NP&EDC

NANTUCKET PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

Nantucket Planning & Economic Development Commission APPROVED Minutes
Remote Participation via Zoom Webinar
July 29, 2024 @ 5:00PM

Commissioners: Chair Barry Rector, Vice-Chair Nat Lowell, Brook Mohr, Bert Johnson, Abby De Molina, Joseph Topham, Dave Iverson, John Kitchener, Wendy Hudson, Kristina Jelleme, and Michael Misurelli

Staff: Leslie Snell, Director of Planning, Megan Trudel, Senior Planner, Michael Burns, Transportation Program Manager, Nicky Sheriff, Land Use Specialist (Absent), and Catherine Ancero, Administrative Specialist

NP & EDC APPROVED MINTUES 07-29-2024

I. Call to Order:

Chair Rector called the meeting to order at 5:02pm. Chair Rector welcomed two new members Mike Misurelli from ConCom and Brook Mohr from Select Board.

II. Establishment of Quorum:

In Attendance:

Vote taken by Roll Call:

Vice-Chair Nat Lowell *Aye*
John Kitchener *Aye*
Kristina Jelleme *Aye*
Brook Mohr *Aye*
Dave Iverson *Aye*
Joseph Topham *Aye*
Bert Johnson *Aye (remote participation)*
Abby De Molina *Aye (remote participation)*
Michael Misurelli *Aye (remote participation)*
Wendy Hudson *Aye (remote participation)*
Barry Rector *Aye*

Staff:

Michael Burns, Transportation Program Manager *Aye (remote participation)*
Raissah Kouame, Regional Planning Coordinator, MassDOT *Aye (remote participation)*
Megan Trudel, Senior Planner *Aye*
Leslie Snell, Director of Planning *Aye*

Ms. De Molina was officially welcomed to the Board.

III. Approval of Agenda:

Motion/Vote: Mr. Kitchener made a motion to approve the agenda and the motion was duly seconded by Mr. Lowell and the motion was carried unanimously.

Vote taken by Roll Call:

Vice-Chair Nat Lowell *Aye*
John Kitchener *Aye*
Kristina Jelleme *Aye*
Brook Mohr *Aye*
Dave Iverson *Aye*
Joseph Topham *Aye*
Bert Johnson *Aye (remote participation)*
Abby De Molina *Aye (remote participation)*
Michael Misurelli *Aye (remote participation)*
Wendy Hudson *Aye (remote participation)*
Barry Rector *Aye*

IV. Public Comment for items not included on the agenda:

Hillary Rayport: Ms. Rayport mentioned a citizen petition regarding agenda item Enabling Legislation Discussion and that she would not be able to stay for the discussion due to prior commitment. Ms. Rayport expressed her interest in participating in the upcoming August 5th meeting and offered to provide any necessary information to inform the Board's discussion. Ms. Rayport expressed her concern of the wind farms and the Commission's role as a Regional Planning Commission. Ms. Rayport stressed the importance of the commission contributing to discussions about wind farms, especially regarding the ocean advisory committee and the potential to advocate directly to the governor. Chair Rector recognized Ms. Rayport's comments and confirmed that the issue had been discussed before, with the commission already taking proactive steps.

V. Minutes

- **June 24, 2024**

Motion/Vote: Mr. Topham made a motion to approve the June 24th set of minutes as drafted and the motion was duly seconded by Vice-Chair Lowell and the motion was carried unanimously.

Vote taken by Roll Call:

Vice-Chair Nat Lowell *Aye*
John Kitchener *Aye*
Kristina Jelleme *Aye*
Brook Mohr *Abstained*
Dave Iverson *Aye (remote participation)*
Joseph Topham *Aye*
Bert Johnson *Aye (remote participation)*
Abby De Molina *Aye (remote participation)*
Michael Misurelli *Abstained (remote participation)*
Wendy Hudson *Aye (remote participation)*
Barry Rector *Aye*

VI. Transportation Action/Discussion Items:

A. NRTA Fare Free Impact on Ridership

Representing: Michael Burns Transportation Program Manager and Gary Roberts (*Remote participation*)

Discussion: Mr. Burns provided an overview of increase in ridership due to the fare free initiative. This started in 1995 and has grown substantially with the data showing a rise in ridership with the fare free service. These benefits align with regional transportation goals such as improved accessibility, affordability, reliability, and environmental sensitivity. Ms. Jelleme questioned about the data supporting these improvements, including congestion, delays and parking availability due to the NRTA fare-free service. Mr. Burns stated that while there were no exact figures, the improvements where 30,000 trips were taken by bus instead of cars therefore reduces traffic and parking demand. Mr. Johnson asked about the capacity of the new electric buses. The new electric buses can carry 16 passengers and extra buses were added during peak times to handle the overflow.

