


NRPC APPROVED MINUTES
NRPC TRANSPORTATION TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
02/14/18

Members Present:

Tom Bayrd, Town of Hollis	Julie Chizmas, City of Nashua
George Thebarga, Town of Hudson	Joe Mendola, City of Nashua
Mark Chamberlain, Town of Lyndeborough	Camille Pattison, NTS
Dawn Tuomala, Town of Merrimack	James Vayo, City of Nashua
Emil Bravo, City of Nashua	Jeff Gowan, Town of Pelham

Others Present

Suzanne Fournier, Brox Environmental Citizens	Jessica Wilcox, NHDES
Tim White, NHDES	Linda Dusenberry, NHDOT
Elizabeth Strachan, NHDES	

STAFF PRESENT

Jay Minkarah, Executive Director	Jen Czysz, Asst. Director/Litchfield Circuit Rider
Gregg Lantos, Principal Transportation Planner/MPO Coord.	Cassie Mullen, Regl Planner/Mason Circuit Rider
Matt Waitkins, Senior Transportation Planner	Karen Baker, Program Assistant

CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

Lantos called the meeting to order at 12:04 with introductions.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM THE JANUARY 10, 2018 MEETING

Lantos referred to the minutes of January 10, 2018 included in the agenda packet as Attachment 1. He asked if there were any corrections. Gowan noted that he was listed twice in *Members Present*. Strachan noted that on page 3, last sentence of paragraph 2, she had stated that the environmental benefit would be for *both ORT and AET* due to less idling. Chizmas also noted on page 2, that Marchant had asked *if the widening and ORT are one project*. Gowan motioned with a second from Chamberlain to approve the January 10, 2018 TTAC minutes as amended. All were in favor and the motion passed.

ELECTRIC VEHICLE INFRASTRUCTURE: JESSICA WILCOX, GRANTS MANAGER AND GRANITE STATE CLEAN CITIES COORDINATOR AND ELIZABETH STRACHAN, TRANSPORTATION ANALYST, NHDES

Wilcox introduced herself and provided a presentation to the TTAC on the Electric Vehicle Infrastructure. She started off by informing the group of the Granite State Clean Cities Coalition which consists of over 120 public and private partnerships working together to reduce petroleum use in transportation through the use of domestically produced, cleaner burning alternative fuels and other fuel reduction strategies. The electric vehicle infrastructure is the key to the future of EV charging in NH Towns. Wilcox reviewed the total number of electric vehicles registered by county in NH in 2016 and 2017 with Hillsborough and Rockingham Counties having the most and seeing the largest increase per year. She noted the kW-h cost reduction from 2007 to 2017 due to the decrease in battery prices and the increase in miles per charge making the EV's more convenient and affordable. She described and the differences between All-Electric Vehicles and Plug-in Hybrid Electric Vehicles. Wilcox also presented information on the types of charging stations and how to charge for charging, highlighting 3 different kinds:

- Level 1 Charging – 2-5 miles/hour of charging, or 22 hours for full charge
- Level 2 Charging – 10-20 miles/hour of charging w/costs ranging from \$1,000-\$20,000
- DC Fast Charging – 60-80 miles/hour of charging w/costs ranging from \$25,000-less than \$100,000

Wilcox also noted the highest source of greenhouse gas emissions comes from the tailpipe (transportation) and automakers are now listening with Ford, GM, Mercedes-Benz, Toyota, Lexus and Volvo offering electronic versions. She showed maps of the extensive EV charging infrastructure in New England and NH which did not include Tesla. Wilcox provided examples of ways to encourage EV infrastructure in municipal fleets, school districts and workplaces and even becoming an EV hotspot or offering benefits for having an EV. Also, municipalities could incorporate EV into their planning process and by encouraging builders to invest in EV.

Wilcox wrapped up her presentation noting some success stories. In a Hanover Parking Garage, they have seen about a 70% increase in usage of their EV charging station. In Durham, at the Pettee Brook Municipal Parking Lot, they have had 61 drivers from 44 zip codes in 2 years use their charging station at an annual cost of less than \$400 to run it. In addition, she noted that NHDES also leads by example since the state installed EV infrastructure. Lastly, Wilcox passed around a sign in sheet to the group for those interested in more info or becoming a member of the Granite State Clean Cities Coalition.

