



Northern Middlesex Council of Governments

NOTICE OF MEETING

A Multi-Disciplinary
Regional Planning
Agency Serving:

Billerica
Chelmsford
Dracut
Dunstable
Lowell
Pepperell
Tewksbury
Tyngsborough
Westford

Andrew N. Deslaurier
Chair

Jennifer M. Raitt
Executive Director

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Lowell, MA
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The next meeting of the **Northern Middlesex Council of Governments (NMCOG)** will be held on **Wednesday, May 17, 2023 at 7:00 p.m.** at **NMCOG Offices, 40 Church St, Suite 200, Lowell, MA 01852** with optional remote access via Zoom. To join this meeting via Zoom, please go to: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88101757628?pwd=MIl4dEhJaXFHZERLNHIxZzNOZHN6dz09>. The Meeting ID is: 881 0175 7628 and Passcode is: 439793. If you are joining by phone, dial (646) 558-8656, Meeting ID# 881 0175 7628

AGENDA

- I. Call to Order and Roll Call**
- II. Election of Vice-Chair (Vote Required)**

This vote is required per NMCOG Bylaws, Section 2 Council Organization, 1. *"...In the case of any... positions becoming vacant, the Council shall elect at its next meeting a member to fill the position until the next annual election. The officer so elected shall take office upon election."*
- III. Approval of Minutes - April 19, 2023 (Vote Required)**
- IV. Financial Report and Warrant - Income and expense statements 4/19/2023-5/15/2023 (Vote Required)**
- V. Report of the Executive Director, April 2023**
- VI. Community Exchange**
- VII. Reminders and Announcements**
 1. Lowell Housing Forum – May 31, 2023 at 6:30 PM, Lowell Senior Center
 2. NMCOG Council Meeting – June 21, 2023 at 7:00 PM
- VIII. Other Business not known at the time of posting of this agenda**
- IX. Adjourn**

CITY/TOWN CLERKS: PLEASE POST PURSUANT TO OPEN MEETING LAW

Please contact Lesley Shahbazian at lshahbazian@nmcog.org with any questions on this agenda.

Northern Middlesex Council of Governments
40 Church Street, Suite 200
Lowell, MA 01852

Minutes from Council Meeting April 19, 2023

I. The April 19, 2023 meeting of the Northern Middlesex Council of Governments (NMCOG) was held via Zoom. The meeting was called to order by Anita Tonakarn-Nguyen at 7:03 p.m. The following were in attendance:

Councilors:

- Christopher Tribou – Assistant Clerk, Billerica Planning Board
- Mary K. McBride, Clerk, Billerica Alternate
- Pat Wojtas, MPO Rep, Chelmsford Select Board
- Annita Tanini, Chelmsford Planning Board
- Philippe Thibault, Dracut Alternate
- Chuck Walkovich, Pepperell Select Board
- Stephen Themelis, Pepperell Alternate
- Jayne Wellman, Assistant Treasurer, Tewksbury Select Board
- Darrin Wizst-Westford Planning Board
- Anita Tonakarn-Nguyen, Vice Chair, Westford Select Board

Staff:

- Jennifer Raitt, Executive Director
- Michael Asciola, AICP, Senior Planner – Housing and Land Use
- Christopher Hayes, AICP, Housing and Economic Development Planner
- Justin Howard, Transportation Director
- Sara Paz, Finance and Benefits Manager
- Lesley Shahbazian, Executive Assistant

II. Minutes of Meeting: March 15, 2023

The Minutes of the March 15, 2023 meeting were distributed to all Councilors for review. Changed misspelling of Philippe Thibault's name. Ms. Raitt also made an edit. We met on Zoom only (not in person) for the March meeting. Based on a Motion by Jayne Wellman, seconded by Christopher Tribou, on a roll call vote, the Council approved the Minutes of the March 15, 2023 meeting as amended.

**III. Financial Report and Warrant – Income and Expense Statements
4/19/2023**

Sara Paz, Finance and Benefits Manager presented the Financial Report and the Warrant for review and approval. Jayne Wellman would like to see in the next report a run rate on our expenses so we can see how accounts are doing throughout the year. Based on a Motion by Darrin Wizst and seconded by Jayne

Wellman, following a roll call vote, the Council unanimously approved the Financial Report and Warrant.

