NP&EDC
DRAFT Minutes
Monday June 26th, 2023 at 5pm

To view a recording of the meeting, use the link below:
[Nantucket Planning & Economic Development Commission -June 26h, 2023]

Call to Order:
Chair Longacre called the meeting to order at 5:01pm

Establishment of a Quorum:
In Attendance:

Commission:
Mary Longacre
Barry Rector
Joe Topham
Seth Engelbourg
Dave Iverson
Bert Johnson
Wendy Hudson
Dawn Holdgate
Nat Lowell

Staff:
Andrew Vorce, Director of Planning
Leslie Snell, Deputy Director of Planning
Megan Trudel, Land Use Specialist
Mike Burns, Regional Planning
Raissah Koume, MassDOT

Approval of the Agenda as posted:
Nat Lowell moved to approve the agenda, the motion was duly seconded by Joe Topham and the motion was carried unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

- **April 24, 2023**

Nat Lowell moved to approve the minutes of the April 24, 2023 NP&EDC meeting. The motion was duly seconded by Bert Johnson and the motion carried UNANIMOUSLY.

Vote taken by Roll Call:
Mary Longacre *Aye*
Seth Engelbourg *Aye*
Dawn Holdgate *Aye*
Dave Iverson *Aye*
Bert Johnson *Aye*
Wendy Hudson *Aye*
Nat Lowell *Aye*
Barry Rector *Aye*
Joseph Topham *Aye*

Public Comments:
NONE

At Large Membership Appointment:

We have received one application from Wendy Hudson, Wendy addressed the commission and expressed her gratitude for considering her to continue in her seat. She mentioned that it is an exciting time despite Andrew's departure and the arrival of Leslie. Wendy emphasized the importance of their ongoing conversations related to their mission and expressed her hope that they would consider retaining her membership. Can we make a motion to reappoint Wendy Hudson as an at-large member for a three-year term.

Nat Lowell moved to approve the motion_and was duly seconded by Bert Johnson and the motion carried UNANIMOUSLY.

Transportation Program Manager Update from Mike Burn

The item being discussed is the approval of a comment letter from the chair to MassDOT regarding the draft 2023 MassDOT Freight Plan. The staff has been involved in informational meetings and coordination with MassDOT staff regarding the Freight System designations and performance measures. The draft plan is available online for review. The purpose of the Statewide plan is to develop a roadmap for improving the existing freight system, encompassing all modes of freight and goods movement strategies. The goals include enhancing safety, condition, operations, and system resiliency. This involves initiatives such as electrification of truck stops, use of e-bikes for delivery and advanced air mobility operations, including the use of drones as part of the long-range transportation plan. There are also local considerations to address freight movement issues on and off islands. During the presentation a map is shown that highlights three specific comments mentioned in the comment letter. The first comment relates to the National Highway Freight Network designation, which identifies emerging freight corridors. The second comment focuses on a Critical Urban Freight Corridor designation to better accommodate freight traffic along Milestone Road this designation aims to assist with funding and has public support. The third comment proposes a Major Seaport designation to improve terminal facilities, resolve conflicts between vehicles, pedestrians, trucks, barge operations and address underutilized seaports according to MassDOT. The comment letter was shared with Cape Cod Commission staff and Steamship Authority officials. The staff is requesting approval of the comment letter, which includes the establishment of a national highway freight network connection to Hyannis, the designation of a section of Milestone Road as a critical urban freight corridor, the designation of Hyannis and Nantucket as major seaport and support for the statewide plan's immediate robust hedging and shaping strategies. The motion is to approve the draft 2023 MassDOT freight plan letter.

Nat Lowell moved to approve the motion and was duly seconded by Bert Johnson and the motion carried UNANIMOUSLY.