B. FFY2024-28 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)– close public review period and approve Amendment Number 4

Representing: Michael Burns

Discussion: The Tip for fiscal year 2024 had $618,620 allocated for operating costs. This amount is being increased by about 1.2 million. The Amendment was approved last month after a public review period. The feedback received was mostly positive, 31 responses, roughly 80% in favor. Some concerns were raised, including whether the NRTA (Nantucket Regional Transit Authority) needed to increase services or operating funds, with some suggesting that bus riders should pay for the service instead of it being free. There were also complaints about previous bad experiences with the bus service. Staff recommended that the NP&EDC approve Amendment 4 to the fiscal year 2024 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) following a public review period that lasted about a month. The review period ended on the 29th and based on the feedback received the staff believes the amendment should be approved.

Motion/Vote: Vice-Chair Lowell motion to close the public review. The motion was duly seconded by Mr. Topham and the motion was carried unanimously.

<u>Vote taken by Roll Call:</u>
Vice-Chair Nat Lowell *Aye*
John Kitchener *Aye*
Kristina Jelleme *Aye*
Brook Mohr *Aye*
Dave Iverson *Aye (remote participation)*
Joseph Topham *Aye*
Bert Johnson *Aye (remote participation)*
Abby De Molina *Aye (remote participation)*
Michael Misurelli *Aye (remote participation)*
Wendy Hudson *Aye (remote participation)*
Barry Rector *Aye*

Motion/Vote: Vice-Chair Lowell made a motion to approve Amendment 4 to the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The motion was duly seconded by Mr. Topham and the motion was carried unanimously.

<u>Vote taken by Roll Call:</u>
Vice-Chair Nat Lowell *Aye*
John Kitchener *Aye*
Kristina Jelleme *Aye*

Brook Mohr *Aye*
Dave Iverson *Aye (remote participation)*
Joseph Topham *Aye*
Bert Johnson *Aye (remote participation)*
Abby De Molina *Aye (remote participation)*
Michael Misurelli *Aye (remote participation)*
Wendy Hudson *Aye (remote participation)*
Barry Rector *Aye*

C. Long-Range Transportation Plan FY2024 Accomplishments

Representing: Michael Burns, Transportation Planner
Discussion: The NP&EDC reviewed and discussed the accomplishments achieved over the past year concerning the Long-Range Transportation Plan for Fiscal Year 2024. Increased public involvement in updating the long-range transportation plan tripled through improved communication and the plan more user-friendly. Educated the public about e-bike classifications and promoted helmet use. Developing a safety action plan to heighten road safety, including visits to high crash areas and installing speed feedback signs on Milestone Road. Installed permanent traffic counters at six locations to monitor traffic patterns and seasonal changes. Started designing the Milestone Rotary at Nobadeer Farm Road and widening Milestone Road to improve traffic flow. Proposed the Pleasant Street project and Tom Nevers Path to expand the multimodal transportation network. Continuing to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Collaborating with statewide and local staff on initiatives for downtown resiliency and reliability. Coordinated with the Historic Commission and other Town departments to address potential issues early in project designs. The Steamship Authority froze fares for residents and kept parking rates unchanged to maintain affordability based on updated transportation plans and survey results. Initiated a system to manage parking effectively. Evaluated daily miles traveled and vehicle population trends to make sure they align with the Town's development plans. Approved funding for new town road path and improvement to parking management to support better transportation infrastructure. Planning to update the vehicle carrying capacity study to reflect current traffic trends and needs. It was last conducted in 2001. Continuing to update the master plan including implementing the Free Fare and improving parking provisions in downtown areas.

VIII. <u>Other Action/Discussion Items:</u>

A. Vacation Carryover for Planning Director Leslie Snell

Mrs. Snell requested to carry over 137.5 hours of vacation time to the next year due to a busy schedule that prevented her from using it. The Commission discussed the request briefly.

Motion/Vote: Mr. Lowell made a motion to approve the request. The motion was duly seconded by Mr. Kitchener.

<u>Vote taken by Roll Call:</u>
Joseph Topham *Aye*
Brook Mohr *Aye*
Kristina Jelleme *Aye*
Dave Iverson *Aye (remote participation)*
Vice-Chair Nat Lowell *Aye*
John Kitchener *Aye*
Bert Johnson *Aye (remote participation)*
Abby De Molina *Aye (remote participation)*
Michael Misurelli *Aye (remote participation)*
Wendy Hudson *Aye (remote participation)*

