

Transportation Advisory Committee

Minutes

August, 11th, 2010

Present: Joe Elgosin (Whitefield), Rob Nadler (Albany), Doug Grant (Randolph), Bev Raymond (Berlin/Transit), Dean Eastman (NHDOT), Glenn English (Haverhill), Henry Anderson (Madison), Carl Martland (Sugar Hill), Charles Muller (Jefferson), Dave Graham (Gorham), Paul Robitaille (Gorham), Robin Frost (Gorham), Brian Schutt (NHDOT), Bob Stevenson (Jackson), and Joel Godston (Haverhill).

Staff: Michael King, Mary Deppe, and Tara Bamford.

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 6/16/10

Motion was made by Joe Elgosin to approve the minutes from the 6/16/10 TAC meeting, Charles Muller seconded the motion. All were in favor and none were opposed. The minutes were approved without changes.

Review and discussion of draft of NCC TIP Scoring Criteria

Mary Deppe explained that after the last TAC meeting, a subcommittee was formed to review the scoring methodology for TIP projects. Doug Grant explained that the subcommittee came up with a method that gives a meaningful score to applicants. It shows how well an applicant did and assigns a percentage based on the total score. Currently, the maximum total score available is 300 points, which would equate to 100%. Similarly, the lowest score available would be -300 points or 0%, 0 points would be 50%, and so on.

Carl Martland stated that he thought it would be helpful for applicants if the TAC adopted this method.

There was some question about if the scoring criteria is similar to the other RPC's and Mary Deppe explained that UVLSRPC and LRPC scoring criteria were reviewed when NCC's was developed.

Mary Deppe also explained that NCC will be working on developing project description sheets that will be sent to NCC towns. This will be for towns to justify an existing project in the Ten Year Plan or for towns to substitute a new project for an old. This information will be needed so that the TAC has the information needed to score and rank the projects.

A motion to adopt the NCC TIP scoring presented was made by Glenn English and seconded by Rob Nadler. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

NHDOT Updates

Dean Eastman explained that a new round of Safe Routes to School funding is opening in October. Mary Deppe stated that the grant round opens on October 4th and the deadline for applications is November 30th.

Eastman stated that there is nothing new with Scenic Byways and we won't know until later in the fall about grant awards from the 2010 round. He mentioned that the Mount Washington Hotel is interested in the Mt. Washington Overlook project and is committed to doing a land swap. This is a SB project that was initiated in 2004 or 2005 and is currently lacking funding it needs because no engineering was ever done before applying. When preliminary engineering was done, NHDOT found out that RR line there needs a retaining wall to support it. There is roughly \$400,000 available for the project and the total cost is about \$800,000 or 900,000.

Eastman explained that the next step is to reapply and double the original request for funding. Not a done deal, but it is not over either. The project applicant was DOT. The land will have to go through an appraisal, so the hotel may not be as interested once an appraisal is done.

Eastman explained that there will be audits for any organization or community with federal grants for over \$500,000/year. Each recipient will be required to do audit. There will be a letter to communities from DOT going out soon to notify of this requirement.

Charles Muller: Can moving the utility line be a component of that Mt. Washington project?
Dean: Not with SB funding, it is not eligible. The cost to do that would be around \$100,000.

District One Updates:

The new District 1 Engineer, Brain Schutt, explained that there are several projects we're working on.

Mike King stated that the District Engineers are always welcome and the NCC TAC would love it if you could come and give updates about projects at future meetings.

Glenn English: former District Engineer, Greg Placy, had shown concern about surface of interstate.

Brian Schutt: We don't have any interstate work lined up right now. Bids for Franconia notch came in very high. It was a pavement rehab, guardrail and drainage project. Bids came in about \$2.5 million over the engineering estimate. A lot of the extra was because night work was involved. NHDOT pulled the project back and are taking another look at it. NHDOT might advertise again in fall.

Brian Schutt: These are some of the projects we are working on:

- Before the TAC meeting I was at a preconstruction meeting for upgrading the guardrail on the US 302 corridor. District 1 has been able to do sections over a few years with a limited budget. We are currently upgrading cable rail to beam rail. This project is from the Hart's location / Carroll town line and continuing easterly to the Main Street S/L.
- Dixville-Millsfield on NH26, rehab 2.5 miles.
- Annual resurfacing program, \$3 million in District 1 to pave the roads.
- Box culvert on US 302 east of golf course in Bethlehem.
- Extensive drainage work on NH 16 in Errol, replacing culverts and ditch lines.
- Doing site work for section of NH 16 in Errol. Working on plans to move NH 16 away from river. It is similar to what happened in Dummer when the road fell into the river and it had to be shut down for 2 months.

