


NRPC APPROVED MINUTES
NRPC TRANSPORTATION TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
09/09/15

Members Present:

Colleen Mailloux, Town of Amherst
 Tom Bayrd, Town of Hollis
 Rick Seymour, Town of Merrimack
 Jeff Gowan, Town of Pelham

Others Present:

Leigh Levine, FHWA
 Paul Lockwood, NHDES
 Carol Macuch, NHDOT

STAFF PRESENT

Tim Roache, Executive Director
 Karen Baker, Program Assistant

Jen Czysz, Assistant Director

CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

Czysz opened the meeting with introductions at 12:12pm.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM THE AUGUST 12, 2015 MEETING

There was not a quorum present, therefore; approval of the minutes of August 12, 2015 would be done at the October TTAC meeting.

TEN YEAR PLAN AND GACIT UPDATE

Czysz referred to the information in the agenda packet on the Ten Year Plan (TYP) and GACIT Schedule. She pointed out the link to complete list of projects included in the TYP and the GACIT hearing schedule at: www.nh.gov/dot/org/projectdevelopment/planning/typ/. She also reminded the group about the 9 project prioritizations submitted for inclusion in the TYP based on 20 million available, which turned out to be only 4 million. Due to this, not all projects recommended for inclusion in were incorporated and DOT took only the top 2 projects from each region to be included into the TYP (shown below).

- Nashua: East Hollis St. and its intersections – improvements from Main St to the proposed roundabout; and
- Brookline: NH 13 – Construct southbound left turn lane

She showed the scoring that was conducted in 2013 vs. 2015 as a comparison, pointing out which categories were omitted for this round and how some of the projects lost value based on the evaluation criteria. DOT did not re-evaluate and rank all projects together statewide. Roache commented that he was not aware the process was going to happen this way, adding that the roundabout in Pelham might have ranked higher. The overall results may have been different were some of the more subjective elements still included in the ranking that allowed for measurement of the costs versus benefits. Czysz also noted that local support was removed as a scoring criterion and instead became a threshold criterion, removing the ability to demonstrate the relative weight a project may have at the local level. Czysz said she would like feedback on the results of this round before the next 2 year process. Roache added that he did not know how it would play out with DOT in regards to further scoring and conversations on cost benefit.

Gowan commented that the Pelham was going to try and start the roundabout project regardless of the fact that it did not get into the TYP. The Town is looking at undertaking the project themselves for safety reasons even though it is a State Road. He added that there was local support for the project and Pelham is looking into other funding sources. Gowan elaborated on the Road Safety Audit process and the political support garnered due to it. Czysz said that Watson recommended Pelham look into other programmatic funds such as CMAQ which would likely provide funding sooner than if the project were scheduled as a

traditional TYP project. Czys was uncertain if there would be an opportunity to change the process used with the RPC's but none the less wanted to discern whether further improvements could be made. Roache referred to the Hollis 4 Corners project and suggested for future rounds that they check with the towns to see if the town is interested in pursuing and if the project is doable. Levine commented that the TYP is still in draft and referred to the hearing coming up in Merrimack.

Czys informed the TTAC of the GACIT (Governor's Advisory Council on Intermodal Transportation) hearings scheduled in September and October. The hearings scheduled in and near the NRPC region by District 3 Councilor Sununu, representing Pelham, and District 5 Councilor Wheeler, representing all other NRPC communities that NRPC will be attending include:

District 5 Councilor Wheeler:

- Monday September 21, 2015, 7 PM, Bedford Cable TV Meeting Room, 10 Meeting House Road
- Tuesday October 13, 2015, 6:30 PM, Merrimack Town Hall, West Wing, Matthew Thornton Room, 8 Baboosic Lake Road

District 3 Councilor Sununu:

- Thursday October 8, 2015, 7 PM, Londonderry Town Office, Town Council Chambers, Moosehill Room, 268B Mammoth Road

Czys asked TTAC if there was anything they wanted to have included in NRPC's presentation for the hearings, particularly the one will be held in Merrimack. Macuch stated that there would be 15 minutes allotted to do presentations. Gowan asked if it would be beneficial to have TTAC and municipal representatives at the hearings. Roache said yes and that he felt it carries more weight if you have selectmen and local officials express concerns with the projects related to their city/town. He added that it is also good to support projects that are already in the TYP not just the 2 that are moving forward.

S/TIP AMENDMENT AND REVISION AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROCESS

Czys informed TTAC that the next interagency meeting is in October and will be a more detailed and in person to see how they can improve the process. She summarized the 10-30 day public comment period for amendments and the city/town notification process NRPC takes before responding to S/TIP minor revisions. Gowan commented that he liked the process and feels it works well. Roache felt they needed representatives here at TTAC to bring information back to the BOS/BOA/TC.

