



**NRPC APPROVED MINUTES
NRPC TRANSPORTATION TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
01/19/11**

Members Present:

John Cashell, Town of Hudson
Jeff Babel, Town of Hollis
Leon Kenison, City of Nashua DPW
Wayne Husband, Nashua Traffic
Steve Dookran, City of Nashua DPW
Eric Abrams

Leigh Levine, FHWA
Jason Hoch, Town of Litchfield
Kyle Fox, Town of Merrimack
Jeff Gowan, Town of Pelham
John St. Pierre – Town of Amherst
Bill Parker, Town of Milford

Staff Present

Tim Roache, MPO Coordinator
Kerrie Diers, Executive Director
Julie Chizmas, Transportation Planner

Karen M. Baker, Administrative Assistant
Steve Wagner, Regional Planner
Matt Waitkins, Transportation Planner

Others Present

Joe Mendola, City of Nashua DPW
Barbara Pressly, City of Nashua

Mark Dixon, FHWA
Gary Webster, Town of Hudson

CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

Tim Roache opened the meeting at 12:12 with introductions

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM THE DECEMBER 8TH 2010 MEETING

Roache referred to the minutes of December 8, 2010 included in the agenda packet as Attachment 1 and asked for a motion to approve. Gowan moved to approve the December 8, 2010 minutes with a second from St. Pierre. All were in favor and the motion passed.

KICK-OFF OF THE NRPC TWO-YEAR TRANSPORTATION PLANNING CYCLE

Roache summarized that the NRPC 2 year transportation cycle coincides with the NHDOT's Ten Year Plan. He continued that he was starting with the federal side first and that he has asked the towns for feedback back in July regarding the projects currently listed in the LRTP. He added that the goal for the meeting was to review the projects and use the feasibility matrix to rank them, with a future goal of presenting the priority projects to the full Commission for approval. Roache passed the floor to Chizmas who provided a Power Point Presentation to the group which included the name, history, key bullets, funding history and phases of the projects listed in the LRTP. Chizmas continued with Roache by reviewing the projects listed below with key points about each:

Milford to Nashua NH 101A Corridor Improvements

- Evolved from a proposed bypass that was cancelled in the early 1990s to a series of road improvements at various locations.
- 2003 - 2012 scope: "Roadway improvements from NH 101 to FEE TPK (7.5 mi); Construction projects to be determined by Corridor Study"
 - over \$18 Million in funding (\$5M in 2003 and \$11M for 2006 through 2008).
- Project split into two phases in the 2005 - 2014 Ten Year Plan.

Wilton-Milford-Amherst NH 101 Corridor Improvements

- Safety improvements at various locations along the NH 101 Corridor from Wilton to Wallace Road in Bedford as determined by the 2002 NH 101 Corridor Study. (DOT Project # 13692).

Capital Corridor Rail Project – Nashua-Manchester-Concord

- Establish passenger rail service connecting Lowell (MA), Nashua, Manchester and Concord, with station facilities along the corridor.

Merrimack - Nashua: F.E. Everett Turnpike Improvements

- Widen the F. E. Everett Turnpike to a consistent three lane cross section between Exit 8 in Nashua and the Bedford mainline toll facility.
- Included in current NRPC Long Range Transportation Plan with a plan estimate of \$125M for 2019-2022 plan years.

Hudson - Nashua: East-West Connectivity

- East west travel across the Merrimack River has been under discussion and study for 50 years which indirectly led to Circumferential Highway Project which also has not been included in last two Ten Year Plans.
- NRPC LRTP projects include:
 - Develop Merrimack River Crossing between Route 3 and Route 3A, including a connection to NH 102 in Hudson.
 - Connect NH 3A (Lowell Road) to NH 111 beginning at the Sagamore Bridge in Hudson – Illustrative.
 - Develop capacity improvements around Taylor Falls Bridge between Hudson and Nashua as a connection between three federal or state routes (US 3, NH 3A, NH 102) - Not currently included in LRTP.

Nashua – Tyngsboro, MA: Exit 36 SB

- Addition of southbound off-ramp to Exit 36 just across the Massachusetts state line in Tyngsboro to provide southbound access from the FE Everett Turnpike to the Pheasant Lane Mall - Included in current NRPC LRTP

Hollis - Four Corners Intersection Improvements

- 4-Corners Intersection Improvements - addition of turn lanes at the signalized intersection of NH Route 122 and NH Route 130 - Currently included in NRPC LRTP

Merrimack – Intersection Improvements

- Intersection improvements to improve traffic flow at intersections identified in studies by the Town of Merrimack. - Included in current NRPC LRTP.

Comments from the group:

- **Bedford Tolls Relocation** – Roache: The relocation of the Bedford Tolls will show in the NRPC TIP. The study is still in the works and no decision has been made on the location.
- **Capital Corridor Rail Project** – Roache: Enormous history with no funds currently to build. Remains as illustrative project in TIP. Pressly spoke in favor of pushing for this adding that NH was so far behind and by not supporting would send a bad message. Roache added that this was bigger than congestion and transportation. Diers responded to questions informing the group that there were planning grants out there to help address questions such as “is it going to be feasible for other than leisurely trips to Boston” that would be completed within 2 years if the funding comes through. Abrams gave an instance on time comparison with traffic vs. rail. Diers responded to Cashell, saying that the regional range was studied south of Nashua in regards to the speed of the trains. Roache commented that the infrastructure was in place to Lowell. Husband asked how many funding sources were being utilized. Diers said a combination, adding that FRA and FTA agreed to work together so using both. There was a question on using CMAQ funds, which Chizmas addressed. Kenison said he did not think the state would succeed with rail until the political will is there and the state buys and takes ownership of the rail.