Barry Rector *Aye*

B. Enabling Legislation Discussion

Chair Rector acknowledged the delays in progress and the urgency the need to finalize a first draft. A workshop session was planned to revisit and discuss remaining items. Chair Rector expressed the need to move forward and complete the discussion, such as including members, term lengths and the organization's name. There was discussion of which organizations should be responsible for Arts and Culture appointments, with the Commissioners agreeing to follow the staff's recommendations of the Cultural Council. The Commissioners leaned towards the Cultural Council since it is a Town Committee. There was debate whether the Housing Authority or the Affordable Housing Trust should be represented in the enabling legislation. Ms. Mohr strongly advised that the Affordable Housing Trust should be included due to its broader and more current involvement in housing issues whereas the Housing Authority has more limited scope. Mrs. Snell recalled that there is already a link between the Commission and the Housing Trust through an appointed member. The Housing Authority was seen as more traditionally linked to state agencies dating back to its creation in 1973. Chair Rector expressed the need for each member to clearly state their position so that a decision could be made. The Commissioners debated the importance of including both perspectives in the planning process. There was a majority support for Housing Authority with a vote taken by roll call: Vice-Chair Nat Lowell – *Housing Authority;* John Kitchener - *Housing Authority;* Kristina Jelleme – *Housing Authority*; Brook Mohr – *Housing Authority;* Dave Iverson – *Housing Authority;* Joseph Topham – *Housing Authority;* Michael Misirelli – *Housing Authority (remote participation*; Abby De Molina – *Housing Authority (remote participation)*; Wendy Hudson - *Housing Authority (remote participation);* Bert Johnson - *Housing Authority (remote participation); and* Chair Barry Rector – *Housing Authority,* despite some reservations about the workload for the Housing Authority. The Commissioners discussed on how to choose the three at large members. The Commissioners debated whether these positions should be appointed or elected. Mr. Topham felt that appointing members might seem like "insider" decision making. Some thought elections could be messy and put too much pressure on candidates. Some Commissioners suggested involving multiple entities such as the County Commissioners or the Select Board in the appointment process. Through that process it would provide more public perspective rather than having decisions made solely by the Planning Commission. There was some support of this idea, it would make the process feel fairer and more legitimate. Some supported keeping the process flexible. Most of the Commissioners agreed on appointing these members instead of electing them. The consensus was to let the other entity handle the appointments independently, avoiding any joint appointment process. Chair Rector asked the Commissioners which entities should be responsible for appointing the three at-large members. There was a debate of the term lengths for different positions. It was greed that at large members should have a three-year term and to allow members time to learn and contribute effectively. The Commissioners agreed that staggering the terms of at large members will prevent all three members from being replaced at once. There is consensus against imposing term limits. This might prevent experienced and valuable members from continuing to serve. There was a discussion regarding the name for the new entity and whether to include the word "planning" or not. The consensus leaned towards "Regional Commission". The majority supports the name "Nantucket Regional Commission", which they felt was simpler and more reflective of the commission's regional focus.

C. Election of Officers

a. Chair (currently Barry Rector)

Mr. Iverson is the acting chair for the election of officers. The Mr. Rector confirmed that no second was required for the nomination. Barry Rector was the only candidate for the Chair position. A roll call vote was done with all members voting unanimously in favor of Mr. Rector as the Chair.

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

Joseph Topham *Aye*
Kristina Jelleme *Aye*

John Kitchener *Aye*
Brook Mohr *Aye*
Vice-Chair Nat Lowell *Aye*
Wendy Hudson *Aye (remote participation)*
Michael Misurelli *Aye (remote participation)*
Bert Johnson *Aye (remote participation)*
Abby De Molina *Aye (remote participation)*
Dave Iverson *Aye*

b. Vice Chair (currently Nat Lowell)

Nat Lowell was nominated for the Vice-Chair position. A roll call vote was done, and Mr. Lowell was unanimously re-elected as the Vice-Chair.

Vote taken by Roll Call:
Barry Rector *Aye*
John Kitchener *Aye*
Kristina Jelleme *Aye*
Brook Mohr *Aye*
Joseph Topham *Aye*
Wendy Hudson *Aye (remote participation)*
Michael Misurelli *Aye (remote participation)*
Bert Johnson *Aye (remote participation)*
Abby De Molina *Aye (remote participation)*
Dave Iverson *Aye*

D. Annual Appointments

a. Rural Policy Advisory Committee (*currently Wendy Hudson***)**

Wendy Hudson was re-appointed. A roll call vote was done, and Ms. Hudson was unanimously re-elected.

