region's natural resources and systems will be managed in a coordinated manner to ensure their health, integrity, and viability is protected for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations." Tara Germond noted that the list of six objectives connected to this goal are not all inclusive and asked members for their comments. Ryan Owens noted that he likes the wide range of items that have been included and would advocate for also making connections to public health, cultural and historical elements. Tara Germond explained that there is a lot of overlap between various objectives and questioned if we should list some of the objectives under multiple goals. Ryan Owens noted that he doesn't see anything wrong with a certain amount of overlap. Eileen Fernandes asked if an explanation of the overlap could be incorporated into the story to highlight the interconnectedness between goals. Leandra MacDonald suggested creating a paragraph that covers more than one goal noting that goals that protect natural resources also protect the rural character of small towns. Dick Berry noted that he is concerned with the wording "will be managed." Eileen Fernandes agreed that this wording might be too strong.

Ryan Owens suggested finding a way to remind readers of the document that there are cross-links between the objectives for several of the goals. Susan Ashworth suggested adding an objective for air quality to both the natural resources and transportation goals. Tara Germond noted that there wasn't much mentioned about solid waste from the public outreach and various focus groups for the project. She asked the group about their thoughts on including it as an objective. Following a brief discussion it was agreed that solid waste as well as wastewater issues should be included as objectives.

Ryan Owens stated that he likes the way the goal has a connection with quality of life and suggested that this relationship be reiterated throughout the document. Eileen Fernandes suggested that landowners be added to the objective, "Increase coordination and planning for natural resource protection and management among communities and partner organizations in the Region." Leandra MacDonald suggested replacing the words "changing climate" with "climate variability" in the objective that reads, "Identify, remove, mitigate and prevent threats to biodiversity such as spread of invasive species and changing climate."

The group reviewed and discussed the goal, "A competitive and prospering regional economy will create diverse opportunities and living wages for current and future residents and employers." Dick Berry suggested changing the last part of the goal to read, "...wages for current employers and future residents." Eileen Fernandes questioned who would "Provide workers with the skills to meet the needs of local business/industry," which is listed as the first objective. Tim Murphy explained that the specifics for this objective would likely be identified further through specific strategies in the implementation section of the Plan. Eileen Fernandes suggested including an objective that would read "Opportunities for young professionals to grow." Leandra MacDonald suggested removing the words, "and other sectors, such as" from the last objective, "Support collaborative efforts between industry and other sectors, such as education, agriculture and the arts."

## **V. Next Meeting**

It was noted that the next meeting is scheduled to take place following the SWRPC Board of Director's meeting on May 20, 2014. Eileen Fernandes questioned if there is a need for the group

to meet more frequently. Leandra MacDonald noted that might not be necessary if the group were able to review portions of the document that would be discussed prior to a scheduled meeting. Tim Murphy agreed that this would eliminate staff having to review materials during meetings providing more time for active discussion. Tara Germond noted that it would be helpful if committee members emailed her with specific comments and suggestions after reviewing sections of the document.

**VI. Public Comments/Questions**

No public comments were made at this time.

**VII. Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rebecca I. Baldwin  
Office Manager