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NEWMARKET
NORTHWOOD
NOTTINGHAM
ROCHESTER
ROLLINSFORD
SOMERSWORTH
STRAFFORD
WAKEFIELD

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

April 8, 2011 Minutes

Present: Dave Sharples (Somersworth), Thomas Fargo (NHDES-ARD), Nicholas Alexander (NHDOT), Jon Hotchkiss (Middleton), Wallace Dunham (Madbury), Beverly Cray (UNH), Steven Ireland (NHDOT-District 6), Rad Nichols (COAST), James Campbell (Durham) and Victoria Parmele (Northwood)

Members Not Present: Connie Brawders (Barrington), Bruce Woodruff (Dover), Laurel Cox (Lee), Diane Hardy (Newmarket), Melodie Esterberg (Rochester), Leigh Levine (FHWA) and Patrick Carroll (Rollinsford)

Staff: Cynthia Copeland (Executive Director), Marilyn Barton (Administrative Assistant), Dan Camara (GIS/Transportation Analyst) and Kyle Pimental (Regional Planner)

1. Introductions

Chairman J. Campbell opened the meeting at 9:05 a.m. and introductions were given around the room.

2. Staff Communications

D. Camara stated SRPC was in the process of looking to hire a couple of interns and would start interviews in the next couple of weeks and the interns would be working on things such as traffic counts, culvert assessments, Broadband and other miscellaneous items.

M. Barton stated the speaker from Go Rail, scheduled for the April 1, 2011 TAC meeting would be back in a couple of months and would do a presentation for TAC at that time and noted handouts from him were available if anyone was interested.

C. Copeland stated at 1:30 today there would be a meeting in Concord with Commissioner Campbell regarding the budget and Ten Year Plan and she would be attending that meeting.

Planning and action for sustainable development and an improved quality of life.

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

The chairman asked for a motion for approval of the draft Strafford MPO TAC March 4, 2011 minutes. D. Sharples made a motion and W. Dunham seconded the motion. It was noted that D. Sharples name was absent from those in attendance at that meeting. M. Barton stated she would correct that. It was noted there was one abstention-B. Cray, as she was not at that meeting. All in favor, with amendment made as discussed. Motion carried.

3.2 NH Ten Year Project Listing- Recommendations to Policy Committee

C. Copeland noted M. Ambrosi was on vacation and reviewed the memo sent out with the meeting packet of questions asked to N. Alexander and his responses. C. Copeland stated in previous years, the MPO would have looked at exchanging projects out that had to be of like value. C. Copeland noted just as SRPC started project solicitation, issues at the state legislature and federal government came into the forefront and there are still ongoing uncertainties regarding NHDOT revenues and there is no new revenue sources from the state at this time to replace the thirty dollar motor vehicle registration fee. C. Copeland stated there is also discussion at the federal level about deeper cuts particularly in the years 2012-forward which would impact the region. C. Copeland noted we are prepared for the worst-case scenario but remain hopeful to go forward as planned.

There was a question on the response to question number three regarding "How should projects funded through CMAQ, SRTS, HSIP and TE be dealt with if they are not yet programmed by NHDOT? And how should future projects be dealt with that will likely be funded through these programs over the ten year timeframe?"

N. Alexander stated projects funded through CMAQ, TE or SRTS are projects whose application rounds that run approximately every two years and if you have a proposed project as part of the Ten Year Plan within that timeframe and are funded through these programs, they could not be added, as they would need to go through the application process.

N. Alexander stated another approach would be putting the project in the year you would like it to be in as an illustrative project. R Nichols stated it could be a new way of dealing with a wish list. N. Alexander stated those programs do have funds set aside and illustrative projects are more representative of a regions priority

N. Alexander noted statewide programs operate on a budget system, such as CMAQ that has a budget of nine million; projects are selected up to that amount and if there are delays or increased costs, the budget cap is not increased and projects may be moved to a later date.

T. Fargo noted taking funding out and moving it to future allocation would result in less money for future years. R. Nichols stated the decision to split the Plaistow Project was a great move as it did not tie up the approximately five million dollars that would have been otherwise inaccessible.