Minkarah asked if there were any grants available and if there are, who is eligible to apply for them. Wilcox stated that there were no more 2015 grants available and that there is the potential of some coming with the VW settlement, but that is not known as of yet. Lantos asked if the Hanover Garage infrastructure was free. Wilcox said yes, but you have to pay for parking and currently there is only 1 charging station but they will be increasing to 6. Thebarga asked why private industry is not providing power. White stated that Public Utilities will be part of the solution and the VW settlement. Fournier asked for the website. Wilcox stated www.granitestatecleancities.nh.gov. Fournier asked how much the cost is to put in a charging station. Strachan said that would depend on the type of charging station you purchased. There was further discussion between Gowan and Strachan on the infrastructure of charging stations and charging related to solar.

F.E. EVERETT TURNPIKE WIDENING PROJECT – SUMMARY OF NHDOT FRONT OFFICE PROJECT REVIEW MEETING

Lantos informed the TTAC that the NHDOT held a Front Office Meeting for the FEE Turnpike Widening project on January 29, 2018 in regard to concerns that the Town of Merrimack had on the project. The discussion was led by project manager Wendy Johnson. Lantos reviewed the memo included in the agenda packet with the group and felt that the decisions were reasonable for Merrimack. Below is a brief summary of the results:

- Wire Road Bridge - Alt 7 was selected as the preferred alternative.
- Baboosic Lake Road Bridge - Alt 3B was the selected alternative due to the limited impacts to ROW and better alignment.
- Request to Accommodate Future 4th Turnpike Lane at Overpass Bridges - Traffic projections do not foresee the need for the 30-year analysis period and the panel decided not to place bridge abutments to accommodate a future 4th lane.
- Baboosic Lake Road Sidewalk - The panel approved a 2,500 ft. sidewalk at \$570k.
- Right-Turn Lane from Baboosic Lake Rd to O’Gara Drive - Sightlines for left turns from O’Gara would be impeded by right turn traffic, so the change was not approved.
- Eliminate Super-elevation on Curves – approved.
- Turnpike Over Baboosic Brook Alignment – Discussion over whether to widen the Turnpike with no change in profile or to raise the profile grade. Although noted by the panel that the Turnpike has never been underwater in this area, the panel decided on an alignment which raises profile to meet freeboard requirements at a cost of \$1.1M.

PASSENGER RAIL SERVICE IMPACT ON F.E.E. TURNPIKE TRAFFIC

Lantos summarized that at the January 10, 2018 TTAC meeting, the group reviewed a traffic analysis of the need for a potential fourth lane per direction as a modification of the project scope for the FEE Turnpike widening

project. An ancillary question was raised regarding the potential impact of a future passenger rail service on turnpike traffic volumes. NRPC agreed to undertake this analysis. As the fourth-lane needs analysis focused on peak hour flows (AM southbound, PM northbound), the passenger rail impact analysis was done in the same manner. The analysis utilizes ridership forecasts in the New Hampshire Capitol Corridor Rail and Transit Alternatives Analysis and is based on the Manchester Regional Commuter Rail alternative. This would extend the MBTA Lowell line to downtown Manchester, with stops in Bedford, Manchester Airport, downtown Nashua and South Nashua. Existing intercity bus service from Manchester and Nashua is assumed to be continued. This would ultimately be a decision to be made by the private operator, Boston Express, based on continued profitability. Lantos reviewed the tables included in the agenda packet and based on this information concluded that there would be a moderate decrease in traffic to the F.E.E. Turnpike with passenger rail.

Vayo commented that in comparing widening versus rail, each mode would prioritize and promote different land use practices. He added that when you widen a highway, there is further development there, with commuter rail, all development will happen within a 10-15 minute or 1 mile radius from a rail station. There are two vastly different outcomes. Vayo felt the analysis is good but it does not capture the scope or impact of each service: widening vs. rail. Thebarga asked about the impact of rail capacity on ridership and asked what percentage of capacity they using for ridership projections. Lantos said that the existing commuter rail line from Lowell was not at full capacity for passengers (although the parking garage may be at or near full capacity). He added that he could get more data if interest or if there are specific questions. Lantos stated that he was relying on Lowell numbers. Thebarga felt there could be other measures and they should be pointed out.

