



MINUTES-Draft

NRPC TRANSPORTATION TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

3/19/03

Members Present: Steve Williams, NRPC
Andrew Singelakis, NRPC
Jay Minkarah, Town of Merrimack
Roger Houston, City of Nashua Planning
Art Leblanc, Town of Hollis
Bill Parker, Town of Milford
Bob Lyford, NH DOT
Becky Ohler, NH DES

Others Present: Ray Guarino, NRPC Transportation Planner
Betsy Hahn, NRPC Regional Planner
Matt Waitkins, NRPC Transportation Planner
Ryan Friedman, NRPC Transportation Planner
Camille Pattison, NRPC Transit Planner
Mark Archambault, NRPC Senior Planner
Steve Wagner, NRPC Regional Planner
John Vogl, NRPC GIS Manager
Steve Heuchert, NRPC Senior Planner

Meeting Opened and review of Minutes

The meeting was called to order by Steve Williams at 3:05 PM. Williams asked the Committee if there were any corrections to the minutes from the 2/19/03 meeting. Becky Ohler moved to accept the minutes and Bill Lyford seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed.

Transportation Enhancement (TE) and CMAQ Applications

Williams stated that applications would be mailed to communities March 21, 2003. Electronic copies of the instructions and applications will be available on the NRPC web-site. All applications will be due July 31, 2003. All CMAQ projects will require an air quality analysis. NRPC staff will be available to assist communities with both CMAQ and TE applications. Future meetings will address NRPC standards and the procedures for submitting the applications to NHDOT.

Draft FY2004-FY2005 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

Williams referred the Committee to the draft document in the meeting packet. The UPWP is a federally mandated document for NRPC since it is the MPO for the region. Essentially the document outlines the planning projects to be undertaken in the next two years to meet federal requirements. The seven planning factors at the bottom of first page are anticipated to change with the new transportation authorization. Bob Lyford stated that the NHDOT had some comments on the UPWP. Williams stated that he spoke with Ram and they concluded that the changes were not substantive. He recommends that the TTAC incorporate them after the review and recommend that the Executive Committee adopt the UPWP at tonight's meeting. Williams went through the document section by section.



Changes in the Document:

- Under Urban Traffic Data Program (301.2) the NHDOT requested that ten speed studies be added.
- Modeling of Land use and transportation has been moved to 301 since it more data oriented.

Jay questioned when UrbanSim would be available and Williams stated that the next transportation plan update should have the updated land use allocations and the traffic demand model incorporated. The travel demand model should be done in 6 months using 2000 as a base year. The employment data geo-coding has started.

Ohler inquired whether dirt or gravel roads would be incorporated in the network for the updated model. Williams stated that NRPC will use only unpaved roads that they believe are destined to be paved in the future and will assign a speed limit of 5mph so we don't model an excessive amount of traffic. The new model will have increased road mileage and VMT and care will be taken to stay within the air conformity.

- Additions in Section 302 include proposing to conduct a survey of transportation improvement preferences and information on the NRPC web page.
- Special studies will include corridor studies on NH13 through Brookline, Milford and Mont Vernon and roads connecting I-93 (NH 102, 111,38).

A question was raised about the status of the Executive Council with regard to commuter rail. Singelakis stated that he did not think that it made today's agenda. There is uncertainty at the moment of what would happen if a member of the Council recused himself due to a conflict of interest. The vote would end in a tie. No one at the moment knows how a tie will be handled. Charlie Bass will submit the item in for TEA 21 reauthorization. If the issue does not get resolved then the support for the project will wane.

A motion was made by Roger Houston to recommend that the NRPC Executive Committee adopt the document with minor and non-substantive changes. Jay Minkarah seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

Ranking STP applications

Applications were sent out in January. NRPC received a total of 13 applications. Three were regional access highway projects and the rest were local roadway or intersection improvements. The three regional projects are listed below in the order of their ranking:

1. Milford Bypass Safety Improvements - From Baboosic Lake Road in Amherst to Old Wilton Road in Milford. There were immediate action items that could be pursued independently from the comprehensive road widening. These include widening the median to 3 or 4 feet, double stripping the median and rumble strips. Traffic will actually be shifted out onto the shoulders and the shoulders narrowed from 10 feet to 8 feet on each side. The entire roadway would need an overlay. This item is in the FY03 to FY12 Ten Year Plan for 2006, but in the draft FY05 to FY14



the Ten Year Plan has been moved back to 2013. NRPC feels that these improvements should be constructed as soon as possible.

