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SOMERSWORTH
STRAFFORD
WAKEFIELD

Strafford Metropolitan Planning Organization Policy Committee Public Hearing & Meeting

June 18, 2010

SRPC Office, Dover, NH

Minutes

FINAL

SRPC Policy Members Present: Rick McMenimen (Newmarket), Doug Bencks (UNH), John Parry (Durham), Tom Clark (Dover), George Snyder (Somersworth), Robert Jaffin (Rochester), Tom Fargo (DES-ARD), Rad Nichols (COAST), Nick Alexander (NHDOT), Lou Vita (Middleton), Kenn Ortmann (Rochester) and Sandra Keans (Rochester)

SRPC Policy Members Not Present: Paul Parker (Farmington), Scott Kemp (Lee), Tom Crosby (Madbury), Bruce Woodruff (Milton), Scott Martin (Northwood), Ed Jansen (Rollinsford), Paul Eaton (Strafford) and John Ciardi (Wakefield)

SRPC Staff Present: Cynthia Copeland (Executive Director), Dan Camara (GIS/Transportation Analyst), Marc Ambrosi (Regional Transportation Planner), Michelle Auen (Regional Planner) and Marilyn Barton (Administrative Assistant)

1. Convene Strafford Metropolitan Planning Organization Meeting/Introductions

Vice-Chair L. Vita convened the meeting of the Strafford Metropolitan Planning Organization at 10:10 a.m. and introductions were given around the room.

2.1 Open Public Hearing to Solicit Public Comments on TIP Amendment #5

L. Vita opened the public hearing at 10:11 a.m. D. Camara gave an overview of the projects included in the amendment, which included two regional projects. D. Camara noted there no comments were received and stated the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) at their June 4, 2010 meeting recommended approval to forward to the Policy Committee. D. Camara noted Bob Landry said some of the costs for the Rochester project were up due to additional costs for assessing local impacts and some hazardous materials were an issue in engineering costs. There were no other comments.

2.2 Close Public Hearing to Solicit Public Comments on TIP Amendment #5

Hearing no other comments, L. Vita asked for a motion to close the public hearing at 10:15 a.m. K. Ortmann made a motion and G. Snyder seconded the motion. All in favor; motion carried.

3.1 Draft MPO Minutes of March 19, 2010

L. Vita asked for a motion to adopt the draft MPO minutes of March 19, 2010. R. McMenimen made a motion and R. Jaffin seconded that motion. All in favor; motion carried.

3.2 TIP Amendment #5

L. Vita asked for a motion to adopt TIP Amendment #5. S. Keans made a motion and R. McMenimen seconded that motion. All in favor, motion carried.

4.1 Long-Range Plan Updates

D. Camara stated the four MPO's (Strafford Regional Planning Commission, Rockingham Planning Commission, Southern Planning Commission and the Nashua Planning Commission) were working together to draft a new process for the Long-Range Plan and noted a they had been working on a drafting a project profile or initiation and noted they were trying to keep this somewhat generalized.

M. Ambrosi stated they were trying to gain some consistency with the MPO's and identify appropriate criteria, so that the report contains good information DOT can work with. M. Ambrosi noted good progress has been made with the format.

D. Camara noted the goal is to have something official to present to both the TAC and Policy Committees in the next two weeks to a month.

K. Ortmann noted this was based on qualitative standards, not just politics. N. Alexander noted any attempt at a unified format makes it easier.

4.2 Congestion Mitigation Air Quality Updates

D. Camara noted UNH submitted three applications and the Air Quality subcommittee reviewed the analyses and checked for consistency and reasonableness. D. Camara noted the applications came back with some questions; those were addressed with Steve Pesci of UNH and were re-sent to N. Alexander on June 18, 2010. N. Alexander stated the next step would include eligibility cost and environmental review and would be similar to the TE process.

5. Project Updates

D. Camara stated the traffic counts program began this week and noted DOT loaned SRPC seven counters. D. Camara noted there are 110 counts to do and these would be put on a map and be made available on the SRPC website. D. Camara stated there were two local requests for traffic counts – Durham and Newmarket.

M. Ambrosi stated he had been working on Form 536 that DOT wants completed and noted these forms were challenging and was contacting communities to help fill out these forms. M. Ambrosi stated he was going to ask DOT if they had examples of forms done previously to aid in filling out the forms.

M. Barton stated she had recently attended a first time ever Safe Routes To School Conference to learn more about the program. M. Barton noted there would be another grant round available sometime in the fall and encouraged those in attendance to let their communities know about the program, as it was one hundred percent reimbursable.

