



MINUTES-Draft

NRPC TRANSPORTATION TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

3/16/05

Members Present:

Camille Pattison, NRPC
Steve Williams, NRPC
Bob Jeniski, Nashua Transit System
Paul Newman, Nashua Transit System
Roger Houston, City of Nashua Planning Dept.
Becky Ohler, NH DES
Bruce Berry, Town of Amherst

Others Present:

Ryan Friedman, NRPC Transportation Planner GIS
Matt Waitkins, NRPC Transportation Planner
Betsy Hahn, NRPC Regional Planner
Steve Wagner, Regional Planner

Meeting Opened and Review of Minutes

The meeting was called to order by Camille Pattison at 3:08 PM. Camille asked the Committee if there were any corrections to the minutes from the 1/19/05 meeting. Roger Houston moved to accept the minutes and Bob Jeniski seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

Commuter Rail

Steve Williams distributed a Nashua-Lowell Commuter Rail Fact Sheet and summarized the information. Currently \$24 million in federal funds are committed to the project. The project requires an additional \$32 million in federal funds and \$14 million in matching funds. The latest funding approach will be to utilize the New Starts Program and direct congressional appropriations. The City of Nashua and NRPC put together a concept plan for the rail station site based on a concept called "Transit Oriented Development". The site will have mixed uses at high density. A 3-4 story garage is planned with development on the top floor. The transit oriented development will generate an increase in property tax revenue which will be captured through a Tax Increment Finance District (TIFD). The City will issue revenue bonds to pay the required local match and use the revenue from the TIFD to pay off the bonds. A MOA will be signed by the City and NHDOT to agree that NHDOT will manage the project and a rail transit authority will be created to operate the rail in New Hampshire. The Nashua train station will also serve as a train layover facility, which will allow MBTA to operate more efficiently.

The City and NRPC have requested that the Federal Transit Administration give the project "Local Match Deferred" status. Federal funds are to be expended first and matching funds last, allowing for flexibility for technical studies and preliminary construction. NRPC and the City are currently working with the congressional delegation to secure the \$32 million in federal funding.

Transportation, Community and Systems Preservation

The Nashua Regional Planning Commission (NRPC) is in the process of conducting a comprehensive transportation study of Amherst, Milford and Wilton under the Federal Highway Administration's Transportation & Community & Systems Preservation Pilot Program (TCSP). This project will expand upon the recently completed NH 101 Corridor Study.

Results of the corridor study have shown that traffic issues in these towns are not confined to the NH 101 Corridor. Increasing congestion and safety concerns regarding NH 101 are leading to a diversion of state route traffic into the local communities. At the same time, traffic is diverting from local streets onto the state highway due to congestion issues at specific locations. These issues are the result of a lack of coordination between land use and transportation policies. The TCSP Pilot Program is designed to investigate the relationships between land use and transportation policies and to identify methods of coordinating these policies. A steering committee was formed and meets on a monthly basis.



The committee includes NRPC staff, town planners, highway department officials and representatives from the Main Street Associations.

Safe Routes to School

Matt Waitkins stated that the program goal is to encourage children to increase their physical activity by walking or biking to school. The program addresses safety concerns of parents by exploring ways to create safer streets, enforcing traffic laws and educating the public about safe biking, walking and driving practices. Next steps include meeting with City officials and the Ledge Street Elementary School PTO.

NH DOT State Transportation Plan (STIP)

There are only two changes to the STIP. The NH 102 sidewalk project in Hudson has moved up to 2005 and the Nashua parking facility at the proposed commuter rail site has been delayed.

Next Meeting is April 20th, 2005 at 3 PM.

Meeting was adjourned at 4:25 PM.

#300WW-83