



MINUTES
NRPC TRANSPORTATION TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
05/20/09
APPROVED

Members Present:

Steve Laurin, Town of Merrimack
 John LeBrun, City of Nashua
 Bill Parker, Town of Milford
 Steve Dookran, City of Nashua
 James Vayo, Member of the Public
 Bruce Berry, Town of Amherst

Tad Putney, Town of Brookline
 Jean Marie Kennamer, City of Nashua
 John Cashell, Town of Hudson
 Jeff Gowan, Town of Pelham
 Chris Skoglund, NH DES

Others Present

Tim Roache, Principal Transportation Planner
 Matt Waitkins, NRPC Transportation Planner
 Steve Wagner, NRPC Regional Planner
 Julie Chizmas, Transportation Planner
 Karen M. Baker, NRPC Administrative Assistant

CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

Tim Roache opened the meeting at 12:08 and proceeded with introductions around the table.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM THE APRIL 15TH 2009 MEETING

Roache referred to the minutes of April 15th 2009 included in the agenda packet and asked for a motion to approve. Jeff Gowan moved to approve the minutes with a second coming from Jean Marie Kennamer. All were in favor and the motion passed.

2011-2014 TIP & TEN YEAR PLAN UPDATE

Roache referred to the Ten Year Plan memo included in the agenda packet. He reviewed the current projects, illustrative projects, new projects and rail & transit projects. He reminded the group that at some point they would need to prioritize the projects listed in the Ten Year Plan. Roache used the 101A project as an example adding that it has been in the Ten Year Plan for about 10 years with an estimate that was originally in the 101A Corridor plan. He added that this was an old estimate and off on money by 5 million dollars if it were to be done by its 2012 completion date. Dookran added a few more points regarding the project saying that originally the State was going to fund the cost of ROW, but now it is back into the estimate. Additionally, in 2004-2005 there was a 25% increase in construction costs. Roache said that DOT has started working on a plan to address the inflation issue. He added that DOT is looking for a prioritization of projects so if they can reallocate funds they will look at projects that appear to be important to us. Roache said this project is an example of what could be sent to DOT in a letter as a top priority. He also informed the group that DOT would be meeting tomorrow to look at the Ten Year Plan. Dookran provided a few more details about the 101A project:

- Preliminary Engineering Estimate is done
- 8.6 million current budget
- Only 5 ½ million in budget
- \$250,000 budget for ROW
- Nashua sees project as a commuter corridor project or regional project and not the highest of all needs to Nashua.

Waitkins felt this was one of the toughest areas and in most need of being done.

Roache said he would like to draft a letter for the Executive Committee that refers to a priority project list with the 101A project listed as a high priority. He asked for a motion for this. Bill Parker moved with Jeff Gowan seconding. All were in favor with one abstention.

Roache also said he would like to get some kind of consensus for prioritization criteria adding that he felt it should be different on different projects (ex. rail). Roache suggested a fact sheet be put together for the top 5 projects each with concrete facts, a vision for the region, why it should be a priority and have it for the June TTAC meeting. At that time, he would seek a recommendation from TTAC to later present to the Commission for approval, to then forward to DOT. He asked the group if they had any concerns about this. Gowan felt that he was sticking oranges in with apples and referred to a Pelham project with a construction date of 2009 and a completion date of 2012 which is federally earmarked for funding. Gowan added that there are a lot of accidents in town center where this project is located and is needed and felt that was something to be considered as priority. Roache said that is was a good point and to think about readiness and funding when prioritizing the projects. He added that he would put available funds down as criteria when prioritizing.

Roache said the group would meet next month at which time they would come with forward with a prioritization list. He asked the group if they wanted to rank by type of project of lump all together. Dookran said the decision makers want you to tell them what you want first. He felt that the projects should have a number or letter. Roache said he would put that as a consensus process. Skoglund said that other RPC/MPO's were using a scoring system due to the turnover of members. Roache said he found difficulty coming up with criteria that is fair across the board and was open to suggestions and opinions. He added that it could be changed in the long run once brought to the Commission for approval. Laurin asked if project reports would be used as criteria. Roache said just for reference materials. Kennamer felt there should be sub-categories (smaller & moderate), not one big king project that would squeeze out all the others. Roache said he would pull rail and transit projects aside from the highway and safety improvements. James Vayo, member from the public suggested using vehicle or pedestrian metrics when prioritizing projects. Roache said the closest data to use would be that collected for the Safe Routes to School programs.

