

MONADNOCK REGION FUTURE

LEADERSHIP TEAM MEETING

MINUTES

October 16, 2012

Present: Dick Berry, Jim Coffey, Ben Daviss, Bob Harcke, Elaine Levlocke, Leandra MacDonald, Ed Merrell, Tom Mullins, Larry Robinson, Bernie Schneckenburger, Judy Tomlinson, Eleanor Vander Haegen, SWRPC Board of Directors; Susan Ashworth, HCS; Bob Baker, Keene State College; Amanda Costello, Cheshire County Conservation District; Eileen Fernandes, Cheshire Medical Center; 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; Rebeckah Bullock, Assistant Planner; Tara Germond, Regional Planner; J.B. Mack, Principal Planner; Lisa Murphy, Senior Planner.

I. Welcome and Introductions

Mr. Murphy called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m., welcomed those in attendance and introductions were made.

II. Project Overview - Refresher

Tara Germond reviewed the Granite State Future project that began in February 2012 and will extend through January 2015. The project will lead to the development of nine regional comprehensive plans. Each of the state's nine regional planning commissions are working together to assure consistency in the plans. Public involvement is a priority and is being accomplished through various methods of community outreach.

III. Role of Leadership Team

Tara Germond explained that the Leadership Team is comprised of members of the SWRPC Board of Directors as well as additional individuals that have been identified as being influential within their respective communities. The role of the Team is to assist staff by serving as an advocate for the project, participate in public outreach efforts to ensure that underrepresented individuals are included and help review regional data. It was suggested that Team meetings be held on an approximately quarterly basis in conjunction with SWRPC Board of Directors meetings. Those in attendance agreed with the suggestion.

IV. Project Messaging

Tara Germond referred to handouts that were included in the agenda packet for today's meeting: *Granite State Future* provides an in depth description of the project that was sent to the Region's

municipalities this summer when we began the program. Tom Mullins asked if we received any feedback and Tara Germond explained that it was sent out only as an informational item. *Granite State Future: Monadnock Region Future* was distributed at a prior Leadership Team meeting and describes what the benefits of the project are. Tara Germond reviewed a draft document entitled *Monadnock Region Future - Talking Points* and asked members if they had any comments or suggestions for this document. Rhett Lamb suggested changing the wording under the second bullet from “This initiative, led by the Southwest Region Planning Commission,...” to “This initiative, facilitated by the Southwest Region Planning Commission...”. Leandra MacDonald noted that these are just talking points for team members and won’t be handed out and Tara Germond agreed that it is an internal document to provide guidance. Tom Mullins cautioned that nothing is guaranteed to remain as an internal document.

Ryan Owens questioned how old the document was that this new regional plan would be replacing. Mr. Murphy noted that we created a document in 2002 entitled *Guiding Change* that was created on a shoestring budget. Tom Mullins asked what will become of the new document when it is completed. Mr. Murphy explained that it will serve several functions, one of which it will be distributed to our communities to serve as an advisory guide to assist in updating municipal documents such as master plans. Eleanor Vander Haegan asked if it will be used by towns working individually or regionally and Mr. Murphy replied that it would be great to be used for both. Tom Mullins noted that in order to be an effective plan it needs to tell towns how to collaborate on issues by providing implementation guidance rather than just saying that collaboration is a good idea. Tara Germond explained that the plan will have chapters on vision, recommendations and implementation. Mr. Murphy noted that implementation often requires federal assistance and having real projects identified within the plan could assist in competitive efforts to obtain federal funding. Tom Mullins observed that the only way things can be implemented is if federal funding remains available or else you end up with a document full of ideas that can’t happen. Leandra MacDonald noted that a document of this nature could go a long way towards uniting municipalities for a common cause. Ben Daviss agreed noting that currently a lot of towns only focus on what is important within their own town and they need to figure out how to work together. Eleanor Vander Haegen suggested that we will have more buy-in to our plan if we can demonstrate that we are eliminating duplication of efforts and saving funds in the process. Tom Mullins agreed that everyone will be interested in the plan if we can use it to show them how they can save money. Jim Coffey observed that better community service is important as well and we need to focus on what we want to look like in the future and how to get there. He added that if the plan doesn’t show a benefit to the community it will just sit on the shelf. Tara Germond asked members to contact her with any additional suggestions or comments.

V. Project Outreach

a. Activities to-date and on-going

Tara Germond reported that since July memos about the project have been sent to our municipalities. In addition members of staff have attended various community functions and have collected comment cards from the public in attendance at these events. She also explained that thirty-five “listening boxes” have been deployed in ten towns to date as an added effort to get comment cards from the public. Approximately 200 comment cards have been collected to-date and reflect on topics such as this being a safe place to live, regional arts and crafts, community recreation, and the need to focus locally. Judy Tomlinson asked if comments can be made online and Tara Germond noted they can through the Granite State Future website that has recently been developed.

b. Moving forward

Tara Germond reported that staff has developed a press release and plans to hold facilitated visioning sessions throughout the region. There are also plans to work in conjunction with UNH to hold various listening sessions beginning in the fall of this year. Tom Mullins asked if any plans have been made to go to facilities where the underrepresented live. Tara Germond noted that this has been discussed and it is hoped that team members will help identify the best locations. Rhett Lamb asked what questions will be asked at the listening sessions and Tara Germond responded that this will be discussed at a Statewide Advisory Committee Meeting scheduled for November 29th.

c. Opportunities to participate

Tara Germond noted that she recently made a presentation on the project to the NH Homebuilders Association and asked team members if they knew of any additional venues that should be considered for presentations or the placement of listening boxes. Team members suggested the following: veteran organizations, Crooked Mountain Rehabilitation Center, laundromats, town meetings, civic functions at the Colonial Theater, and Friendly Meals recipients. Tara Germond stated that she had 22 listening boxes with her today if members were interested in assisting staff by placing them within their communities. She added that boxes are typically left at a given location for a two week period.

VI. Other Updates

Staff members Rebeckah Bullock, Jamison Cook, J.B. Mack, and Lisa Murphy provided brief descriptions of various Granite State Future subcommittee meetings they've attended.

Tara Germond distributed in-kind contribution reports to members and asked them to fill them out and return them to her to assist in meeting our match requirement for the project.

VII. Next Meeting

The next meeting was scheduled for December 18, 2012 following the December Board of Directors meeting.

VIII. 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