


NRPC APPROVED MINUTES
NRPC TRANSPORTATION TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
04/11/18

Members Present:

Gordon Leedy, Town of Amherst	Wayne Husband, City of Nashua
Tad Putney, Town of Brookline	Pete Kohalmi, City of Nashua
Tom Bayrd, Town of Hollis	Camille Pattison, Nashua Transit System
George Thebarg, Town of Hudson	John Savage, City of Nashua
Mark Chamberlain, Town of Lyndeborough	Jeff Gowan, Town of Pelham
Julie Chizmas, City of Nashua	Jim Lavacchia, Town of Wilton
Steve Dookran, City of Nashua	Tim White, NHDES

Others Present

James Vayo, City of Nashua	Jonathan Evans, NT DOT
----------------------------	------------------------

STAFF PRESENT

Jay Minkarah, Executive Director	Gregg Lantos, Principal Transp. Planner/MPO Coord.
Matt Waitkins, Senior Transportation Planner	Cassie Mullen, Reg'I Planner/Mason Circuit Rider
Karen Baker, Program Assistant	Stephen Meno, Reg'I Planner/Wilton Circuit Rider

CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

Lantos called the meeting to order at 12:06 with introductions.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM THE MARCH 14, 2018 MEETING

Lantos referred to the minutes of March 14, 2018 included in the agenda packet as Attachment 1. He asked if there were any corrections; if not a motion for approval. Minor grammatical errors were noted on page 2. Gowan motioned with a second from Leedy to approve the March 14, 2018 TTAC minutes as amended. All were in favor and the motion passed.

DISCUSSION OF NOISE ISSUES AND NHDOT POLICY BY GUEST SPEAKER JONATHAN EVANS, NHDOT

Evans welcomed the group and noted that NHDOT has had a noise policy since 1996 and there have been a couple of different versions. Evans stated that he would be providing info on Type I & Type II highway projects later in the presentation. He added that as of November 30th, 2016, New Hampshire has an approved Type II Policy. Evans added that only CT and MA also have Type II policies, but the MA policy is not funded. He noted that the NH policy is currently not funded and that 95% of all DOT projects are a Type III. Evans proceeded by providing an overview of what he would be presenting including regulations, policy requirements, and Type II abatement implementation. He started by reviewing the regulations requirements for Title 23, Part 772 of the Code of Federal Regulations (23 CFR 772) which include:

- Identification of highway traffic noise impacts;
- Examination of potential abatement measures;
- Incorporation of reasonable and feasible highway traffic noise abatement measures into the highway project;
- Coordination with local officials to provide helpful information on compatible land use planning and control; and
- Identifies three types of highway projects; Type I, Type II & Type III

Evans provided information about Type I and II highway projects:

TYPE I project involve construction of a new highway, “Substantial” alteration of either the vertical or horizontal alignment of the roadway, addition of 1 or more through traffic lanes or auxiliary lanes (Including weave, HOV, HOT and truck climbing lanes), addition of interchange lanes or ramps and addition of a weigh station, rest stop, park & ride or toll plaza. Evans noted that all state highway agencies are required to have a Type I highway noise policy detailing their policies and procedures for maintaining compliance with 23 CFR 772 and Type I projects must comply with the State’s noise policy as a prerequisite for receiving Federal-aid highway funds

TYPE II projects consist of a proposed project for noise abatement on an existing highway where no highway improvements are programmed, and Type II abatement is eligible for Federal-aid highway funds if the agency has an approved Type II Noise Policy. He noted that participation in the Type II abatement program is voluntary

TYPE III projects are those that are not a Type I or Type II and do not require assessment of noise impact & abatement.

Next, Evans reviewed Noise Policy requirements noting that identification of receptors and of noise impacts as well as the examination of potential abatement measures are required as part of the noise impact and abatement assessment process for Type I & II projects. He also noted the requirements related to identification of receptors for Type I & II projects:

- TYPE I: All receptors within or adjacent to the project area. This includes future development if final approval for development has been received by the date of public knowledge.
- TYPE II: Considers only those receptors permitted for development prior to November 30, 2017.

Evans also noted that noise impacts requirements for Type I & II projects:

- TYPE I Projects: Design year noise levels must approach or exceed the noise abatement criteria or design year noise levels must exceed existing conditions by at least 15 dBA.
- TYPE II Projects: Existing noise levels must approach or exceed the noise abatement criteria (past and future years not considered).

