



MINUTES

NRPC TRANSPORTATION TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING 03/21/07

Members Present:

Steve Dubois, NH Department of Transportation
Becky Ohler, NH Department of Environmental Services
Leigh Levine, FHWA
Roger Houston, City of Nashua
Steve Laurin, Town of Merrimack
Jeff Gowan, Town of Pelham
Bill Parker, Town of Milford
Roger Houston, City of Nashua Community Development
Jean Marie Kennamer, City of Nashua
Wayne Husband, City of Nashua Traffic
Sean Sullivan, Town of Hudson
Joe Mendola, City of Nashua

Others Present:

Tim Roache, NRPC Principal Transportation Planner
Ryan Friedman, GIS Planner
Matt Waitkins, NRPC Transportation Planner
Karen M. Baker, Administrative Assistant
Steve Wagner, NRPC Regional Planner
Stephen Williams, NRPC Executive Director

Meeting Opened and Review of Minutes: Tim Roache opened the meeting at 12:11. He started introductions and moved onto approval of the minutes from the February 28th TTAC meeting. Roger Houston moved to approve the minutes and Steve Laurin seconded the motion. All were in favor, none opposed and the motion was passed.

Tim reviewed what was discussed at the last TTAC meeting and passed around 4 handouts for reviewing for today's meeting:

- 2009-2018 Maintenance, CMAQ/TE and Earmark Summary
- 2009-2018 Investment Planner
- TPFKACH - Hudson, Litchfield, & Merrimack
- Route 101 - Wilton, Milford, & Amherst

Tim proceeded to explain the investment planner handout identifying that NH DOT was responsible for the funding on projects listed in red, projects listed in green were the responsibility of regional & local governments, and projects listed in blue were the responsibility of the local towns. In all cases, the highest priority project was listed at top of each of the corresponding sections. He gave a brief overview of all the projects listed with anticipated dates for completion or when they should be completed. Steve Williams explained the approach in more detail.

Becky Ohler mentioned that the dollar amount was the same. Tim confirmed that it was 53 million and that some of it was pushed out beyond the 10 year plan. Steve Williams added that Tim inflated the costs by some reasonable factor. Leigh Levine said that it would need to be done in future projects.

Jeff Gowan referred to a self-funded project that Pelham was working with the DOT on, with an estimated cost of about ½ million that would be paid with exactions. He questioned whether it should be tracked on the investment planner even though it was not currently in the 10 year plan. Tim responded yes and that there was



no reason why it could not be put in the out years. Jeff would provide Tim with more detailed information regarding the project. Bill Parker commented that the 101 portion of the investment planner reflected priorities the group had came up with during an iTRaC meeting.

Tim added that they programmed the spreadsheet where they felt projects would fit best using inflated estimates based on the early costs. Steve Williams added that there were no guarantees that the projects would be put in the 10 year plan by the DOT and that this planner was basically a fishing expedition.

Steve Laurin referred to the Merrimack ramp project not being in yet. He questioned what would happen if the DOT decides to incorporate the ramp project into the 10 year plan in conjunction with the Everett Turnpike widening project. Response was the DOT Executive Council & Legislature have to buy into it first.

Tim moved onto the Tier 2/3 projects and asked the group talked the group about whether the projects listed going to move forward. Steve Laurin said he would have to look into the Merrimack project to get more information.

The project formally known as Circumferential Highway (see 11 x 17 handout) was discussed next. Steve Williams informed the group of a public meeting that they had attended in Hudson. He added that the project was more or less gone, from what they got from DOT. Steve Williams said that DOT about 3 projects. Firstly, crossing the Merrimack River at the north end/Rte 102 in Litchfield & Hudson to Rte 3A to Rte 3 in Merrimack with an estimated cost of 67 million primarily funded through DOT. Second was connecting Rte 3A in Hudson to Rte 111, beginning at the Sagamore Bridge, with an estimated cost of 30 million without the help of state or local funds. Lastly, was the Hudson Taylor Falls Bridge with an estimated cost of 15 million.

