


NRPC APPROVED MINUTES
NRPC TRANSPORTATION TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
10/12/16

Members Present:

Gordon Leedy, Town of Amherst
 Tad Putney, Town of Brookline
 Tom Bayrd, Town of Hollis
 John Cashell, Town of Hudson
 Tom Young, Town of Litchfield
 Kyle Fox, Town of Merrimack
 Dawn Tuomala, Town of Merrimack

Lincoln Daley, Town of Milford
 Tim Cummings, City of Nashua
 Steve Dookran, City of Nashua
 Amy Gill, City of Nashua
 Sara Marchant, City of Nashua
 Jeff Gowan, Town of Pelham

Others Present

Suzanne Fournier, Milford-Brox Environmental Citizens
 Tim White, NHDES

STAFF PRESENT

Tim Roache, Executive Director
 Julie Chizmas, Senior Transportation Planner
 Bill Parker, Special Projects Planner

Matt Waitkins, Field Data/Transportation Planner
 Karen Baker, Program Assistant

CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

Chizmas opened the meeting at 12:08pm with introductions.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM THE JULY 13, 2016

Chizmas referred to the minutes of July 13, 2016 included in the agenda packet as attachment 1. She asked if there were any corrections and if not, for a motion to approve. Young moved to approve the July 13, 2016 minutes with a second from Cashell. All were in favor.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM THE SEPTEMBER 14, 2016

Chizmas referred to the minutes of September 14, 2016 included in the agenda packet as attachment 1. She asked if there were any corrections and if not, for a motion to approve. Putney moved to approve the September 14, 2016 minutes with a second from Young. All were in favor.

2017-2020 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) UPDATE

Chizmas passed around copies of the draft list of the NRPC MPO projects advancing in the 2017 – 2020 TIP noting that over the next month, she would be drafting a full update to the TIP document and a minor update to the MTP; project list only. Chizmas said that she would be putting both out for a 30-day public comment period following the November 9th TTAC meeting, with the goal of adopting the 2017 – 2020 TIP and Minor Update to the 2015 – 2040 MTP at the December 14th TTAC meeting. She also noted that the projects that are advancing are STIP projects so they have funding and that if there are any changes, to please send her the comments before they go out for public comment. Chizmas proceeded by informing the group that the first 4 years of the long range plan is the TIP. She reviewed the projects that would NOT be advancing forward into the TIP/MTP Update due to no funding in the effective years of the TIP or having already been completed. In addition, she noted regional projects that would not be included in the TIP/MTP Update per discussions at the September TTAC meeting to have them removed as follows:

- Merrimack – Removal of Exit 11 Tolls
- Nashua – Pine Hill Rd & Indian Rock Rd Intersection Improvements
- Merrimack – Baboosic Lake Road Rd Bridge Replacement (*included in TPKE widening project*)

Chizmas also noted NEW projects that would be included in the TIP/MTP Update:

- Nashua – Pavement Rehab on Somerset Pkwy, NH 101A, NH 130 & NH 111; a TIP project with construction in 2017.
- Brookline – Southbound left turn lane from NH 13 onto Old Milford Rd; Ten Year Plan project with construction in 2026 that was previously illustrative in MTP.
- Nashua – East Hollis St Improvements from Main St to proposed roundabout; Ten Year Plan project with construction in 2025.

She also noted other NEW Regional Projects included in MTP, which were submitted for consideration but not included in 2017 – 2026 Ten Year Plan:

- Merrimack – DW Highway/Wire Road
- Nashua – Heritage Rail Trail Corridor East
- Nashua – Downtown West Gateway Project
- Nashua – Main Street Railroad Crossing Reconstruction
- Nashua – New Interchange connecting Broad Street Parkway to Franklin Street
- Pelham – Mammoth Rd/Sherburne Rd Improvements

Chizmas informed the group of the updated estimate for the TIP on the 101A Widening and Improvements, Phase II (10136B) project of a ROW delay of one year from 2020 to 2021 for constraint purposes. She also asked the group to review the projects and send updated scopes and estimates by October 28th for the MTP. Marchant asked that “roundabout” be removed from the scope for the Nashua East Hollis St Improvements project.

TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES PROGRAM PRESENTATIONS

Chizmas noted that four communities (Brookline, Merrimack, Milford and Nashua) submitted applications for TAP funding and will be presenting their projects to the TTAC today. She passed around Scoring sheets and informed the group that they will be asked to rank the projects from 1-4 with 1 being the highest ranking. She added that these rankings will be included as part of the criteria used by the MPO TAP scoring subcommittee. Chizmas said presentations will be done alphabetically in reverse starting with Nashua.

