


NRPC APPROVED MINUTES
NRPC TRANSPORTATION TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
03/14/18

Members Present:

Gordon Leedy, Town of Amherst	Sarah Marchant, City of Nashua
George Thebarga, Town of Hudson	Camille Pattison, NTS
Dawn Tuomala, Town of Merrimack	Jeff Gowan, Town of Pelham
Julie Chizmas, City of Nashua	Scott Butcher, Town of Wilton
Pete Kohalmi, City of Nashua	Jim Lavacchia, Town of Wilton

Others Present

Amy Prouty-Gill, City of Nashua	Phil Goff, Alta Planning & Design
Tim Cummings, City of Nashua	Ron Bingham, Goodale's Bike Shop
Nelson Disco, Town of Merrimack	Chris Buchanan, Volunteer-Amherst
Simon Corson, Town of Amherst	

STAFF PRESENT

Jay Minkarah, Executive Director	Jen Czysz, Asst. Director/Litchfield Circuit Rider
Matt Waitkins, Senior Transportation Planner	Cassie Mullen, Reg'l Planner/Mason Circuit Rider
Karen Baker, Program Assistant	Stephen Meno, Reg'l Planner/Wilton Circuit Rider

CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

Waitkins called the meeting to order at 12:08 with introductions.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM THE FEBRUARY 14, 2018 MEETING

Waitkins referred to the minutes of February 14, 2018 included in the agenda packet as Attachment 1. He asked if there were any corrections; if not a motion for approval. Gowan motioned with a second from Marchant to approve the February 14, 2018 TTAC minutes. All were in favor and the motion passed.

INNOVATIONS IN BICYCLE PLANNING AND FACILITY DESIGN BY GUEST SPEAKER PHIL GOFF, ALTA PLANNING & DESIGN

Goff introduced himself, provided a brief background on himself to the group, reviewed the agenda of his presentation, and provided a brief history of Alta Planning & Design and the numerous regional and national guides, manuals and white papers they have produced. He added that Alta was selected by NHDOT to participate in the Statewide Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plans project. Goff noted that Alta has produced Bike/Ped Master Plans for over 50 cities/regions and 12 states. Goff also noted the extensive project management experience he has had on a variety of bike/pedestrian projects throughout New England.

Goff reviewed what Complete Streets are with the group noting that "a Complete Street is safe, comfortable and convenient for travel via foot, bicycle, transit and automobile for anyone regardless of age or ability". He also noted that Complete Streets are safe streets and that safe streets are 40% less deadly and have fewer percentage of crashes. Goff added that Complete Streets accommodate all cyclists and showed examples of on-street bikeway markings from least protection to most protection for bicyclist.

Goff noted the 4 "C's" of bike network planning, provided definitions and showed bike/trail network examples:

- Connectivity – Links gaps and connects destinations
- Conspicuous – Wayfinding signs to clarify routes using bold graphics/branding
- Coherent – Logic of networks and consistency of the design
- Comfort – Separation from cars, intersection treatments and good maintenance polices

Lastly, Goff referred to the Bicycle Facility Design Toolkit which gives examples of a variety of bike lane, intersections, and shared roadway options. He shared examples of striped bike lanes in Nashua, separated bike lanes using a one-way cycle track option with the first of its type in NH anticipated to be implemented on Middle Street in Portsmouth, and buffered bike lane examples from Cambridge, MA. He noted that developing buffered bike lanes are a good idea for cities where there is concern about snow removal. He referred to the new NACTO; a handy guide for developing streets for bikes and pedestrians in urban areas. Goff also showed examples bike lane design options such as, one-way cycle track – sidewalk level design, two-way cycle track design, contra flow bike lanes, intersection bike lane design; with end, extension and thru options.

Goff stated the importance of intersection design with bicycle signals and the use of green pavement markings, which are becoming more prevalent, to distinguish the bike lanes and conflict zones. He noted that the FHWA approved using bike signals at intersections in the MUTCD. Goff pointed out other design features such as bike boxes are becoming more popular and he has seen queues of 10 to 12 bikes in the boxes. He added that there were a couple other new designs out there; the “Two-Stage Left Turn Queue Box” and the “Two-Stage Left Turn Jug Handle” options.

