


NRPC APPROVED MINUTES
NRPC TRANSPORTATION TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
09/13/17

Members Present:

Bruce Berry, Town of Amherst	Mark Chamberlain, Town of Lyndeborough
Eric Hahn, Town of Amherst	Dawn Tuomala, Town of Merrimack
Gordon Leedy, Town of Amherst	Lincoln Daley, Town of Milford
Jim Battis, Town of Hudson	Wayne Husband, City of Nashua
Elvis Dhima, Town of Hudson	Sarah Marchant, City of Nashua
George Theborge, Town of Hudson	Jeanne Walker, City of Nashua
Tom Young, Town of Litchfield	

Others Present

Tim White, NHDES	Leigh Levine, FHWA
Jennifer Reczek, NHDOT	Henry Underwood, SWRPC
William Rose, NHDOT	

STAFF PRESENT

Julie Chizmas, Senior Transportation Planner	Karen Baker, Program Assistant
Matt Waitkins, Senior Transportation Planner	Jen Czysz, Interim Executive Director

CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

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

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM THE AUGUST 9, 2017 MEETING

Chizmas referred to the minutes of August 9, 2017 included in the agenda packet as Attachment 1. She asked if there were any corrections. White noted a few minor grammatical corrections and clarification on the following pages:

- Page 3, sentence beginning with Strachan also noted...., add *“newer diesel or”* electric to get...”
- Page 3, sentence beginning with Strachan said the chassis..., change 6 to *“3”* inch hole...”
- Page 3, 2nd paragraph, 2nd sentence under *VW Settlement: Zero Emission Vehicle Investments*, add *“new”* before *“info on Appendix D...”*
- Page 3, 4th paragraph, 4th sentence, delete *“fast”* before charging infrastructure.
- Page 4, 2nd paragraph, 2nd sentence, *add “EV charging stations can be configured in many different way”* and *delete “they are usually put in groups of 20.”*
- Page 4, 3rd paragraph, 3rd sentence should read: *“White stated that there is a lack of charging infrastructure in NH and this can act as a barrier to people buying the cars.”* and delete 4 & 5 sentences.
- Page 4, 6th & 7th sentences should be combined and read as follows: *“Pattison asked if this was for busses or just cars and White said light duty vehicles are not an eligible project type in Appendix D.”*

There were no further corrections. Leedy motioned with a second from Young. All were in favor and the motion passed.

NH101A AND NH101

Chizmas noted provided a brief history on the NH101A and NH101 projects that are currently funded in the NRPC TIP and State Ten Year Transportation Plan. She also stated that Jennifer Reczek, NHDOT Project Manager would do a presentation on the planned improvements on NH101A, followed by discussion and also on the NH101 corridor to get input from communities on where safety improvements should be made along that

corridor. Chizmas emphasized the importance of this open discussion, stating that it provides TTAC a direct opportunity to learn about and provide input on the planned projects aimed at improving safety and reducing congestion along these key corridors.

Reczek introduced herself with brief background. She proceeded by summarizing the history of the Milford to Nashua Corridor Improvements stating that the project was initiated in 1985 as a NH101A bypass study which later included an updated corridor study in 2002. She stated that there were 4 proposed projects for the Ten Year Plan (2 in Nashua, Amherst and Merrimack). She proceeded by reviewing each of the projects, providing a history and current status update on each.

Amherst #10136C-Intersection of NH 101EB off-ramp & NH101A: Action item #20 - Realignment of the NH 101 EB off-ramp, construction of right-turn slip ramp and acceleration lane to accommodate peak hour demands for right-turn.

Current Status: Consultant contract approved in June of 2017, Slope & Drain Plans scheduled for Sept. 2017 with scheduled to advertise in March 2018 with construction in the summer of 2018 and an estimated construction cost approximately \$1.3 million.

