



MINUTES
NRPC TRANSPORTATION TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
06/25/08
APPROVED

Members Present:

- Louise Woodworth, Nashua Transit System
- Kristi Gillette, Nashua Transit System
- Steve Laurin, Town of Merrimack
- Jeff Babel, Town of Hollis
- Tad Putney, Town of Brookline
- Jean Marie Kennamer, City of Nashua
- Mark Sousa, Nashua Transit System
- Steve DuBois, NH Department of Transportation
- Chris Skoglund, NH Department of Environmental Services
- Leigh Levine, Federal Highway Administration
- Bruce Berry, Town of Amherst
- Steve Dookran, City of Nashua Division of Public Works
- Jeanne Walker, City of Nashua Division of Public Works
- Sean Sullivan, Town of Hudson
- John Cashell, Town of Hudson

Others Present:

- Tim Roache, NRPC Principal Transportation Planner
- Matt Waitkins, NRPC Transportation Planner
- Ryan Friedman, NRPC GIS Planner
- Karen M. Baker, NRPC Administrative Assistant

MEETING OPENED AND REVIEW OF MINUTES

Tim Roache opened the meeting at 12:08. He started with introductions and moved onto approval of the minutes from the May 21st TTAC meeting. Sean Sullivan moved to approve the minutes seconded by Mark Sousa. All were in favor and the minutes were approved as submitted.

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL GRANT APPLICATIONS

Matt Waitkins gave a brief history of the Safe Routes to School Program. He explained that it started back in 1999 with a pilot study done at the New Searles School in Nashua which became a program through the Federal Highway Administration under NH Department of Transportation. The program is 100% reimbursable. Matt informed the group that currently, SRTS was in their second round of funding applications which began on March 17th with applications due at NRPC and NH DOT on May 12th. On July 21st, funding applicants will do their presentations at NH DOT. He added that the Master Plan from the Ledge Street School which has become the model for SRTS, was used for further funding and that 40% is for infrastructure improvements. The point of the program is health related to encourage kids to bike or walk to school. Matt continued on explaining that the RPC's in the state were asked to rank the applications using guidance and criteria from NH DOT. He added that NRPC staff not involved in the SRTS program were asked to rank the applications using this criteria. The five applications came from the following schools/towns:

- Amherst Street School, Nashua
- Bicentennial School, Nashua
- Birch Street School, Nashua
- New Searles School, Nashua
- Brookline School District



Matt informed the group that of all of the applications, the Brookline application stood out above the others. Some improvements listed in the Brookline application were sidewalk expansion, vehicle feedback signs, and education & enforcement. The 4 Nashua applications were ranked second equally. There was a ranking difference with Amherst Street School which was ranked #1 in its category because it is considered a "start up" which carries a cap of \$5,000.

Tim commented that the 1st round of applications ranked by NRPC were not weighted as seriously with the Statewide Committee and that NRPC was looking for support from TTAC on their rankings of Brookline as #1 with the Nashua Schools coming in as #2 equally except for Amherst Street School which was in its out start up funding category. He added that the Nashua schools superintendent was very enthusiastic about the program and praised Brookline on their hard work on the application and the task force they created as well.

Matt informed the group that the 3rd round of funding would be starting in November and encouraged folks to start the groundwork. He added that infrastructure projects are capped at \$100,000.

