



NH PLANNERS
ASSOCIATION

VOL. 7, NO. 2

THE GRANITE STATE PLANNER

SPRING 2010

www.nhplanners.org

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Colleagues:

It's spring and that means the NHPA Executive Committee is gearing up for its Spring Professional Development Session and the NHPA Planning Awards on April 22, 2010. No Annual Conference this spring you say? Stay tuned; NHPA is hosting this year's **fall** NNECAPA conference.

The NHPA executive committee has been working to prepare a new Strategic Plan. A draft is now available and we'd like to hear your comments. Are we moving in the right direction? Are there services you'd like us to include in our future planning? Resources we ought to be providing to the membership? Contact any member of the Executive Committee to pass on your thoughts. To view the proposed [2010 Strategic Plan](#) visit: www.nhplanners.org.

One recurrent objective in both the 2003 and proposed Strategic Plan is to increase awareness of the value and benefits of planning. One identified means towards implementation is to work with NH's schools and partner with the American Institute of Architects in NH's Learning By Design program,

particularly their Box City effort. The program is intended to introduce students at various grade levels to city planning and design principles, zoning, scale, architectural design, construction, and presentation and discussion skills, as well as, give you the chance to refine your skills and give back to your community. If you are interested in volunteering, please [contact me](#). If there is enough interest among NHPA members, we will organize a training session for volunteers. If you would like to learn a little more about the program visit the AIANH [Learning by Design website](#).

Sincerely,

Jennifer Czysz
NHPA President

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MOVING FORWARD TO PROTECT CANAAN STREET LAKE

Like many lakes in New Hampshire, Canaan Street Lake offers residents and visitors recreational opportunities, such as swimming, fishing, boating, water-skiing, ice fishing, ice-skating, snowmobiling, and the occasional seaplane landing. In addition, the lake is the town's largest public water supply and Canaan's Source Water Protection Committee is completing a number of initiatives to minimize activities that may negatively affect the lake's water quality. David Shinnlinger, the committee's chair and a teacher at Mascoma Valley Regional High School, believes protecting Canaan Street Lake's watershed is important. "We need to preserve what we have. If something happens to the lake and it couldn't be used to supply drinking water anymore, it will be extremely costly for the town to change water supply sources."

In 2006 the committee, with assistance from the Granite State Rural Water Association, completed a comprehensive watershed protection plan identifying three primary threats to water quality: roads, septic systems, and land use/land conversion. The plan summarizes historical lake water quality data and notes that "increasing conductivity levels signify that human induced pollution is degrading Canaan Street Lake. Conductivity levels increased annually from 1998 to 2004, with a total increase of nearly 65% from original levels."

With a clear set of objectives, strategies, and actions identified in the plan, the committee applied for a DES Source Protection Grant in 2007 to implement the plan's key recommendations. These include the development of a comprehensive water quality testing program, survey of nearby high-risk (older) septic systems, better management of recreational uses, development of land use regulations to reduce salt and sediment entering the lake, and increased public education. Significant contributions have been made by various partners, including Plymouth State University through land use regulation recommendations; Cardigan Mountain School through facilities, manpower, and funding; and Mascoma High School through a series of educational brochures regarding pollution prevention; as well as many committed volunteers and financial contributions.

Public education and outreach to landowners, contractors, town employees and visitors has made everyone think about how some of their activities may affect the lake's water quality. For example, information concerning septic system care and pollution impacts, distributed through a survey to lakefront property owners, has resulted in property owners performing an increased level of septic system maintenance. In 2010, educational efforts will focus on how property owners can minimize stormwater runoff. The committee also plans to

champion new stormwater and land use regulations, promote land conservation, and work on resolving existing road and recreational management issues.

To download a copy of the watershed source protection plan, visit the Canaan Street Source Water Protection Committee website at [www.townofcanaannh.us/stories/storyReader\\$128](http://www.townofcanaannh.us/stories/storyReader$128). For more information concerning the committee's activities and work, contact John Bergeron at bergeronjh@gmail.com or 603-523-9621.