Leedy asked if signals were warranted for this intersection and if so, why are we not putting them in and if not, why were they put into the project to begin with. Marchant noted that this was back in 2015 and Mark Fougere was involved, but she remembered folks being adamantly against having signals installed because there are so many along that corridor already. Husband suggested it would be a good idea to put in the infrastructure now so that if congestion or safety becomes an issue down the road, a signal can be put in. Daley agreed but said there is an anti-light movement along that corridor. Leedy asked who made the decision. Chizmas said she read through the minutes from the public meeting in 2012 and signals were not wanted. Marchant said she was not sure who made the decision but there are a lot of accidents there. Leedy wanted clarification at the DOT level if signals were warranted or not. Reczek said any renegotiations will delay construction on this project. She added that the changes to the project were made before she came on board. Reczek added that if you want to see progress, you may have to go with it, but she said she would check into this.

Merrimack #10136D-Widening NH 101A and Intersection Improvements: Action Items #14 and 22 - NH 101A widening which adds third EB through-lane and sidewalk, an additional right-turn lane from Continental Boulevard to NH 101A WB, a right-turn lane from NH 101A WB to Continental Boulevard, and reconfigures the Boston Post Road / Craftsman Lane intersection.

Current Status: Consultant contract anticipated by Nov. 2017, a re-evaluation of action item #22 from an Environmental aspect due to new policies with the MS4 stormwater requirements (slight tweaks anticipated), hearing is scheduled summer 2018 with schedule to advertise in summer 2020 and construction 2020-2022. Estimated construction cost is approximately \$3.5 million.

Reczek noted that the current WB portion has insufficient capacity and that right-turn lanes need to accommodate peak and future traffic demands. Berry asked if there was any chance of expanding the distance and referred to the heavy cut-through traffic coming from Hollis and lanes being too narrow. Reczek felt this might be outside the scope of the project. Leedy referred to the odd cut-through at the church as the way folks get from the southerly part of Amherst and that closing that would be a bad idea and the current intersection would have to be reconfigured for safety. Tuomala stated that Fox wants this project to be done. There was discussion from Leedy on the area and avoiding church lot cut thru and if improvements would remedy the left turns east bound onto Continental. Leedy elaborated, adding that you are going to have capacity issues and you

can't add a 4th lane and talked about trying to balance improvements that mean something and affecting businesses.

Nashua #10136A&B-Widening NH 101A: Action Item #17 - NH 101A widening from Celina Avenue to Somerset Parkway with 3 through-lanes with shoulders and sidewalks in each direction, modifications to 7 signalized intersections. ROW is required throughout and complex environmental concerns and many utility relocations.

Current Status: Enter into agreement with City for NHDOT to manage project or potential for City to assume management of project if desired. Consultant selection slated for 2018 with hearing in 2021. Project scheduled to advertise in 2025 and 2026 with construction to begin between 2020 and 2022 and an estimated cost of approximately \$11.5 million.

Reczek noted that currently, the project has insufficient capacity and poor levels of service and a decision needs to be made on what to do with the signals at the old Building 19 location. She added that the preferred option provides a LOS D through 2027. Reczek touched on the history of the project noting that it was completed through NEPA and Public Hearing under the LPA process and at some point the project came back to DOT and is now managed by the department after it halted in 2010. Reczek stated that it needs to be looked at again to see if the alternative still applies and then they will need to engage a consultant for final design. Reczek proposed entering into an agreement with the City to combine the two projects into one. She added that both sections are currently in the Ten Year Plan. Marchant felt it did not make a difference if it was 1 vs. 2 projects and said they can make that happen but it would take time. Reczek said it would speed up the project if the City would assume management of the project. Marchant said they would not do that because the City is not going to put up the match.

Husband referred to a CMAQ project that the City did which involved a traffic management system which communicates with the traffic signals via computer and uses copper. He noted the success they have had but that it is not quite cutting it due to the lack of full time communication because the intersections are on different clocks. He added that it would make sense to optimize what they have through the current traffic management system and wanted to know if there is any federal funding available to coordinate with Merrimack and along the corridor for better traffic optimization. Levine stated that CMAQ funds could be used for this, but you would have to demonstrate emission reduction. There was further discussion between Leedy, Levine, Husband and Reczek about signal optimization. Reczek noted that some of the existing signals would be relocated. Marchant asked if they could be fiber and could they tie into Merrimack. Reczek said she was not sure but it could be discussed. Leedy stated there was fiber in the old railroad bed but was unsure of who the owner was but thought UNH was involved.

