

NCC Transportation Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
October 13th, 2010

Present: Rob Nadler (Albany), Doug Grant (Randolph), Bev Raymond (Berlin/Transit), William Rose (NHDOT), Glenn English (Haverhill), Regan Pride (Lisbon), Councilor Raymond Burton, Henry Anderson (Madison), and Stuart Thompson (NHDOT).

Staff: Michael King and Mary Deppe.

Call To Order:
Beverly Raymond called the meeting to order at 3pm.

Welcome / Introductions / Attendance
Round table of introductions was completed and attendance was taken.

Review and approve minutes from 8/11/10
There was initially no quorum. Later, Glenn English made a motion to approve the minutes from the 8/11/10 meeting as written. The motion was seconded by Rob Nadler. All were in favor and the minutes were approved.

NHDOT Updates
William Rose passed around a copy of the Long Range Transportation Plan for the TAC to review. He explained that Round 5 of the Safe Routes to School program is open and applications are due to NHDOT and the RPC's by November 30th. Towns should coordinate with Mary at NCC to develop applications. SRTS is a 100% reimbursement program.

William explained that NHDOT is looking to develop comprehensive Locally Administered Project program, which will cover things like TE, Scenic Byways, SRTS, etc. DOT is also looking to update the CMAQ program guidelines.

William explained that federal oversight from FHWA is increasing, so we will probably see increased requirements and oversight with funding.

DOT has started the UPWP development process. NHDOT provides funds to the 9 RPCs through the UPWP contracts. These are developed on a biennial basis. Last year there were some major changes to the UPWP contracts and there were mixed results. DOT is putting together a working group with DOT, FHWA, RPC's and MPO's to discuss standard invoicing template, standard UPWP format (how tasks are described), and collective tasks that are shared among all RPC's. The first working group meeting was yesterday. One common thread was that there are administrative issues with some RPC's regarding the UPWP program and SPR funds. There has been a problem with some agencies being compliant with program terms and conditions. William explained that DOT needs the RPC's to be positioned to function as reimbursable programs, so they will need to have cash on hand. If the RPC's aren't in a position to do that, then DOT isn't in a position to do business.

Division Administrator of FHWA in New Hampshire, Kathy Laffey will be leaving and is being replaced by someone from California.

Long Range Transportation Plan Update
William explained that the last time people saw the LRTP was 2008. The process began in 2006 with Commissioner Murray and CAC (Community Advisory Committee). There were some problems with the 2008 plan. Section 5 of the plan went into detail of modal funding with different scenarios. (This was removed from the current/adopted plan). The chief problem was that highway funds cannot be used for particular modes of transportation that are constitutionally prohibited and the 2nd problem is that the legislature thought that they were the party that should develop transportation policy, not the NHDOT. The LRTP was shelved for a while and revised. FHWA would not approve the next STIP if the LRTP was not adopted.

The plan was recently adopted and includes an expanded discussion of resource review process, discusses climate issues, livability and sustainability issues, etc.

Regan Pride asked what an example of constitutionally prohibited project would be. William replied that rail would be one. Highway funds can't be spent on it.

Councilor Burton explained that by law, the gas tax can only be used for highway and bridges. The appropriations committee has dipped into that funding for all types of agencies for years. Ray has emailed DOT and requested info on what the current budget allows money to be spent on/distributed to.

Councilor Burton also explained that the legislature, because of lack of money, has set up a study committee to look at long range financing of highways and bridges. The report is due out at the end of November.

There was some discussion about how the Highway Trust Fund is the source of funding for highway block grants to towns and it is a dollar amount not a percentage.

Mike King explained that this plan should come from DOT and say what we think the best use of our resources across the board and the needs are, regardless of where the funding comes from.

William stated that the LRTP was recently approved by the legislature and by FHWA. It states that this plan can't be used against DOT and State of New Hampshire if anyone wants to sue. This plan fits well with the TYP.

Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) / Strategic Highway Safety Program (SHSP) Presentation (Stuart Thompson, NHDOT)

Stuart Thompson passed out a handout with the 100 intersections with highest crash rates in New Hampshire. The list looks at severe injury and fatal collision. For a rural intersection to be on the list there needed to be 5 severe/fatal accidents over the analysis period. For urban intersections, there needed to be 10. The Bureau of Highway Design has rated them in order of what could be implemented first, or the project's constructability.

