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

December 2, 2011 Minutes

Present: Wallace Dunham (Madbury), Bill Hoke (NHDOT), Leigh Levine (FHWA), Paul Lockwood (NHDES-ARD), Jon Hotchkiss (Middleton), Paul Parker (Farmington), Dirk Timmons (UNH), Melodie Esterberg (Rochester), Dave Sharples (Somersworth), Victoria Parmele (Northwood) and Jim Campbell (Durham)

Members Not Present: Connie Brawders (Barrington), Chris Parker (Dover), Laurel Cox (Lee), Don Vachon (New Durham), Diane Hardy (Newmarket), Patrick Carroll (Rollinsford), Rad Nichols (COAST) and Steven Ireland (NHDOT-District 6)

Staff: Cynthia Copeland (Executive Director) Marc Ambrosi (Transportation Planner) Marilyn Barton (Executive Assistant), and Dan Camara (Senior GIS/Transportation Analyst)

1. Introductions

Chairman M. Esterberg opened the meeting at 9 a.m. and introductions were given around the room.

2. Staff Communications

C. Copeland noted that Matt Sullivan, who has been working as our Broadband Collection Technician, has accepted an offer to be our newest Regional Planner. C. Copeland stated all nine RPC's were awarded 3.7 million dollars from HUD, which will be used to update state development and is a unique project and work would begin in January 2012. C. Copeland stated she participated in the first Climate Change webinar sponsored by FHWA and noted several staff attended the webinar and gave a handout with a listing of upcoming climate change webinars.

3.1 Approval of Draft Strafford MPO TAC November 4, 2011 Minutes

The Chairman asked for a motion to approve the draft Strafford MPO TAC minutes of November 4, 2011. J Campbell noted on the minutes that he was not listed under present or not present. M. Barton stated she

would correct that. D. Sharples made a motion with the correction as discussed and J. Hotchkiss seconded that motion. All in favor; motion carried.

4.1 Coordinated Plan Update

M. Ambrosi stated SRPC is in the middle of updating the Coordinated Plan and noted this was a collaborative effort with Rockingham Planning Commission, the Alliance for Community Transportation (ACT) and service providers from the Regional Coordination Council. M. Ambrosi noted federal rules mandate this document be updated every five years to maintain eligibility to access specific Federal Transit Administration funding programs which include 5310, 5316 and 5317. M. Ambrosi stated there is a tight timeline for finishing the update to prevent a lapse in our ability to access funding. M. Ambrosi noted there would be a draft document ready to be presented at the next ACT meeting, next week and would be seeking endorsement in January from the TAC and Policy Committees.

4.2 Federal Legislation Update

M. Ambrosi stated there is still nothing set in stone regarding a new Surface Transportation Authorization. M. Ambrosi stated it looks like the House and Senate are still pretty far apart and they have a good deal of work ahead of them to bridge the gaps.

M. Ambrosi noted one promising sign is that both the house and the senate seem to be recognizing that the funding levels initially proposed (30-40% lower than the current levels) are not adequate to maintain our infrastructure. M. Ambrosi stated with that said, there are questions about how to fund any increase in surface transportation dollars and with absolute resistance to raising taxes on anything, increasing the revenue coming into the Highway Trust Fund remains a huge hurdle for lawmakers to overcome.

M. Ambrosi went over the proposed consolidation of federally mandated programs (TE, SRTS, CMAQ and the Recreational Trails Program) from Senator Boxer’s Moving Ahead for Progress and in the 21st Century ACT (MAP-21). Listed below are the proposed consolidations:

SAFETEA-LU (current)	MAP-21 (proposed)
Transportation Enhancements (funded)	CMAQ Additional Activities (funded at TE 2009)
Bicycle and pedestrian facilities	No change
Bike/ped safety & education	No change
Acquisition of scenic easements/historic sites	No change
Scenic/historic highway programs	Now also includes scenic/historic bridge programs
Landscaping/scenic beautification	Definitions further defined & expanded
Historic preservation of transportation facilities	Merged
Rehab/operation of historic transportation bldgs	
Preservation of abandoned railway corridors	No change
Inventory, control, and removal of outdoor ads	No change
Archaeological planning/research	No change
Env. Mitigation: water pollution due to runoff	Now also includes some NEPA wetland mitigation
Establishment of transportation museums	Eliminated
Safe Routes to School (funded)	No longer separate, eligible under CMAQ & TMP
Recreational Trails (funded)	No longer separate, eligible under CMAQ & TMP
	Opt-out capability

4.3 Local Project Administration

C. Copeland noted she had asked someone from NHDOT to attend the Policy Committee meeting to discuss this and would continue to do so.