Walker asked about the ROW in all this. Reczek stated that it is one of the issues and the process could take a fair amount of time to get through. Walker stated that she is pushing for sidewalks but it is difficult to ask for if it is only going to be ripped up and have to be done again. She also noted that the condition of the pavement ties into this. Reczek stated the construction is scheduled for 2025 for Nashua project #10136A and FY2026 for #10136B, adding that calendar year 2026 would be the earliest we would be out there. Walker asked if they could get dollars for paving. Reczek said no because it is in the urban compact.

Chizmas noted that as part of the performance measures, 101A will be included because it is a NHS corridor which will be coming in the next two years which is when the assessments have to be done. She added that this has to do with pavement management systems. Marchant commented that it is the second busiest corridor. Chizmas stated that NRPC was going to move forward with a letter writing campaign on advancing projects by

lending a strong voice to get them moved up. Marchant asked if she could argue in the letter on improvements already done by the City and improvements to congestion.

Wilton-Milford-Amherst-Bedford #13692-101 Corridor Improvements: A corridor study was completed in 2002 and there are 3 Ten Year Projects included (2 in Bedford and Milford). Reczek noted that project #13692A at the intersection of 101 / Hardy Road / Jenkins Road in Bedford is complete as well as project #13692B widening and lane reconfiguration from Wilton Road east in Milford (approx. 2750 ft.) is also complete.

Reczek reviewed the Bedford project #13692C bridge replacement on NH 101 over Pulpit Brook which was currently under design. She noted that this bridge was built in 1951 and is currently on the State's redlist.

Current Status (of bridge project over Pulpit Brook): Consultant contract was approved in the fall of 2016, TS&L Plans are due fall 2017, it is scheduled to Advertise in July of 2019, with construction slated for summer 2020 and an estimated construction cost of approximately \$2 million.

Going Forward on the Corridor Improvements: Reczek asked the group where there are places along the 101 Corridor that we can make the best impacts with the money we have. Leedy commented on the traffic volume on the corridor. Berry, a frequent traveler of the corridor commented on the seasonal safety issues due to glare from the sun which results in drastic slow-downs in speed on the corridor. Husband agreed. Leedy did not think improvements along the corridor were warranted and that the corridor study should be redone. Reczek stated that there are funds set for 2020 and if you do another corridor study, it will make it take that much longer. She felt it is better to address the concerns in a NRPC setting to help advance improvements. Berry asked if there was speed data available from NRPC. Chizmas said that NRPC does not typically gather speed data, but it can be done. Berry and Chamberlain agreed that the stretch between Rte. 13 and Rte. 101A was bad and a safety issue due to grade changes, merging of traffic and speed fluctuations (from blinding sunlight). Tuomala, Husband, Marchant and a few others noted that the Camp Road area was a major area of concern for safety, noting that they often alter their routes for safety reasons. Leedy agreed that Camp Road would be a good area for a signal. He asked what areas were called out for improvements in the 2002 corridor study. Reczek stated the Joppa Road was for a signal, which had since been completed. There was further discussion on left turns at several locations along the corridor which posed safety issues as well as speed reduction with people entering the corridor. Reczek asked about rumble strips as a method of safety. It was noted that there were already rumble strips in place on Rtes. 101 and 13. Berry commented on the poor condition of the intersection pavement at 101 & Elm St and the traffic backup east on the 101 Bypass at the old state police barracks. Chamberlain commented on the conflicts created on Rte. 13 and 101 coming into Wilton and the effects to Main Street. Tuomala agreed and said she would like to see some type of signalization there and she had concerns for the school children there. Underwood with Southwest Region Planning Commission, was curious if the access management areas in Wilton east of Temple Rd and Isaac Frye Highway referred to in the corridor study had been addressed and how there were now. He noted that in the southwest region, Rte. 123 and 101 in Peterborough is a safety issue. Reczek concluded her presentation and thanked the group for their input.

ADJOURN

Chizmas provided the group contact information for Electrify America. White noted that it was National Drive Electric Week which the Governor also made a proclamation for in NH. White informed the group of events being held in Concord at the Statehouse and at the Common Man in Plymouth to celebrate the week. He also stated that he had a Prius Prime in the parking lot for the group to check out.

Motion to adjourn came from Leedy with a second from Young. The meeting ended at 1:33pm.