


NRPC APPROVED MINUTES
NRPC TRANSPORTATION TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
04/13/16

Members Present:

John Cashell, Town of Hudson
 Tom Young, Town of Litchfield
 Lincoln Daley, Town of Milford
 Wendy Hunt, Town of Milford
 Wayne Husband, City of Nashua

Joe Mendola, City of Nashua
 Jeff Gowan, Town of Pelham
 Jennifer Hovey, Town of Pelham

Others Present:

Suzanne Fournier, Milford-Brox Environmental Citizens

STAFF PRESENT

Jen Czysz, Assistant Director
 Camille Pattison, Planning Manager
 Ryan Friedman, Senior GIS Planner

Julie Chizmas, Senior Transportation Planner
 Matt Waitkins, Field Data Tech/Transp. Planner
 Karen Baker, Program Assistant

CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

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

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM THE JANUARY 13, 2016 & FEBRUARY 10, 2016

Czysz referred to the minutes of January 13, 2016 included in the agenda packet and asked if there were any comments or changes. She asked for a motion to approve. Gowan moved to approve the January 13, 2016 minutes with a second from Cashell. All were in favor. Next, she referred to the minutes of February 10, 2016 and asked if there were any comments or changes and a motion, if not. Gowan moved to approve the minutes of February 10, 2016 with a second from Young. All were in favor. Czysz added that Pattison represents the Town of Wilton and Mason as their circuit rider and can vote on their behalf.

STAFF PRESENTATION: COMPLETE STREETS GUIDE UPDATE

Pattison showed a copy of the Complete Street Guide to the group. She informed the group that there are three components to the guide. The first one she would provide an update on and then would pass the floor to Waitkins to go over techniques and lastly have Friedman get into the more detailed LTS piece of the guide.

Pattison started off by showing pictures then and now of Daniel Webster Highway, a regional center for commercial development. She showed 4 images for DW Highway; 1965, 1978, 1998, and 2012 so the group could see the growth overtime. Pattison noted the 4 locations outlined in red that are shown in each slide as a reference as the area develops. She also pointed out the new development in each of the photos specifically the major development of the Route 3 FE Everett turnpike in the 1978 photo, residential development east and west of Rte. 3, BAE, and the Pheasant Lane Mall which was developed in the 80's, followed by Nashua Technology Park, the Radisson and apartment growth along Spit Brook Rd. In the last photo from 2012 Pattison pointed out the continued development along Spit Brook Road and the clearing for new development in other areas such as the Dow Chemical site and the Green Ridge Turkey Farm which stood at the corner of DW Highway and Spit Brook Road, burned down in the 50's and was rebuilt only to eventually close in the mid 90's and make way for new development (Barnes and Nobles and Not Your Average Joes). This pattern of development has created barriers to other modes of transportation, particularly for non-motorized modes. The goal of Complete Streets is to minimize these barriers and as a result accommodate as many modes of travel as possible. Pattison informed the group that the project was funded through the CDC and American Planning Association and initiated through Healthy Easting Active Living NH. HEAL NH partnered with the City of Nashua, the Regional Planning Commission and NH Public Health to complete the project. Complete Streets are designed for all users, not just cars, but also to meet

the varied needs of pedestrian and bicyclists. She added that Nashua is already designing complete streets, referring to the Main St. sidewalks project and installations along Manchester St. in the North End of the City. Key components of the project were an extensive audit of 7 of the City's land use regulations and ordinances, outreach with the public to determine where people feel safe walking and biking, information events and the development of the Complete Streets Guide. Pattison passed the floor to Waitkins who would talk about the techniques used in the Complete Streets Guide.