Goff noted that often there is no space for bike lanes and showed examples and provided ideas on how to address this:

- Uphill bike lane with downhill sharrows
- Advisory shoulder/ bike lanes
- Designate a nearby roadway as a Bicycle Boulevard
- Design the Bike Boulevard using branding and crossing arterials

Goff concluded his presentation by showing a comparison of combined bike traffic over four main Portland bike bridges with bikeway miles noting that crashes remained flat but overall, they were down from the 80’s.

Chizmas asked if Goff had seen an increase in encouragement of infrastructure for bicycles in cities or regions since the launch of Bikeshare. Goff stated that it was already heading that way, but it became that way simultaneously in Boston from 2009-2010 when they started adding bike lanes, then in 2011, Bikeshare came in. Chizmas felt that data from Bikeshare should show you where you should make your investments.

Thebarga referred to the maintenance issues with municipal budgets and if this could affect safety. Goff said yes, and that regular refreshing of pavement markings is necessary and would impact ridership, especially at intersections. Goff said it is worth the capital investment to put use somewhat more expensive pavement marking materials that have longer life spans.

Leedy stated that Amherst is working on a Bike and Pedestrian Master Plan and there are no streets in Amherst that look like the roads in the presentation; Amherst roads are mostly scenic and do not have a lot of space but have urban traffic. He asked if there are any alternatives? Goff suggested advisory shoulders which are good for areas with less than 1500vmt. He also stated that the (STAR) guide has some guidance, but there is no silver bullet for a 22ft wide road with high volume. Buchanan asked about side-paths and advisory shoulders and what funding opportunities are out there to become a model city. Goff said there are some and mentioned one with awards between \$20,000 & \$50,000 to provide seed money for planning, but it is mostly for signage and striping. He added that there are some others out there but mostly smaller scale. He noted that he was aware of funding opportunities in MA, but nothing in NH currently, but there may be additional opportunities to come.

Minkarah commented on the many different alternatives for design and asked if it is confusing for motorist and bicyclist. Goff said there was a little bit for both and there are a lot of different examples from different

communities. He added that consistency of design is important and there is the little bit of that risk of confusion, but if it is a good design, it should be pretty intuitive; this all has to be considered by both the planner and the designer. Minkarah asked if bike/pedestrian conflicts are going to be tracked as more infrastructure is added in and usage increases. Goff said his guess is that usage is increasing and there are some conflicts. He added that statistically, he has never seen a rise of this with increased usage. Chizmas referred to a college she visited that had walk only areas and lots of signage due to the number of bikes. She added that sidewalk riding is an issue in some areas with Bikeshare.

Minkarah asked Goff's opinion on Dock Bikeshare vs. Dock-less systems. Goff commented that for a lot of communities, the dock-based system is too expensive, but in larger cities, you can't beat the Dock-less based system. Bingham stated that he was not in agreement and noted that Texas was very unhappy with the Dock-less system. He added that he did not think the Dock-less system was good and it should Dock-based due to the deaths, fatalities and more bicycle crashes associated with the Dock-less system.

There was a concern from the group regarding Goff's presentation and the "If you build it, they will come" and intimidating more motorists by putting more cyclists on the road.

TIP AMENDMENT 4 [ACTION REQUIRED] AND MARCH MINOR REVISION

Waitkins informed the group that TIP Amendment #4 was discussed at the February TTAC meeting. He added that a notice was posted for a Public Comments through March 15th in the Telegraph and on the NRPC website and a Public Hearing will be held on Wednesday, March 21st @ 7 pm. As of today, no comments were received. Waitkins reviewed the Amendment with the group:

TIP Amendment 4 and February Minor Revision – Review Items

Waitkins reviewed STIP Amendment 4 and the February Minor Revision with the group. He summarized the regional and statewide projects of significance to the region in STIP Amendment #4:

REGIONAL

Hudson 41754: Constructing a third southbound right turn lane on Lowell Rd/NH3A. (CMAQ)

- New project, Add PE funds in FY19 and FY20, Total project cost: \$1,571,258

Merrimack 10136D: Widening 101A from Boston Post Rd to Continental Blvd & safety improvements at Craftsman Lane/Boston Post Rd. (STP, Toll credits)

- No change in project scope, Decrease PE funds in FY18, Decrease ROW funds in FY19, Decrease Construction funds in FY20, Total project cost: \$5,270,706 (- \$1,104,768)

Nashua 10136B: NH Route 101A; Phase II, Widening and improvements from Somerset Pkwy to Sunapee St & Blackstone Dr. to Celina. (NHS, Toll credits)