<u>Vote taken by Roll Call:</u>

Mary Longacre *Aye*
Seth Engelbourg *Aye*
Dawn Holdgate
Dave Iverson *Aye*
Bert Johnson *Aye*
Wendy Hudson *Aye*
Nat Lowell *Aye*
Barry Rector *Aye*
Joseph Topham *Aye*

Mike discussed the approval of the next fiscal year's Transportation Work Program. Staff had received comments only from SDOT and incorporated them into the draft document. The changes included the addition of a new task 2.4 for Complete Street support and a new task 3.2 specific to the Regional Safety Action Plan. Some activities were taken out of task 3.1, which was adjusted to still include traffic modeling and vehicle limitation implementation tasks. The budget and tasks remained mostly unchanged, with activities being reassigned to more appropriate tasks. The public review period for the UPWP began on May 26th, with notifications made through the town's Communications office. A recorded presentation and the draft document were made available on the town's Zen City public outreach website, and hard copies were provided at the Atheneum Town building and planning office. The staff requested that the commission take action to close the public review period and approve the Federal Fiscal Year 2024 Unified Planning Work Program.

Barry Rector makes a motion to close the public review period and approve the fiscal year 2024 unified planning work program and it was duly seconded by Nat Lowell and the motion carried UNANIMOUSLY.

Vote taken by Roll Call:

Mary Longacre *Aye*
Seth Engelbourg *Aye*
Dawn Holdgate *Aye*
Dave Iverson *Aye*
Bert Johnson *Aye*
Wendy Hudson *Aye*
Nat Lowell *Aye*
Barry Rector *Aye*
Joseph Topham

Mike identified this as the third meeting for the development of the long-range Transportation Plan, focused on finalizing the vision and goals, as well as reviewing planning priorities. The agenda included a review of the visioning survey results, an updated vision statement and goals and the introduction of priorities and project selection criteria. It was mentioned that a second round of surveying was currently live to gather input from the public on planning priorities with the survey closing on July 11th. The visioning survey received almost 800 responses with most participants answering all the questions. Approximately half of the responses came from year-round residents and certain demographic groups were more represented than others, particularly older, white, higher-income homeowners. However, responses were generally consistent across all groups. The survey revealed that most respondents either drove alone or frequently walked. They appreciated the island's paths, safe travel options and proximity to amenities. The primary concerns expressed were congestion, followed surprisingly by pavement quality and issues related to travel between the island and the mainland. Respondents generally liked the Infinity's vision statements, but there were concerns and a need for clarity regarding vehicle limitations. There was also a strong desire for increased investment in roads, paths, and transit facilities. Better management strategies to address congestion, pavement quality, and parking were highlighted as necessary. The presentation included various graphs summarizing the survey results, but the details were not discussed during the meeting, as they were available in the meeting materials. The next steps included finalizing the vision statement and goals, which would be followed by the availability of a draft planning priorities document at the next meeting. A public review of the draft would then be authorized, with the aim of approving the new long-range Transportation Plan at the August 21st meeting. Based on a review of the survey responses, coordination with staff and input from the chair, Mike is suggesting for the vision statement to include the addition of "reliable and affordable" to emphasize a safe and accessible transportation system. The topic of vehicle limitations was acknowledged as requiring further discussion and clarification, which would be addressed through the ongoing second round of surveying. The discussion then shifted to the planning priorities, which aligned with the five goals outlined in the vision statement. The priorities were subject to the ongoing survey and would be further discussed at next month's meeting. Here is a summary of the priorities aligned with each goal:

1. Accessibility: Utilize the town's complete streets policy to accommodate all system users and improve and expand the multi-modal network of sidewalks and bike paths. Additionally, consider implementing a paid parking system to encourage parking terms over downtown areas.
2. Sensitivity: Focus on environmental impacts, climate change, and resiliency improvements. Address compatibility issues around the airport and track greenhouse gas emissions as part of the transportation improvement program.
3. Affordability: Address concerns related to travel between the mainland, invest in facilities and operations that reduce reliance on automobiles, explore the possibility of free fair transit, and improve connections from the free out-of-town parking lot to downtown.
4. Safety: Refine safety goals during the development of the regional safety action plan. Incorporate a safe system approach into planning practices and enhance methods for evaluating project safety improvements as part of tip development and project prioritization.
5. Reliability: Focus on system operations and include federal performance measures for roads and freight movement. Expand the goal to include travel between the mainland and consider strategies for vehicle limitations.

