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NEWMARKET
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ROCHESTER
ROLLINSFORD
SOMERSWORTH
STRAFFORD
WAKEFIELD

Strafford Metropolitan Planning Organization Technical Advisory Committee Meeting SRPC Office, Rochester, NH FINAL

June 3, 2011 Minutes

Present: Don Vachon (New Durham), Craig Wheeler (Somersworth), Wallace Dunham (Madbury), Rad Nichols (COAST), Laurel Cox (Lee), Bruce Woodruff (Dover), James Campbell (Durham), Nick Alexander (NHDOT), Jon Hotchkiss (Middleton), Dirk Timmons (UNH), Melodie Esterberg (Rochester) and Diane Hardy (Newmarket)

Members Not Present: Connie Brawders (Barrington), Victoria Parmele (Northwood), Patrick Carroll (Rollinsford) and Thomas Fargo (DES-ARD)

Staff: Marc Ambrosi (Transportation Planner) Marilyn Barton (Administrative Assistant), Dan Camara (GIS/Transportation Analyst) Kyle Pimental (Regional Planner) and Michelle Auen (Regional Planner)

1. Introductions

Chairman J. Campbell opened the meeting at 9 am and introductions were given around the room.

2. Staff Communications

M. Barton stated due to the holiday in July, the July TAC meeting is cancelled and the next meeting would be in August. M. Barton noted it is the practice of TAC at the new fiscal year (July 1) the chairman and vice-chairman switch positions, unless someone wanted to volunteer. After the meeting ended, M. Barton confirmed with Melodie Esterberg that she would step into the role of chairman as of July 1, 2011 through June 30, 2012. M. Barton also noted two SRPC staff members recently had their one year anniversary with the Commission. M. Barton also welcomed the newest member of TAC, Don Vachon from New Durham to the group.

3.1 Approval of Draft Strafford MPO TAC May 6, 2011 Minutes

The chairman asked for a motion to approve the draft minutes from May 6, 2011. J. Hotchkiss made a motion. J. Hotchkiss noted there was an error on page two, under section 5, Project Updates. J. Hotchkiss noted it currently read, "D. Hardy stated there is a proposal right now for an eighty to ninety square foot community shopping center" and should it not read "eighty to ninety thousand square foot". M. Barton

stated she would make that change and confirmed with D. Hardy of Newmarket if that was correct. B. Woodruff seconded that motion with change as discussed. It was noted there was one abstention-J. Campbell of Durham as he was not at that meeting. All in favor, motion carried.

3.2 State Transportation Improvement Program, Amendment #2

M. Ambrosi stated the Strafford Metropolitan Planning Organization (SMPO) is seeking TAC's recommendation to the Policy Committee for approval of TIP Amendment #2. M. Ambrosi reviewed the projects and noted the majority of the changes to the Strafford Region were to add the recently approved CMAQ projects. M. Ambrosi noted the SMPO received a comment from UNH requesting the originally proposed Amendment #2 be modified to show all engineering funds for the UNH CMAQ projects be moved into their respective construction phases and noted these changes have cleared with NHDOT. M. Ambrosi stated Amendment #2 required a new air quality determination to account for the additional projects and noted that the SMPO and the three other MPO's have gone through the process to recalculate our emissions and have determined our region remains below our threshold for emissions.

M. Ambrosi gave an overview for the newer members of TAC what the S/TIP process was about and stated the participation in the process from the group was fantastic and was appreciated.

Chairman J. Campbell asked for a motion to recommend the State Transportation Improvement Program, Amendment #2 as presented to the Policy Committee. B. Woodruff made a motion; D. Hardy seconded that motion. All in favor, motion carried.

4. Discussion Items

M. Ambrosi stated he went to the public meeting recently held in Milton regarding the bridge on Rt. 153 that was recently closed. M. Ambrosi noted there was no conclusion at the meeting as to what to do with the bridge. M. Ambrosi stated that this is a problem as it has negative economic impacts and leaves only one route to access this area of Maine while there is a significant population that would be impacted. It was also noted that in past flooding events the remaining access is not passable and would create dangerous conditions in case of an emergency. B. Woodruff stated the reasons for getting it fixed are not just convenience-it comes down to the fact that a person would have to travel three times further and that adds greatly to vehicle miles traveled. B. Woodruff stated they are not sure who actually owns the bridge- Milton, NH or Lebanon, ME.

