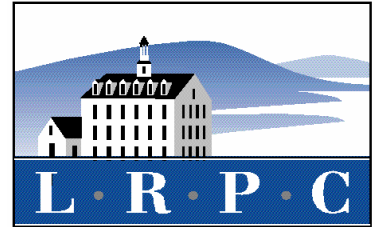


# LAKES REGION PLANNING COMMISSION

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MINUTES of March 5, 2008 TRANSPORTATION TAC MEETING  
Humiston Building  
Meredith, NH

**TO:** Transportation Technical Advisory Committee

**FROM:** Michael Izard, Principal Planner

**DATE:** April 25, 2008

## MEMBERS PRESENT

### Voting

Sheldon Morgan, Gilford, Chairman  
David Bowles, Tamworth  
Malcolm Taylor, Holderness  
Rick Ball, Belmont

### Non-Voting

Dick Waitt, Gilford (LRPC Commissioners' representative)

## OTHERS PRESENT

John Gotjen, Tamworth  
Michael Izard, LRPC  
David Jeffers, LRPC  
Kathy Brockett, NH DES Air Resources Division

### 1. Call to Order

Chairman Morgan called the meeting to order at 2:04 PM. He welcomed everyone.

### 2. Approval of the Minutes

The January 9, 2008 minutes were approved as written.

*M/S/Passed Bowles/Taylor*

The Chairman asked for public input, there was none. D. Bowles recommended that James Turk be removed from the TAC mailing list; he has not attended any meetings.

### 3. Regional Updates

M. Izard noted that a draft version of the NH Route 25 Corridor is available on line at

<http://www.lakesrpc.org/transportation/route25/index.htm>. LRPC will give a presentation to the Moultonborough and Center Harbor Selectmen during the second week of April. The report assesses the current status of the corridor; it also looks at development potential and associated trip generation using a build-out analysis. The report identifies five leading intersections of concern and proposes preliminary conceptual designs along with cost estimates developed by the project consulting engineer, Fay, Spofford and Thorndike.

#### **4. Presentation: Downeaster Passenger Line**

Steve Pesci, Special Projects Director for the office of Campus Planning at the University of New Hampshire and a NH Passenger Rail Transit Authority appointee updated the TAC on the status of rail travel in NH with his presentation “Seacoast NH Rail Service”. He encouraged the broadening of the Authority’s vision beyond the Keene/Manchester corridor to the “Capital Corridor” – Boston-Concord-Montpelier-Quebec. The current status of the various corridors throughout the state were discussed.

The Downeaster is now 11 years old and resulted from a citizens’ initiative in Maine. There are three stops in NH but no state funding; in NH the station communities pay the associated costs, ranging from \$30,000 – \$70,000. Last year the Downeaster received \$60 million in upgrades.

The number of riders in NH has grown each year and now averages 20,000 per month, four times its beginning level. Forty percent of the passengers are from New Hampshire. There are five trips a day, seven days a week. Intercity bus travel has also increased during this time. 25% - 45% of the riders are commuters, while 45% - 75% are leisure riders and two-thirds have used the train more than once.

Annually, it costs between \$3 million and \$5 million over fares collected to run the Downeaster. Maine has used CMAQ funds to cover this expense, with the state matching 20 percent. A major challenge facing the Downeaster is that this CMAQ funding ends in fiscal year 2009.

Steve urged NH to treat train depots as Park and Ride locations; he also encouraged thinking about rail lines as economical ways of transporting freight (one tenth the cost of trucking).

The TAC discussed various ways of getting the word out in the Lakes Region about use of the Downeaster and additional corridors in NH, including the Lakes Region.

#### **5. Discussion: Prioritization of Regional Projects**

M. Izard raised the question of whether the TAC should begin prioritizing projects. It was suggested that the criteria last used for project evaluation in 2001 should be edited to reflect new NH DOT and LRPC goals.

There was general agreement that more frequent meetings would be needed to revise the criteria and begin the prioritization process.

A motion was made that a subcommittee of the TAC should meet monthly for the purposes of revising the criteria and prioritizing projects until the update is completed.

*M/S/Passed D. Bowles/M. Taylor*

A meeting date of April 2, 2008 was set for a sub-committee on Project Prioritization; any TAC members with an interest in this process are encouraged to attend.

## **6. Other Business**

Several items related to TAC membership were discussed, including term limits and providing a membership to the TAC.

K. Brockett gave an update on air quality efforts in the state.

- On April 7 from 9:00 – 3:00 there will be a workshop in Manchester for reducing diesel emissions. Contact Becky Oehler at NH DES for more information.
- EPA is proposing to revise the ozone standard from 0.8 ppm to 0.7 ppm. This could have an impact on the Lakes Region as a few communities might not meet this standard, triggering CMAQ funding and requirements.
- In July there will be a presentation by the Statewide Climate Change Policy Task Force.
- In January Keene and Manchester experienced an unusual poor winter air quality that exceeded standards.

## **7. Statewide Planning and Research Grants**

April 1 is the deadline for applying for the 2008 Statewide Planning and Research (SPR) Grant. M. Izard provided a list of potential projects and asked the TAC to consider project preferences. The list included:

- NH Route 3 Corridor Study Phase II (in conjunction with Central RPC)
- Full interchange at I-93 Exit 19 - identification of existing routes.
- Alton/Gilford NH Route 11 Phase I - inventory of existing conditions
- I-93 Exit 23 in New Hampton - gateway to the Lakes Region
- Road Surface Management System (RSMS) for regional project prioritization
- Route 28 Wolfeboro / Wolfeboro Falls - Corridor Study
- Barnstead NH Route 28 – Safety Audit

LRPC is planning to submit two proposals. A motion was made to support the LRPC staff in moving forward with any combination of these proposals.

*M/S/Passed R. Ball/D. Bowles*

The next TAC meeting will be April 2, 2008 in Meredith.

## **8. Adjourned 4:30 PM**

*M/S/Passed M. Taylor/Bowles*