FROM STRAFFORD REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION E-BULLETIN, VOL 1 ISSUE 20 3/31/2010

Have you looked up your area's 2010 Census Mail Participation Rate? On the [Census Bureau's Take 10 Challenge Map](#) you can track how well your community is participating in the census by seeing what percentage of households have mailed back their census forms. The nation just surpassed the **50% mark** today -- half the nation has returned their census form.

Are you above or below this national rate?

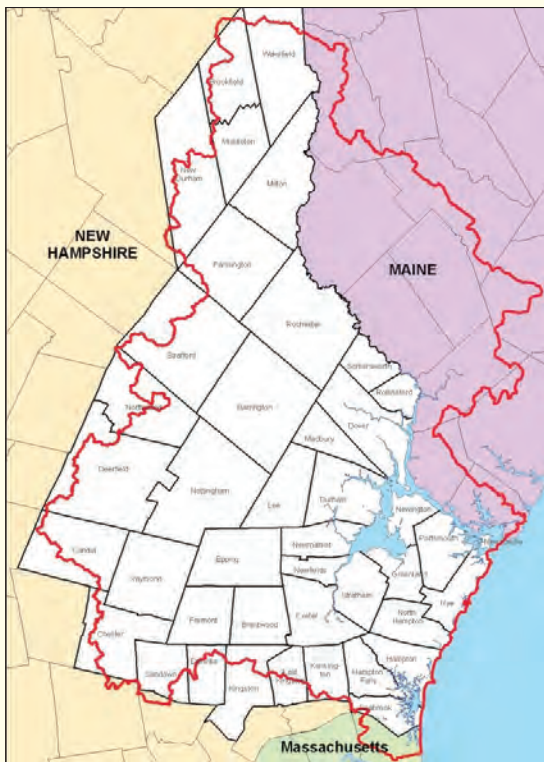
The Census Bureau is challenging all communities to achieve a higher rate in 2010 than they did in 2000. Nationally, our goal is to "beat" the 2000 Census rate of 72%. Each community's 2000 rate is also on the *Take 10 Map*.

Remember, census data help determine how more than \$400 BILLION in Federal funds are distributed to state, local and tribal areas each year. A complete count of your community in the census will help ensure that your community gets its fair share of census-based funding for the next ten years. If everyone across the nation mailed back their form, taxpayers could reduce the cost of taking the census by about \$1.5 billion.

SOUTHEAST WATERSHED ALLIANCE (SWA)

The Southeast Watershed Alliance (SWA) is a new regional organization of municipalities in New Hampshire's coastal watershed. The SWA was established by [RSA 485-E](#) in the 2009 legislative session. The Alliance's vision is to support healthy coastal water resources that provide a balance between social, environmental, and economic benefits in keeping with State and Federal regulations. The mission of the SWA is to establish a regional framework for coastal watershed communities, regional planning commissions, the State and other stakeholders, to collaborate on planning and implement measures to improve and protect water quality in the watershed. The establishment of the Alliance was spurred by the need to more effectively address the challenges of meeting clean water standards, particularly with respect to nutrient pollution. More information can be found at the SWA website at <http://southeastwatershedalliance.org/>.

Map of the Coastal-Piscataqua River Watershed



The Alliance is currently in the process of developing administrative procedures and soliciting membership of watershed towns. In keeping with RSA 485-E, the Alliance created a Planning Committee to develop draft operating procedures, and to propose a board of directors and an organizational structure. Currently, 27 of the 42 coastal watershed communities are members of the Alliance. For additional information please refer to the Frequently Asked Questions or [FAQs](#) on the SWA website.

In addition, RSA 485-E established an Advisory Committee to the Alliance consisting of representatives from the 3 Regional Planning Commission (Strafford, Rockingham and Southern NH), the NH Coastal Program, the NH Department of Transportation and the Piscataqua Region Estuaries Partnership. The function of the Advisory Committee is to provide technical support, recommendations on policy and actions, ensure integration with existing programs and resources, and attend meetings at the request of the Alliance.

