

SWRPC

Commission Highlights

October 2023

Vol. 29 - No. 10

2023 Fall Meeting

On October 10th, SWRPC held its 2023 Fall Meeting with the featured topic *Weathering the Storm: Towards Local Climate Resilience in the Monadnock Region*. Turnout was healthy with over 50 registrants. A keynote presentation was provided by Dr. Eshan Dave, a faculty member with the Civil and Environmental Engineering Department of the University of New Hampshire. He spoke of the ever-increasing need to better understand and respond to the effects of changing climate on transportation and other infrastructure. The event also included a panel discussion comprised of municipal officials from Swanzey, Peterborough and Keene to share the work that these communities are doing to become more resilient. For more information, please visit this link <https://www.swrpc.org/swrpc-fall-2023-commission-meeting/>.

Monadnock Housing Forum

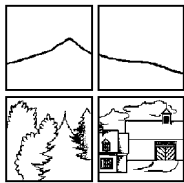
On October 24th, SWRPC Assistant Director J. B. Mack gave a presentation to approximately sixty community leaders regarding the state of housing in Southwest New Hampshire at a Monadnock Housing Forum organized by the Monadnock United Way, the New Hampshire Community Loan Fund and the Monadnock Resource Alliance. The forum, which was held at Keene State College's Alumni Center, covered key housing-related data and trends and housing challenges at the regional, state and national levels. Feedback from stakeholders, experts and the public concerning the Region's housing needs was also received. Information in the presentation was derived from findings and recommendations in the *Southwest New Hampshire Regional Housing Needs Assessment* report, which was published earlier this year. The purpose of the Monadnock Housing Forum is to develop a multi-sector and grassroots-organized strategic plan to improve and expand housing options in the Region. To view the presentation and related documents, please go to www.swrpc.org/housing/. To learn more about the Monadnock Resource Alliance, please visit www.muw.org/monadnock-resource-alliance. For more information, please contact J. B. Mack of SWRPC staff at jbmack@swrpc.org.

Community Transportation Month

During October, the Monadnock Regional Coordinating Council (MRCC) joined the NH Transit Association, State Coordinating Council and other Regional Coordinating Councils to celebrate New Hampshire's first annual Community Transportation Month. The purpose was to highlight the various forms of community transportation services available in the region and across the state. Throughout the month, Monadnock Region transportation providers conducted promotions to raise awareness about the services they provide. For example, HCS Transportation offered free rides on the City Express and Friendly Bus during the week of October 23rd. The Community Volunteer Transportation Company, HCS and Keene Senior Center teamed-up to run full page ads in the Monadnock Shopper and Monadnock Ledger Transcript to show appreciation for the over 100 bus and volunteer drivers who provide rides to the public. The Keene Housing Kids Collaborative held an event to recognize a Thomas Transportation driver who makes it possible for youth from low-income families to attend life enriching programs. These community transportation providers are valued members of the MRCC which is dedicated to building an innovative, coordinated and resilient transportation network that works for all. For more information about the MRCC and community transportation services available in the Monadnock Region, please contact Terry Johnson of SWRPC staff at tjohnson@swrpc.org.

SWRPC Releases Monadnock Region Parks and Play Spaces Municipal Resource Guide

Monadnock Region municipalities and community partners play vital roles in connecting children and people of all ages to active recreation opportunities through implementing park, open space and trail infrastructure improvements. The newly released *Monadnock Region Parks and Play Municipal Guide to Creating Accessible Outdoor Active Recreation Spaces* provides municipalities and community stakeholders with recommendations for improving existing and developing new park and play spaces. The Guide provides an overview of the elements necessary to creating fully utilized parks and play spaces that are integrated into a community's vision, culture and built environment, and promote equitable access for all; safety for users; healthy, active lifestyles; and community and social connections. SWRPC is partnering with [Monadnock Outdoors](#) to provide Geographic Information System (GIS) data updates to the Outdoor Recreation interactive StoryMap, a resource for community members to locate access points to over 400 recreation sites in the Monadnock Region. Both the Municipal Resource Guide and interactive StoryMap can be accessed on the [Monadnock Region Parks and Play](#) webpage on the SWRPC website. Support for the Monadnock Region Parks and Play project was provided by the New Hampshire Children's Health Foundation. For more information, please contact Terry Johnson of SWRPC staff at tjohnson@swrpc.org.



A Focus on Accessory Dwelling Units

On October 11th, SWRPC's Economic Development Advisory Committee (EDAC) met. Discussion focused on the housing shortage, widely recognized as one of the Region's major constraints to economic growth and a challenge faced by many residents, and centered on a strategy that could play a part in growing the housing supply through infill development that blends in with the surrounding neighborhood. Based on a model piloted in other areas, the Town of Peterborough has been working towards holding an accessory dwelling unit (ADU) design challenge. ADUs are secondary units located on the same property as a principal dwelling. The idea of a design challenge is to recruit local architects and building professionals to submit conceptual drawings for ADUs, with competition winners receiving an award to develop construction-ready plans. These plans in turn could be licensed for an affordable fee by homeowners interested in building an ADU. The EDAC discussed how this concept under consideration in Peterborough could be expanded to a regional design challenge. For more information, please contact Todd Horner of SWRPC staff at thorner@swrpc.org.

Southwest Region Planning Commission
37 Ashuelot Street Keene, NH 03431 603-357-0557 www.swrpc.org

