

Community Development Connection

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Office of Community Development Department - Town of Amherst



Capital Improvements Plan FY 2015—FY 2020

The Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) is a program authorized by State law to link local infrastructure investments with master plan goals, land use ordinances, and economic development; and by bridging that gap the fiscal realities of improving and expanding community facilities are realized.

As authorized by RSA 674:5-8, the CIP is the responsibility of the Planning Board or a formally appointed capital improvements program committee to prepare and amend a recommended program of municipal capital improvements projected over a period of at least six years. The Planning Board cited one of their highest priority of 2013 as resurrecting the Capital Improvements Planning process as a way to link long-term planning, avoid spikes in the tax rate, and provide incentives to economic development.

To this end, the process was restarted in the Spring of 2013, and a CIP Committee was appointed by the Board of Selectmen. The volunteer Committee worked diligently over the summer and into the fall to analyze and prioritize the 76 project requests for the 2015-2020 timeframe and 18 additional "On the Horizon" projects. A draft of the [FY2015- FY2020 Capital Improvements Plan](#) is available through the [CIP Committee webpage](#) and will be discussed at the 10/16/13 Planning Board worksession, 10/24/13 School Board's meeting, and 10/28/13 Board of Selectmen's meeting. In addition, the Planning Board will host a Public Hearing to adopt the final plan on November 6, 2013.

Inside this issue:

Community Planning Grant—Next Steps	2
Regional Transportation Workshop	2
Offices at the Fire Department	2
Meeting Results	3-4
Welcome to Amherst—Orange Leaf	4
Save the Dates	5
DOT Ten Year Plan—Public Hearings	6
NRPC Update	7

Did You Know? - Middle Street Traffic Analysis

Have you seen these black tubes placed on streets around the Amherst green? The Town, through the Board of Selectmen, has asked NRPC to investigate if vehicles heading west on Amherst Road (NH Route 122) use Middle Street as a "cut through" to avoid the signalized intersection at Boston Post Road and Amherst Road.

This situation is complicated by the closing of the municipal bridge on Manchester Road over Beaver Brook due to structural failure. The loss of the bridge has resulted in diverted westbound traffic using the Amherst Street/Middle Street path to access areas north of the Village Green. Middle Street bisects the pedestrian friendly Village Green, and the cut through traffic has raised safety concerns.

This study will assess the potential traffic impacts of closing the 200± foot section of Middle Street between Main Street and School Street on the roads and intersections in the immediate vicinity.

NRPC is collecting directional traffic volumes and conducting turning movement counts to document existing conditions with Middle Street open. Traffic associated with the closed section of Middle Street will be redistributed to adjacent links and intersections, and the impacts of the redistribution will be assessed using Synchro 8, a macroscopic intersection analysis software application. Data collection and analysis will be conducted in the fall with a report completed before the end of the calendar year to be presented for further discussion at a Board of Selectmen's meeting. (Reprinted with permission from Nashua Regional Planning Commission, *3rd Quarter Program Highlights*, dated: September 18, 2013)



The Public Hearing for the adoption of the *FY 2015 — FY 2020 Capital Improvements Plan* has been scheduled for November 6, 2013 at Souhegan High School, in the Auditorium at 7:30 pm.

Your transportation ideas go further
when you share them.



Regional Transportation Workshop

Developing a long term transportation plan for the Nashua Region

NOVEMBER 18, 2013 6:30 p.m. City Hall Auditorium, 229 Main Street, Nashua, NH

RSVP by
NOVEMBER 14

KarenB@nashuarpc.org or (603) 424-2240, ext. 11



Community Planning Grant—Next Steps:

The Planning Board and the Community Development Office were awarded a grant to combine and update the water resource ordinances with current Best Management Practices for the Watershed Conservation, Wetlands Protection, and Aquifer Conservation Districts in order to protect the high quality drinking water and watershed of the Town of Amherst and the Region. The goal of this project will be to prepare revised ordinances that reflect the goals of the Master Plan and the interests of the community for the voters to approve on the 2014 Town Ballot.



The Planning Board has been working with consultants and an Advisory Team including the Amherst Conservation Commission, Souhegan Valley Chamber of Commerce, Pennichuck Waterworks, and the Towns of Merrimack and Milford, along with many other stakeholder groups to help ensure the ordinance revisions will work with the breadth of the community's needs through a series of worksessions and draft ordinance revisions.

Based on feedback received from the various stakeholder groups, the Wetlands and Watershed Conservation District draft has been finalized. In addition, draft of the Aquifer Conservation District is under construction with a worksession planned for Wednesday, October 30th, at Souhegan High School, Room 202. The draft revisions and worksessions information will be posted on the [Special Projects](#) page as they become available.

