


APPROVED MINUTES
NRPC TRANSPORTATION TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
06/12/13

Members Present:

Sarah Marchant, Town of Amherst
 Tad Putney, Town of Brookline
 Jeff Babel, Town of Hollis DPW
 John Cashell, Town of Hudson
 Kyle Fox, Town of Merrimack
 Kyle Higgins, Merrimack DPW Intern
 Zach Wallin, Merrimack DPW Intern
 Bill Parker, Milford
 Wayne Husband, City of Nashua

Joe Mendola, City of Nashua
 Mark Sousa, City of Nashua Transit
 Louise Woodworth, City of Nashua Transit
 Jeff Gowan, Town of Pelham

Others Present:

Paul Lockwood, NH DES
 Karla Kemp, NH DOT
 Linda Dusenberry, NH DOT
 Leigh Levine, FHWA

STAFF PRESENT

Tim Roache, MPO Coordinator
 Julie Chizmas, Transportation Planner
 Matt Waitkins, Field Data/Transportation Planner

Kerrie Diers, Executive Director
 Karen Baker, Program Assistant

CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

Tim Roache opened the meeting at 12:10 with introductions.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM THE APRIL 10, 2013 MEETING

Roache referred to the minutes of April 10, 2013 included in the agenda packet as Attachment 1 and asked for a motion to approve. Gowan moved to approve the April 10, 2013 minutes with a second from Babel.

S/TIP AMENDMENT 2 (ACTION ITEM)

Chizmas reviewed S/TIP Amendment 2 to the adopted Nashua Metropolitan Area 2013 – 2016 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). She informed the group that the amendment is to account for changes to projects within the Nashua region and to maintain consistency with the Statewide TIP (STIP). Chizmas added that there was only 1 project that was within our region:

Wilton-Milford-Amherst-Bedford – NH 101 Safety Improvements at various locations from Wilton to Wallace Road in Bedford as determined by the corridor study. The proposed amendment is to add a preliminary engineering phase with \$114,000 in FY2014 funds, increasing FY2016 Right of Way funds from \$36,000 to \$121,000.

Chizmas added that there were also 2 Statewide projects listed in the Amendment: Programmatic project for post construction hazmat obligations and Bridge Rehabilitation, Painting, Preservation & Improvement Projects which is part of the annual Federal Program.

The proposed amendments to the projects in the Nashua region are primarily administrative in nature and are necessary to ensure that the TIP and STIP reflect the anticipated project schedule and maintain fiscal constraint requirements. NH DOT has confirmed that fiscal constraint has been maintained. In addition, NRPC has consulted with all the proper state & federal agencies as well as the NH MPO's and confirmed that the proposed changes made by S/TIP Amendment 2 trigger a new conformity determination of the SE NH 8-hour Ozone Nonattainment Area and the City of Nashua Carbon Monoxide Maintenance Area, and that the Nashua Metropolitan Area Air Quality Conformity Analysis (2013 – 2040), adopted October 17, 2012, continues to be valid.

A legal notice was placed in the Nashua Telegraph and on the NRPC website and public comments were accepted through Wednesday, June 5, 2013; with no comments received. A Public Hearing will be held on Wednesday, June 19, 2013 at the Nashua Regional Planning Commission at 7:00 PM at the NRPC office, 9 Executive Park Drive, Suite 201,

Merrimack, NH 03054. Roache informed TTAC that action is required from the TTAC to recommend approval of the proposed Amendment #2 by the Nashua Regional Planning Commission. Sousa motioned with a second from Babel to recommend approval of the proposed amendment #2 by the full Commission. All were in favor.

PROPOSED FEDERAL FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION CHANGES

Chizmas referred to the memo included in the agenda packet and provided a power point explaining the Federal functional classification process. She said it is a process by which streets and highways are grouped into classes or systems, according to the type of service they are intended to provide. It reflects a highway's balance between providing land access versus mobility. In general, roads are classified as urban or rural based on US Census data, then as arterials, collector roads or local roads, based on function. Definitions are as follows:

Principal Arterial

- Provides the highest level of mobility at the greatest travel speeds, providing long distance connections between major trip generators (larger cities, recreational areas, etc.)
- Three subcategories: Interstate, Freeway/Expressway, and Other Principal Arterial
- Eligible for federal aid

Minor Arterial

- Provides access to geographic areas smaller than those served by the higher system by linking towns and cities together
- Can provide the highest level of mobility through rural areas without principal arterials, while providing important connections between the principal arterial and collector network in urban areas
- Eligible for federal aid

Major/Urban Collector

- Provides service to any county seat not on an arterial route; to the larger towns not directly served by the higher systems; and to other traffic generators of equivalent intra-county importance, such as consolidated schools, shipping points, recreational areas, etc.
- Provides links to nearby larger towns or cities, or with routes of higher classifications
- In urban areas, provides both land access service and traffic circulation within residential neighborhoods, commercial and industrial areas
- Serves the more important intra-county travel corridors
- Eligible for federal aid

Minor Collector (rural only)

- Collects traffic from the local roadway network and distributes it to the major collector or arterial system
- Provides service to smaller municipalities
- Provides links to important small scale land use serving the local community

Local

- Comprises all highways not on the higher systems
- Provides the lowest level of mobility by accessing adjacent land use, serving local trip purposes, and connecting to higher order roadway