The mission of SWA has been made ever more critical with the listing of Great Bay on the EPA's list of impaired water bodies for non-attainment of federal water quality standards for nitrogen loading. According to the Piscataqua Region Estuaries Partnership (PREP) State of the Estuaries Report 2009, 65 percent of the total nitrogen load to Great Bay is from tributaries and non-point source pollution mainly from runoff. For this report and more information, see the PREP website at <http://www.prep.unh.edu/>.

CHAPTER 485-E SOUTHEAST WATERSHED ALLIANCE - Section 485-E:1 Findings and Purpose. -

I. New Hampshire's coastal water resources have significant ecological, commercial, cultural, and recreational values for the state and its citizens. The state's coastal water resources are highly sensitive and are subject to intense and increasing pressures associated with population growth and development, including increased pollution loads from many sources, including wastewater treatment facilities, stormwater runoff, septic systems, and land use practices. Excess levels of nutrients are of particular concern, have become a significant problem in the Great Bay estuary, and are likely to result in more stringent water quality requirements that could affect activities occurring in municipalities throughout the coastal watershed. In order to improve and protect water quality and meet state and federal regulations, it is necessary for municipalities to reduce nutrient pollution loads from wastewater treatment facilities, stormwater runoff, septic systems and septic, and land use practices. It is essential that the state, and municipalities located within the state's coastal watershed, work in a coordinated way to address these problems and protect the health and sustainability of New Hampshire's coastal resources.

(continued on next page)

CHAPTER 485 (continued from page 3)

II. The purposes of this chapter are to:

- (a) Create better municipal, intermunicipal, and regional planning and coordination relative to wastewater and stormwater management, water quality and water supply planning, and land use;
- (b) Establish a regional framework for coastal watershed communities, regional planning commissions, the state, and other stakeholders to collaborate on planning and implementation measures to improve and protect water quality and more effectively address the challenges of meeting clean water standards, particularly with respect to nutrients pollution;
- (c) Encourage coastal watershed municipalities, the state, and other stakeholders, individually and in collaboration with one another, to plan, implement, and invest in wastewater, stormwater, and land use planning and management approaches that protect the water quality, natural hydrology, and habitats of the state's coastal resources and associated waters and that advance the state's economic growth, resource protection, and planning policy, established in RSA 9-B; and
- (d) Seek innovative solutions to reducing pollution and enhancing water quality.

Source. 2004, 258:1, eff. Aug. 15, 2004. 2009, 220:1, eff. July 15, 2009.

OF PLANS AND PLANNERS

In February 2010, the Town of Epping welcomed a new staff member, Planner and Code Enforcement Officer Brittany Howard, a native of Auburn, New Hampshire. She holds a BA in Community Planning from the University of Connecticut and an MA in Community Planning and Development from the University of Southern Maine.

Elizabeth Wood is now the Community Planner for the Town of Windham a municipality of roughly 15,000 citizens. Prior to working in Windham, she served as Associate Planner for the City of Sheridan, WY. One of her many career achievements was helping Sheridan receive the "Great Places in America Award 2008" from the American Planning Association (APA). Also while in Sheridan, she co-founded an organization called "hYPE" Helping Young Professionals Engage, a non-profit organization that recruits young workers and their families to the Sheridan area as a place to live, work, and play. Elizabeth was also designated one of Wyoming's 2008 "Top 40-Under 40" by the Casper Star Tribune for my contributions as a young person to the State of Wyoming.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Rick Sawyer, AICP, Legislative Liaison

Did one of the nearly 2,000 bills introduced over the last couple of years affect your community negatively? Do you want to correct it? Is there something about land use law in New Hampshire that drives you nuts? (*if you are a planner in NH there must be something*). Believe it or not if you really want to introduce a bill or have an impact on what legislation becomes a priority for the NH Planner's Association (NHPA) in 2011 -- NOW is the time to get started. Please feel free to contact any of the Legislative Sub-Committee members listed below to let us know if there something we should be focusing on. Getting an early start will allow us to work with our partners at the Office of Energy & Planning, the NH Association of Regional Planning Commissions and the NH Municipal Association to develop language that will be acceptable to all.