There will be additional worksessions and revisions over the fall to be ready for public hearings starting December 18th. Keep your eyes out for information on this project. If you would like to become more involved, please contact Sarah Marchant, Community Development Director, at smarchant@amherstnh.gov or 673-6041, to see how you can help.

OFFICES AT THE FIRE DEPARTMENT!

The first floor Town Hall Offices were relocated to the Amherst Fire Department as of July 29th to allow for the repair and replacement of Town Hall's roof and truss structures. The offices of the Town Clerk, Tax Collector, Assessing, and Community Development (Building, Planning, Zoning, Code Enforcement, and Economic Development) have been relocated to temporary offices in the Central Fire Station Community Room, located at 177 Amherst Street. All phone numbers, email, and hours of operation will remain the same.

All Planning Board, Zoning Board, Heritage Commission, Historic District Commission, and Conservation Commission meetings have been relocated to space at Souhegan High School or the Brick School SAU building. Please check all agendas carefully as to the location of the meetings.

The repairs are now scheduled to be completed by the end of December (we hope). As soon as the work is completed, all Departments, Boards, and Commissions will head back to our normal Town Hall spaces.

Note: The Town Administration, Welfare, and Finance Departments are only accessible by appointment during construction. Please call 673-6041 x210 for Town Administration and x213 for Finance Department.



Meeting Results:



Each month this column will bring you a quick update on the results of the Zoning Board, Planning Board, and Historic District Commission's deliberations:

Zoning Board (ZBA)

The ZBA heard one Variance requests October 15th:

1. Case #PZ 4446: Variance

Melissa Mabon, 14 Manchester Road, PIN# 020-030-001, to construct a home within the first 50' of the 100' wetland buffer in the Public Water Protection Wetlands District.

The variance request was approved to allow structures within 50 ft of the wetlands buffer with the condition that a Water Resource Management Plan (WRMP) be approved by the Planning Board prior to development of the property.

PLEASE NOTE: November ZBA Meeting will be held at Souhegan High School, Information Center, Rm. 202.

Planning Board (PB)

The PB held a public hearing to hear five applications on October 2, 2013.

1. Case #4401 – Peg Bennett – NRSP Amendment – 14 Cross Road, PIN# 002-145-000: Temporary lighting of Bean Field.

The application was tabled until the November 6, 2013, meeting to allow time for the submission of the following items:

- a. Photogrammetric lighting plan with direction options and impacts to Boston Post Rd and Terrance Lane.*
- b. Written documentation on when lights will be turned on and off, and who will be responsible.*
- c. Additional buffering and screening options for Terrance Lane to be placed along Boston Post Rd.*
- d. Establish a line of communication with neighbors.*

2. Case #4394 – Dr. Jennifer Edwards – Sign Master Plan – 199 Route 101, Bldg #8, PIN# 006-066-001: Modification to existing sign master plan to accommodate existing tenant. .

The application was approved as submitted.

3. Case #4400 – Genevieve Perron – WRMP – 1 Cub Circle, PIN# 002-073-001: Water Resource Management Plan.

The application was approved with the following conditions:

- a. The NH Natural Heritage Inventory be submitted for review by Town Staff.*
- b. The landowner has agreed to post one (1) or more town placards at the one hundred (100) foot wetland buffer.*

Meeting Results (continued)

c. *An appropriate document be recorded with the Registry of Deeds noting it is on file with the Town of Amherst.*

4. **Case #4199 – Brad Knight – Acorn Fields – 12 Stearns Road, PIN# 004-065-001:** Application for a non-commercial sports and recreation Non-Residential Site Plan with waivers requested from providing a Water Resource Management Plan/Stormwater Report, Traffic Study, and the scale at which the plans are required to be provided.

The application was not accepted for review by the Planning Board as the application as presented did not conform to Section 4.3.A.8 of the Town of Amherst Zoning Ordinance.

5. **Case #4300 – Stacy J. Clark – Affordable Housing Suitability – 131 Hollis Road (Route 122), PIN# 001-013-000, - 004 & -005:** Application for Affordable Housing Suitability determination of a 16 unit affordable housing development on a proposed private drive loop road off of Hollis Rd.

The application was conditionally approved for an application for Affordable Housing Suitability determination of a 16 unit affordable housing development on a proposed private drive loop road off of Hollis Road by a 5 to 1 vote with the following precedent conditions:

- a. Town legal counsel review and approve Affordability Covenants, exhibits, and Declaration of Condominium documents.
- b. Lot merger form is recorded at the HCRD combining lots 1-13, 1-13-4, and 1-13-5 back into one lot.

