



MINUTES-Draft
NRPC TRANSPORTATION TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
11/19/03

Members Present: Steve Williams, NRPC
Roger Houston, City of Nashua Community Development
Paul Newman, City of Nashua Urban Programs
John Whittaker, Nashua Transit System
John Cashell, Town of Hudson
Art LeBlanc, Town of Hollis
Doug Starr, NH DES
Dave Szczublewski, NH DOT
Will D'Andrea, Town of Pelham

Others Present: Betsy Hahn, NRPC Regional Planner
Camille Pattison, NRPC Transit Planner

Document Handouts
STIP Amendment #7

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 9/17/03 meeting. John Whittaker moved to accept the minutes and Doug Starr seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed.

STIP Amendment #7

Williams stated that the DOT has requested that NRPC review and take action on the proposed 2003-2005 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) Amendment #7. Under the process that has been agreed upon by NH DOT and the MPO's there are two different processes for STIP amendments. An Expedited Amendment process allows the NH DOT and the MPO's to agree on a STIP amendment for minor changes to projects. Typically, these minor project changes include either a delay of one year in the project at the request of the NH DOT, the MPO or the municipality sponsoring the project, or a decrease in the total cost. On occasion, the expedited process is also used to fix errors in the STIP. There is also a Full Amendment process that is used for projects that will be delayed more than one year in the STIP or for which there will be increases in funding or project scope.

The Expedited Review amendment (SA #07-2-2003) that was requested includes changes to six projects in the NRPC region. The projects to be amended are as follows:

Hollis - Sidewalk on NH 122 (#13099) - This project has been moved back from 2003 to 2004 at the request of the town.

Hudson - Sidewalk on NH 3A (#13100) - This project has been moved back from 2003 to 2004 at the request of the town.

Nashua - Broad Street Parkway (#10040A, #10040M, #10040N, #10040P) - These projects have been delayed to allow the city to undertake revisions to the project concept recommended by the Mayor's Broad Street Parkway Advisory Committee.



Nashua - Daniel Webster Pedestrian Safety and Sidewalks (#12650) - This project has been moved back from 2003 to 2004 at the request of the city.

Nashua Commuter Rail - FEE Turnpike Park and Ride (#13117) and Commuter Rail Equipment (#13514) - These projects, both portions of the Lowell to Nashua Commuter Rail project, have been moved back pending a decision on the lawsuit. Making this change will allow the state to move another project forward without violating the fiscal constraint requirement described above. NH DOT staff has stated that the money for the Commuter Rail project will remain dedicated to that purpose.

Nashua - Daniel Webster Highway Signal Optimization (#13130) - This project has been delayed at the request of the city.

The TTAC Committee reviewed the proposed changes. A motion was made by Art LeBlanc and seconded by John Cashell to approve the proposed STIP amendment. Motion passed.

The NH DOT has also asked the MPO's to consider a Full Amendment (SA #07-3-2003). The amendment affects two projects in the NRPC region.

Hollis - Sidewalk on NH 122 (#13099) - This amendment adds in a project phase, Preliminary Engineering at a cost of \$15,000 in 2004. This phase was inadvertently omitted from the adopted STIP.

Nashua Commuter Rail - FEE Turnpike Park and Ride (#13117) and Commuter Rail Equipment (#13514) and Commuter Rail Extension (#68000) - These items are all portions of the Lowell to Nashua Commuter Rail Extension. As noted above, making this change will allow the state to move another project forward without violating the fiscal constraint requirement. NRPC will only accept this STIP amendment with the understanding that that Commuter Rail project is being delayed and that no funding will be removed from the project.

Under the agreed upon Full Amendment process the TTAC must make a motion recommending the proposed amendment to the NRPC Commission. A 30-day public comment period will be noticed and copies of the amendment information made available to the public. A public hearing must be conducted by the NRPC Commission. Following the public hearing, the NRPC Commission will take action on the amendment. Motion by John Cashell and seconded by Art LeBlanc. Motion carried.

Ten Year Transportation Plan

Steve Williams stated that there are several changes in the Ten-Year Plan and includes the following:

Circumferential Highway was in the 2003-2012 Plan but has now been dropped out completely and is in the "Future Considerations" section of this draft 10 Year Transportation Plan. The future considerations section does not indicate any commitment on the part of the DOT to the project. 101A funding remains the same but construction has been moved back. The order of the proposed projects has been rearranged with the top priority segment from Somerset Parkway to Celina Street shifted to the end of the time line. The FEE Turnpike is scheduled to be widened to three lanes from exit 11 to Manchester in 2112-2114. The exit 36 project was not included and NRPC would like to see a preliminary engineering plan included at the bare minimum.

Paul Newman – Is there any active opposition to the Circumferential Highway project? Why is it not moving forward?

Steve Williams – I think that is just a lack of interest on everyone's part at this point. There was some opposition from Pennichuck Watershed Council and environmental groups.



Paul Newman – Was there any opposition at any of the town meeting that NRPC attended?

Steve Williams – No, but the towns seem to recognize that the project is nearly impossible given the current financial picture and lack of strong support.

Transit Plan

Camille Pattison stated that three out of the four community outreach meetings were well attended and some good suggestions were received. The Transit Plan now includes all of the suggestions offered by TTAC members. New to the Plan is a website for “one stop shopping” for all transit needs. The site is www.rideshare.com. A goal and scope of work section was also added. Some of the goals are now being initiated such as extended evening hours. She requested that the TTAC recommend the Plans adoption by the NRPC Commission. Paul Newman made the motion to recommend adoption and Roger Houston seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed.

Circumferential Highway

Steve Williams walked the Committee through alternatives to the full build of the highway. All alternatives were modeled to show the increase and decrease in volume on all traffic routes. The alternatives all had the following criteria:

No construction in the Pennichuck watershed

Only two lanes with a 45mph speed limit

Limited access road

Had to follow the existing alignment

Paul Newman – Is there a planned long term east-west route for the State?

Steve Williams – The Airport Access Road Bridge is the only thing at this point.

John Cashell – If the project is abandoned all together will there be additional traffic studies for the light signalization in Hudson?

Steve Williams – Yes, we have told the NH DOT that we believe such a study is absolutely necessary no matter what the outcome for the Circumferential Highway.

Next Meeting, December 17 at 3 PM.

Meeting was adjourned at 4:35 PM.

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