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION PLAN – REVIEW UPDATE PROCESS

Lantos stated that the MTP update, required by Federal regulations, is part of the Transportation Policy Statement for the Metropolitan Region. It maintains a 25-year planning horizon and is the source from which specific projects are identified, prioritized and selected for funding. He added that the update will stress operations and maintenance constraints. He added that he did not have specific numbers yet, but that he was working with other MPO's and looking to beef up the constraints. He noted the timeline and tasks for the update:

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

Lantos stated that they need to look at projects and scrutinize them which would entail reviewing and comparing the projects currently listed together with cost to determine if they are still feasible or if we need to look at the scope again. He added that he would be looking for input.

Chizmas felt the 101A Corridor Study needs to be dusted off and refreshed and to look for money to do this. She added that this project was a DOT project that got broken out into child projects. She added that the 3rd bridge crossing also needs to be looked at again. Lantos said we don't get guidance from DOT on projects that are beyond the Ten Year Plan timeframe and are looking to get better clarity of projects in the out years. He added that it is also difficult to model projects on the border of the regions and he will have to work with the other MPOs on that. Vayo referred to the existing demand on crossings and to look at the project from a different aspect. Chizmas suggested bumping the two projects to illustrative until a path is established to get the project done. Normal outreach should be done. Thebarga said there are concerns from east of the river with any changes to the third bridge project stressing the serious need to reduce east-west traffic.

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: \$519,911

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, It will be added to statewide FTA 5307 programmatic category, NHDOT will provide details of project

Waitkins noted that a Public comment period has been posted through March 15th and we will be seeking TTAC recommendation at March 14th meeting and a public hearing will be held on Wednesday, March 21st @ 7 pm

Gowan asked for clarification on the Pelham project; whether the increase was due to inflation. Lantos said that that was correct. Chizmas explained that the 101A project and decrease in inflation was due to the project being broken out into two different projects in different years. Chizmas asked what happen to the previous 2009 CMAQ project to upgrade 65 signals. Lantos thought the new CMAQ project in the amendment was not in the region. Dusenberry did not know about the previous CMAQ project but said she would check into it. White asked if the Nashua CMAQ project was capital or operating costs. Waitkins said operating.

Waitkins reviewed briefly with the group the February Minor Revision and noted that he contacted the communities that could be impacted by the revision.

REGIONAL PROJECTS

Nashua (16314) Intersection improvements at East Hollis St and Bridge St from C St to the Hudson Town Line

- Move PE funds to align with the project schedule and removes one year of inflation from Construction.

STATEWIDE PROJECTS

- PROGRAM (PAVE-T2-MAINT) Tier 2 Highway Maintenance, Increase Funding
- PROGRAM (PAVE-T2-PRES) Tier 2 Highway Preservation, Increase Funding
- PROGRAM (RRRCS) Statewide Rail Road Crossings Increase Funding FY19 decrease PE, FY20 Increase PE

UZA SUB-AGREEMENTS: NASHUA UZA AND BOSTON UZA – REVIEW DRAFTS

Lantos referred to the Draft UZA Sub-Agreements included in the agenda packet and stated that this is going to take a few years to work through the process of using these new funds. Chizmas referred to the UZA Federal Aid Eligible miles and asked if that could be changed to lane miles. Lantos said he would check with Miller on this and maybe see if VMT could be considered too.

STAFF UPDATES

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. Chizmas stated that Milford, Merrimack and Hudson are being targeted specifically through an online survey being put out by NRPC. It will be sent to policy decision makers, users, housing developments and large businesses.

Waitkins stated that at the next TTAC meeting, Phil Goff, Senior Planning Associate from Alta Planning and Design will do a presentation on bike and pedestrian design.

ADJOURN

Motion to adjourn came from Fox with a second from Chamberlain. The meeting ended at 1:20pm.