PLEASE NOTE: *The November 6th Planning Board meetings will be held at the Souhegan High School at 412 Boston Post Rd in the Auditorium.*

Historic District Commission (HDC)

The HDC held a public hearing to adopt changes to their regulations on October 17th :

PUBLIC HEARING: Public Hearing in accordance with RSA 675:7 – Revision of Historic District Commission Regulations – Section 8.2 Removal of Mature Trees.

The Board adopted changes to Section 8.2 Removal of Mature Trees. The current version of the Regulations is available on the Town's website at www.amherstnh.gov/rules-regulations/.

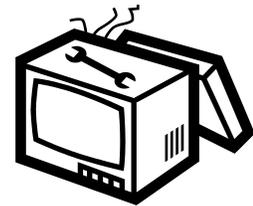
PLEASE NOTE: *The November 21st HDC meetings will be held at the Brick School Conference Room , 1 School Street.*

Welcome to Amherst!

Orange Leaf frozen yogurt just opened its doors at 124 Route 101A next to Pet Life, Red Wing Shoes, and The Meat House. Orange Leaf is the ultimate dessert experience. They are a self-serve, choose-your-own toppings frozen treat destination unlike any other!

Please join us in welcoming this company to their new location in Amherst!



SAVE THE DATES:

FINAL HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE & ELECTRONICS COLLECTION OF 2013

WHEN: Saturday November 2, 8:00AM-12:00PM

WHERE: Nashua Public Works Garage, 9 Stadium Drive, Nashua

WHO CAN ATTEND: Residents of Amherst, Brookline, Hollis, Hudson, Litchfield, Merrimack, Milford, Mont Vernon, Nashua, Pelham, and Windham

COST: \$10 user fee per vehicle, additional charges for quantities exceeding 10 gallons or 20 pounds, additional charges for electronics recycling

For more information and a complete list of accepted items, please visit:

www.nashuarpc.org/hhw or call 603-424-2240.

"Three Free Ways to Promote Your City or Town via The Web"

A BROADBAND TRAINING SESSION: Presented by Andre Garron & Shane Bradt from UNH Cooperative Extension and the NH Broadband Mapping & Planning Program (NHBMPP)

WHEN: Wednesday, October 30th, 2013, 10:00am

WHERE: Nashua Regional Planning Commission (NRPC), 9 Executive Park Drive, Suite 201, Merrimack, NH. Look for: NRPC Community and Economic Vitality Workshop Summary

For more information and a complete list of accepted items, please visit: www.nashuarpc.org or call 424-2240.

New Hampshire Municipal Association's 72nd Annual Conference- *COMMITMENT TO SERVICE*

WHEN: November 6-7, 2013

WHERE: Radisson Hotel, Manchester NH

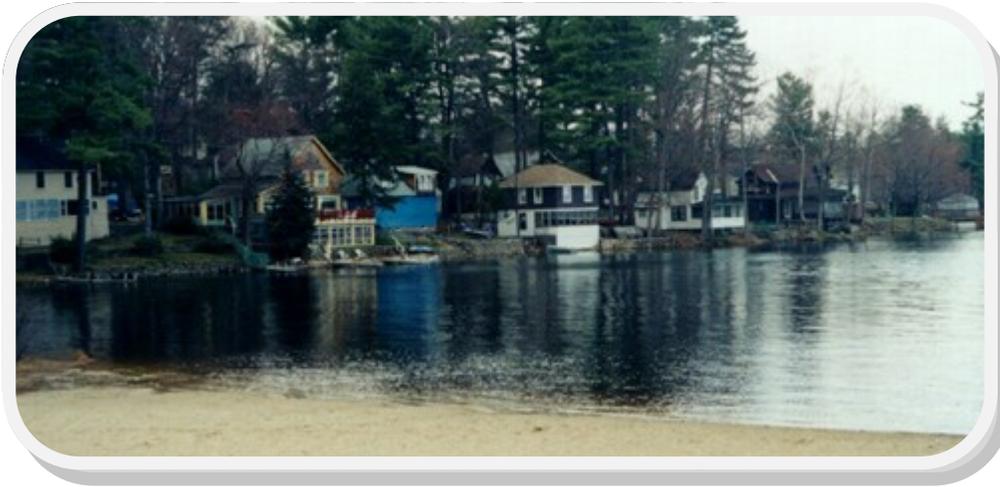
The New Hampshire Municipal Association (NHMA) is pleased to announce its 72nd Annual Conference, with the theme Commitment to Service. This is New Hampshire's premier conference for municipal officials, featuring over 30 educational sessions on timely and relevant topics, as well as ample opportunities to meet and greet with exhibitors ready to offer you the latest products and services.