NASHUA: Tim Cummings, Economic Development Director and Sarah Marchant, Community Development Director presented Nashua’s TAP application. Cummings informed the group that Nashua’s application is to construct a pedestrian connection in downtown to correct an ADA non-compliance concern. He noted that the project has support from the Board of Alderman, Great American Downtown, Chamber of Commerce, Cotton Mill & Clocktower Place Apartments, Harbor Homes as well as others. Cummings said the project has financial readiness through the City’s CIP. He added that the City had an engineering firm review the draft application for feasibility on the permitting and engineering and also provided a cost estimate for the design & construction. Cummings pointed out the Safety issues that will be addressed including the creation of an ADA compliant trail system from Main St to the Renaissance Park that will alleviate the difficult pedestrian crossing on Water Street. Cummings talked about the stress analysis relief associated with the project in relation to jobs and having a safe passageway. Lastly, he noted the socio-economic benefits and recreation to the Millyard and Mine Falls Park.

Marchant also talked about connectivity and pointed out the various opportunity centers within the study area as well as the recreation connections just outside the study area. She also pointed out the connections to jobs in the Millyard for neighborhoods east of Main Street by having this access. Lastly, Marchant elaborated more on the socio-economic benefits to the neighborhoods east and west of Main Street using data from the 2014 ACS 5 year estimates.

MILFORD: Lincoln Daley, Community Development Director presented the Town of Milford's TAP application. Daley informed the group that Milford's application is to rehabilitate and reconstruct a historically significant suspension pedestrian bridge known as the Swing Bridge. He added that this project will maintain a well-traveled pedestrian corridor connection to Milford's downtown, residential neighborhoods, parks and the trail network system. He noted that preservation & rehabilitation will enhance the aesthetic, cultural and historical character. Lastly it will preserve the water quality within the Souhegan River watershed. Daley showed a map of the study area, noting the vital connection of east & north Milford to downtown Milford for jobs, recreation & trails. In addition, the bridge represents a primary nexus to resources and multi-modal connections that intersect or are in proximity to Milford's downtown Oval District. Daley provided a history of the bridge to the group which was built in 1850 by mill owners to allow their workers to get to Milford's textile and furniture mills. Daley also noted that the bridge is part of Milford's 2014 Town-wide pedestrian, bicycle and trail connectivity plan. Daley informed the group that the town retained Hoyle, Tanner & Associates to assess the condition of the bridge and to provide an estimated project cost. The firm concluded that if the bridge was let in its current condition, it would be closed in 5-10 years if not repaired. Total cost of for the project came in at \$564,493 with the town being responsible for \$112,900 of which the town will reach through a combination of budgetary, CIP funds and private funding sources. Daley concluded his presentation by informing the group that the project has been fully vetted and is widely supported by Town and elected officials. Additionally, the Milford Heritage Commission continues to actively raise private donations to assist with the required 20% match and to date they have raised \$7,000. The BOS is prepared to place a specific article on the March Town meeting warrant. Fournier asked how long the bridge is. Daley replied that it is 200ft long adding that a design change is not likely.