- No change in project scope, Decrease PE funds in FY19, Total project cost: \$12,221,255 (+31,519)

Nashua 41742: Heritage Rail Trail East; Construct the Heritage Rail Trail East. (CMAQ)

- New project, Add PE funds in FY19 & FY20, Add Construction funds in FY20, Total project cost: \$1,125,747

Nashua 41745: NH 101 A; To expand Nashua Transit System (NTS) west along Amherst Street, (NH101A) to Walmart in Amherst. (CMAQ)

- New project, Total project cost: \$472,646

Pelham 41751: NH 128 & Sherburne Rd; Intersection improvements at the intersection of NH128 & Sherburne Rd and Mammoth & NH111A. (CMAQ)

- New project, Add PE funds in FY19 & FY20, Add ROW funds in FY20, Total project cost: \$2,086,943

STATEWIDE

Boston-Manchester 68093 (C,E,M,O): Boston Express

- No change in project scope, Project is being removed from the STIP, will be added to statewide FTA 5307 programmatic category, NHDOT will provide details of project

Waitkins briefly summarized the additional Statewide projects and showed a proposed motion. There was brief discussion on the fiscally constraint portion of the TIP per Lantos suggestion. Chizmas suggested including info to be safe and it would show a net zero. After further discussion, Leedy motioned with a second from Gowan to approve Amendment #4 to the adopted Nashua Metropolitan Area 2017-2020 Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP). All were in favor and the motion passed.

Waitkins summarized the March Minor revision noting there was only one project in the region:

Nashua - Merrimack - Bedford, F. E. Everett Turnpike (13761): F.E.E. Turnpike widening of 2-lane sections from Exit 8 (Nashua) to I-293 (Bedford). Inflation decreased due to first estimate in Federal FY 2018.

ELECTRIC AMERICA ZERO EMISSION VEHICLE INVESTMENT PROCESS & MPO DATA SUPPORT

Waitkins briefly reviewed the Electrify America Zero Emissions program and as part of our Cycle 2 planning process, Electrify America is seeking input from governments on traffic patterns, storage and grid modernization, census tract level data, charger use, and bus and LDV fleets by municipality. Waitkins stated that NRPC provided data NH DES on commuting patterns by census tract, identification of census tracts where commuting trips originate and which census tracts they travel to, and number of vehicle miles traveled on specific stretches of roadway in a given time period. He also noted that NRPC would be providing data on the NTS bus fleet as well. All the above data supplied to NH DES will be evaluated for the first round of funding.

Cummings asked if NRPC was looking at private lots. Waitkins said that data was not provided to NH DES, but it can be and that any municipality that has that data should feel free to pass that along to NRPC.

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION PLAN UPDATE

Waitkins reviewed 2019-2045 MTP update process briefly with the TTAC:

Tasks & Timeframes

- Project Solicitation and Listing: January - March
- Transportation Model Update: January - March
- Outreach:
 - Surveys: February - March
 - Individual BOS & Planning Board: August - October
 - TTAC: Monthly
- Document Update: January - December

Czys explained more in detail stating that NRPC would be looking for new projects and would be using similar or consistent criteria as the other RPCs. She passed around last year's example of the form used to solicit new projects. Chizmas asked what the deadline would be. Czys thought it would be the end of April.



NASHUA TRANSIT SYSTEM EXPANSION FEASIBILITY STUDY UPDATE

Czys referenced the 5305 Special Projects Grant and noted that NRPC will be working with NTS to conduct a Feasibility Study on expanding transit service outside of the City. This will be an ongoing process through 2019 and consist of outreach, a series of workshops and a robust input process. Czys stated that the draft online survey has been done and the outreach strategy has been scoped. She added that she will be reaching out to Merrimack, Milford, Hudson, and Amherst to get a feel of the true public support for transit and to build on that support. She added that NRPC would also be meeting with City staff after the TTAC meeting to work out final details.

STAFF UPDATES

Mullen showed the new NRPC Bicycle and Pedestrian webpage to the TTAC. She noted the information contained on the page such as resources, trails info, and NRPC developed plans. Mullen concluded and noted that any suggestions or additions for the webpage should be emailed to her.

ADJOURN

Motion to adjourn came from Leedy with a second from Gowan. The meeting ended at 1:32pm.