Waitkins talked about the techniques used in the Complete Streets Guide and how they fit into the toolkit for complete streets. Listed below are some of the techniques:

- Curb Extensions: Reduce pedestrian cross times and improve visibility.
- Street Trees: Provide a buffer between pedestrians and cars.
- Street Furniture: Creates a more pleasant environment for pedestrians.
- Crosswalks: Placed to minimize crossing distances and minimize conflicts between pedestrian and vehicles
- Bicycle Boxes: At signalized intersections and require motorists to stop a short distance before the crosswalk and allow bicyclists to stop in the area between the cars and the crosswalk.
- Public Bike Parking: Enough secure public bike parking to meet demand in that area.
- Advisory Bike Lane: Dotted white lines to help to delineate the bicycle travel area. Used when bikes and cars cross paths.
- Buffered Bicycle Lane: Marked buffer to increase the separation between bicycles and motor vehicles.

There was a question on whether the crosswalks were painted or stamped. Husband said it was a mix. Daley asked about the budget for crosswalks. Husband said there is a budget every year for crosswalks and it increases. Daley asked if they use volunteer to help offset the cost. Husband said not that he was aware of. There was further discussion on painting of crosswalks and the costs associated with smaller towns. Gowan commented on the street trees techniques and how they are considered a liability in some towns. He added that this is an issue in Pelham. Daley felt it comes down to long and short term goals of the town. Waitkins informed the group that there were 30+ elements in the guide on techniques for some. Cashell commented on how complete streets have taken off in the last ten years but people are still confused because there is no education on these new techniques. Waitkins said that the SRTS program assists with education on this due to the program requirements of gearing to K-8. Waitkins passed the floor to Friedman who provided an overview on LTS.

Friedman informed the group that the Level of Traffic Stress (LTS) street analysis started with an objective of determining how easy or difficult it is for bicyclists and pedestrians to get around the City and an LTS score was given to Nashua streets based on this analysis. He added that a similar study is being done for walkability. The data goals were to quantify bikability and walkability, map potential origins and destinations, identify stressful or broken connections, and inform Complete Streets decision making. LTS was developed by MTI for San Jose, CA and based on rider comfort levels established in the Netherlands. Friedman pointed out the 4 levels of traffic stress:

- LTS 1: All riders, including capable children
- LTS 2: Recreational adults
- LTS 3: "Enthusiastic and confident"
- LTS 4: "Strong and fearless"

The 3 elements used for the analysis were segments, approaches and crossings. They were calculated by the presence of bike lanes, travel lane widths, shoulder widths, speed limits, on-street parking, and land

use. Other optional stressors used were safety, aesthetics and terrain. Friedman showed maps with LTS scores of roads based on the data gathered and analyzed. He added that level of walkability was also analyzed and heavily weighted towards sidewalks without limitations with crossings factored in. Friedman showed maps with the results of the analysis with origins and destinations and identifying where biking and walking was as an option instead of a car. Data analyses were also done on connectivity islands to determine where there are gaps, where can't people go, and with improvements, where they could go and where can they go now. Friedman showed a map depicting the least stressful road (LTS 1) to walk within a mile of the Dr. Crisp School. He then showed the areas higher than an LTS 1. He showed examples of a Biking LTS 2 and how to improve to make more opportunities to get somewhere via bicycle. Friedman added that this is just a tool.

Friedman referred to Butch's Creative Crosswalks and showed a video demonstration using decorative sidewalks in Haverhill, MA & the success of using Complete Streets technique. He informed the group that they would be doing a test similar to that of Butch's Creative Crosswalks at Holman Stadium in the parking lot during the baseball season and for feedback.

Husband commented that Federal Highway sees safety issues on doing decorative sidewalks and that it may distract drivers. Friedman said that is why they are doing the test in the parking lot. Husband felt it was more of a policy level decision. Pattison said there was talk about doing it along the Heritage Rail Trail. Husband said maybe it would be something for a low traffic street. Friedman said he has heard both sides. Pattison informed that they planned on doing some type of education also at Hollman Stadium. She added that there was talk about having a universal icon and that the creative crosswalk has been very successful for Haverhill. There was further discussion of the safety aspect.