For the HSIP, DOT uses 3 types of analysis: the Traditional Approach, the Systematic Approach, and the Special Project Approach. The traditional approach is based on the Highway Safety Manual. We'd look at hotspots, rank them, and make corrections at the hot spots. With the Systematic Approach, DOT would go to the location and would make improvements in the area and not just to the specific crash site. With the Special Project Approach, the conditions may lapse the analysis. To work at a location like that, DOT would want to look at the crashes and identify a counter measure to affect the crashes. This allows communities to submit for improvements without needing to be on the 5% report. If an area fits that requirement DOT would come in and do a Road Safety Audit (RSA) and use the recommendations as proof that something needed to be done at that location.

The RSA is a formal process. DOT would go to the area, go through the information, generate a report, and assign responsibilities. The RSA team is meant to be an independent team so judgment isn't clouded by other conditions at the location. Funding for HSIP is 90/10 with 10% match on any project.

Councilor Burton mentioned a location in Haverhill, at the intersection of NH 135 and US 302 that could use an RSA. Glenn explained that he was more concerned about the Forest Street intersection with US 302 in Haverhill. This was on the TAC RSA priority list.

Mary Deppe explained that with the help of Stuart, an RSA that was just done in Lancaster at both US 3/US2 intersections. Gene Calvert, the RSA Peer-to-Peer Coordinator that was provided through FHWA will be sending a draft report in the next week or so.

There was some discussion about how the projects at the top of the list are the most constructible and could be done more quickly than the ones that are further down on the list.

There was a question of whether a project will be a priority for funding if it is on the list. One would need to show that there are a lot of crashes at the location. Typically the owner of a RSA project could be DOT or a town. Once the RSA report is done, the owner can either accept recommendations or not and the project will eventually go on a project list. The report will eventually will be presented at a public town meeting.

Stuart explained that one type of project that is done with the Systematic Approach is rural signage improvements. These improvements to signage at curves can reduce accidents by 25%. The idea is to identify problems and fix them before a fatality happens.

There was discussion about how guardrail assistance would be really helpful in some of the rural areas.

An RSA was just done in Jefferson at Santa's Village, but not through the HSIP. That report identified what type of improvements could be done, possibly through TE funding.

There was some discussion about new software for signals.

Other Updates

Transit

Bev Raymond explained that TCCAP is still waiting for vehicles for Carroll County. The small vehicles should arrive in October or November. The larger are expected to be in and ready February. If the small vehicles get here soon, they could start the demand response. TCCAP will be looking to hire drivers soon for that service. TCCAP is also looking for a driver in the Littleton area and in Berlin area. Drivers must have a CDL and Passenger Endorsement.

DOT has Purchase of Service funding (5310) for elderly and disabled services. It is a requirement that an RCC is formed. In part of our region the GCRCC is formed, but there is nothing yet in Carroll County. There needs to be a "lead agency" to accept the money, but whoever accepts the money can't provide the service. DOT is looking at maybe having RPC's be the lead agency. However, only 4% of funding is available for administration and there is a lot of reporting and other admin that would need to be done.

TCCAP has started with some long distance and local trips with money funding from BEAS (Bureau of Elderly and Adult Services) and is working to provide trips in Carroll County. To date, 50 trips have been made and there are still a lot of people in need of rides, especially for dialysis patients going to Laconia.

Bev was asked to talk in Littleton about transportation on channel two. The program will air a few times.

Beverly explained that NCT could expand services into Lisbon and Haverhill if the funding was there, but it would take coordination with the Towns and probably an additional vehicle.

North Country RideShare Update

Mary Deppe explained that NCC is currently developing promotional materials for the North Country RideShare Program, but we are waiting until the NHDOT's new ride matching software (Trapeze) is up and running before most of the outreach is done. NCC is currently doing outreach to communities and employers in the Berlin and Littleton Labor Market areas to teach them about the program and to encourage them promote and participate. NCC is developing promotional materials like brochures and posters that will be good resources to get the information out. Some of the materials will be available at the NCC Annual Meeting.