It was emphasized that the ongoing second survey aimed to gather clarity and input from the public regarding various topics, including vehicle limitations. The priorities and goals would be further discussed and refined in subsequent meetings. To determine the consensus and whether the proposed vision and goals provide a good direction for addressing transportation needs in the region, the commission can engage in discussion. Members can express their opinions, offer feedback, and share any concerns or suggestions related to the proposed direction. While a formal motion may not be required at this stage, the discussion and spirit of the meeting can help inform the finalization of the draft document.

Nat expressed concerns about the inclusion of the vehicle limitation issue. He mentioned that this issue has been extensively discussed in the past and may not be feasible or equitable to implement. He felt that bringing up this topic through the surveys could create more questions and confusion among the public. He stated that many people might not be aware of the previous discussions or the 1998 article related to the issue. Nat believed that focusing on other aspects of transportation would be more relevant and impactful.

Wendy suggested exploring tools and incentives to encourage the use of smaller or electric cars to address transportation needs also expressing interest in steering the vehicle fleet towards more efficient and compact options, such as the smaller European work trucks that are becoming increasingly common, she believed that having more of these types of vehicles on the streets would contribute to less congestion.

Mary agrees with Wendy and emphasizes that what people truly desire from the transportation system is reliability. They want to be able to leave their house with confidence, knowing how long it will take to reach their destination without getting stuck in long traffic queues. Mary explained that the connection made between vehicle limitations and improved reliability stemmed from the understanding that individuals simply want a transportation system that works efficiently and accommodates their mobility needs. The goal is to create a system where people can move around without having to constantly think about how to navigate a flawed or congested system.

Mike clarified that reliability in the context of transportation refers to ensuring that the system operates as expected and does not cause significant delays or travel times beyond what the system was designed for. They explained that the use of the term "reliability" was intentional as it is a federal planning factor that needs to be considered when discussing system operations and performance measures.

Regarding the vehicle limitations issue, Mike agreed with the chair's earlier point that the intent behind such limitations was to help the system operate more efficiently by reducing traffic volume. However, they also mentioned that the town's strategic plan takes a different approach, prioritizing options for individuals and creating financial disincentives for contributing to downtown parking issues. Mike highlighted the town's land use policy, which incentivizes development patterns that promote proximity to amenities making it more feasible for people to walk or use public transportation. He acknowledged that the previous cycle's decision on vehicle limitations had been extensively discussed and they expressed openness to removing that language from the vision statement if it was deemed inappropriate or no longer relevant. He noted that the ongoing second survey includes questions about different types of vehicle limitations, ranging from hard caps on vehicles to more flexible options such as parking requirements. The decision to remove or retain the language related to vehicle limitations will be further discussed at the next meeting.

The discussion among the commissioners revolved around the issue of vehicle limitations and the approach to addressing congestion and incentivizing alternative transportation options. There were differing opinions on the effectiveness and appropriateness of vehicle limitations as a solution. Some members expressed concerns about the practicality and potential inequities associated with such limitations, while others emphasized the importance of reducing personal vehicle use and exploring disincentives.

Barry highlighted the need for a comprehensive approach that includes infrastructure improvements to address congestion, Mike pointed out that solely increasing infrastructure capacity may not solve the problem in the long term. The discussion touched on the idea of improving infrastructure reliability and exploring a range of disincentivization and incentivization measures to encourage mode shift and reduce reliance on personal vehicles. Ultimately, the consensus was to continue discussing the issue and gather more input from the public before deciding. Seth suggested exploring alternative language such as "vehicle use limitations" to capture the broader concept of reducing personal vehicle reliance. The topic will be revisited in the next meeting after the public review period. Dave has concerns about paid parking in the long-range Transportation plan which was based on its alignment with the town's strategic plan and its goal of reducing single-occupancy vehicle use. The practice of implementing paid parking is intended to disincentivize certain uses and generate revenue that can be used to support other transportation initiatives, such as free transit fares, and improve paths and sidewalks. Paid parking is also in line with state statutes, including the municipal modernization law, which created a parking benefit district and allows for parking management strategies. While paid parking can generate income, there are concerns about its potential impact on accessibility and affordability for those who cannot afford the fees. These concerns would need to be considered and addressed to ensure that the implementation of paid parking is effective and equitable.