For those of you interested in a relatively inexpensive way to learn more about how Town government, school districts, boards, and commissions work this is a great two-day conference opportunity. The conference generally has tons of session choices so you can customize the experience to your own interests.

Please visit the [NHMA website](http://NHMAwebsite) for more information. For questions or to register by mail, call 800.852.3358, ext. 3350, or email NHMAregistrations@nhmunicipal.org.



BABOOSIC LAKE “SOAK UP THE RAIN” PILOT PROJECT



In New Hampshire, 83 percent of pollution of surface water bodies is directly attributable to stormwater runoff. Any rain or snowmelt that is not absorbed directly into the ground, intercepted by vegetation, or evaporated flows directly into our lakes, rivers, streams, and other water bodies. As runoff flows over roadways and other surfaces, it accumulates pollutants from motor oils, fertilizers, animal waste, and any other substances it encounters before flowing into water bodies.

In our region, Baboosic Lake, a 228 acre lake on the Amherst and Merrimack border, is a scenic and popular recreation area. However, the lake has long battled storm-water-related pollution in the form of cyanobacteria and excess algal growth.

This fall, the Nashua Regional Planning Commission, working in partnership with the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) and the Baboosic Lake Association (BLA), will be finalizing the “Soak Up the Rain” pilot program on Baboosic Lake. A property owner was identified, and the site was evaluated for potential stormwater mitigation sites. Volunteers in conjunction with NRPC and NHDES staff will implement stormwater management practices on the property to capture contaminated rainwater before it reaches the lake.

Additionally, workshops will be offered in late fall or early spring to give guidance and training on “Soak Up the Rain” implementation to other property owners in an effort to continue the program at other locations around the lake.

In the coming months, NRPC, working in partnership with NHDES and the Towns of Amherst and Merrimack, is drafting an update to the Baboosic Lake Watershed Plan outlining best management practices to limit stormwater flow into the lake. Currently, Baboosic Lake has a Watershed Management Plan; however, it is in need of updating, as many projects have been completed by the Baboosic Lake Association and the Towns of Amherst and Merrimack. The completed projects have already reduced stormwater and phosphorus loading into the lake reducing the impacts to water quality. For more information on this project, or the Baboosic Lake “Soak Up the Rain” pilot program, contact Kim Goddu at kimg@nashuarpc.org.

(Reprinted with permission from Nashua Regional Planning Commission, *3rd Quarter Program Highlights*, dated: September 18, 2013)

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WE ARE ON THE WEB!

WWW.AMHERSTNH.GOV

The Community Development Office strives to effectively manage community change in accordance with the Master Plan and the Town's ordinances and regulations by providing professional advice and technical expertise in a consistent and fair manner to citizens, boards, commissions, departments, and regional agencies on the implementation of land use ordinances, regulations, and policies for both the short and long term physical, natural, and economic development of the Town.

The Community Development Office is comprised of the Building, Zoning, Planning, Code Enforcement, and Economic Development Departments. The Office provides support to the Planning Board, Zoning Board, Amherst Conservation Commission, Historic District Commission, Heritage Commission, and the CIP Committee. The office provides a one-stop location for all land development processing in the Town.



NRPC UPDATE



THIRD QUARTER PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

The Nashua Regional Planning Commission (NRPC) has long prided itself as being on the cutting edge of innovation and technology in our planning work.

This summer, we added a number of new programs to our suite of professional services that we offer to communities in the greater Nashua Region. See the GIS Program Highlights to read more about Synchro Studio, which provides traffic simulation and analysis and HAZUS which helps to estimate physical, economic, and social impacts of natural disasters on communities.

We also will be adding an upgraded version of Community Viz. This software allows NRPC to create realistic, interactive 3D models of communities - as they are, or as they could be. The software enables the user to fly through, walk around, and explore places and make changes to see the results.

One particularly new innovation that we are excited about is NRPC LiveMaps. We anticipate that by the end of December, you will be able to interact with NRPCs standard map sets and data layers to create your own maps.

The data can be customized to meet the needs of each community, and we are currently working with community staff to do so. In addition to LiveMaps, the entire

www.nashuarpc.org will be revised and a number of features such as a transportation data viewer and a live community forum will be available for communities to use for their own planning work. Stay tuned for December!

In addition to our software and hardware, NRPC will also be rolling out our new, affordable master plan services.

We all know how much time, energy, and money a community can devote to a master plan. NRPC has developed a cost effective approach to updating community master plans. To discuss how this might work for your community, please give us a call at 603-424-2240.