I encourage you to follow the status of the 50 bills that NHPA is currently tracking by visiting the NHPA web site and clicking on "Legislation/Law". The Legislative Tracker element of the website makes it very easy for planners to quickly find and read bills that may be important to you. All of the bills are hyperlinked for easy access to the text and hearing dates, status, and sponsors are listed as well.

Over the past year it became clear to the Legislative Sub-Committee and the Executive Committee that NHPA could positively impact legislation on a national level by working more closely with NNECAPA and APA but that none of us had enough time to effectively fill this role given our current responsibilities. As part of the NHPA Spring Meeting to be held on April 22, 2010 we'll ask for your support to amend the Association's Bylaws to allow for an additional member to the Executive Board to focus on this task. The full language of the amendment can be found in the packet mailed to you in March or at the NHPA website.

2010 Legislative Sub-Committee Members

Rick Sawyer, Chair rsawyer@bedfordnh.org
 Timothy Corwin tcorwin@alumni.upenn.edu
 Ben Frost bfrost@nhhfa.org
 Jillian Harris JHarris@snhpc.org

STRATHAM GATEWAY BUSINESS COMMERCIAL DISTRICT

In March 2010, the Town of Stratham, New Hampshire became the second community in the state to adopt a zoning ordinance based on the principals of *form based code*. In 2009, the City of Dover adopted a form based code ordinance to guide redevelopment in their downtown district. Both communities adopted their form based code ordinances as authorized under RSA 674:21 II Innovative Land Use Controls and RSA 674:16 Grant of Power.

With technical assistance from the Rockingham Planning Commission (RPC), Stratham chose to employ form based code to provide opportunity for transforming the scale, density and design of development within their existing Commercial Business District centered on Portsmouth Avenue north of NH101. The town believes that existing development lacks the following elements: flexibility in uses and services, traditional New England character, economic development incentives and housing opportunities. The vision for new development is to enhance the economic vitality, business diversity, accessibility, and visual appeal of Stratham's build environment, in a manner that is consistent with the landscape and architecture of the town's agricultural tradition.

Stratham's zoning initiative was guided by the town's policy to maintain a balance of land uses and development opportunities that results in a well planned community with a diverse tax base [Stratham Master Plan 1998]. The form base code zoning was largely based on a Master Plan developed in 2009 by a voluntary committee that solicited input from town officials and staff and the general public to document the vision for the zoning district. Stratham's initiative establishes a new zoning district – the Gateway Commercial Business District (GCBD) – which is intended to create a desirable destination for residents and visitors by integrating various

land uses and public amenities throughout the landscape. The GCBD zoning would be implemented on voluntary basis at the discretion of property owners.

The intent and vision of the GCBD zoning is to foster development of a vibrant mixed use district with a cohesive street layout and architectural character that includes commercial, residential and civic uses and integration of open spaces, transit, bicycle and pedestrian accommodations. The requirements of the GCBD are based primarily on building form, placement and function, site design, and the overall built environment including streetscapes, landscaping, and outdoor spaces and facilities. The RPC is developing a design guidelines manual to illustrate the town's vision and zoning for the GCBD which encourage growth and development that is compatible with the community's history and character. The manual will provide design guidance and approaches that encourage development of a unified and cohesive district without compromising the potential of each individual landowner or business to design a well-designed project. The concept of Traditional Neighborhood Design is highly encouraged and integrated within these guidelines.