C. Copeland stated NHDOT has released new draft guidance for communities on Local Project Administration. C. Copeland noted NHDOT produced this manual to communicate all program processes and requirements to NHDOT's LPA recipients. C. Copeland stated it is an update and a replacement for the following Documents:

-TE & CMAQ Program Manual for the Development of Projects (May 2001)

-Safe Routes to School Project Administration Guide (Sept. 2010)

-NH DOT Process for Municipally Managed Federal Aid Surface Transportation Program Projects (Jan. 2007)

C. Copeland noted the purpose of this document is to provide a consistent and structured process to follow for Local Project Administration. C. Copeland stated the manual provides guidance for each step in project administration including reporting requirements and how to be reimbursed.

M. Ambrosi stated one significant change in NH rules is a new requirement that local project sponsors and their consultants attend a mandatory training to earn a project management certification valid for three years.

C. Copeland stated interested parties are invited to submit comments regarding this manual to NHDOT and will be accepted through December 9, 2011.

D. Sharples asked what about if a community has a signed agreement already in place? C. Copeland stated these types of questions are why we wanted to have NHDOT here to answer them and would get an answer to that question.

L. Levine stated FHWA asked NHDOT to create this manual as it was determined municipally managed projects are high risk. L. Levine noted a national review team went around the country to see how these projects were being administered and when the team came to NH, they specifically wanted to see a manual in place.

A discussion ensued about the new requirement of having a full time, certified person on site.

P. Parker asked about the availability of training and certification and the cost of that to communities? C. Copeland stated she would follow up with an answer to that question.

5. Project Updates

M. Ambrosi spoke about Amendment #4 and would be asking for TAC's recommendation to Policy at the January meeting. M. Ambrosi noted the final GACIT hearing was held on November 30, 2011 and was approved and sent to the Governor's office for approval. It was also noted financial constraint will need to be done because of changed assumptions regarding the toll credit match.

M. Ambrosi stated the Monday before Thanksgiving (November 21, 2011) NHDOT made a request to regional planning commissions to submit a prioritized list of ten to twelve projects from each region to add to the 2013-2022 Ten Year Plan Deferred Projects list. M. Ambrosi stated this raised some questions about

how to identify projects for this list because last spring planning commissions were instructed to prioritize only projects from the existing 2011-2020 Ten Year Plan.

M. Ambrosi noted in response, Strafford Metropolitan Planning Organization staff reviewed the comments we submitted on behalf of the region regarding the Ten Year Plan and GACIT, along with projects identified in our Metropolitan Transportation Plan and from our recent project solicitation process with communities and agencies to generate a list of projects for the deferred list.

M. Ambrosi stated on Monday of this week (November 28, 2011), NHDOT requested we resubmit the top two priority projects from the region by the end of the day. For this we reviewed the projects included on the 2013-2022 Ten Year Plan, referred to the region's top priorities (Safety, Bridges, Funding, Transit etc.) and projects from the solicitation process. M. Ambrosi noted several calls were also made to NHDOT seeking further guidance. D. Camara noted another major factor in ranking projects was the amount of traffic on the roads and all are major routes in our region. M. Ambrosi went over the handouts and the projects submitted.

C. Copeland stated at the final GACIT hearing in Rochester, we found out that the Dover portion of the Little Bay Bridge project would not be funded and immediately sent out a letter asking that either the NHDOT Commissioner or someone from NHDOT turnpikes come and speak to the Policy Committee about this and at this time, there has not been a response from NHDOT and wanted this stated for the record.

D. Camara stated gave an update on the ITS project update. D. Camara stated a signed copy from IBI group has been received and will touch base with stakeholders and look for new ones and identify ITS needs. D. Camara stated the stakeholders include surrounding states and MPOs and RPCs and would have a robust list of stakeholders. D. Camara stated he would give an update at every TAC meeting for the next six or seven meetings and the update would need to be completed by the end of June 2012.

6. Other Business

M. Ambrosi stated the Annual Listing of Obligated Projects will be out by the end of the year. C. Copeland stated there is a meeting regarding Seacoast Commuter Options open to all interested parties, next week on December 9, 2011 at 10 a.m. at NHDOT in the Community Conference room in Concord. There was no other business.

7. Adjournment

The Chairman asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:20 a.m. D. Sharples made a motion and J. Hotchkiss seconded that motion. All in favor, motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,



Marilyn Barton, PHR
Recording Secretary