Seth feels that it’s clear that addressing the issue of personal or single-occupancy vehicle use is a priority. He believes that the biggest problem on Nantucket's roadways is the high number of people driving alone in their cars. He emphasizes the importance of carpooling and businesses utilizing transportation options, such as work trucks with multiple occupants as positive solution vehicle limitations are not as significant as incentivizing and promoting alternative modes of transportation, like carpooling and taking buses. Seth suggests disincentivizing individual use of personal vehicles and expanding bus routes, schedules and accessibility to make them a more viable transportation option for commuters, by focusing on reducing personal vehicle use and providing convenient and reliable alternatives he believes that the transportation problem can be solved.

Nat believes small improvements, such as strategically placed roundabouts and improvements to Lovers Lane can make a significant difference in traffic flow and congestion. He mentioned the positive impact of the roundabout at Francis Street and Washington Street, which has improved traffic flow and safety. You also highlighted the importance of spreading out vehicles on Old South Road to alleviate congestion during peak hours. Overall, you believe that with these small improvements and potential future developments, the transportation situation can improve over time.

Joe mentioned the proposed plan to expand sidewalks and bike lanes along Pleasant Street, including the idea of a roundabout near the school. Roundabouts can be efficient and safe traffic control measures when used correctly. They can help improve traffic flow and reduce the risk of accidents compared to traditional stop sign intersections. He also highlighted the need for patience and careful driving to ensure everyone's safety, especially when entering intersections. He believes that these improvements, such as roundabouts and expanded infrastructure are necessary and will contribute to a better transportation experience on the island.

Mike acknowledges the importance of exploring innovative solutions for transportation on Nantucket. He mentions that Nantucket has been involved in interesting projects related to wind farms, wave action electricity, and other initiatives. He suggests keeping an eye out for any companies or technologies that could offer innovative solutions for transportation on the island. Additionally, he mentions the need for reevaluating the transit system and exploring different modes of transportation, such as carpooling, transit, walking, biking, and even delivery services. These solutions align with current state-of-the-art practices and the goal of reducing single-occupancy vehicle use, we will revisit this in July meeting to finalize.

Mike provides an overview of the project selection criteria and the funding allocation for the projects. He mentions that the table provided is from 2019 and will be revisited and refined in the coming weeks. The project selection criteria will be aligned with the vision and goals of the transportation plan to ensure they are achieved. The action plan includes anticipated funding for intersections, corridors, and paths, with a focus on accommodating all users based on the Complete Streets policy. Mike notes that Transit facilities and operations will also be included in the draft, and the funding distribution will continue to be equal for intersections, corridors, and paths. The draft plan will be presented to the board in July for public review and will be available for review until August 21st.

Discussion – NP&EDC Mission

Andrew introduces the acceptance of the updated NP and EDC bylaws. He acknowledges the committee members and staff who worked on the updates, including Mary, Barry, Nat, and Megan. Andrew emphasizes the importance of updating the bylaws, which were last revised in 2008, to align with the organization's work and legislation. He requests the Commissioners to vote to approve the updated bylaws.

Seth raises a question about the timing of accepting the updated bylaws. He acknowledges that the content of the updated bylaws is not an issue but suggests considering whether it makes sense to accept them now, considering the ongoing planning processes that may lead to changes in membership, vision, mission, and goals. Seth proposes the possibility of waiting to accept the bylaws until the updates are made and a new version can be created based on the changes. He directs the question to the staff and looks for input from the committee.

Barry agrees with Seth's concerns about the timing of accepting the updated bylaws. They acknowledge that changes may be needed in the future, especially regarding membership composition, but they believe it is appropriate to accept the current version of the bylaws and address any necessary revisions within the next six months to a year. They assure that there is nothing in the current bylaws that is incompatible with the present circumstances, and accepting the work done so far will allow them to move forward and align themselves before revisiting the bylaws in the future.