S/TIP AMENDMENT 3 (ACTION ITEM)

Chizmas reviewed S/TIP Amendment 3. She informed the group that NRPC has received from DOT Amendment #3 to the adopted MTP 2015 – 2018 TIP and NRPC is amending the TIP to account for changes to Statewide projects and to maintain consistency with the Statewide TIP (STIP). She added that due to the new dataset provided by NH DOT that lists the communities within which each TIP project is located the Nashua MPO realized that there are several SNHPC TIP projects located in the Nashua Urbanized Area (UZA) that should be listed in the Nashua MPO TIP per federal requirements. SNHPC maintains fiscal constraint of these projects through their TIP; therefore, they are not included in the Nashua MPO TIP's fiscal constraint analysis. Additionally, these projects are not located within the City of Nashua and therefore do not trigger a new conformity determination of the City of Nashua Carbon Monoxide Maintenance Area. The Nashua MPO proposes to formally add these projects to its TIP project listing through this Amendment.

The proposed amendments to the Statewide projects 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. The proposal to list the SNHPC projects located within the Nashua UZA is also administrative in nature and meets the fiscal constraint analysis. The proposed changes made by STIP Amendment 3 do not trigger a new conformity determination of the City of Nashua Carbon Monoxide Maintenance Area. NRPC placed a legal notice in the Telegraph and on the NRPC website. Public comments are being accepted through April 8, 2016 and a public hearing will be held on Wednesday, April 20, at the NRPC at 6:00pm. Action is required from the TTAC to recommend approval of the proposed Amendment #3 by the NRPC Commission.

Cashell motioned with a second from Young that the NRPC Commission approve the proposed S/TIP Amendment 3. All were in favor.

STAFF UPDATES:

MTP Project List

Czys informed that NRPC is planning to host a series of workshops during June 2016 across the region to review and discuss the draft Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) Project Listing. These big picture conversations will focus on regional corridors: The Turnpike and access across the Merrimack River, the 101 and 101A corridors, and rural transportation needs.

Session Dates and Locations:

- June 9, 2016 – WEST at Wilton Town Hall (Lyndeborough, Mason, Mont Vernon, Wilton)
- June 16, 2016 – CENTRAL at Milford Town Hall (Amherst, Brookline, Hollis, Milford)
- June 30, 2016 – EAST at Hudson Town Hall (Hudson, Litchfield, Merrimack, Nashua, Pelham)

Czys said she would be touching base with Cashell and Daley prior to the Hudson and Milford events. Cashell asked that any presentations be emailed prior to the workshop. Czys said she would and briefly reviewed the agenda for the workshops.

ITS Plan

Chizmas informed the group that she would be doing an update to the outdated ITS Plan. She added that she would choose a different approach for this update since no one has reports using the current one. She informed the group that she would be using the “keep it simple” guidance from NHDOT by building on existing Transportation Plans such as the Congestion Management Process Corridors, looking at devices that help meet objectives of CMP and Metropolitan Transportation Plan. Chizmas said she would look at the ITS service areas and the MTP objectives. In addition, as part of the update she would identify existing, planned and needed devices related to public transportation, traveler Information, and traffic management in the region. She said TTAC would be her first mode of connection to gather this information as well as from Federal, State and MPO officials, municipal officials, and transit agencies. Lastly, she would map, identify and document the data she collects. The plan is to do a new ITS plan using a similar structure to what Denise Markow from DOT did for her plan update.

Final Rules: Highway Safety Improvement Program and Safety Performance Measures

Czys informed the group that the final rules for the Highway Safety Improvement Program and Safety Performance Measures were adopted on March 15, 2016 and will go into effect on April 14th. She added that the rules are primarily geared to the State level and the purpose of the Federal Government rule was to make sure federal dollars are being used effectively. Czys added that we are still waiting for the MPO planning rules that have not been released yet. She referred to the last 2 pages of the agenda packet which has more detailed information.

Other Business

Chizmas informed the group that there was a newly added Pelham project added to the advertising schedule: Route 38 & Old Gage Road Safety Improvements through HSIP. Also another HSIP project in Brookline was added.

Gowan informed that Jennifer Hovey was an alternate for TTAC from Pelham.

Motion to adjourn came from Gowan with a second from Young. The meeting ended at 1:19pm.