IV. Report of the Executive Director

The Executive Director's Report was distributed for review to the Council in advance of the meeting. Ms. Raitt shared some highlights:

- Council Updates:
 - Anita Tonakarn-Nguyen's term ends at the beginning of May so this is her last Council meeting. Ms. Raitt thanked Anita for all the support she has provided to the Council, NMCOG, and the region.
 - Ms. Raitt welcomed and introduced Annita Tanini to the Council from the Chelmsford Planning Board.
- Staff Updates:
 - Ms. Raitt also welcomed and introduced Mike Asciola who is our new Senior Planner.
 - Chris Curry is retiring on April 27, 2023. He has been at NMCOG since 1989.
 - NMCOG is actively hiring for five positions – three of them are in different stages of the interview process along with the personnel committee input. Additional staff are being hired for the transportation team, specifically to help work on the Safe Streets and Roads for All grant which we received in partnership with the Merrimack Valley Planning Commission. With Chris Curry retiring we would like to fill the Transit Planner position as quickly as possible. We just signed the contract with LRTA which is an important service we provide as well as the transportation activities for the MPO.
- Transportation Planning Highlights
 - The Regional Transportation Plan is in progress. We hosted the second Envision 2050 regional forum on March 22nd – 24 people attended. We received great feedback from this meeting. Thanks to Justin Howard and Council members who attended.
 - At the next MPO meeting there will be a discussion about programming UPWP funds for the next federal fiscal year. Jessica Boulanger and Justin are working on this. TIP was proposed and put together by Shrvanthi Gopalan Narayanan and Justin. Chris C. and Jessica, Justin and Carlin Andrus pulled together the Title VI which was endorsed at the last MPO meeting.
 - Ridership continues to increase month over month as we get further away from the pandemic and the weather improves. 33% in the fixed route ridership and 19% on the Road Runner.

- We received five proposals in response to the RFP for traffic counting services. We anticipate making an award by May.
- Housing, Economic Development, Environment, and Digital Equity Planning Updates:
 - Chris Hayes has been worked diligently on the (EDA) CARES Act and has been convening committees and groups to better understand the conditions and nature of the regional economic outlook and how NMCOG can advance specific issue areas. Ms. Raitt highlighted the Sewer and Wastewater Existing Capacity and Opportunities study which was shared with the Northern Middlesex CEO Group and presented by Daniela Garcia Moreno. This is a good starting place for NMCOG to potentially play a bigger role in helping address wastewater capacity issues in the region.
 - The Regional Digital Equity Planning Grant application has been filed by the City of Lowell. MAPC is the lead vendor and NMCOG is working in partnership with them. All nine communities will be part of this initiative.
 - The Northern Middlesex Stormwater Collaborative is holding a virtual meeting on May 8th to discuss PFAS.
 - "At Home in Greater Lowell" Regional Housing Strategy – NMCOG taking the lead to scope the project to see how much it would cost to do a regional data analysis. We are at the beginning of the process. Jayne Wellman suggested NMCOG Council have conversations revolving around homelessness and the unhoused and what the political issues might be between the communities.
- General Updates:
 - An RFP for office lease is posted and we anticipate proposals in May. Ms. Raitt has been talking with our current landlord and hope to receive a strong proposal from them.
 - Thank you to Carlin Andrus to help successfully procure the new server, coordinate, and complete the server migration with little interruption.

VI. Community Exchange

- Stephen Themelis mentioned Town elections on April 24th in Pepperell and May 1st is Annual Town Meeting with 26 warrant articles. There is a proposed public safety complex (fire, police, and communications department) which would cost \$30 million or \$220 per year per household.
- Anita Tonakarn-Nguyen shared that Westford has elections coming up in the first week in May and Darrin Wizst is running for reelection. A proposal for a municipal building on the ballot again.

Northern Middlesex Council of Governments

WARRANT

May 17, 2023

PAYMENTS PENDING

Enterprise Operating Account	\$	2,677.86	Checks dated 4/25/2023 presented for payment
Enterprise Operating Account	\$	1,917.48	Checks dated 4/25/2023 presented for payment
Enterprise Operating Account	\$	45,201.29	Checks dated 5/1/2023 presented for payment
Enterprise Operating Account	\$	5,294.47	Checks dated 5/1/2023 presented for payment
Enterprise Operating Account	\$	5,126.86	Checks dated 5/15/2023 presented for payment
Total	\$	<u>60,217.96</u>	