Chizmas added that the functional classification of the highways, roads and streets determines eligibility for federal funds. Roadways that are located on a Federal-aid Highway (i.e., arterials or urban collectors) or that are designated as being part of National Highway System (NHS) are eligible for National Highway Performance Program (NHPP) or Surface Transportation Program (STP) funding, which account for about 85% of federal aid. Roads functionally classified as local streets or rural minor collectors are not part of the Federal-aid Highway System and are not generally eligible for federal aid funding. *Note: Highway Safety Improvement Program funding can be used to reduce fatal and severe accidents on any public road.*

The change in the federal urbanized area boundaries related to the 2010 Census provides an opportunity for states and metropolitan planning organizations to review the federal functional classification of their roadways. Chizmas

informed the group that NRPC reviewed traffic volumes, generators and travel patterns, and is proposing the functional class changes shown in the tables following the *Proposed Function Class Changes* memo in the agenda packet and asked the group for feedback on the proposed changes. She added that there were no significant changes saying some roads gained federal status and some lost, but no town lost any federal aid, but some gained. Chizmas added that this was not related to State class roads, strictly Federal.

Husband questioned if traffic volume was a factor in the outcome. Chizmas said, spacing, driveways, amongst other factors were components. Husband questioned what roads in Nashua. Roache informed the group that the change to some of the roads in Nashua opens them up for Federal funding which could be used for traffic calming. Chizmas added that the changes have to be justified and outdoor advertising is affected. She added it only applies to NHS segments. Husband had concerns with what it could mean for North Nashua residents and he felt they would not be happy about being an urban collector. Chizmas said it would not mean much to the regular person and to the City it means they could request STP funds for improvements. Chizmas explained that DOT wanted to make the road local and we disagreed. She added that DOT reviewed the NRPC recommendations and has not concerns with them. Husband felt this would be a sore point for the City being designated as a collector road and that they did not want traffic there. Roache pointed out that collector roads go through populated areas. Chizmas referred to the definitions on page 2 for collector roads. Roache said there are 2 different opinions on this: 1) If you want to do work on this particular road or area, the City would have to foot the bill by changing the class recommended or 2) By keeping the class recommended, any work done on this road/area is 80% paid for. Mendola questioned if the change would be made regardless of the urban compact. Chizmas explained that urban compact was not related to this as that is a state designation and this is Federal. Chizmas asked that if there were any concerns or comments to in addition to the Nashua concerns, to please email them to her within 2 weeks in order to get them to DOT. Gowan asked to have the information on roads listed in Pelham to him.

STAFF AND PROJECT UPDATES

Roache informed the group of the upcoming next round of project solicitation for the Ten Year Plan with a focus on the MTP which will kick off in the fall after the GACIT hearings. He asked that the group think about roads and transportation needs. He added that only a small handful of the towns have projects listed in the TIP and MTP and said there should be project from every community in the TIP adding that there must be a need in each of the communities.

Roache also mentioned the new Synchro Software that NRPC recently picked with the hope of expanding on our capabilities. He added that many staff had training on this intersection analysis and 3D simulation software and will be working with Amherst in the near future on some problem intersections. Roache said to keep this in mind for any problem intersections in your towns.

Roache referred to the Highway Safety Improvements program and asked the group to come to NRPC with any problems within the towns. He added that NRPC had met recently with and completed a pavement assessment to support the Mont Vernon's master plan. This also helps NRPC with their requirements for performance based planning.

Roache informed the group that NRPC's traffic model is currently being calibrated and should be done in 2 to 3 months. Gowan asked about core intersections and the RSA process. Chizmas informed that that was a different tool than the Synchro software and that a safety tool is used for crash analysis which lets you put in a proposed improvement and see the new crash analysis for that particular area. Roache added that we were trying to build on our technical analysis capability. Lockwood asked if Synchro was the best software for this. Roache said most use this software and it is commonly used at public meetings. It can also be laid over Bing maps and local flight and provides better analysis of level of service.

Chizmas passed around the Project Advertising Schedule updates. Roache informed there would be no July meeting and would meet again in August with project solicitation fact sheets for review, Ten Year Plan recommendations and possibly a Decision Lens demonstration.



Mendola shared with the group the progress of the Manchester Street Bridge Project on the border of Nashua and Merrimack. He continued saying they had received approval for final design, completed all proper environmental documents as well as completed all necessary State and Federal documents and were about to go out to bid when they found the presence of an eagles nest on the Merrimack side of the bridge which could potentially hold up the project. He continued saying they were working with the Audubon Society where the nest is not too far from the impact area.

Gowan shared some information on the Pelham Roundabout project which he said has been going gangbusters, but the utilities have become a problem due to their failure to meet their contracts. He added that they are going to the PUC to try and get this resolved to avoid having DOT and Continental have to abandon the project. He added that if the State Legislature and the PUC implemented penalties on utility companies for not sticking to their contracts. He added that construction companies are penalized if they do not stick to their contracts. He encouraged other towns to take the same approach when dealing with these types of issues. Fox asked about reaching out to DOT in an effort to make a united approach. Gowan felt that the municipalities and legislators have more clout.

Roache concluded by encouraging the group to bring these types of issues, ideas for solutions, etc. to these TTAC meetings.

Motion to adjourn came from Gowan with a second from Babel. The meeting adjourned at 1:05 pm.