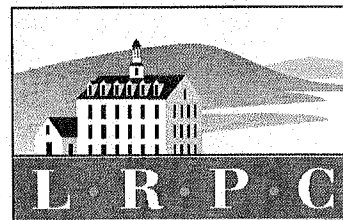



LAKES REGION PLANNING COMMISSION

103 Main Street, Suite #3
Meredith, NH 03253
tel (603) 279-8171
fax (603) 279-0200
www.lakesrpc.org



TO: LRPC Transportation Technical Advisory Committee

FROM: Michael Izard, Principal Planner 

DATE: November 3, 2010

Minutes of September 27, 2010 LRPC Transportation Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Meeting Humiston Building, Meredith, NH

VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT

John Dever, III, Alton (Alt.)
David Kerr, Barnstead
Rick Ball, Belmont
Jeff Haines, Center Harbor
Elizabeth Dragon, Franklin
Shanna Saunders, Laconia
John Edgar, Meredith
Brad Harriman, Vice-Chair (Ossipee)
John Gotjen, Tamworth

OTHERS PRESENT

Dick Waitt, LRPC Representative (Gilford)
Eric Abrams, NH DES, Air Resources Division
Michael Izard, LRPC
David Jeffers, LRPC
Kimon Koulet, LRPC
Herb Farnham, Moultonborough
John Thayer, Sanbornton
Dan Merhalski, Moultonborough
Jan Collins, Hebron Pathways Committee
Bill Watson, NHDOT Bureau of Planning and
Community Assistance
Dean Eastman, NHDOT Bureau of Planning
and Community Assistance

1. Call to Order and Introductions

Vice Chairman Harriman called the meeting to order at 2:00 PM. A motion was made to accept the meeting minutes of the September 1, 2010 as written.

M/S/Passed Haines/Kerr

2. Regional Updates

M. Izard updated the TAC on the progress of the Scenic Byways Exploratory Committee, which has met three times, since it was formed this summer; the next meeting is September 28 at 2:00 PM. The group is working on a Letter of Intent and working with NHDOT to address byway program questions including some clarifying roadside signage issues. Moultonborough will likely not participate at this time. M. Izard will draft a committee report with potential recommendations based on meeting discussions that will be distributed to byway community Boards of Selectmen for concurrence.

3. **NH Long Range Transportation Plan**

B. Watson distributed some copies of the draft Long Range Transportation Plan - July 2010 and gave a history of its development and summary of its contents. In 2006 a recommendation was made that the 1995 Plan should be updated. The update was completed in May 2008 and released for public comment. An impediment to the adoption of the 2008 Plan was that it indicated that NHDOT was to set policy on transportation which is the role of the State Legislature. The Federal Highway Administration requires NHDOT to update the Long Range Transportation Plan by the end of September 2010. Failure to complete the update may result in the withholding of all federal highway transportation funding.

Since 2008 there has been an effort to try to update the initiatives and goals and relate these to other regional and national efforts that are ongoing. He reviewed the four goals of the Plan: 1. Unify with other state and national efforts (Smart Growth, Sustainable Communities); 2. When possible integrate planning and investment decisions with other modes of transportation; 3. Preserve and maintain what we have; 4. Establish better, more collaborative partnerships e.g. Sustainable Communities Initiative.

Funding discussions in the Plan focus on how we stretch our \$150 million in federal funding as far as possible, including leveraging funds and the use of Garvey bonds for the widening of I-93. The Plan does not talk about funding scenarios or fiscal constraints at all, as that is the larger than the role of the department. Noting that while the Plan does not discuss state transportation funding efforts he mentioned several funding ideas that are being explored by the legislature's Finance Commission and expressed the hope that in the future legislative funding efforts can be integrated with Long Range Transportation Planning efforts.

The department is also looking at what it can do to improve its efforts. Traveler safety is the department's top priority. Other items include pavement management system, congestion, and asset management – the department is taking steps to integrate all of these. Instead of looking at individual roads, NHDOT needs to look at highway corridors. The CSS process continues to be a priority; as this leads to more project success; this includes locally administered projects (450 across the state). There is a strong emphasis in the Plan on Performance Measures and Balanced Scorecard – processes by which you determine how well are doing against what you said that you would do and if not meeting those goals, ask what we need to do differently. NHDOT expects that all of federal funding will soon be tied to such measures. The department is also working with Vermont and Maine on coordinated performance measures.

There is a bill for establishing a state-wide policy is in the legislature but it does not go much further than the Long Range Transportation Plan and has been deemed "inexpedient to legislate" by the House Public Works Committee. This committee recently noted that regularly updating the Plan is the best way to keep the state current on the department's priorities. The Ten-Year Plan process is really the place where NHDOT can make specific tactical changes to the approach that we take to the transportation projects. B. Watson then addressed questions for those in attendance. The following comments and questions were posed:

- R. Waitt would like to see the expansion of rail service addressed in the Plan. Rail development could relieve pressure on the roads, especially along the I-93 corridor. There is a need for this, especially from Concord south.
- D. Kerr would like to see increased assessments on heavy vehicles, a major contributor to local road wear, considered as a funding source.
- J. Collins expressed support for effective implementation of bicycle and pedestrian facilities during the planning, design, and construction of roadways and would to see this more reflected in the plan.
- J. Gotjen expressed concern about the approval process and response time on municipally managed projects.
- J. Edgar noted that performance measures are focused on specifics related to transportation. He asked how would you measure the level of state integration between various state agencies with limited resources and how do you institutionalize efforts to coordinate with other agencies? He urged that they tie the performance measures to outcomes and expressed a need for more interoperability and integration between state agencies and organizations.
- K. Koulet noted that developing state and regional transportation planning efforts that focus on corridors is useful and that effort needs to go into developing consensus on identifying the corridors.

Comments from the public will be accepted by NHDOT through September 30, 2010.

4. **NHDOT Discussion Topics**

M. Izard noted that the groundwork for Regional Priority Projects is often linked to the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), State Planning and Research (SPR), and Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS). W. Watson indicated that NHDOT cannot give direction to RPCs until the Legislature acts on the budget but in the interim the department has submitted a budget that does not yet have funding. The department does not want to solicit projects until funding is clearer. They will likely begin the process with a comprehensive dialogue in January and ask for recommendations by April 2011. Regarding SPR funds, currently RPCs are funded at \$3 million per year; the new budget will include an additional \$1 million especially for regional corridor planning.

J. Edgar expressed concern about extended delays of the CSS process on Meredith's US3 & NH25 project.

5. **Other Business**

- It was noted that the NH Municipal Association/Local Government Center is now in a position to advocate for passing a gas tax.
- The town of Meredith has been working with Carroll County Transit (CCT) to identify a stop along their Laconia to Ossipee route; it is anticipated that this route will be up and running in November.
- J. Gotjen commented that he liked hearing about what projects are going on locally at the last meeting.

- Barnstead has been seeking timely responses to their correspondence with the District.
- B. Watson noted that NHDOT will be sending out anticipated Block Grant Funds and that revenues are coming in higher than last year.

The next TAC meeting will be on Wednesday, November 3, 2010 at 2:00 PM, in Franklin.

6. Adjourn

A motion to adjourn was unanimously approved.

M/S/Passed Haines/Edgar