Evans continued by reviewing the Noise Policy requirements regarding abatement for Type I & II projects:

- Noise Reduction Design Goal – Minimum 7 dBA reduction at one benefitted receptor
- Views of the benefitted receptors – 51% support
- Effectiveness – Base criteria of 1,500 s.f. per benefitted receptor

Evans wrapped up his presentation by reviewing the Type II eligibility requirements and municipal participation requirements:

Eligibility:

- Must be located along existing Tier 1 highway
- Cannot be located along a section of roadway for which a Type I eligible project is programed within the 10-year Plan
- Cannot be constructed in areas where such measures were previously determined not to be feasible and reasonable, regardless of any subsequent development
- At least one benefitting receptor must have been permitted for development prior to either the original system opening date of the adjacent highway or prior to November 28, 1995
- Cannot necessitate any permanent modification to the alignment of an existing roadway

- Right-of-way must be donated to the state

Municipal Participation:

- Municipality must have enacted noise compatible planning & development regulations adjacent to state highways in order to participate in Type II program
- Commit to 20% municipal match prior to design
- Municipality must demonstrate 51% support from benefitting receptors prior to final design
- Municipality must send request to Department to participate in Type II program

In addition, Evans noted that the department must develop an outreach program to inform local officials of noise compatible planning concepts, noise levels adjacent to Type I improvement projects, adjustments of the Effectiveness Criteria based upon the date of development and ineligibility for Type II abatement. Evans also reviewed Type II Abatement Implementation:

- Municipalities wishing to participate in the Type II program submit request to Department.
 - Must demonstrate implementation of noise compatible land use planning regulations
- Upon acceptance into the program, a Type II abatement study will be initiated of all eligible roadways within the municipality
- Abatement measures that meet criteria will be added to the statewide priority list based upon effectiveness
- Type II abatement funding becomes available in Ten Year Plan
- Municipality commits to 20% match & demonstrates 51% support.
- Final design begins & necessary ROW is donated to State
- Project advertises and is constructed

Evans concluded his presentation by noting that investigation and implementation of Type II noise abatement would be subject to the availability of funds. He asked if there were any questions.

Chizmas: Does it have to be a building or could it be a sensitive wildlife habitat. Evans stated that noise impact that is evaluated is of the human type. He added that 66 decibels is about the level of human speech. Evans also stated that they do not do interior noise mitigation of commercial or residential. There was further discussion on noise impacts during the construction of roads and the one instance that they had in Windham of a 15 decibel increase in noise. Leedy asked for an example of a Tier I highway. Evans stated the Everett Turnpike, adding that it has to be interstate style and that Rte. 101A is not a Tier 1 highway, but Route 101 from Bedford to Hampton is.

Evans also noted that you really want Type II barrier support, so as not to have to go out to public hearing and the reason for the right-of-way to DOT in the potential barrier location. Evans also noted that currently, there are no Type II abatements funds in the TYP.

White asked about the required match and if it is the same as it would be with a TYP project. Evans stated that it would be 20% of the construction and design funds and minor transfer costs for the right-of-way donated. Minkarah asked if a neighborhood does not pass the feasible and reasonable test, they are not eligible for Type II? Evans said yes, that is correct, but they would be eligible for Type I.

Evans noted that Nashua has 4 eligible locations at a \$12.5M estimated cost and \$12.5M potential for Type II funding with 49+ barriers. Vayo asked what the linear footage is for the Nashua locations. Evans said about 3.2

miles. Dookran asked for the Nashua locations. Evans said he did not have them with him but said he could send them to Dookran. He summarized the process taken to determine Type II abatement. He added that all Nashua Walls were built prior to 1996 and are the oldest in the State. He added that there are other potential areas in the State eligible for Type II but would have to further be evaluated.

Dookran asked for clarification evaluation for noise impacts. Evans explained that the area to have the most frequent outdoor use is how the noise area affected is measured, not at the right-of-way line, but on the property where owner uses it most. Vayo asked if there are temperature factors. Evans said no, but they use the worse case noise hour than occurs on a regular basis. He added that they use the FHWA traffic model to put in conditions they don't already have. Evans noted that locations are measured simultaneously, and that data is put into the model to measure noise levels.

Thebarge asked about noise ordinances to target noise generators. Evans said that would require receptors to block from noise generator. Thebarge asked if local ordinances would be used or could they be generated. Evans said no, it just doesn't fit. Leedy commented that towns already have compliant local ordinances. He asked what criteria and if planning policies are compliant with our criteria, then are we eligible for the study? Vayo also commented on the impacts of real value or cost of construction and the financial impacts of constructing new buildings because they must be built to higher standards. Evans stated that the policy is intended to get municipalities and developers to consider noise in the development of properties. There was further discussion funding from state agencies and the mis-information on criteria in relation to noise. Leedy also commented that zoning is already in place in towns and you could run into issues. Evans stated that it is a voluntary program to provide incentives for Type II abatement, if a town wants to participate. Savage informed the group that there is a guidebook on noise from HUD.