RCC Update

Mary Deppe explained that the Grafton Coos RCC has recently finished developing a transportation provider directory. It is available online and some paper copies are available. Mary passed around a copy of the directory.

Mary also explained that NCC has put out an RFP to hire a Mobility Manager to develop the RCC in Carroll County.

Conway Bypass:

Mary Deppe explained NCC and DOT recently held a Conway Bypass meeting and it was a positive meeting. The group agreed that they need to move forward as a region in order to make any progress with this project. A report of the meeting is being sent to the attendees for review and comment and will later be distributed to the TAC. At the meeting, it was decided that the goal would be for all of the towns to adopt a resolution in support of the project and present it to NHDOT and the state legislature. Pat MacQueen of Berlin drafted the resolution and it will be sent to the attendees for review and comments before it is circulated to the towns.

There was some discussion about environmental permits and using roundabouts instead of overpasses to decrease the costs.

Glenn asked Mike to give a report at the annual meeting and build some support for the project.

FHWA

Mike explained that he was recently invited to attend a conference with FHWA to develop standardized performance measures for the country and write it into the new law when the transportation bill is finalized. The idea is that funding will depend on how well a state or region hits the measures. There were about 80-90 people at the conference and only 6 were from rural regions. FHWA seems to be forgetting about the rurals and needs to get them at the table.

Transport Central

Doug Grant explained that in September, Nelson/Nygaard presented the preliminary results of the Transport Central Feasibility Study at two public meetings in Plymouth. Doug explained that the recommendations of the FS show that Transport Central should hire a Mobility Manager to begin implementing the plan.

Doug also explained that there were some issues with the Randolph Hill Road project but it is scheduled to be constructed next year.

Other Business

Ten Year Plan

Mary Deppe explained that NCC recently sent out letters to towns informing them that the Ten Year Plan cycle will be getting underway in the near future and that a timeline will be distributed when DOT announces it. NCC is requesting that towns start filling out Project Proposal Sheets so that the TAC will be able to properly review, score, and rank them as DOT requests. William Rose explained that the commissioner will discuss TYP tomorrow and will unroll the timeline at the RPC Directors Meeting.

Chair and Vice Chair Nominations

Glenn English made a motion to nominate the current chair (Beverly Raymond) and vice chair (Joe Elgosin) for another two-year term. Rob Nadler seconded the motion. During the discussion, Mary Deppe explained that Doug Grant had also stated that he was willing and interested in acting as either chair or vice chair. There was some discussion about distributing the work and allowing another TAC member to have a chance to serve as the Vice Chair. Glenn amended his motion to nominate Bev Raymond for Chair and Doug Grant for vice chair. Rob Nadler seconded the motion. All were in favor and none were opposed.

Councilor Burton

Councilor Burton explained that there will be a dedication for the bridge on Airport Road at the Mount Washington Airport tomorrow at 10 am and it is a public event. Ray handed out invitations for RR Promotion Day. He also explained that he will be doing a Rt. 16 corridor tour on October 22nd and 23rd for to promote his campaign. He also explained that on Friday at 10 he will be at Claremont airport celebrating \$400,000 of improvements from Fed Aviation Trust Fund.

Glenn English added that there is also a project at Dean Memorial Airport through FAA and the State is providing the match.

Doug Grant said that he is running for Register of Probate in Grafton County.

Regan Pride mentioned that due to the large rainstorm we had, part of US 302 in Lisbon was washed out. This section of road is currently a single lane, which has resulted in the closure of a side-road (Cotterill Road) in Lisbon. DOT is looking to build a temporary road, but it may not be done before winter, which will make it impossible for the town to plow the road. If DOT can't get temporary lane built soon, then it will be one lane throughout the winter.

Regan Pride also mentioned that he observed pedestrians trying to cross US 302 by Wal-Mart in Littleton in the evening the other night, and he realized that there are no crosswalks and no time between the lights changing for pedestrians to safely cross the street. This is very dangerous and he will be contacting the Town of Littleton to point out the problem.

Mary Deppe handed out a schedule of the 2011 TAC meeting dates.

Adjourn

A motion was made by Rob Nadler to adjourn the meeting and it was seconded by Regan Pride. All were in favor and none were opposed.

Minutes Approved: 12/15/2010