Vote taken by Roll Call:
Vice-Chair Nat Lowell *Aye*
John Kitchener *Aye*
Kristina Jelleme *Aye*
Brook Mohr *Aye*
Dave Iverson *Aye*
Joseph Topham *Aye*
Michael Misurelli *Aye (remote participation)*
Bert Johnson *Aye (remote participation)*
Abby De Molina *Aye (remote participation)*
Wendy Hudson *Aye (remote participation)*
Barry Rector *Aye*

b. Capital Program Committee (*currently Barry Rector)*

Mr. Rector expressed the need to step down from the Capital Program Committee due to heavy time commitment. After discussing the responsibilities Mr. Kitchener was suggested and nominated to take on the role. Mr. Kitchener expressed interest but mentioned needing to be released from other commitments to fully take on this responsibility. Mr. Kitchener was unanimously voted in to join the Capital Program Committee.

Vote taken by Roll Call:
Vice-Chair Nat Lowell *Aye*

Kristina Jelleme *Aye*
John Kitchener *Aye*
Brook Mohr *Aye*
Dave Iverson *Aye*
Joseph Topham *Aye*
Michael Misurelli *Aye (remote participation)*
Bert Johnson *Aye (remote participation)*
Abby De Molina *Aye (remote participation)*
Wendy Hudson *Aye (remote participation)*
Barry Rector *Aye*

c. **Affordable Housing Trust (***currently Dave Iverson***)**
Mr. Iverson served on the Affordable Housing Trust for five years expressed his passion for the cause however he is overwhelmed with time commitments to continue. Abby De Molina was nominated to take Mr. Iverson's place. Ms. De Molina accepted the nomination and commented her willingness and interest in contributing to the Affordable Housing Trust. Ms. De Molina was unanimously approved to join the Affordable Housing Trust.

Vote taken by Roll Call:
Vice-Chair Nat Lowell *Aye*
Kristina Jelleme *Aye*
John Kitchener *Aye*
Brook Mohr *Aye*
Dave Iverson *Aye*
Joseph Topham *Aye*
Michael Misurelli *Aye (remote participation)*
Bert Johnson *Aye (remote participation)*
Abby De Molina *Aye (remote participation)*
Wendy Hudson *Aye (remote participation)*
Barry Rector *Aye*

d. **Contract Review Committee of Human Services (***currently Bert Johnson***)**
Mr. Johnson declined to continue due to the time commitment and seasona travel to Florida. Mr. Johnson stated that the meetings are more demanding than he can manage and asked if anyone else was interested. Chair Rector showed interest however wanted more information about the time commitment. Ms. Mohr stated that the Human Services process is under review and might change in the future. It was decided to hold off on appointing someone new for this committee until more information is gathered.

e. **Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (***currently Joseph Topham***)**

f. **Madaket Area Plan Workgroup (***currently Joseph Topham)*
Mr. Topham was nominated and accepted to continue his role on both committees (Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee and Madaket Area Plan Workgroup).

Vote taken by Roll Call:
Vice-Chair Nat Lowell *Aye*
John Kitchener *Aye*
Kristina Jelleme *Aye*
Dave Iverson *Aye*
Brook Mohr *Aye*
Michael Misurelli *Aye (remote participation)*
Wendy Hudson *Aye (remote participation)*

Abby De Molina *Aye (remote participation)*
Bert Johnson *Aye (remote participation)*
Barry Rector *Aye*

g. **Harbor Plan Update Committee (*currently Seth Engelbourg*)**
h. **Town Area Plan Workgroup (*formerly Mary Longacre*)**

The Commissioners discussed appointments for Harbor Plan Update Committee and the Town Area Plan Workgroup however postponed for a month to allow members more time to consider the responsibilities.

E. Committee Reports

- **Rural Policy Advisory Committee – Wendy Hudson**
- **Capital Program Committee – Barry Rector**
- **Affordable Housing Trust – Dave Iverson**
- **Contract Review Committee of Human Services – Bert Johnson**
- **Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee – Joseph Topham**

There was a brief update and discussion of concerns about bike path safety, especially with the increased use of electric bikes. There were suggestions to implement speed limits, improve safety education, and promote helmet use especially among young riders. Mr. Topham stated that there was a potential for an article at the next Town Meeting to address these issues and consider ways to engage the community, like involving the schools and local bike shops in safety measures.

- **Harbor Plan Update Committee**
- **Madaket Area Plan Workgroup – Joseph Topham**
- **Others**

VIII. Other Business

None

IX. Adjournment:

Motion/Vote: Ms. Iverson made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:39PM. The motion was duly seconded by Mr. Kitchener and the motion was carried unanimously.

<u>Vote taken by Roll Call:</u>
Vice-Chair Nat Lowell *Aye*
John Kitchener *Aye*
Kristina Jelleme *Aye*
Brook Mohr *Aye*
Abby De Molina *Aye (remote participation)*
Dave Iverson *Aye*
Michael Misurelli *Aye (remote participation)*
Wendy Hudson *Aye (remote participation)*
Bert Johnson *Aye (remote participation)*
Barry Rector *Aye*

Submitted by: Catherine Ancero