Optional Primer on Form Based Code

Form-based codes place a primary emphasis on building type, dimensions, parking location and façade features, and less emphasis on uses. These codes have the following characteristics:

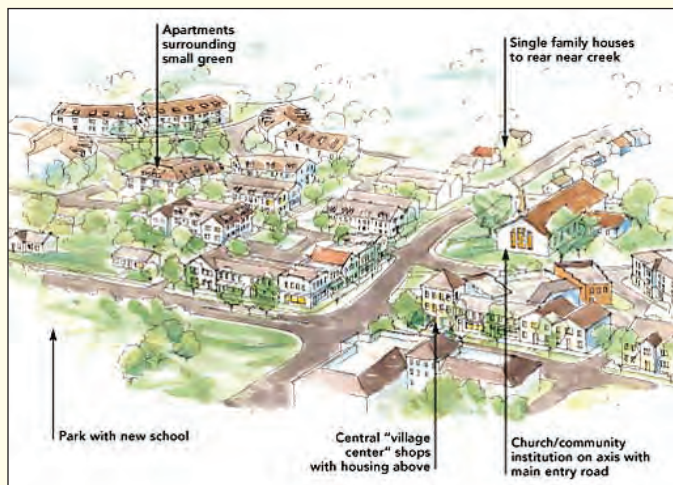
Zoning Districts –defined around districts, neighborhoods and corridors with relationship to the transportation framework or the larger area.

Regulatory Focus –de-emphasize density and use regulation in favor of rules for building form, recognizing that uses may change over time, but the building will endure.

Uses –emphasize mixed use and a mix of housing types to bring destinations into close proximity to housing and provide housing choices to meet many individuals' needs at different times in their lives.

Design – Greater attention to streetscape and the design of the public realm; the role of individual buildings in shaping the public realm; and how critical these public spaces are to defining and creating a "place."

Public Participation – employs a design-focused public participation process to assure thorough discussion of land use issues as the code is created.



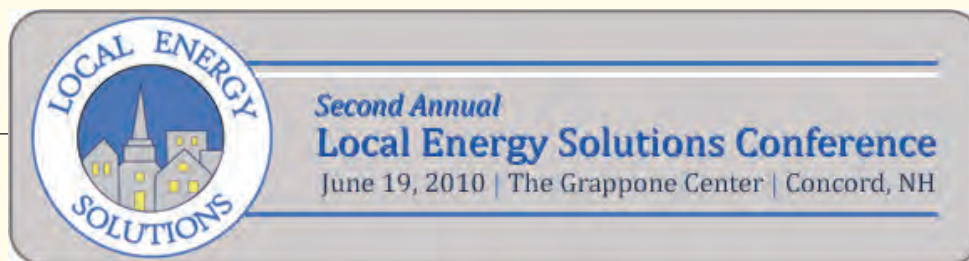
AMERICAN RECOVERY AND REINVESTMENT ACT OF 2009: IMPROVING WATER INFRASTRUCTURE AND GENERATING JOBS

On February 17, 2009, President Obama signed into law the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA), providing additional funds for water-related infrastructure improvements. In April 2009, New Hampshire's Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) program was awarded a \$19,500,000 capitalization grant, effectively doubling the amount of funds available to finance water and wastewater infrastructure improvements. As of February 2010, the DWSRF provided 51 loans totaling \$37,440,000 to complete a range of water related capital improvements.

As a first step to receiving a DWSRF loan, water systems must submit a pre-application summarizing the project. The response to an initial solicitation for projects was overwhelming, as DES received 265 pre-applications for a total request of \$246,236,590. Each pre-application was reviewed and ranked according to a formula evaluating compliance with the Safe Drinking Water Act, affordability, capacity development, and

incorporation of "green infrastructure" (e.g. leak detection, automated water meters, clean energy production, etc.), among other factors. At least 20 percent of the ARRA funds disbursed as loans through the DWSRF have been invested in green infrastructure projects. For more information on Green Infrastructure projects, download DES's DWSRF Guidance for Green Infrastructure Applications. (See www.des.nh.gov/recovery/documents/dwsrf_greenguidance.pdf)

The infrastructure projects funded to date range in size from \$19,000 for the interconnection of a mobile home park to the Rochester municipal water system, to \$5,000,000 to partially fund the construction cost of a new arsenic and iron and manganese treatment facility for the town of Seabrook. For a complete list of projects and to learn more about ARRA resources used to improve water infrastructure, visit the DES website at www.des.nh.gov/recovery/drinking_water_funding.htm.