C. Copeland reviewed the spreadsheets of projects, which included the list of exemption codes and noted if you take out the statewide programs and toll funding and various programs at state level, there is ten million in funding for ten years in our region. C. Copeland stated after discussions the recommendations would be keeping projects in the Ten Year Plan as they are now and retain funding.

R. Nichols stated two days ago he was informed of the final 5307 allocation funds for FY11 and would be tweaking some of the 2011 numbers. C. Copeland noted adjustments would be made to 5307 numbers or any request to withdraw projects and stated the Newmarket project is in process for the summer. C. Copeland stated the Rochester Strafford Square project is being kept in and have had no request for exchanges.

B. Cray asked if the CMAQ project just approved for Durham would need to be in the Ten Year Plan? N. Alexander stated yes it would and an amendment to the current TIP would be included in the Ten Year Plan.

C. Copeland asked N. Alexander what other MPOs do with Regional Coordinating Council (RCC) funds? N. Alexander stated it is not included in the UPWP. C. Copeland stated it has to be an inclusive document and account for all federal funds. N. Alexander noted urban transportation providers by law have to coordinate this information with the MPO.

The chairman asked for a motion to recommend to the Policy Committee the projects listed on the spreadsheets, 2011-2014 and 2015-2022 as shown with modifications as discussed with COAST and additional information from NHDOT, FHWA and FTA. W. Dunham made a motion, T. Fargo seconded that motion. All in favor, motion.

N. Alexander noted most regions have submitted a prioritized list of projects and to have any type of discussion regarding projects that should be spared; it would be good to have a sense of that and as presented, this is not giving any guidance as to what is and is not a regional priority.

C. Copeland noted no one asked for an exchange or to remove any projects and asked if there were any priorities from the group to forward to the Policy Committee for their consideration?

A discussion ensued and a list prioritization was given: Secure source of funding, CMAQ and TE project, project in Durham, red list bridge in Milton and Dover Rt. 4 Safety Study.

C. Copeland stated other regions receive a lot more federal dollars than ten million. N. Alexander stated the state doesn't want to cut anything; however there are more needs than money across the state.

J. Campbell stated the Rt. 108 bike lane project has been an important project for Durham and Newmarket for a long time and should be at the top of the priority list. D. Camara stated perhaps dues vs. non-dues paying communities could be a factor in prioritizing the list.

R. Nichols noted the bridge project in Milton, which goes over the railroad, is also an important project.

C. Copeland noted while not a requirement to pay dues to SRPC to receive federal dollars, additional time is spent working in communities that are dues paying and there is a fine line between access and needs and that factor has been used previously to prioritize projects. C. Copeland stated Dover, Farmington, Milton and Wakefield are currently non-dues paying communities, which all have problems with infrastructure and have seen the majority of highest growth since 2000.

There was discussion that all projects on the list are very important and would be very difficult to remove a project. C. Copeland asked if the TAC group wanted their position to be that they could not come to a consensus and that needs were equal? J. Hotchkiss stated there should be a definite conversation as it would not look good to citizens of the region if someone else made the decisions on what projects should be removed. It was suggested to refuse to have any projects cut. N. Alexander stated it was against guidance but would accept whatever is submitted by the MPO. W. Dunham stated not paying dues should have consequences and not attending meetings to speak up for your community could also be used as a factor. C. Copeland stated the Policy Committee wants to ensure those dues-paying members have benefits. The following aspects were used to help prioritize projects: Identify technical aspects, how red is red (regarding bridges), traffic volumes, dues paying vs. non-dues paying, air quality and regional impact/safety. C. Copeland stated that information would be found and compiled for them to make decision and a copy of that information would be sent to TAC members. The prioritized list needs to be submitted to NHDOT before May 1, 2011.