Glenn English: There is so much work on I-93 south of here for resurfacing, how come not up here?

Brian Schutt: There are plans for north of Notch and I can find out what the status of those are. The piece south of Lincoln was in dire need, just as bad as section in Franconia.

Doug Grant: At the last meeting we talked about un-numbered roads. Randolph will be redoing Randolph Hill Road. We will get 2/3 state funding and afterwards the road will be owned by Randolph. If a lot of towns do this too, the number of un-numbered roads will go way down.

Brian Schutt: That sounds like the State-Aid Highway Program, which is 2/3 state and 1/3 town funded. In District 1, we have over 175 miles of un-numbered roads.

Road Safety Audit

Mary Deppe passed out materials and explained that NCC has funding this year to do one Road Safety Audit. A Road safety audit is a formal review of the safety performance of an existing or future roadway. The audit is done by a small team that is made up of people with expertise in different areas, like a road agent, district engineer, police officer, etc. Mary explained that the TAC needs to select a location and that there is a list of potential locations in the handout.

Tara Bamford explained that one thing that we looked when deciding on these was high accident locations. NCC can do 1 or 2 that are close to each other. We only have funding in this year's budget to for this amount.

Glenn English stated #6 (Intersection of US 302 and Forest Street in Woodsville) has alignment issues and no signal. It is more important than doing # 3 (Intersection of US 302 and NH 135 in Woodsville). Joel Godston agreed with Glenn on number 6 and stated that number 7 (intersection of NH 10 and Forest Street) is also a safety hazard waiting for a problem to occur. Tara Bamford stated that there is logic in doing numbers 6 and 7 together.

Mary Deppe explained that Brian Schutt and NHDOT will be looking at corridor on Route 2 in the Santa's Village area in Jefferson. Brian explained that NHDOT is doing something similar to an RSA in Jefferson. We will walk through area, talk about the issues, and discuss solutions. Charles Muller stated that the planning board in Jefferson sees a problem and hopes Santa's village will contribute to costs.

Glenn suggested that the TAC should do a five year projection and select a number of locations to do over that time. Tara explained that we have a contract with DOT to do a road safety audit and the TAC can have input in the spring if NCC should try to get more RSA's in the next UPWP contract.

Dean Eastman stated that design should be ahead of enforcement for ranking. If the issue is an enforcement issue, then it won't help to solve the problem.

Doug Grant stated that the one that Glenn suggested is as good as any. If we need to select one now we should do either 6 or 7 or the one that has the most accidents.

Tara confirmed that NCC has the go ahead to talk to DOT about doing either 6 and 7 or a higher accident location.

Conway Bypass – Mike

Mike explained that a couple weeks ago, public meeting in Conway in regards to Conway Bypass. The southern segment currently in the Ten Year Plan and there was a discussion about this at a meeting that was called by citizens design review committee of Conway. In attendance were Commissioner Campbell, Jeff Brillhart, Bill Cass, and Bob Liford (project

manager). There were also people from Gorham, Albany, and Madison. The purpose of the meeting was to request that DOT take another look at Conway bypass.

There was some discussion about the project itself and its impact. Mike King explained that we this is a regional project with regional issues and we need to get the communities together (about 10) that are affected by this project/problem and discuss what we need to do. He mentioned that the project manager will get in touch with us. Mike also explained that Commissioner Campbell said that DOT will probably have money to do another traffic study.

Paul Robitaille explained that in the past, this has always been looked at as a regional project, but recently it is looked at as a Conway project. There needs to be emphasis that this is a regional problem and we should come up with a regional solution.

Mike King recommended that NCC contact all selectmen of the communities in the project area and request a regional discussion. Glenn English stated that it is important to convene the governing bodies.

There was discussion about the need for the project. Paul Robitaille stated that demographics have changed and there are problems with the economy north of notch. People think we don't need it because mills aren't there, but we hope to have other things there in the future. He explained that if we look at it regionally, then it won't turn into an "us-against-them" scenario. We need to take care of their concerns and prove that it is still needed. We should put together this meeting in a way so all interests throughout the region are identified and we can state what we want to do.