Gain valuable tools to help reduce energy costs and save taxpayer dollars! Three hundred people gathered in Concord on June 20, 2009 to meet on energy challenges and solutions in municipalities. Attendees included volunteers from town budget committees and planning boards, county commissioners and historic preservation professionals, city councilors, town managers and employees, police officials, and of course local energy committee volunteers. **So, we decided to do it again.**

Please join us for the Second Annual Local Energy Solutions Conference on June 19, 2010 at the Grappone Center in Concord New Hampshire.

Who Should Attend in 2010

- Local energy committee volunteers
- Town administrators and employees
- Board of selectmen, planning board, budget committee members
- Legislators and interested citizens
- School staff and facility managers

What You'll Learn

- Ways to finance your energy projects
- Best practices and example of energy projects
- How to measure municipal, school and residential energy use
- Audits and how to use the results
- Elements of energy planning
- Maximizing energy committee effectiveness

Visit www.cleanair-coolplanet.org/les2010/ for more information about the conference. If you have any questions contact Christa Koehler AICP, Manager of State and Local Government Program at ckoehler@cleanair-coolplanet.org.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

— March 25, 2010 —

ACTIVITIES PLANNED ACROSS NASHUA REGION FOR SMART COMMUTE WEEK

(MERRIMACK, NH) – Tune up your bike, find the bus schedule, and call your carpool buddy, because Smart Commute Week is coming soon! Smart Commute Week takes place from May 15 through May 21, 2010. It is a national movement, also referred to as Green Commute Week, which is often held in conjunction with Bike-to-Work Week. The goal of Smart Commute Week is to promote alternative ways of getting to work and around town.

Smart commuting includes carpools, vanpools, public transportation (where available), walking, biking, telecommuting, and working a flexible schedule. Even if you have a short commute or don't commute at all, you can use these principles for many of your daily travels. Once you try it you'll discover that it is easier than you think. Smart commuting saves time, money, and the environment. It helps to reduce air pollution, promotes energy independence, improves public health, and leads to a better quality of life.

During Smart Commute Week, the Nashua Regional Planning Commission (NRPC) will offer activities for employers as well as the general public. The goal of these activities is to encourage people to try an alternative means of commuting at least once during the week and to inspire a long-term change in commuting behavior that lasts beyond the week.

NRPC has partnered with the Milford Recreation Department to hold a Smart Commute Week kick-off event on Saturday May 15 from 3:00 to 6:00 PM at Kaley Park, located at 442 Nashua Street, Milford, behind the St. Joseph Medical Center. This event will be held in conjunction with the Milford Recreation Department's Grand Opening celebration for Kaley Park. NRPC will offer organized bike rides, raffles, informational booths, and materials to help you plan your Smart Commute. The Park Grand Opening will also feature food, music, guided river walks, horse carriage rides, and tethered hot air balloon rides. Admission is free and donations support the park.

A second public event will be held on Friday May 21 from 7:00-9:00 AM in front of Nashua City Hall, 229 Main Street, Nashua. This event will serve as the culmination of Smart Commute Week and participants are encouraged to arrive at the event en-route to work using Smart Commute methods. Activities will include food, raffles, informational booths, and educational materials.

To learn more about Smart Commute Week, visit www.nashuarpc.org/smartcommute. There you will find information on planned activities, resources for commuters and employers, and useful links. You can also log any Smart Commute trips that you make between May 15th and 21st and be entered into a drawing for some great prizes.