MERRIMACK: Kyle Fox, Director of Public Works and Dawn Tuomala, Town Engineer presented the Town of Merrimack's TAP application. Tuomala showed a map taken from the Town Center Pedestrian and Trail Master Plan and showed the three sidewalk priorities labeled as #2, #3 and #6 in the town center area to construct a total of 2,700 linear feet of sidewalk along Daniel Webster Highway at Wire Road and Woodbury Street to provide a safe and inviting access to Town residents and visitors. She pointed out the proposed sidewalks to be constructed, existing sidewalks that would be tied into, the scheduled Wire Road reconstruction and associated crosswalk as well as the various businesses and the recreational park located in the area. Tuomala noted that the project has full support from Town Council through a vote at their August 16 meeting, the Planning Board & the Town Center Committee. She talked about the projects financial readiness noting that it has been outlined in the 2002 & 2013 Town Master Plan and included in the 2017/2023 CIP. Funds will be taken from the Town's Infrastructure Capital Reserve Fund for the 20% match of the project cost of \$650,000. Tuomala said the project is very feasible noting that there are no anticipated historic, cultural or environmental obstacles and Merrimack has completed 2 other sidewalk projects through the TE program along DW Highway. She also pointed out three other proposed projects in the area with similar timeframes that would tie in nicely with their TAP application project. In addition, major safety issues would be remedied or improved in the area which has no existing sidewalks and a poor line of sight. The proposed raised sidewalks will allow more protection to pedestrians at all three priorities and tying in the crosswalk at the recreation parks with the construction of sidewalks would make for safer pedestrian crossing in an area where a child was hit in the past. Tuomala noted that a stress analysis was done on both streets for existing conditions and scored a level D/E which makes them unsuitable for pedestrians and bicyclist. Completing the entire project would bump the level up to an A/B. Tuomala also noted proposed 2700 liner feet of sidewalk would complete connections from D.W. Hwy and Woodbury Road to town parks & recreation, town facilities, schools, trails, and retail establishments. Additionally, the project has multi-modal connections due to the D.W. Hwy being a main north/south corridor with public transportation systems in both Nashua and Manchester with potential for expansion of routes in those cities into Merrimack. She also noted that the existing rail runs parallel to D.W. Hwy and leaves open the

opportunity for a future commuter train stop. Lastly, the project has a socio-economic benefit for both residents and tourists with connections to downtown and commercial, retail, & recreation, the potential to improve public health by increasing safer pedestrian & bike travel. Roache asked if the project could be broken out into two projects due to the way the program money is broken out. Fox said the process is very cumbersome and to make it worth the time, they did it as one project but it could be broken into two and they would be happy to do 1 part of the project vs. none.

BROOKLINE: Tad Putney, Town Administrator presented the Town of Brookline's TAP application. Putney informed the group that Brookline is seeking funding to complete the final phase of Brookline's 2009 Sidewalk and Trail Connection Plan to connect its growing sidewalk network to a newly created rail trail in order to significantly increase its use. Putney noted that Town of Brookline from 1990-2010 was the fastest growing town in the state, more than doubling in population. In response, the BOS, PB, and CC created the Sidewalk and Trail Connection Plan. The Plan mapped current sidewalks and trails, identified locations where new sidewalks and trails were needed to enhance safety and connectivity, and prioritized these new locations. Putney showed a map depicting the existing sidewalks, existing rail and bike trails, and existing hiking trails on both private and town owned land, and to-be build Safe Routes to School sidewalks. He noted the gap in the middle of the map where there was no connectivity through sidewalks to provide access to the trails for residents. Next, Putney showed map depicting future sidewalks and future rail trail/bike trail improvements that would connect pedestrian & bicycle and rail trail/bike access from the top of town to the bottom; a potential of 15 miles. He pointed out the sidewalks that would need to be constructed for connectivity to the recently constructed 1 mile rail trail which you can't current get to as there are no sidewalk connections. Putney also noted that there is distance of about 2300 feet with no sidewalks to get to the new rail trail, dangerous corners and guardrails. He informed the group that this was a top safety priority by 300 residents and that since the land is town-owned, easements are all set. Putney showed pictures of the two segments for construction. In segment 1 at the Rail Trail off South Main Street, it is well maintained and available for multiple uses, but not currently linked to the sidewalk network. The new sidewalk would substantially increase use. He showed a second picture of segment 1 looking southbound toward the entrance to the rail trail and noted the lack of visibility in part due to no streetlights and of oncoming traffic as one approaches the rail trail and the dangers to pedestrians and bicyclists. Lastly, he showed segment 2 at the crossing bridge just after the town beach entrance. He noted the pedestrian and vehicle encounters due to the length and narrowness of the bridge at this location and safety issues that will be addressed by adding a new pedestrian bridge and the connections to the beach and Town Center for the residents in the large neighborhood in that area. Putney also noted that the Town of Brookline recently completed a TE project in 21 months and \$40,000 under budget.

Chizmas gave the group some time to complete the scoring sheets and asked them to pass them in when complete. After TTAC she would be meeting with the scoring committee to score the projects using rankings from the group. After they are scored she will then submit to NHDOT who will then do their scoring process and announce results in December in time for town warrant. In response to a question from Fournier, Chizmas said there was 5.4 million available with the potential of more than one project in our region being selected. She noted that we have done well in the past with 3 awarded in our region in the last round, but it is a very competitive process.

ADJOURN:

Motion to adjourn came from Young with a second from Putney. The meeting ended at 1:12pm.