ANTICIPATED EXPENSES / INVOICES PENDING

Atlantis Ventures	\$	8,399.75	June Rent
Canon Financial Services	\$	682.83	June Copier Lease
Comcast	\$	628.47	June Phone & internet service
GMS	\$	1,126.76	June Monthly Billing
Guardian Life Insurance	\$	236.65	June life insurance
MIIA	\$	36,000.00	<i>Est</i> June health & dental (Includes LRTA Portion)
National Grid	\$	500.00	<i>Est</i> Apr/May electric service
The Lowell Sun	\$	794.40	Public Notice postings (3)
Verizon	\$	50.00	StormWater Mobile Phone
W.B. Mason	\$	<u>300.00</u>	<i>Est</i> Office Supplies (May 18-June 20)
	\$	48,718.86	

PAYROLL & TAXES

Paydates May 25 2023; June 8, 2023; and employee final pay (Estimated)	\$	91,000.00
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TOTAL WARRANT	\$	<u><u>199,936.82</u></u>
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Northern Middlesex Council of Governments

FINANCIAL REPORT
May 17, 2023

CASH BALANCES AS OF 04/30/2023:

Enterprise Bank - New Investment Acct	\$ 390,159.21
Enterprise Bank - New Operating Acct	\$ 10,580.02
Washington Savings - Investment Acct.	\$ 534,300.15
Salem Five 36 MO.CD	\$ 173,154.00

TOTAL CASH ACCOUNT BALANCES \$ 1,108,193.38

Restricted Cash Account AS OF 3/31/2023:

OPEB (VantageCare RHS-EIP:Vantagepoint MP Trad Growth Dedicated Retirement Health Savings Plan)	\$ 323,376.40
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ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE - PROJECTS INVOICED:

4/26/23	Proj 30950 - MassDOT #118971 - March 2023 Invoice Expect payment on or about 6/10/23	\$ 101,534.58
4/26/23	Proj 35750 - Dracut OSRP - February 2023 Invoice Received payment 5/8/23	\$ 1,080.88
4/26/23	Proj 35750 - Dracut OSRP - March 2023 Invoice Received payment 5/8/23	\$ 279.56
4/27/23	Proj - GLCF At home in greater lowell regional housing strategy plan for 2024-2025 Received payment 5/15/23	\$ 15,000.00
5/1/23	Proj 37075 - EDA Economic Recovery and Resiliency Plan (Cares Act) - Jan-Mar invoice Received payment 5/10/23	\$ 9,351.73
5/11/23	Proj 35750 - Dracut OSRP - April 2023 Invoice	\$ 2,778.92
5/11/23	Proj 38413 - Pictometry - 2023 Invoice (BillERICA, Chelmsford, Lowell, & Tewksbury)	\$ 15,238.00
5/15/23	Proj 32265 - MAPC/MassTrails - Oct22-May23 Invoice	\$ 3,054.00

TOTAL PROJECT RECEIVABLES: \$ 148,317.67

ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE - FY 2023 MEMBER ASSESSMENTS: \$ -

OTHER RECEIVABLES: \$ -

TOTAL ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLES: \$ 148,317.67

NET CASH TOTAL INCLUDING RECEIVABLES: \$ 1,256,511.05

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE :

A/P CHECKS PRESENTED FOR SIGNATURE	\$ (60,217.96)
ANTICIPATED EXPENSES / INVOICES PENDING	\$ (48,718.86)
ANTICIPATED PAYROLL & TAXES (Through May 11, 2023)	\$ (91,000.00)

TOTAL WARRANT: \$ (199,936.82)

TOTAL ACCOUNTS PAYABLE: \$ (199,936.82)

NET CASH TOTAL (INCLUDING RECEIVABLES, LESS ACCOUNTS PAYABLE): \$ 1,056,574.23

Other Outstanding Obligations:

Contract Advance-DLTA XV	\$ (54,807.00)
Due to/from Grantor-MHD Contracts FY94 - FY22	\$ (125,827.00)
	<u>\$ (180,634.00)</u>

NET CASH TOTAL (Less) OTHER OUTSTANDING PAYABLES: \$ 875,940.23

To: Northern Middlesex Council of Governments, Council and Alternate Members
From: Jennifer Raitt, Executive Director
Re: Executive Director's Report
Date: May 2023

REGIONAL PLANNING ACTIVITIES

Transportation/ MPO

On April 26, the Northern Middlesex Metropolitan Planning Organization (NMMPO) convened its monthly meeting with several topics on the agenda. Staff presented the draft FFY 2024-2028 Transportation Improvement Program, which outlined programming of federal transportation dollars for construction of several projects around the region. Also at the meeting, the MPO voted to release draft FFY 2023-2027 TIP Amendment Three, which involves changes to several LRTA projects due to additional state funding available. The MPO also heard updates on development of the FFY 2024 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), outlining potential new projects in the workplan beginning in October. More information on specific projects are in the following sections of this report. The next meeting of the NMMPO will be on May 24 at 2PM. Meeting topics will include consideration to release the draft FFY 2024UPWP and endorsement of the FFY 2024-2028 TIP. Other agenda items will include updates on Envision 2050 and Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan development.