Czys said she wants to improve the flow of communication through internal strategic planning and communication improvements. She reviewed the August minor revision with the group and the changes to projects included in the revision report. She used Pelham's Main Street Bridge project as a positive example where an amendment was proposed shared with the Town asking there was any information that should be discussed or provided to DOT. Gowan said it would be good to know what the participating change is and why. Macuch said sometimes in the updated estimates, that information is included. Gowan said for this particular project, it has been good and there has subsequently been DOT outreach.

Czys asked TTAC if the time to review the changes was adequate or not and how communications could be improved. She referred to past examples of where communications broke down and resulted in amendments being adapted to the municipality's later displeasure. Levine said this time of year is tough and money is moved around a lot due to time constraints and the end of the federal fiscal year.

Macuch informed the group that S/TIP Amendment #2 would be coming for October. Roache said that he wants to revisit the 16314 and the E. Hollis Roundabout. Macuch suggested doing that quickly.

NRPC FREIGHT PLAN OUTLINE

Czys referred to the NRPC Freight Plan Outline included in the agenda packet and explained this is a proposed addendum to the MTP and will look at existing conditions for freight, economic contributions in the NH region and current and proposed projects. Additionally, NRPC will look at what the regional freight needs are. Lastly, Connors will be pulling together data for this addendum which will be short and ideally ready for consideration at the December Commission meeting. Czys said that NRPC had talked to George Law and Steven Burke about freight and asked if there was anyone else that TTAC felt they should talk to. Levine suggested distribution warehouses. Macuch suggested State of MA officials and informed Czys that Strafford RPC was doing a large outreach effort on this. Levine suggested the Statewide Freight Plan and suggested talking to Shelly Winters at DOT for State Freight Plan information. Macuch suggested looking at and existing project that might have impact on freight in the region. Gowan suggested getting in touch with the REDC or local economic development committees.

NRPC INTERNAL STRATEGIC PLANNING AND COMMUNICATIONS IMPROVEMENTS

Czys informed TTAC that per the recommendation of the NRPC Executive Committee, they would like NRPC to work on improving communications both interoffice and with the municipalities. She added that this has been on the radar for a while and that as part of this, Roache would be on the road attending BOS/BOA/TC meetings in the region.

TTAC MEMBER ROUNDTABLE

Pelham – Gowan: Referred to the MS4 permit that is open for comment and asked if the RPCs would be involved. He had issues or concerns with the federal mandate portion and the costs associated with water quality testing. He questioned whether NRPC would be playing a role or providing suggestions. He added that there should be a State Testing Lab that is federally funded and what the requirements would be.

Czys said that NRPC can't respond until we know more details but that it was on the radar. She suggested that NRPC can provide support on implementation through education and outreach.

Amherst – Mailloux: As a follow up to Gowan's updates, Mailloux referred to the Regional Stormwater Coalition that Bruce Berry is now the Chair of and the next meeting being held on October 1st from 9:00-11:00am at the NRPC office. She informed the group that Newton Tedder, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 1, and Barbara McMillan from DES that would be present to discuss the upcoming MS4 permit requirements.

FHWA – Levine: Informed the group of the TMA Certification Review being held on November 4th, a tentative date. He added that the process has to be done with MPO's every 4 years and there is a public meeting component around the date of the review. Roache suggested tying it in with the Executive Committee meeting date on October 21st. Levine said he would get info on what kind of questionnaire there will be.

NHDES – Lockwood: Informed the group of the National Drive Electric Week being held September 12-20, 2015. He added this is a nationwide celebration to heighten awareness of today's widespread availability of plug-in vehicles and highlight the benefits of all-electric and plug-in hybrid-electric cars, trucks, motorcycles, and more. He referred to 2 events happening in NH, 1 being in Concord in conjunction with the Farmer's Market and the other in Durham where there would be a ribbon cutting ceremony for the new electric charging station and BMW electric car test drives.



OTHER BUSINESS

Czys referred to the FHWA handout with the schedule for rules at the MPO level for performance measures and the anticipated date of November for the final rules. She added that NRPC is working with Rockingham, Southern NH, and Southwest RPC's on Performance Measures. She referred to the Sharp 2 Innovation Grant awarded that Strafford would be taking the lead on for evaluating performance measures. The goal is to establish meaningful, realistic performance measures that work. Czys added they we are trying to get jump on this and that DOT is also participating in the work group for this. Lastly, they would be identifying metrics at the local level as part of the process.

The meeting ended at 1:13 pm (there was not a quorum present to adjourn the meeting).