- **Merrimack - Nashua: F.E. Everett Turnpike Improvements** – Roache said it is expected that the turnpike would go to a level of service (LOS) F within the next 10 years. Fox felt that improvements would benefit the secondary roads if this was done.
- **Merrimack River Crossing** – Roache: There is a great need for a bridge over the Merrimack River and that is why the project is still listed in the NRPC TIP, even though there is no funding out there for it. The point is to address the congestion across the Taylor Falls Bridge. Webster said a Route 102 to Route 3 connection would have the least amount of wetland impacts and would help alleviate the congestion. Fox said there would also be a benefit to the folks from the West. Cashell said it was a very high priority for Hudson.
- **Connector Road – NH 3A to NH 111** – Roache: The local impact to Hudson is huge. Webster commented on the Wason Road backup and how this would alleviate congestion tremendously as well as Nashua. Cashell commented that is just over half the cost of a new high school.
- **Exit 36S** – Roache: Has been in the LRTP for a number of years and a push was made recently to get funding through a TIGER Grant, but we were not awarded. Also is high priority project for the City of Nashua due to the congestion issues on Spitbrook and therefore worth keeping in the LRTP. Additionally, from an economic aspect, this would be a great benefit and would also improve overall circulation. Pressly asked about getting interstate monies. Roache said it would need a lot of federal support (maybe an earmark).
- **Merrimack Intersection Improvements** – Roache: Are there still concerns in Merrimack and if so, where are they. Fox informed that Columbia & Wright Ave were being improved this summer. He added that it would be interesting to see what impact the new mall will have on traffic and the intersections
- **Hollis Four Corners** – Roache: Question on crashes at the 4 Corners roads. Roache would check the NRPC Safety Plan to see if intersection made top crash areas.

Roache referred to the Feasibility Matrix taped to the wall and informed the group that they would run through the projects using this matrix, first determining what the level of importance was on the Regional Impact, then the Feasibility level. He added that the group would later look at the short term projects, and then the new projects in March/April to come up with a list of priorities. Each project was ranked by the group using the Feasibility Matrix. All projects were discussed among the group and ranked as follows:

Project	Impact	Feasibility
Capital Corridor Rail Project	HIGH	HIGH
Northern Merrimack River Crossing	HIGH	MED/HIGH
Milford to Nashua: NH 101A Corridor Improvements	HIGH	MED/HIGH
Nashua – Tyngsboro, MA: Exit 36 SB	HIGH	MEDIUM
Wilton-Milford-Amherst: NH 101 Corridor Improvements	MED/HIGH	MED/HIGH
Merrimack - Nashua: F.E. Everett Turnpike Improvements	MED/HIGH	MED/HIGH
Hudson: Connector Road – NH 3A to NH 111	MED/HIGH	MED/HIGH
Hollis: Four Corners Intersection Improvements	LOW/MED	MED/HIGH

Roache explained to the group that this is a 2 year process with the bulk of the work being done over the next few months wrapping it up around April/May and making a recommendation to NHDOT, then on to the GACIT Hearings in the Fall of 2011. He added that he would be asking communities for new projects for the LRTP.

DRAFT PROJECT EVALUATION CRITERIA AND SELECTION PROCEDURES

Roache passed around a draft kick-off selection procedures letter that would be sent to communities for new projects that have not been proposed and also referred to the Draft Project Evaluation Criteria and Selection Procedures included in the agenda packet. He added that during this update, you would not see these new projects in the Ten Year Plan, but they would be included in the NRPC LRTP to have them in a queue to eventually get into the STIP and NRPC TIP. Roache said that NRPC had not solicited for new projects in 4 to 6 years which shows a lot of gaps in our current list of projects. Chizmas referred to the Project Form that would be used when selecting new projects for the LRTP. She explained that shorter range projects would not really be focused on as much, therefore not as much detail would be required on the form. Chizmas added that the form would also be available online and a letter would go out to the Boards of Alderman, Selectmen, & Town Council and the Planning Boards with a February 29th deadline. Roache added that there would be some public meetings for input.

STAFF AND PROJECT UPDATES

Webster informed the group that the Hudson 102 Sidewalk Project Phase 2 was 100% ready to go.

Roache informed the group of NRPC's MPO review being held on the 26th of January and invite the TTAC to come during the lunch hour to comment. Levine elaborated informing the group that FHWA and FTA were doing MPO reviews to make sure the MPO's were meeting the needs of the region. He added that this was a federal requirement and would be done in 4 year cycles with the 4 MPO's in New Hampshire. Nashua was done back in 2007, and recommendations from the 2007 review would be part of the focus for this next review as well as the newer federal initiatives that have come along since 2007. Levine said the invite extends to policy and TTAC Committees to participate and comment. Additionally, the MPO Model (Travel Demand) would also be looked at and also whether NRPC is meeting federal requirements and compliance. Once the review was done, a report would be generated from both agencies pointing out areas that are going well and those that need improvements.

Roache informed that he was working on the next UPWP. Chizmas referred to the 2011 TTAC Meetings listing available for the group.

Cashell motioned to adjourn with a second from Gowan. The meeting adjourned at **1:55pm**.