

**MINUTES
ROCKINGHAM PLANNING COMMISSION**

**April 13, 2005
Kingston Town Office**

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: A. Stoller, Vice Chairman; P. Griffin (Windham); F. Griffin (Exeter); L. Smith, R. Day (East Kingston); T. Tocci, R. Venden (Hampton Falls); F. McMahon, W. Bambury (Hampton); S. Perry (Kensington); J. Payzant (New Castle); T. Moore (Plaistow); G. Coppelman (Kingston); M. Senter (Plaistow); R. Cooney (Salem)

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

GUESTS: P. Wilson (N.Hampton Planning Board Chair); Tony Peters (Windham)

I. Welcome/Introductions

Vice Chair Stoller convened the meeting at 7:10 p.m. and welcomed those in attendance. She asked that everyone introduce themselves.

II. Minutes of March 9, 2005

*Coppelman moved to approve the Minutes of March 9, 2005 as presented; Moore seconded. **SO VOTED.** (Griffin, Day, Tocci, Smith and Senter abstained.)*

III. Communications

Sinnott distributed a letter of support for HB148. He explained that the Legislative Committee was asked by City of Portsmouth and the Coastal Program to endorse the move of the NH Estuaries Program office to a site location on the grounds of the University of N.H. Cooney noted that the hearing was uneventful.

He also noted that dues letters have been mailed. Sandown, Newington and Epping have all voted to become dues paying members again. This makes the first time in our history that all

communities are members. Commissioner appointment letters were also mailed.

Sinnott attended the OEP Planning Conference and all other commissions were in attendance. NH Assoc. of Regional Plng also attended and had a display. The conference was attended by more than 270 people and well received.

IV. Executive Committee Report

--GIS Policy: Staff and Executive Committee created and developed policies and procedures for GIS capabilities and request; they were developed due to a need to prioritize and use a fair and standard way to deal with mapping requests.

--Nominating Committee: Stoller announced that the Nominating Committee is looking for nominations to the Slate of Officers. Coppelman volunteered to continue the position of Treasurer in order to maintain consistency in the position.

V. Housing Solutions for NH-Bill Ray, Director of Plng, NH Housing Finance Authority

Stoller introduced Bill Ray from NH Finance Authority. Sinnott noted that the Regional Master Plan Committee is currently working on the housing chapter for the Regional Master Plan and considered it wise to prepare for future discussions on the housing market, supply, and demand, so they invited Bill Ray to speak.

Ray began by explaining his start in planning with the Lakes Region Planning Commission and then planner for Laconia and the Office of State Planning, and Director of Coastal Program and CDBG and finally working as the Director of the Housing Finance Authority. The mission of the Housing Authority is to help create affordable housing programs and they do so by offering programs such as Home Ownership program; multi-family housing development opportunities; tenant assistance (Section 8 vouchers); and housing research. He noted that the Finance Authority is not in the business of building, or development.

71% of households are owned vs. rented. The difference between new housing prices and existing home prices, is usually 20-30%, but in 1999 there was a 60% difference. The current median price for all sales is \$235k and new construction is \$298k. It currently takes approximately six months to absorb the current listings (properties are generally on the market for six months). The median gross rent right

now is \$978 for a two bedroom unit and for all of Rockingham County the median becomes \$1046. He went on to explain how the economy of the 90s created a housing shortage when employment opportunities were growing faster than housing supply. A housing shortage erupted due to high demand and low production. Since then, the number of builders have increased. But, influences on land costs (such as zoning, planning, impact fees, regulatory processes; all measures taken to control growth and costs to a town) have made it more costly for a builder or developer to produce homes and have therefore increased the price of development, making land and therefore, home prices increase. He noted that education expenses represent two-thirds of the local government spending. NH added 39,000 public school enrollees in the 90s due to the Baby Boom Echo, and not growth. Now that "Echo" is moving to the rental market because they are finishing school now. There are not nearly enough rentals to absorb the demand, so it makes sense that rentals will see an increase in price due to lack of supply. A question and answer period followed.

VI. Regional Master Plan Committee Report

Sinnott noted that work continues on three sections of the regional master plan: Housing: [Needs Assessment (completed), Facts and Figures, and Tools/Techniques]; Natural Resources Chapter; and Goals and Objectives

VII. Preview of FY 06 Budget

Sinnott referred to Attachment 3 and noted that we have several good news items: we are at 100% dues for FY 06, the CZP program will increase, we will be working on the Newington Hazard Mitigation Plan, and transportation planning funds will increase for FY 06.

Unfortunately, the line item budget does not support replacing Maura Carriel's position so Robinson and West will have three circuit riders each [correction: Robinson will now have four] which is the usual average per planner. Salary increases are not accounted for at this point in time.

VIII. Contract Authorizations

A. NHDOT/FHWA PL Funds (Seacoast MPO): *Tocci moved to allow the Executive Director to enter into and receive funds for a contract with NHDOT for the Seacoast MPO; Griffin seconded.* **SO VOTED.**

B. NHDOT/FHWA PL Funds (Salem-Plaistow-Windham MPO): *Smith moved to allow the Executive Director to enter into and receive funds for a contract with NHDOT for the Salem-Plaistow-Windham MPO; Griffin seconded. **SO VOTED.***

C. NHDOT/FTA 5303 Funds (Seacoast & SPW MPO); *Griffin moved to allow the Executive Director to enter into and receive funds for a contract with NHDOT for the FTA SPW and Seacoast MPO; Coppelman seconded. **SO VOTED.***

D. FY 05 Contract Amendments; CZP (expanded) and REPP (extension) *Tocci moved to approve an expansion to the current CZP contract to include the Exeter River Impoundment Management Plan as outlined in Attachment 3; Payzant seconded. **SO VOTED.*** Coppelman inquired about staff time required to complete the additional workload for Coastal Program and Sinnott replied that Walker would be consulting on that project.

Coppelman moved to approve an extension to the completion date of the REPP contract from June 30, 2005 to December 31, 2005; Stoller seconded. Sinnott explained that the 12 month contract was not approved until December; the extension is necessary to complete the work. **SO VOTED.**

IX. Other Business

- A. Project Updates: Work Program Report: Sinnott to email.
- B. NHARPC Update: Retreat on May 12th
- C. May & June Meetings: May 18th- Windham – topic Land Use Change with Faye Rubin and Nominating & Budget; June 8th – unsure of location at this time; working on speakers
- D. Other: Cooney noted that HB 568 which creates CART (Community Area Regional Transit) will have a hearing on April 14th at 8:15 a.m. in LOB Room 101.

Coppelman thanked Bill Ray and everyone for coming to Kingston and giving him the opportunity to host a meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

ACTION ITEMS:

**Email work program report;
Arrange for Fay Rubin to make
Land Use Change presentation**

Annette L. Pettengill
Recording Secretary