Regional Transportation Plan

Staff have been working on developing a draft plan for Regional Transportation Plan, Envision 2050. The draft plan will be presented to the Northern Middlesex Metropolitan Planning Organization in May and released for public comment period and endorsed in June. Staff are also hosting a virtual Environmental Consultation meeting on May 18, 2023 from 2 pm – 3 pm. This meeting is held to help identify ways to ensure our region improves air quality and offers sustainable transportation options as part of the Envision 2050. This meeting will include discussion with people engaged in and responsible for local, regional, and state land use management, natural resources, environmental protection, conservation, and historic preservation. The discussion will include a presentation about the plan and exploration of state environmental planning goals, resources, maps, and inventories.

FFY 2024-2028 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Development

Staff continued to work on the development of the next TIP document. On April 26, 2023, Staff presented the draft TIP document as a presentation to the Northern Middlesex Metropolitan Planning Organization (NMMPO). NMMPO released the draft FFY 2024-2028 Draft TIP document for a 21-day public comment period which is from April 28 – May 19, 2023. A virtual public meeting to receive comments on the FFY 2024-2028 TIP will be held on May 9 at 5:30 PM. Public comments received during this period will be considered and presented to the NMMPO. This document will go into effect on October

1, 2023.

Endorsement of Title VI 2023 Plan

The NMMPO endorsed the final plan on March 22, following a 21-day public comment period. For more information on Title VI visit www.nmco.org/nondiscrimination-policy. To read the full report, visit <https://www.nmco.org/s/Title-VI-2022-Report-Final-33023.pdf>.

Unified Planning Work Program FFY 2024

During the April 26, NMMPO meeting NMCOG staff presented a preliminary list of tasks and changes to the UPWP for Federal Fiscal Year 2024. On May 24, NMCOG staff will prepare and present the draft UPWP plan for Federal Fiscal Year 2024. The Public Comment Period (21 Days) for this Plan will begin on May 25, 2021 and end on June 14, 2023. A public meeting will be held on June 7, 2023 at 5pm to address comments from the public. On June 28, 2023 Jessica Boulanger will present final UPWP Plan, address comments, and request the NMMPO endorse the updated UPWP plan.

Coordinated Public Transit – Human Services Plan

Jessica Boulanger is working to update the agency 2023 Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan. This plan must be updated every 3 to 5 years in order for direct recipients and sub-recipients to receive formula funds through Section 5310. The Section 5310 Program is intended to enhance mobility for seniors and persons with disabilities. On May 12, NMCOG Transportation Planner Jessica Boulanger will present the Coordinated Public Transit – Human Services Plan at the Cameron Center in Westford. On May 23, Jessica will be presenting the Coordinated Public Transit Human Services Plan to Seniors and the Disability Commission in Billerica. The discussion and feedback obtained during both sessions will be used to further inform this plan update providing insights on transportation challenges. On May 25, NMCOG staff will host a Regional Coordinating Council meeting in partnership with the Merrimack Valley Planning Commission in fulfillment of the requirements of this plan update.

Traffic Counting

NMCOG staff posted a Request for Proposals for traffic counting services, which includes between 60 and 80 count locations in the region. Proposals will be opened on April 20. Based on strength of proposals received, a consultant will be selected and a contract will be finalized by the end of April. The RFP is currently posted on the [NMCOG website](#).

Weights and Measures

During the month of April, NMCOG's Weights and Measures program conducted 27 inspections in the communities of Billerica, Chelmsford, Dracut, Littleton, Lowell, Tewksbury and Westford. Of those 27 inspections conducted in April 19 were annual inspections and eight were new devices/businesses being added. The outcome of these inspections resulted in 280 devices being inspected and sealed. Gas stations continue to be the bulk of our workload at the present time with the nice weather upon us.