Tim asked if there were any thoughts on the layout and the projects. Sean Sullivan spoke of the southern tier possibly funded by developer of the mall adding that they were not enough impact fees left to pay for the remainder. In addition, he said that Hudson was not really interested in the Circumferential Highway and does not want any of that land sold pointing out that the town owns 75 to 80% of the ROW.

Steve Laurin talked about connecting on Industrial Drive. Steve Williams said that is was not sacred and that a study would need to be done for the best location in addition to the study already done. Tim pointed out the impacts that it would have on the Pennichuck water supply and Steve Williams pointed out several other issues including the Budweiser plant, the prime farmland across the river and the eagle habitat at the river.

Tim spoke to the group about giving recommendations as a last step to the DOT. He brought up previous discussions saying the region is given an allocation on program funds and referred to the summary sheet handout, that if they continue to work with the DOT and FHA, using a range of dollars the end result would be having the ability to program the dollars on a regional level.

Leigh Levine gave an explanation to the group of fiscal constraint. He proceeded saying that currently the emphasis is on good financial management which came with the reauthorization process (SAFETEA-LU). Everything had to balance. In planning, there was a need for a financially constraint TIP and STIP and that there will continue to be a broad emphasis on the demonstration of financial constraint.

Steve Williams gave an example for a little bit more ease of understanding by stating that you can't plan on spending 200 million when you are only expected to receive 100 million. He added that this should be viewed as good news and that we should pay attention to the budget given to us.

Steve Laurin asked if this identified the local match. Steve Williams said it was part of it. Leigh added that the constraint has to be by year.



Becky Ohler asked if it allows you to under spend and carry over. Leigh said yes, and they encourage cushion build-ins. Wayne Husband spoke of other states that are aggressive about spending all the money each year so they could get other states moneys. He added that New Hampshire has a good track record about spending all their funds to get redistributed funds. Leigh said it was true about the aggressive spending in other states and that they are becoming even more aggressive.

Steve Williams questioned Tim on how he was going to do this process. Tim suggested that projects be submitted to the Commission, in writing. Projects would be reviewed by the TTAC and recommended for inclusion in the LRP. He suggested using the spreadsheet as a working document. Steve Williams simplified it by saying there is a need to come up with a process from beginning to implementation to completion. Tim added that there needs to be a logical process and flow from outer years to implementation.

Leigh felt it was good to have this financial constraint because it is a more credible process and people have more trust in the documents. Matt Waitkins added that if the MPO gets to distribute the money, it would be very important for the stakeholders to discuss which projects get priority. Jean Marie agreed. Becky asked the group to keep in mind that the LRP should go out 25 years to allow for amendments.

Tim said the 101 Corridor and the Circumferential Highway projects might be good to recommend to the DOT of what the group thinks should happen in the region. Roger Houston made a motion to do so, and Jeff Gowan seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

Tim asked Steve Williams about the amendment process and air quality. Becky responded that it should be a quick process and MPO's were not doing changes, but posting on their websites. She added that they were having a conference with Don Cook to find out if they can go forward with this process.

Becky had one announcement that she relayed to the group regarding a potential opportunity for the towns in the regions busses. She referred to the Clean School Bus USA and EPA Grant Program Act which provides funding to retrofit equipment for busses to help with emissions. One option is a Diesel Oxidation Catalyst which is a muffler replacement which carries a 5 year warrantee, with a cost of about \$900. She added that the entire City of Manchester has already done this with their busses. Sean Sullivan questioned how the money would be handled. Becky replied that the money would be filtered through the school system district, and then given to the bus owners. She concluded saying it was strongly encouraged that the towns take advantage of this and gave her email to the group if they any questions. rohler@des.state.nh.us

Motion to adjourn came from Roger Houston, seconded by Jeff Gowan. The meeting adjourned at 1:12 pm.

Next TTAC Meeting is scheduled for May 21st in the NRPC Conference Room.