MPO MOU: UZA AND TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES PROGRAMMING

Lantos informed the TTAC that at the Commission meeting of March 21, 2018, the NRPC voted to adopt the revised MPO Master Agreement (or Memorandum of Understanding), subject to final approval of minor revisions to be received from NHDOT. The changes were reviewed by staff of the four MPO's at the April Planning for Performance in NH meeting. The primary text revision adds the sub-allocation of Transportation Alternatives Program funds to urbanized areas over 200,000 in population. MPO RPC staff concurred with the modifications, which will be brought to the NRPC Executive Committee for final adoption. Lantos referred to the memo included in the agenda packet and reviewed the changes with the group.

Chizmas commented that with TA, Federal Aid eligibility is not a consideration and suggested maybe just using the population. She added there is additional money allocated to rurals and we want that to still be there and don't want to limit us as a region. Lantos noted that he has been working with Chizmas to sort all of this out and as long as the process is outlined and followed, it is good. He did note that the numbers in the tables of the memo are not correct and we will be adding the source of the data in the MOU.

Putney asked about the Brookline population of 8. Chizmas explained that Census wise, Brookline has no land in the UZA, but from a lane mileage aspect and smoothing, this made Brookline eligible under lane miles. Lantos added that this is another layer for the MTP process going forward and there will still be come changes.

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION PLAN UPDATE

Lantos stated that he is trying to separate out beyond the Ten Year Plan and determine what other funding option are out there for projects in the MTP. He referred to the online New Transportation Projects Submission Form online that would be wrapping up soon.

Lantos stated that Broad Street Parkway has a functional classification per DOT as a local road, which makes it ineligible for funding. We are taking another look at this and have been working with Pete Stamnas at DOT and Steve Dookran with the City. Lantos added that it looks like the road is more like an urban collector.

Chizmas asked about the criteria and if there are any criteria that they should be considering. Lantos stated that it is the same criteria and weighting system as the last time.

OTHER BUSINESS

NHDES VW Settlement Update

White provided an update and details on New Hampshire's plan for the Volkswagen Settlement. He noted the \$30 million that New Hampshire will be able to benefit from as a result of the settlement. He informed the group that the Office of Strategic Initiatives (OSI) and the NHDES have put together a draft mitigation plan that will allow New Hampshire to replace some of their State's oldest and dirtiest vehicles while providing savings for taxpayers. In addition, the plan will make the investments to encourage and support electric vehicle charging infrastructure, enabling the State to continue to attract EV drivers to our state for tourism and workforce development. It will also engage the private sector and provide New Hampshire the opportunity to leverage these funds effectively. The Volkswagen Settlement funds are an opportunity for the state to modernize and update their fleets, invest in EV infrastructure, reduce the State's tax burden and reduce diesel emissions. White also noted that written comments on our draft mitigation plan will be accepted and series public comment sessions will be held across the State.

Vayo asked if there were any core criteria and any specific infrastructure. White said replacement of State and municipal fleets and the state is committed to 15% for EV infrastructure. He added that they will be looking for input on types of infrastructure. Chizmas asked if school or transit busses would be eligible. White elaborated on the types of infrastructure and eligible types of vehicles. Pattison pointed out the Public Comment Session on the VW Settlement being held on May 10th from 10-Noon at the Nashua Community College.

STAFF UPDATES

Waitkins informed the TTAC that the TIP Amendment #4 was adopted by the NRPC at the March Commission meeting. He also referred to the April TIP Minor Revision which had no regional projects, just statewide and there were no scope changes. There was discussion between Leedy, Chizmas and Lantos on the railroad crossings listed in the April Minor Revision and getting these types of projects information programmed and on the radar.

Waitkins also provided a brief summary of the Regional Transit Feasibility Study that NRPC was working on with the NTS. He noted that NRPC was gearing up to do the outreach with an on-board survey and a general survey for transit around the region. Chizmas noted that the general survey will be online.

Waitkins stated that the NRPC traffic counting season is gearing up also and that he takes requests from municipalities for traffic counts as well as bike and pedestrian counts. Leedy asked about the bicycle and pedestrian counts being conducted for Amherst along Middle St. Waitkins informed Leedy that the counts would be picked up on Monday. Waitkins showed the TTAC the bike counter that NRPC currently has set up on the Nashua River Rail Trail in Nashua. He provided a glimpse of the types of numbers collected and how this can be used for bicycle and pedestrian planning.

ADJOURN

Motion to adjourn came from Gowan with a second from Chamberlain. The meeting ended at 1:37pm.