C. Copeland stated staff is beginning work on the culvert program. C. Copeland noted that Keith Cota has agreed to do a PowerPoint presentation/discussion regarding the Little Bay Bridges project at the July 9, 2010 TAC meeting. A discussion ensued regarding incident management and how it would affect Rts. 4 and 108. It was discussed that the notification boards need to happen soon enough, such as

Rochester, so drivers can determine if they want to choose another route. K. Ortman stated Maine should be notified for the impact of increased traffic through their communities during this time.

C. Copeland noted Craig Green would be attending the August TAC meeting to discuss the Lee Traffic Circle regarding flow and safety concerns.

6. Other Business

M. Ambrosi stated he and D. Camara attended an NTI Land Use/transportation course and would like to implement some of the ideas into the region.

R. Jaffin stated he had attended the sixth annual State Emergency Preparedness meeting last week and that there was some good information presented. R. Jaffin noted several MPO's were missing at this meeting that should have attended and wanted to review this important information and requested this be captured in the minutes.

R. Jaffin noted July 1, 2010 was the deadline for submitting a Letter of Intent for mitigation money under the Stafford ACT, for a demonstration project. R. Jaffin explained how this money could be used as a mitigation approach. R. Jaffin stated such an approach changes the infrastructure in such a way that eliminates or greatly reduces vulnerability from future events or incidents from extreme weather, etc. R. Jaffin stated the purpose would be to have a multi-step approach to mitigate future disruptions to the community and to emergency serves, as a result of denial of access to public ways as recent events such as the 2008 ice storm, the February 2010 windstorm and most recently the severe weather conditions in Strafford and York Counties.

R. Jaffin stated there is tiger grant money coming up soon and a need to come up with Community Emergency Response Teams (CERTS) and noted they could be any affinity: college based, city based or regional based. R. Jaffin noted this would be invaluable to the area. R. Jaffin stated he could invite the speaker Dominec Dinatal to come speak at one of our meetings, as it is critical for the area. R. Jaffin noted there would be twenty hours of training and should be recommended to the County as there would be many advantages to being the Point of Contact agency.

R. Jaffin spoke about the New England Rail Coalition Group which is made up of non-profits and planning commissions, in an effort to support regional rail service. R. Jaffin stated to support rail transit needs, people need to be brought in and need to be included on email lists. R. Jaffin noted that SRPC was not on the email list and should be, considering that Amtrak goes through a couple of our communities.

R. Jaffin stated regarding long-range planning, as rail lines from Portsmouth to Concord should be included as Tiger money could be used to do studies and would be invaluable to relieve commuter congestion. R. Jaffin noted more people from the community need to attend and the state is looking for more involvement. R. Jaffin stated the largest contributor in the state is non-point source pollution and cars and busses are responsible for forty percent of the pollution. R. Jaffin noted the region would benefit from limited access from Skyhaven to the Spaulding Turnpike and should be put back into the Ten Year Plan.

R. Jaffin spoke about the Granite Ridge project in Rochester and how five traffic lights in one mile is not working and that the access road takes the pressure off of Route 11 and there is a need to take a stand on issues and educate communities.

S. Keans asked N. Alexander why there are so many of the green marker signs along the roadways as the signs are too expensive. N. Alexander not only are they used for emergency response vehicles, they can be used as landmarks. T. Clark noted they are vital in accident reconstruction.

L. Vita spoke about state roads, Route 153 and Silver Street and how they are being neglected and asked who is responsible for the road maintenance and noted these are roads that are in Farmington that lead to Middleton and noted that Farmington is a non-dues paying member. C. Copeland stated that Farmington is a member of both the Policy and TAC committees and as such, are federally mandated and are treated the same during the project solicitation process.

R. Nichols asked about state and federal dollars the county makes and is that handled by the RPC or DOT? N. Alexander stated DOT is responsible for any roads owned by DOT and noted there are thousands of miles in the state that need to be worked on and more resources are needed. N. Alexander noted maintenance repair is a temporary fix and to do more expensive repair is on a slow schedule due to cost. N. Alexander stated the state has no input on membership to planning commissions.

R. Nichols spoke about the state funds invested in part of the infrastructure and what do we as planning commission or how does the state handle this when a community is unable to fix it at that time? R. Nichols stated someone has to be accountable and not allow a facility to get in such disrepair or the magnitude of money to fix it.

7. Adjournment

L. Vita asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:15 a.m. R. McMenimen made a motion and K. Ortmann seconded that motion. All in favor, motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,



Marilyn Barton
Recording Secretary



Lou Vita
Strafford Regional Planning Committee Commission Vice-Chair