Dookran informed that the City of Nashua tracks all citizen requests and are looking into pedestrian connections using the thought process of it "put it there & they will come" when looking into needs and pedestrian needs based on data collections. Kennamer said the Traffic Department analyzes their own traffic and pedestrian counts on a case by case basis to determine whether there is a need for sidewalks, traffic signals, etc. Laurin had a concern of that the criteria does not apply to all types of projects. Roache said that was the reason for separating it out. Laurin felt there would be an issue with coming up with the top priority with 3 different categories and at the next Commission meeting, the Commission needs to evaluate and come up with the top 3 priorities. Roache said the Commission would have the final say.

TRANSPORTATION ENHANCEMENTS (TE) FUNDING

Roache reviewed the Transportation Enhancements Process and Scoring memo included in the agenda packet. Listed below are the anticipated processes of the TE Advisory Committee (TEAC) meeting on the TE program:

- Program announcement and applications available on June 1, 2009
- A Letter of Intent due to NHDOT and NRPC by July 2, 2009
- Mandatory Trainings offered July through August 2009
- Completed Applications due to NHDOT and NRPC by September 15, 2009

Listed below is a brief synopsis of NRPC's and TTAC comments over the specific items requested for the TE process. For more detailed information on the general comments of NRPC's review of the TE process as well as DOT's Proposed Process and Scoring System For TE Applications, please refer to the items included in the May 20th, 2009 TTAC Meeting Agenda Packet.

ITEM 1 – Letter of Intent

Comment - purpose of this is to determine the number of projects and dollars requested. Dookran felt more paperwork.

ITEM 2 – Mandatory Municipal Management Training

Comment – people who have attended previously should not have to attend again.

ITEM 3 – Proposed Bonus Scoring System

Comments – Planning Commission staff at your service. DOT has offered a proposed scoring system with more emphasis of focus on regional ranking with bonus points. Not a big pot of money (3 ½ to 4 million for the entire state). Intent to get project money that did not make it into other planning processes (ex. Ten Year Plan).

ITEM 4 – Planner Certification and Public Participation

Comment - Should be more clarification on this.

ITEM 5 – Previously Awarded Project Status

Comment – should apply to DOT also. Prefer they did not do this. Kennamer feels they are trying to make the process harder. Roache said it was probably a way to put more control on it.

ITEM 6 – Application Review Process

Comment - FHWA confirmation of eligibility should happen early, before DOT or RPC's score the project.

Roache concluded that he wanted to bring NRPC's comments about the process to TTAC's attention and that NRPC would be putting out a letter to everyone on where to obtain process information and the application. He asked if anyone had thought about applying. Putney said that Brookline had plans on applying.

FY 2010–2011 UNIFIED WORK PLAN PROGRAM (UPWP)

Roache reviewed the memo included in the agenda packet on the 2010-2011 UPWP. He explained that the document represents a wish list along with a must do or required must do's of the NRPC. He added this UPWP is different than past documents mainly due to the amount of detail. He also pointed out to the group that the Senate Finance Committee has taken away their match which results in a loss of \$49,000 out of the budget. He referred to page 28 of the UPWP which summarizes the work elements. Additionally, DOT can't match their 10% and now do toll credits (see memo for detail).

Roache informed the group that TTAC would have a meeting in June and monthly meetings, rather than bi-monthly for now.

Roache also reminded the group that according to NRPC's By-laws for the TTAC, Town Selectmen should be reappointing and/or appointing members for the TTAC every two years.

Tim asked for a motion to adjourn. Jean Marie moved with a second from Bill Parker.

The meeting adjourned at **1:26pm**.