

MINUTES

ROCKINGHAM PLANNING COMMISSION November 10, 2004 North Hampton Town Hall, North Hampton, NH

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: B. Landman, Chairman, S. Kroner (North Hampton); A. Stoller (Windham); C. Cross (Newington); J. Payzant (New Castle); B. Ellis, G. Fredette, R. Cooney (Salem); P. Olney, F. McMahon (Hampton); S. Perry (Kensington); F. Griffin, G. English (Exeter); D. Dodge (Seabrook); R. Venden, T. Tocci (H. Falls); W. Bambury (Hampton); T. Moore (Plaistow); S. Marchand (Portsmouth); R. Day (East Kingston)

STAFF PRESENT: C. Sinnott (Executive Director); A. Pettengill (Business Manager)

OTHERS PRESENT: J. Landman (No. Hampton Heritage Commission); T. Peters (Windham); G. Ohlund (NH Main Street Center); B. Frost (NHOEP)

- I. Chairman Landman convened the meeting at 7:05 p.m. and welcomed a newly appointed commissioner: George Fredette from Salem. Everyone present introduced themselves.
- II. **Planning Update:** Kroner gave a brief review of planning activity in North Hampton and recent subdivision projects. He also noted that the town is working on a sustainable growth audit and an impervious surface study with the RPC. Discussion followed on municipal fire and safety needs and age restrictive housing.

- III. **Minutes** of September 8 and October 13, 2004

Tocci moved to approve both September 8th and October 13th Minutes; Ellis seconded. SO VOTED. Olney, Cross, Payzant, Kroner abstained.

IV. **Communications**

Sinnott stated that Maura Carriel has resigned as of mid January to attend an accelerated nursing program at UNH. Job ads have been submitted and he plans on conducting interviews before the Christmas holiday.

He noted that the Regional Master Plan Committee will be called in December to review the Housing Chapter. He noted that ERLAC has arranged for the reprinting of the book "The Exeter-Squamscott River of Many Uses". There will be a book signing by the author Olive Tardiff on November 12th. All proceeds from the sale of this book are being donated by Olive to fund the Exeter River Local Advisory Committee.

V. **Main Street Program – Glenn Ohlund, Assistant Director, NH Main Street Program**

Ohlund explained that the Main Street Center is supported by donations from Public Service, NH Charitable Foundation and several NH banks and its main goal is to encourage downtown preservation and revitalization. The Community Development Finance Authority funds a large portion of their work. They use a four point approach in the program: strong organization, image enhancement, economic restructuring, and design components. He followed up with a slide

presentation of examples from specific towns and the positive changes that took place under the program. He continued that towns are selected on a competitive basis and require two people from the town to participate in an all day workshop in Concord which explains the town's commitment responsibilities if accepted into the program. Commitment is costly for some communities and requires a large core of volunteers to be involved also. Discussion followed.

VI. NH State Development Plan – Ben Frost, Principal Planner, NHOEP

Frost explained that the State of NH is required and enabled by State statute to produce a State Development Plan, much like individual communities are required to come up with a Master Plan. The Development Plan should reflect the public's desire for the future of NH. The Plan used to be considered the economic development policy for the State, until HB112 changed it's focus. It is an advisory document for towns and regions and a policy plan for government and a guide for State agencies. He noted that his attendance this evening is one of many efforts to gain input and vision from the public and create a Plan that truly echoes the desires of the State's residents.

Several commissioners conveyed their experiences. Cross noted the lack of balanced development with regard to State projects. He suggested workforce housing should be mandated on State developed land such as the Pease Development Authority, where new employment is generated. He stated that the PDA is not required to share in the burden for affordable housing. Other towns in the region are forced to deal with increased need for housing and the burden that brings to local schools. Bambury asked if other public meetings would be held and Frost stated two other regional meetings have been held. Bambury spoke to the completion of the Hampton Beach Master Plan and the visioning committee's work to procreate development and what that growth will mean for the future growth of the region. Landman and Day discussed the regional impact legislation requirements and Sinnott noted the need for standard guidance from OEP on how to implement regional impact legislation in a way that allows quality of development and objective measurement of the quality.

Kroner asked what OEP is doing to look at water quantities for the future and Sinnott explained that the RPC believes growth should be related to sustainability but there currently is no mechanism to balance that or mandate or enforce that. J. Landman noted that desalination and transportation sources should be addressed in the State Plan. Ellis suggested that the State Plan could encourage industrial growth along Interstate 93 and look at other areas in the State that would best serve for commercial and industrial uses since these are ways for communities to keep property taxes low and make housing affordable. Several discussions followed. Stoller asked where OEP can assist communities to plan before it's too late. Moore stated that the transportation section of the State Plan must dovetail with NH Dept of Transportation's 10 year plan. Sinnott stated that despite the fact that "planning", whether it be at the town, regional planning agency, or State agency is undersupported, it's also redundant. Several of the same topics appear in each Plan, such as economic development, transportation, land use, and hazard mitigation, however, there is no consistency in the context of these chapters between documents. English expressed the need to have a much more in depth discussion of and preparation for these issues. There is simply too much to cover adequately in this timeframe. More communication between the agencies would lead to a unified planning scheme for the State. Discussion followed.

VII. Executive Committee Report

VIII. Contract Approval: 604B FY 05

Sinnott referred to Attachment 4. He explained that 604B funding is a yearly contract to continue work with the Exeter River Local Advisory Committee to implement recommendations set forth in

the Exeter River Corridor and Watershed Management Plan. Tocci moved to allow the Executive Director to enter into a contract for 604B funds as presented; Ellis seconded. SO VOTED.

IX. Upcoming Project Proposals for Brownfields and Land Conservation Plan

Sinnott explained that Nashua and the Southwest Region started developing an active Brownfields Program to identify properties that would be considered Brownfields sites. This is a key smartgrowth tool to accommodate growth in the right places. Ellis moved to support an application for Brownfields project funding; Dodge seconded. SO VOTED.

Sinnott stated that the NH Coastal Program/NH Estuaries is funding a Land Conservation Plan that will identify key conservation areas for resource value. This project would be completed in conjunction with the Strafford Regional Planning and Nature Conservancy and Society for Protection of NH Forests. It's goal is to gather science-based conservation priorities and develop land use strategies to protect these areas. Tocci moved to allow the RPC to apply for Land Conservation Plan funds; Payzant seconded. SO VOTED.

X. Other Business

- A. NHARPC Meeting Rpt: Sinnott referred to Attachment 5 "Planning Principles for NH". He explained that this is the NHARPC's principles for good planning in NH. He suggested contacting Bob Landman, Marilyn Senter, or himself with comments and suggestions.
- B. Project Updates: Sinnott distributed Work Program Reports for September and October.
- C. Staff Update: Sinnott stated that Maura Carriel, Senior Planner, has resigned as of January and her position has been advertised.
- D. Other: English noted that the Exeter Area High School is being abandoned for a new location and there is a Committee looking for a suitable use for the building and would like to place several types of agencies. She considered the RPC may want to consider being a tenant there in the future if space becomes an issue at their current location.

XI. **Adjourn:** Meeting adjourned at 9:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Annette L. Pettengill
Recording Secretary