Mike King explained that the purpose of this item being on the agenda was that he wanted to inform the TAC of the meeting and get support. Doug Grant stated that the meeting needs to be controlled well and that we don't want one point of view dominating the discussion. Dave Graham said that having town officials present will help to guide discussions.

Mike said that the meeting will be held somewhere in that area and the NCC will begin working on planning it. Rob Nadler volunteered the Albany town hall for the meeting location.

Other Updates

Transit

Bev Raymond explained that TCCAP is still waiting for vehicles for Carroll County. The small vehicles should arrive in October and the larger sometime in November. The vehicle delivery has been postponed for over a year now. The delay is a combination of getting bids out there and the manufacturing itself. It is hard to get people in Carroll County to understand that this project will really happen. The delay has caused TCCAP to lose a year of funding and they have current funding that can't be used.

Bev explained that TCCAP developed an RFP that initially went out for operations of the system, but some of the reviewers were on part of TCCAP because the original volunteers didn't submit their evaluation sheets. It was protested because the contract went to TCCAP. DOT asked that a subcommittee be formed to re-review proposal and this time the recommendation went for Entertainment Tours (the bidder). TCCAP needs more information to make the final decision. We are hoping it will be decided in another couple weeks.

State 5310 funding for purchase of service, will go out to regions that have an RCC formed. It is for the RCC to decide who the lead agency should be to receive the 5310 money. There has not been a lot of direction from NHDOT and there are no administrative funds available.

Bev clarified that the RCC is the regional coordination council and the SCC is the statewide coordination council. RCC's are made up providers of service and other interested parties and look at better coordinating transportation services for communities. The SCC is the overseeing body of the RCCs.

Bev explained that there is a volunteer driver program in Carroll County and there is funding through DHHS for that. But without the new vehicles, there is still a lot of funding that can't be used.

Bev mentioned that for the Tri-Town and Berlin-Gorham bus routes, TCCAP has asked DOT for 22-passenger replacement busses. They are currently being specked out and hoping to get them before winter. They are hoping to keep the old ones as spares.

Bev mentioned that at the NHTA meeting, Cynthia Copeland spoke about an initiative with all the RPC's for sustainable community measures. Mike King explained that it is a grant program that came out from HUD, EPA, and USDOT. \$100 million will go towards the Sustainable Communities Initiative and the NH RPC's are applying for about \$5 million. The idea is to integrate regional transportation, economic development, land use and housing plans so we would have a statewide development plan. It is a planning grant and we are seeking community partners. Having regional plans in place will determine what kinds of funding regions can get. This particular grant is highly unusual because it is coming to regional organizations rather than to the state. Bev stated that NHTA will be sending a letter of support for this project.

Mike explained that another source of funding for transportation is the Northern Borders Commission. It is small and no money is available now, but it has been legislated. 40% of the future funding needs to go to public infrastructure. It is brand new and if we demonstrate our ability to use them and get funding out, it will be beneficial. This funding would be available for Grafton, Coos, and Sullivan County.

North Country RideShare Update

Mary Deppe explained that regarding the North Country RideShare project, NCC awarded a design contract (logo was passed around), initial contact to large employers has been made, and currently we are waiting for NH RideShare contract on instant computer match system to be approved by state and G&C. Once this is approved we will move forward with the program. The database will coordinate rides in NH, VT, and ME.

Tara said that like the busses in Carroll County, we are in danger of losing funding because we need to use the money in the fiscal year.

Bev mentioned that DOT is also looking at purchasing other software for coordinating rides.

Doug Grant said that both sets of software would be purchased as sole source so they won't have to go through bid process.

RCC Update

Mary Deppe explained that there will be a statewide RCC meeting in November to discuss the high points and success stories. Grafton Coos RCC has recently finished developing a transportation provider directory. It will be available online and some paper copies will be printed.

NCC will be working with LRPC to develop the Carroll County Regional Coordination Council.

Other Business

Mary Deppe explained that the meeting in October will be on the 13th and the NCC annual meeting will be on October 28th. Beverly suggested asking the committee for agenda suggestions.

Joe Elgosin reminded the group that it was time to take nominations for the Chair and Vice Chair positions. Mary Deppe said that she will remind the committee to submit nominations and that it will be on the October agenda.

Adjourn

A motion was made by Joe Elgosin to adjourn the meeting and it was seconded by Charles Muller. All were in favor and none were opposed.

Minutes Written by: Mary Deppe 8/11/2010

Minutes Submitted by: Mary Deppe 10/13/2010