

SWRPC

Commission Highlights

February 2024

Vol. 30 - No. 2

SWRPC Announces CEO Succession

Following nearly 30 years of distinguished leadership, Executive Director Tim Murphy will retire at the end of March, 2024. Under Murphy's direction, the agency has expanded its work scope to extend beyond land-use, transportation and environmental issues to include economic development, emergency management, brownfields, public health planning, broadband, and more. At the same time, the agency's Board of Directors has appointed Todd Horner as SWRPC's next Executive Director effective April 1, 2024. Horner joined SWRPC in 2018 and was appointed as one of two Assistant Directors in January 2023. For more information, please visit SWRPC's website at www.swrpc.org.

2024 Winter Meeting

On February 13th, SWRPC held its Winter Meeting at Heberton Hall in the Keene Public Library Annex. New Hampshire Municipal Association's Government Affairs Counsel, Natch Greyes gave a presentation entitled: *2024 NH Legislative Session: A Focus on Planning*, which highlighted several legislative initiatives and their potential impact on local and regional planning. In addition to Mr. Greyes, area legislators shared information about their efforts in the current session. For more information, please contact Rich Clough of SWRPC staff at rclough@swrpc.org.

Brownfields Advisory Committee Update

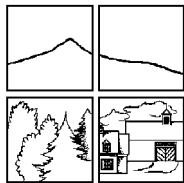
On February 12th, the SWRPC Brownfields Advisory Committee (BrAC) conducted a quarterly meeting to review two environmental assessment scopes of work and a new project nomination. The BrAC reviewed and approved a scope of work to conduct a Phase II Environmental Site Assessment on two separately owned adjacent parcels in the Town of New Ipswich. The purpose of the work is to address potential soil and groundwater contamination. The goal of the assessment work is to help position the two parcels for redevelopment or clean-up through an improved understanding of existing conditions and addressing uncertainties impacting the marketability of the properties. The BrAC also approved a vapor intrusion (indoor air quality) study at 5 commercial properties in Peterborough near a plume of known groundwater contamination in an effort to address public health concerns. In addition to the two scopes of work, the BrAC approved a nomination from the Town of Alstead to enroll a property into SWRPC's program which may result in environmental investigations on a private parcel for potential redevelopment. For more information, please contact J. B. Mack of SWRPC staff at jbmack@swrpc.org.

NH Digital Equity Plan

On February 7th, SWRPC provided comments regarding the draft *New Hampshire Digital Equity Plan*. Goals of the Plan include affordable and reliable access to broadband; access to computers and technical support, digital literacy skill, cybersafety and access to essential public resources. Once approved by the National Telecommunications and Information Administration, the New Hampshire Department of Business and Economic Affairs will implement the Plan over a 5-year period through anticipated funds from the Digital Equity Act, a \$2.75 billion national program that supports planning, formula grants to states, and a competitive grant program (learn more at broadbandusa.ntia.doc.gov.) Individuals interested in issues related to digital equity are encouraged to consider participating in the NH Leadership Summit on Digital Equity on Thursday, March 14th. For more information, please visit digitalequity.us and browse "Events" in the main menu. For additional information, please visit swrpc.org/broadband-digital-equity or contact Henry Underwood at hunderwood@swrpc.org or Rod Bouchard at rbouchard@swrpc.org of SWRPC staff.

SWRPC Soliciting Project Nominations for Ten Year Transportation Improvement Plan

In the coming weeks, municipal select boards, planning boards, police, public works and highway departments, and other municipal staff will receive correspondence from SWRPC requesting preliminary project nomination information for the 2027-2036 Ten Year Transportation Improvement Plan (TYP) update. Municipal staff and volunteer board members are encouraged to coordinate with each other on project nominations and municipalities may nominate more than one project. Projects may include highway improvements, asset management projects, bicycle and pedestrian improvements, or other transportation related projects. SWRPC will be seeking information about each project's location as well as the purpose, need and anticipated scope for each project. SWRPC staff will use this information to screen projects for their suitability as TYP projects or other discretionary grant programs and to gauge a municipality's need for engineering assistance to further develop project ideas. For more information, please contact J. B. Mack of SWRPC staff at jbmack@swrpc.org.



Monadnock Outdoors Gear Library

On January 31st, a meeting of Monadnock Outdoors was hosted by the Keene Public Library. During the meeting, library staff provided an overview and tour of the newly established Monadnock Gear Library which is located at and run by the Keene Public Library. The Gear Library gives Cheshire County residents the ability to borrow, at no cost, outdoor recreation gear including camping supplies, fishing equipment, watercrafts, nature exploration tools, and more. Items can be reserved up to 6 months in advance. Monadnock Outdoors is a regional partnership of municipalities, schools, businesses, nonprofits, coalitions, and faith and civic groups intended to foster connections to nature and holistic community well-being through education and the promotion of active living. The work directly aligns with SWRPC's Monadnock Region Parks and Play (MRPP) effort which aims to promote physical activity and health for people of all ages. For more information, please contact Terry Johnson of SWRPC staff at tjohnson@swrpc.org.