2. Route 101 Widening - This project involves a comprehensive road widening and improvements through Bedford, Amherst, Milford and Wilton, to 4 lanes. NRPC would like to see this project added to the Ten Year Plan and have project development begin as soon as possible, with the understanding that it could take more than ten years for construction to begin.

3. Exit 36 Southbound Approach – This would provide significant benefits to the South Nashua area by enabling direct access from the Turnpike into the Pheasant Lane Mall. Modeling by NRPC indicates that development of this ramp will reduce traffic on Spit Brook Road and D.W. Highway in south Nashua by up to 13,000 vehicles per day.

The three intersection projects were proposed by Hudson:

1. An additional left turn lane on Chase St at the NH 111/102
2. Additional turn lanes at the Greeley St., Kimball Hill Rd., NH111 intersection
3. Improvements to the intersections of Belknap St/County Road and NH 3A

The remaining seven projects are pavement reconstruction for roadways in Nashua:

1. Amherst St. from Main St. to Henri Burque Hwy.
2. Canal/Bridge St. from Main St to the Hudson line
3. Broad St. from Short Ave. to Amherst St.
4. E. Hollis St. from Main St. to the Hudson line
5. Kinsley St. from the FEE to Main St.
6. Main from E. Hollis St. to Orchard Ave.
7. W. Hollis St. from Main to the FEE

All of the projects were ranked on the four criteria discussed (efficiency, safety, pavement condition and air quality benefit) at the February meeting. The projects were ranked in order for each criteria with the higher the number, the higher the ranking.

Questions/Comments on the Rankings

- Jay inquired what year the delay hours are based on. Williams stated that these are projected volumes for the year 2020.
- Steve Heuchert asked if we compared limited access highway projects with surface streets. Williams stated that there are so many differences between the way a controlled access highway functions and the way a local street functions that it was impossible to compare the two types of facilities. As a result, NRPC chose to compare highway projects only with highway projects and local road projects only with local road project.
- Jay questioned why exit 36 was not considered for safety even though it is a new project. Williams agreed that intuitively we know that it will cut down on accidents but a method for forecasting the improvements in safety that will result is not available.
- Jay asked if number vehicle trips are the same in a build and no build situation. Williams stated that the number of trips are the same in 2025 in all scenarios. The only exception is Rt. 101



corridor because the capacity has increased. Trips that were taking shorter paths will now use Rt. 101. The number of vehicle miles traveled will increase but idle and stopping time will be reduced.

- Jay then asked what the reduction in delay would be, meaning if a difficult commute with 2 lanes is now easier and faster with 4 lanes, wouldn't a build increase the numbers in 2025? Williams stated that effective land use controls would prohibit the secondary growth and with the development of the UrbanSim model we will be able to more accurately predict accessibility issues.
- Becky stated that it would be good to note which emissions factors we are using. She also wanted some clarification concerning the projected intersection delay figures in Hudson. Williams stated the numbers came from modeling future year turning movement counts, then using Highway Capacity Manual Software to forecast the actual delays at the intersections. NRPC took the change in delay and multiplied it by the number of vehicles entering the intersection to determine the total daily delay.
- Jay stated that he feels the ranking should be changed because you get "more bang for the buck" with exit 36 project and the Rt. 101 Bypass safety issue is a current regional concern.
- Singelakis said that he is going to recommend to the Executive Committee that the order be changed as Jay had suggested.

Singelakis made a motion to change the order for the regional projects to: 1. Safety Improvements on Rt.101 2. Exit 36 Southbound Approach, 3. Rt. 101 Widening. Becky seconded the motion. Motion passed.

A motion was made by Roger Houston to accept the local projects as ranked with the amendment to drop the E. Hollis St. project because it was already in the Ten-Year Plan. Bill Lyford seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

Other Business

Jay glanced at the map on the wall and asked about the latest news on the Circumferential Highway. Singelakis stated that the financial picture for the turnpike system is looking bleak and maybe it is time to re-evaluate Circumferential Highway.

Next Meeting, April 16, 2003 at 3 PM

Meeting was adjourned at 4:35 PM