Joe acknowledges the concerns raised about potential future changes but emphasizes the importance of moving forward and approving the updated bylaws. They believe that the committee has put in the necessary work and that any future changes can be addressed as they arise. They also mention recent challenges, such as the loss of a committee member and someone leaving and believe that it is crucial to keep the momentum going. Therefore, he advocates for approving the bylaws at this moment. Andrew highlights the importance of updating the bylaws now, considering the significant effort put into the process by the committee members. He mentions the unfortunate passing of two committee members before the completion of the bylaws and emphasize the need to move forward with the updated version, also acknowledges that future changes may be necessary but believes that the current version should be adopted to benefit from the work that has been done.

Bert Johnson makes a motion to approve the updated bylaws it was duly seconded by Joe Topham and the motion carried UNANIMOUSLY.

Vote taken by Roll Call:

Mary Longacre *Aye*
Seth Engelbourg *Aye*
Dawn Holdgate *Aye*
Dave Iverson *Aye*
Bert Johnson *Aye*
Wendy Hudson *Aye*
Nat Lowell *Aye*
Barry Rector *Aye*
Joseph Topham Aye

Discussion – Open Space & Recreation Plan

Andrew informs the commission that the Open Space and Recreation Plan update is nearing completion. He expresses his gratitude to Megan for her efforts in incorporating feedback and making necessary corrections and mentioned that public feedback, particularly regarding indoor recreation, has been incorporated into the final version of the plan. The plan is scheduled to be discussed and potentially adopted by the Selectmen soon. They also note that once approved, the plan will enable the town to access funding opportunities. He introduces the topic of updating the enabling legislation for the NP and EDC and discusses two specific sections that require attention. He explains that the current language regarding meeting expenses and financial procedures is outdated and does not align with current practices. He suggests revisiting these sections and exploring different methods of funding such as assessments or deductions from the town's budget. He emphasizes the need for policy discussions and decision-making by the commission and the Board of Selectmen. The purpose of bringing up these sections is to prompt the commissioners to start thinking about them and to prepare for future amendments. Nat expresses the need for a thorough examination of the budgeting process and the language in the legislation. They suggest involving professionals and other relevant parties in the review process. The commissioner also brings up the question of whether the commission should be housed in the county and highlights the challenges of defining the division between the town topic of clarifying the funding and administrative procedures for the NP and EDC. The commissioner mentions that the current budgeting process is complicated and needs to be examined to ensure clarity and accuracy. They also discuss the need for proper language in the legislation that reflects the current practices and operations of the commission. The issue of staff resources and the expectations placed on them is brought up, highlighting the need for adequate support to fulfill the commission's responsibilities. The conversation touches on the importance of revisiting the enabling legislation and addressing any complexities that arise from partnerships with the town and other departments. The MoA (Memorandum of Agreement) between the town and the NP and EDC is mentioned as a factor that influences financial interactions. The need for diligent examination and communication between the commission and the town is emphasized. Andrew suggests considering additional resources, such as the Communications Department to enhance the commission's operations. Other committee updates and reports are discussed, and the annual meeting in July for the selection of officers and appointments to other committees is mentioned. The commissioners are reminded to express their interest in serving as chair or vice chair by email to the director of planning Leslie Snell. The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, July 17th, and will be held via Zoom.

All the commissioners are so sorry to have Andrew go and a resolution honor was read aloud to Andrew Vorst for his 30 years of outstanding service to Nantucket. It acknowledges his role as Senior Planner from 1993 to 2005 and Director of Planning from 2005 to 2023 and recognizes Andrew's contributions in enhancing relationships between departments in the town of Nantucket, as well as with other state and local agencies and leaders in Massachusetts. It mentions his recognition as the State's Professional Planner of the Year by the American Planning Association Massachusetts Chapter. The resolution highlights Andrew's leadership, compassion, and mentorship during a period of economic prosperity for the island. It acknowledges his achievements, including the creation of the Nantucket Regional Transit Authority, the restructuring of zoning and land use regulations, the expansion of bicycle and pedestrian paths, the implementation of the Nantucket Yard Sale program, and the reorganization of various planning-related offices and departments. It expresses gratitude for Andrew's contributions and extends best wishes as he enters retirement in Nantucket, Massachusetts, and Edenton, North Carolina.