Steve Dookran questioned Brookline applying for the funds and the fact that the roads are State roads. Tad said there was no funding available through the State to build the necessary sidewalks. Dookran said "so, it falls under Urban even though it is a State route"! Dookran also asked about the rules about having a travel plan in place for the school to be able to receive infrastructure money. Tim explained that it was suggested but not a requirement to have a travel plan in place. Tim also added that it would burn up all the funds for SRTS if every one did or had to do a travel plan for their school or district. Laurin asked what the travel plan was for. Tim said it was like a master plan but for the schools. He added that a survey would have to be done with kids and parents and be provided to the FHW. Laurin asked if there was some criteria (ex. Is it safe? Are kids starting to walk?). He said he would like to see some performance measure. Matt said it was still a fairly recent and new and that FHW was doing the tracking. Dookran asked if the balance of what is not used or going to be used still available. Tim said that balance is carried in, reminding the group that the application has to be a good one to be considered for the funding. Jeanne Walker suggested using bike racks that will be put in at the Ledge Street School as a way to measure to see if more kids were walking & biking to school. Jean Marie asked what the age criteria were. Matt said it was grades K-8. Jean Marie said that she would not let her daughter walk or bike to school by herself for safety reasons.

Tad pointed out a successful program that Brookline has started called Fresh Air Fridays where parents and teachers meet in a local parking lot not too far from the school and chaperone the kids to school by way of walking or biking. He added that it was not just restricted to parents and teachers of school grades K-8. Jeanne added that there was positive feedback and support throughout the City for the SRTS program.

Laurin asked about seeing the ranking of the round 2 applications. Matt said he would send it off to him. Tim asked for a motion for endorsement on the projects and the way they were ranked with Brookline being #1 with all 4 Nashua Schools ranked as #2 equally. Steve Laurin moved, and Jean Marie Kennamer seconded the motion.

PRELIMINARY DRAFT 2009-2012 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Tim explained that the TIP process started last year and was derived from the Ten Year Plan all of which comes down from the NH DOT. Tim referred to the 11 x 17 spreadsheet included in the agenda packet which was originally produced in work but moved to excel in order to keep a better eye on information regarding fiscal constraint and expected funding vs. expenditure on projects which usually comes from NH DOT. He continued on pointing out that everything was in alphabetical order by town now and that



the information was provided to the group just as an FYI and that he was still waiting on information from DOT. He asked the group to look through and asked for questions and or comments. There were only a few project changes according to representatives from the towns listed:

- Mark Sousa – Project # 607 - City of Nashua Bus Equipment – Should be listed as FY 2009 instead of FY 2011.
- Bruce Berry – Town of Amherst TE Project – Construction conflict with 2010 Amherst 250th Anniversary Celebration – Working with DOT for possible acceleration or Amherst front project and get reimbursed later. May require an amendment, but not full.

Dookran commented on the many phases of the BSP. Tim said there would probably be one big amendment on this once the City makes a decision.

Tim talked about fiscal constraint and informed the group that he would be updating the table and including all statewide allocations in the number, but there would probably be some stuff not included and to rely on the DOT analysis as it would be more accurate.

AIR QUALITY CONFORMITY ANALYSIS

Tim passed around the Air Quality Conformity Schedule memorandum explaining that this would be updated with the adoption of the 2009 TIP. Tim continued to review the schedule pointing out a few things:

- Draft Regional Emissions Calculation - The Southeast portion of New Hampshire is shared by 4 MPO's who all share the same non-attainment area.
- The open public comment period will be 30 days.
- August 20th has been set aside for a TTAC meeting to review all documents (LRTP, TIP, Air Quality).
- TTAC also to meet possibly on September 10th for comments/changes before recommendation to the Commission.

The group agreed to meet prior to recommendation to review the LRTP, TIP, and Air Quality documents. Leigh Levine mentioned that the federal agencies have to approve the STIP first.

OTHER BUSINESS

Tim informed the group that TIP Amendment #8 would be coming soon totaling \$32,000 due to a change in the Hollis TE project. This was not originally listed in the TIP. This was due to changes in the preliminary engineering and right-of-way phases and therefore would require the amendment. A 30 day public comment period beginning on July 1st was when it would be noticed.

Tim asked the group about canceling the July meeting and addressing all documents as well as the STIP #8 at the proposed August 20th meeting. The group agreed to this. Tim said he would send out a memo on this. **The next TTAC meeting will be held on August 20th.**

The meeting adjourned at **1:05pm**.