Municipal Digital Equity Planning Program

The Massachusetts Broadband Institute (MBI) notified the City of Lowell of their award for the Municipal Digital Equity Planning Program on behalf of the nine NMCOG communities. The nine communities selected the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) and NMCOG to assist with the regional planning process. The \$121,000 in funding to NMCOG will be used to assist with community charrettes and other activities in order to help build out local digital equity actions and the regional digital equity plan.

“At Home in Greater Lowell” Regional Housing Strategy

NMCOG was one of 19 organizations awarded funding from the Greater Lowell Community Foundation as part of their discretionary grant funding cycle in the spring of 2023. The \$15,000 grant was made under the category of Racial Equity and Inclusion. The funding will support the outreach and engagement as part of the development of the *At Home in Greater Lowell: Regional Housing Strategy Plan through 2035*. Staff are excited to begin working on this plan in 2023 and looks forward to robust and creative engagement as we focus on improved quality of life in our region and increased availability, affordability, and attainability of housing for all. For additional information about the planning process and recent award, please contact Jennifer Raitt, Executive Director. NMCOG staff are also in the process of submitting the OneStop for Growth application to receive a planning grant for this project.

Northern Middlesex Stormwater Collaborative

NMCOG is collaborating with the Merrimack Valley Planning Commission to host a joint-stormwater collaborative meeting to discuss PFAS. The in-person meeting is scheduled for May 24th, and will feature a conversation with Massachusetts Municipal Association’s Josie Ahlberg, a Legislative Analyst with expertise in environmental policy. This meeting will be hosted at the Nevin Memorial Library located at 305 Broadway in Methuen. For more information about the meeting, please contact Sustainability Planner, Daniela Garcia Moreno, at dgarciamoreno@nmcog.org.

PROJECT REFERRALS UNDER THE MASSACHUSETTS ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT

May 15, 2023

MEPA/NMCOG NUMBER AND TYPE OF DOCUMENT FILED	PROJECT NAME AND LOCATION	APPLICANT NAME AND ADDRESS	PROJECT DESCRIPTION	PRIORITY RANK	COMMENT DEADLINE AND STAFF REMARKS
EEA No. 16647 NMCOG No. 689 Single Environmental Impact Report	339/349 Line Asset Condition Refurbishment (ACR) Project	New England Power Company (NEP) 40 Sylvan	Asset Condition Refurbishment activities along the 339/349 transmission	C	Comments due: June 9, 2023

(EIR)	Tewksbury, Wakefield, Wilmington, Saugus, Lynnfield, Andover, North Reading, Reading	Road, Waltham, MA 02451	line right-of-way between Tewksbury and Saugus. Project includes complete refurbishment of existing transmission line for a more reliable, climate-ready, and resilient transmission system that can withstand more extreme weather events.		
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Testimony to the Joint Committee on Natural Resources and Environment

On April 26, Daniela Garcia Moreno, Sustainability Planner, provided testimony in support of H.905/ S.586 *An Act to Create a Merrimack River Collaborative* at a Joint Committee on Natural Resources and Environment hearing. This legislative effort is led by Merrimack Valley Planning Commission, and will formalize a collaboration for work related to Merrimack River water quality if it is approved by the Legislature. You can read the full written testimony [here](#). If you have any questions about the Merrimack River Collaborative or NMCOC’s testimony, please reach out to Daniela at dgarciamoreno@nmcog.org.

ASSISTANCE TO INDIVIDUAL COMMUNITIES

Multi-Family Zoning Requirement for MBTA Communities

All seven municipalities that were required to file Action Plans in the NMCOC region filed by the required deadline to the MA Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). DHCD approved Action Plans submitted by Dracut, Lowell, Tewksbury, and Westford. Additional approvals are anticipated for Billerica, Chelmsford, and Tyngsborough. NMCOC assisted with reviews and development of Action Plans for Billerica, Chelmsford, Dracut, and Tyngsborough. NMCOC recently kicked off the next phase of MBTA Communities planning work with Tyngsborough funded by a \$20,000 planning technical assistance grant from the Massachusetts Housing Partnership.

Lowell Housing Production Plan

NMCOC and the City of Lowell are looking forward to hosting a citywide forum on May 31 from 6:30-8:30 PM at the Senior Center to discuss key facts about housing in Lowell, to report out from the interviews and focus group meetings, and to begin developing a vision and goals for the Housing Production Plan component of the Lowell Forward

comprehensive plan.