Other Business:

a. Leslie received a letter from Dylan Fernandez congratulating her on her appointment to the director of planning, he and Leslie have worked together over the years and so it was nice for him to personally reach out to me on that.

b. **Next Meeting Monday, Monday, July 17, 2023, at 5pm**, via Zoom

VIII. Adjournment:

Mary Longacre made a motion to adjourn the meeting and the motion was duly seconded by Bert Johsnon and the motion was carried unanimously.

Vote taken by Roll Call:
Seth Engelbourg *Aye*
Dawn Holdgate *Aye*
Wendy Hudson, *Aye*
Dave Iverson *Aye*
Bert Johnson *Aye*
Nat Lowell *Aye*
Vice-Chair Barry Rector *Aye*
Joseph Topham *Aye*
Chair Mary Longacre *Aye*

Submitted by: *Fiona Johnson*

“EXHIBIT A” to the July 17th, 2023 NP&EDC Minutes

Proposed Premise: Amending legislation is a <u>major effort</u> and should be <u>carefully</u> considered.

1. Why amend legislation?
   - Address a specific problem.
   - To “modernize”:
     - Remove outdated practices/language.
     - Remove confusion/provide clarity.
     - Match existing practices.
     - Expand/contract function or duties.

   Please provide specifics
   - Restructure
     - Improve effectiveness/inclusion or other goals. ***Identify***.

2. Factors influencing “when?”:
   - Urgency?
   - Priority?
   - Timing? What else is being requested?
   - Transitions?

3. How?
   - Home Rule petition or direct submission?

4. **Existing legislation** has five sections. Brief and broad compared to others.

Section 1: Name, mission, and composition.

- Name: 9 of 13 use "planning" in title, 2 use "commission" only and 2 are "council of governments".
- Mission is in special acts or statewide authority for other RPAs. Is ours clear?
    - Clear role and funding for transportation; sometimes for state-wide smart growth; ex. DLTA
    - Issue: Intrusion into jurisdictions of other/competition with municipality-to be avoided?
- Composition must recognize one municipality in region and adjust.
    - Issues? Appointment of At-Large; membership total; regional vs. local perspectives; should composition change?
    - Odd number of members preferred varied between 9 and 12 over time.

Section 2: Responsibilities.

- Plans and retention of "experts".
    - Comprehensive plans vs. Master Plan-confusion? Duplication?
    - Staff, consultants, advisors?
    - Services provided to municipality.

Section 3: Finance.

- Appropriation by Town.

Section 4: Rules and procedures.
Section 5: Standard date of effect.
Options:

- Do not take action at this time. Study further-incorporate as a goal of Master Plan.
- Consider other proposed amendments at a future time, ie. change in government structure.
- Propose amendments for action now; comprehensive or partial.
- Pursue elimination or consolidation with other RPA (not recommended).

History/Background: In 2023, the Nantucket Planning and Economic Development Commission will have been in existence for 50 years. The original concept was voted at a Special Town Meeting followed by a home-rule petition in 1973. (see Warrant Article 5, 1-25-1973 and MGL, Chapter 561 of the Acts of 1973 (8-2-1973)). As researched, the final adopted language is very similar to the Dukes County Planning and Economic Development Commission (DCPEDC) (MGL, Chapter 690 of the Acts of 1966). At this time there was extensive discussion about development, regional planning and zoning including the so called "Kennedy Bill (Nantucket Sound Islands Trust Bill, c. 1972), concern regarding the remaining areas of Massachusetts placement within regions (including Nantucket) and communities that had not yet adopted local zoning bylaws and other planning tools.
The original legislation has been amended 4 times as follows:

1981: Removed HDC rep and expanded “at large” member from one to three (MGL, Chapter 98 of the Acts of 1981) ***9 to 11 members***
1991: Added Housing Authority member (MGL, Chapter 458 of the Acts of 1991) ***11 to 12 members***
2011: Authority for regulation adopted related to Ocean Act (MGL, Chapter 114 of the Acts of 2008) regarding regional planning agencies with “regulatory authority.”
2018: Removed “superintendent of the DPW member” ***12 to 11 members*** (MGL, Chapter 347 of the Acts of 2018)
Also:
NP&EDC is not referenced in Town or County Charters. (MGL, Chapters 289 and 290 of 1996 as amended)
NP&EDC first adopted Bylaws in 2000.