M. Ambrosi gave an update on the Lee Traffic Circle and noted NHDOT has proposed a two-lane roundabout and it would definitely help with congestion and be safer. M. Ambrosi referenced a letter he wrote to William Gregsak and William Cass of NHDOT regarding that, as part of the meeting packet. M. Ambrosi noted SRPC encourages Lee and NHDOT to create an MOU and would like to see the following aspects addressed: Stricter standards, an MOU, pedestrian-transit units and a signalized crosswalk. M. Ambrosi also stated SRPC encourages NHDOT to think about having a park and ride on the northeast side of the circle as that would be an ideal location.

5. Project Updates

M. Ambrosi stated regarding the Newmarket Pedestrian Bridge, that it would be good to expedite the process, which D. Hardy stated is being done. M. Ambrosi noted there would be an update to the ITS to maintain consistency with the State. M. Ambrosi stated SRPC recently assisted with the COAST ridership surveys, riding Route 2 and noted it was very successful.

K. Pimental gave an update regarding the Scenic Byways program he has been working on. K. Pimental stated he has started to move forward in the beginning phases of the planning process. K. Pimental noted he has met with the Rollinsford Planning board and they recruited volunteers and created a subcommittee and they amended the byway route to highlight their downtown area as they were concerned Route 4 may become an increased speed zone. K. Pimental noted the next step in Rollinsford is a two part process: The first is focus on what makes this part of the town special and what do they want to highlight? Also there would be a need to inventory natural, historical and recreation resources. K. Pimental stated the second thing for them to focus on would be the overall importance of the Byway – Routes 108/4 as a whole and come up with a statement of significance. K. Pimental stated the next steps would be to start the process with the other communities involved in the Byway.

M. Auen stated the Strafford Regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Plan has been completed and is in the public review process and noted Cynthia asked her to go over the goals for infrastructure and transportation with the TAC group. M. Auen stated on page 105 of the handout the infrastructure goal was to expand access. M. Auen noted on page 106 the goal for infrastructure transportation included determining if sufficient system capacity and interest for shared rail opportunities and capacity to create new revenue for transit, rail and marine freight expansion, which would result in improved transportation networks in the region, focusing first on transit, rail freight and marine freight. M. Auen stated if anyone had any feedback to please send her an email.

6. Other Business

D. Camara stated two interns have been hired and are currently working on traffic counts and culvert assessments. D. Camara reiterated if any of the communities would like traffic counts done, to please let him know and that SRPC would be doing traffic counts until October.

N. Alexander stated SRPC asked him to give an overview of the Lean Process Review. N. Alexander stated NHDOT worked with stakeholders, the MPOs and RPCs to update the STIP Revision Procedures, especially concerning the length of public comment periods. N. Alexander noted currently there is a thirty-day comment period in place when doing amendments and almost never are comments received from the public and one of the discussions that took place would be to have variable comment periods from ten to thirty days, depending on the complexity of the amendment. N. Alexander stated there was discussion that at the last TAC meeting there was discussion about changing from monthly meetings to bi-monthly meetings and cautioned that we need to let business drive the meeting schedule and not the other way around.

M. Barton stated she had the chance to be part of the discussion process and found it interesting to hear what the other MPOs do as part of their process and stated it was important to have regularly scheduled meetings to conduct important business. A discussion ensued regarding having flexible comment periods and its effects. N. Alexander noted the comments periods will be set by Interagency Consultation and will be looking for feedback and information from the MPOs and RPCs. There was also discussion regarding the use of proxy votes and its relation to the Right to Know Law. N. Alexander stated another discussion point at the meeting was the use of the web to conduct meetings and is something being looked at.

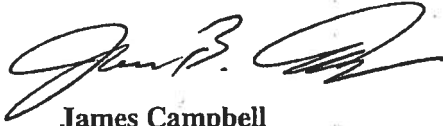
7. Adjournment

The Chairman asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:50 a.m. J. Hotchkiss made a motion and W. Dunham seconded the motion. All in favor, motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Marilyn Barton, PHR

Marilyn Barton, PHR
Recording Secretary



James Campbell
Technical Advisory Committee Chair