Dracut Open Space and Recreation Plan

NMCOG staff with expertise in land use, open space conservation, community engagement, and mapping are providing technical assistance to the Town of Dracut in the completion of an update to their Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP). On Tuesday, May 9th, 2023, NMCOG staff hosted an OSRP Update and Visioning meeting with members of Dracut's Recreation Commission, Open Space Committee, Community Development Committee, and Conservation Commission. This meeting highlighted updates on the inventory of protected lands and a discussion about the community's needs for accessing and maintaining open space lands and recreational facilities and programs. Based on the feedback received, NMCOG is working to finalize the community survey, which will be open from mid-May to late-August. The next opportunity for public engagement in the OSRP update process will be the Public Forum, which is tentatively scheduled for the week of June 12.

Westford Brownfields and Potentially Contaminated Sites Inventory

NMCOG staff are working with the Town of Westford staff on coordinating design charrettes around the key properties identified from the development of the brownfields inventory for the Graniteville neighborhood. The charrettes will be an opportunity for community members and key stakeholders to contribute to potential redevelopment visions for three key sites: 12 and 10 North Main St, 67 and 69 Broadway Ave, and 49 N Main St. The dates and additional details on these charrettes are forthcoming.

GIS AND DATA SHARING

Flights to capture Eagleview (Pictometry) aerial imagery were completed two weeks earlier than in prior years and the four participating communities received very early access to the imagery in the CONNECTExplorer web application. Feedback on the image quality has been positive to date.

NMCOG GIS worked with land use and housing planning staff to develop an affordable housing opportunity scoring system for Tewksbury to prioritize parcels with the highest potential for affordable housing. Based on priorities developed with the Tewksbury Community Development Department, all town parcels were scored based on criteria such as estimated developable area and proximity to amenities and transit. The scoring results were integrated into an interactive web map and provided in a town-wide parcel inventory to facilitate review of the results and the identification of properties for development or redevelopment potential.

Mapping and data GIS support was provided for the Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP), the VFW Highway project Greenhouse Gas (GHG) analysis, the Envision 2050 Regional Transportation Plan, the Dracut Open Space and Recreation Plan, the Regional Wastewater Study, and for the CEDS travel and tourism study. The first phase of the Tyngsborough sewer service area (customer) mapping project was completed and additional layers and

data will be developed in the coming months. Feedback on the draft Massachusetts statewide trail data standards was provided in collaboration with other Regional Planning Agency (RPA) staff and methods for transforming NMCOG’s regional trail network data were tested.

REGIONAL SUPPORT ACTIVITIES

Northern Middlesex Municipal CEO Group

Town/ City Managers and Town Administrators in the region met in Chelmsford hosted by Manager Paul Cohen at Chelmsford Town Hall to continue a discussion from March regarding potential opportunities for regionalization and regional cooperation. The group honed in on the need for regional assistance and collaboration with: cybersecurity training; OSHA compliance and training; inspectional services; human resources/ diversity, equity, and inclusion; animal control; and climate change/ adaptation/ sustainability and energy planning. The next meeting is in Tyngsborough on June 12th to discuss potential policy and legislative priorities.

PERONNEL UPDATES

New Senior Planner of Housing and Land Use hired

Michael Asciola is the Senior Planner for Housing and Land Use. In this role he provides planning and technical assistance to advance local and regional housing initiatives for the Northern Middlesex Council of Government communities. This work includes working with communities in the development of municipal housing plans, zoning analysis, master planning, regulation and handbook drafting, and other related functions to support vibrant, equitable, and sustainable housing and land use planning.

Michael brings more than 15 years of planning experience to this role. Most recently with the City of Dover, NH after spending eight years working in Rhode Island as the Assistant Town Planner in Portsmouth and Town Planner in Johnston. During this time Michael developed his career in the planning field by working closely with the planning boards, zoning boards of appeals, and numerous municipal boards and committees facilitating and implementing various policies aimed at strengthening the communities’ visions and viability while modernizing the departments’ engagement tools and processes. Working hands on drafting land use regulations, policy, and comprehensive plans; providing technical support to Zoning, Planning and Design Review Boards; enforcing code violations; developing grant proposals; reviewing development applications; developing department protocols; managing and maintaining geographic information systems (GIS) databases; and integrating technologies to better serve the public. Michael earned his degree in Environmental Design and Urban Policy from the School of Landscape Architecture and Regional Planning at the University of Massachusetts—Amherst and is a recipient of the American Institute for Certified Planners (AICP) certification.