The chairman asked for a new motion to amend the original to develop priorities for guidance for determining which project the Milton Bridge Project or the Rt. 108 bike lane project in Durham should remain on the list: traffic volumes, red list bridges & actual stats, air quality offset, regional impacts/safety issues and dues vs. non-dues presented as a tie-breaker. Based on additional discussion, the chairman called for another amended motion: The factors of traffic volumes, red list bridges & actual stats, air quality offset, regional impacts/safety issues and dues vs. non-dues presented as tie breaker would be applied to establishing priorities for four projects in the region: Farmington, Milton, Rollinsford and Durham to present to the Policy Committee for their consideration .T. Fargo made a motion and J. Hotchkiss seconded that motion. All in favor, motion carried.

4.1 Project Solicitation for the NH Ten Year Plan and Long-Range Projects

C. Copeland stated she and M. Ambrosi have been meeting with the communities and transit agencies and are down to the last four and asked M. Barton to let the group know which ones they were. M. Barton noted the remaining four to meet with were, C&J, COAST, Nottingham and Rollinsford. C. Copeland stated she would be meeting with C&J and COAST soon and the process was coming to a conclusion and would be moving into the Long-Range Plan aspect of it.

4.2. MOVES – Air Quality Conformity

D. Camara went over the handout on MOVES comparing the generalized procedures from the old method to the new method. T. Fargo stated MOVES is supposed to be all encompassing with increased functionality and that new methods would need to be adopted for data input and would require collaboration between DES and the MPO's. T. Fargo noted the input that has been put into MOVES from Mobile has shown fifty to seventy-five percent higher emissions and this has a bearing on the overall air quality budget.

T. Fargo noted the EPA has given them another year to transition to the new method. T. Fargo stated the EPA will be issuing new air quality standards and it may be very difficult to reach conformity next year.

5. Project Updates

K. Pimental stated the proposed Scenic Byway Route for Route 108 began back in 2009 and had been put on hold due to various reasons. K. Pimental noted the process was starting back up and he would be working on this and gave a handout of a map showing the proposed route and gave an overview of the route. K. Pimental stated establishment of a sub-committee was in process. K. Pimental stated Dean Eastman, a senior planner at NHDOT, is willing to do a presentation for the TAC committee on this if the group is interested at the May or June TAC meetings.

C. Copeland stated the initial interest came from Dover when the Main Street Director approached SRPC and noted there is a scenic byway south of Newmarket on Rt. 85 and then onto Rt 27 and then the coastal byway. C. Copeland noted the idea is to hook up Rt. 108 through Rt. 4 through Madbury, Dover onto Rollinsford and noted the folks from the Southern Maine Planning Commission expressed interest in picking up the byway from there and onto the coast so it would be one big loop.

6. Other Business

R. Nichols stated The Community Rides North Bus would be starting up on April 18, 2011 and one day a week the bus would take seniors and persons with disabilities from the communities in New Durham, Brookfield, Middleton, Wakefield and Milton to Rochester so they could shop for groceries and the pharmacy. R. Nichols noted the buses would be driven by volunteers and so far there are ten volunteers with four more going through the process. R. Nichols stated there would be ribbon-cutting ceremonies in each of the communities and there would be a host of other new services in July and October. R. Nichols stated three new trolley's would be put on the road in early May and noted these trolleys are unique in that they are built on a heavy duty bus chassis and the color scheme is different than that of other trolleys to differentiate themselves. R. Nichols noted ridership continues to climb and the COAST ridership survey would be in the first week of May.

D. Camara went over the map showing population changes from 2000-2010 in the region and noted the major percentage increase in population was in the northern sector of the region and noted he would give a presentation on how to use the new 2010 Census American FactFinder at the next TAC meeting. D. Camara went over a handout of traffic counts SRPC would be doing for 2011 and noted SRPC is in the process of doing a cost-analysis for purchasing some new traffic counters.

T. Fargo noted HB 590, which basically states it is unconstitutional to accept federal funds and makes a state "beholden" to the federal government and has already passed the House and is on its way to the Senate for a vote. T. Fargo stated HB 2, a bill introduced regarding spending caps in municipalities and is basically the same thing as HB 590 in that takes away authority to interpret federal regulations.

7. Adjournment

The chairman asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 11 a.m. J. Hotchkiss made a motion and D. Sharples seconded the motion. All in favor, motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Marilyn Barton, PHR

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Recording Secretary