

LAKES REGION PLANNING COMMISSION

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Transportation Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Minutes of Wednesday, November 4, 2015 Wicwas Lake Grange, 151 Meredith Center Rd, Meredith Center, NH

VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT

Sheldon Morgan (Chair), Gilford
Brad Harriman (Vice-Chair), Ossipee
John Gotjen, Tamworth
Robert Pollock, New Hampton
Steve Favorite, Bristol
Jeff Haines, Center Harbor
David Kerr, Barnstead
George Tuthill, Alexandria
Dave Toth, Ashland
Lloyd P. Wood, Tuftonboro
Paul S. Hazelton, Hebron
Bruce Woodruff, Moultonborough
John Edgar, Meredith

OTHERS PRESENT

Michael Izard, LRPC Principal Planner
Daniel Callister, LRPC Regional Planner
Gretchen Gandini, WOW Trail
Scott Bartlett, Moultonborough
Scott Kinmond, Moultonborough
William Rose, NHDOT
Larry Keniston, NHDOT
Michael Capone, Bristol
Bill Dowey, Newfound Pathways
Larisa Djuvelek-Ruggerio, MS-RCC, CAPBMCI
Allan Beetle, WOW Trail

Call to Order and Introductions

Called to order at 2:08 by Chairman Morgan. A motion was made to approve the amended Minutes of October 7, 2015 meeting with corrections to spelling of Larisa Djuvelek-Ruggerio's name and changing "550 customers" of the volunteer driver program to read "over 550 customers".

M/S/Passed Favorite/Haines, abstaining: Toth, Gotjen, Tuthill

Public Comment:

Chairman Morgan read the following contents of a letter from Belmont Board of Selectmen dated 11/2/15.

"Dear Mr. Watson,

Belmont Board of Selectmen would like to thank you, Lakes Region Planning Commission, and the members of the TAC committee for your assistance and agreeing to include in the 2017-2026 NH Ten Year Plan projects, which are very important to the town of Belmont. Namely Belmont #16203 NH106 at Seavey Rd and Brown Hill Rd intersection safety improvements, and Belmont 40635 NH140 at Main St intersection improvements. We look forward to working with the department on these projects in the near future and ensure you of our cooperation during design and construction.

Sincerely, Belmont Board of Selectmen: Ruth P. Mooney, Ronald Cormier, John Pike"

Regional Updates:

GACIT Hearing

The Lakes Region GACIT hearing was Monday, October 26 at the Belknap Mill in Laconia. Many people had the opportunity to approach the podium to give public comment and speak about projects. A recurring theme was how to integrate walking and bicycling with transportation improvements. Feedback from NHDOT indicates this was one of the best attended among all the GACIT hearings.

Highway Block Grant Aid

Letter to LRPC Director Jeff Hayes talks about the distribution of Highway Block Grant aid. October was second of four distributions, two more in January and April. Funding is projected to be up a little bit from the previous year based on some additional gas tax revenues. In Lakes Region Hill and Danbury are eligible for Apportionment B, based on town assessment and amount of roads they have to maintain. Communities should all have received a letter from Nancy Mayville explaining the process and the revenue projections for FY 2016.

Scenic Byways

There is a Scenic and Cultural Byways Council meeting November 12, 1:00-3:00 at NHDOT, 7 Hazen Drive in Concord. Nearly all the RPCs were represented at the last meeting and there was good discussion.

Safe Routes to School – Grants

Approximately \$117,000 still available through Safe Routes to School program for planning purposes. The infrastructure money has been allocated to projects, but communities interested in a Travel Plan can apply for funds on a rolling basis and may receive up to \$20,000, a portion can be used for conceptual consultation with an engineer. Since learning of this, LRPC has reached to Ashland, Tamworth, and Laconia, but if other communities are interested, this is a 100 percent reimbursement program.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Integration:

Integration in State Projects / Advocate's Guide - Larry Keniston, NHDOT Intermodal Facilities Engineer and Michael Capone, Bristol Town Administrator, presented regarding the work being done on the NHDOT Advocate's Guide, which explains the processes and possibilities of Bike/Ped integration in State Projects. The Advocate's Guide was a product of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Advisory Committee (BPTAC) and was a Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) funded initiative. FHWA very much supports this, but L. Keniston noted DOT is not an advocacy organization. A committee includes outside experts to advise the commissioner. Michael Capone is one of half-dozen members of a design and maintenance sub-committee working on a design and maintenance document since January 2014. A similar document from Fairfax, VA was a helpful resource. A major focus is on looking at pedestrians and cyclists the same along with all modes of transportation. Another focus of the plan is understanding how to incorporate this into new projects. Opportunities are presented when DOT comes in to a small community to upgrade something. The plan will help stakeholders get involved in public participation. Current draft is 60 pages, NHDOT has arranged with RSG (consultant) to develop the document into a more concise and useful guide for advocates. If things stay on schedule, could have a guide for distribution spring 2016.

A challenge with bike/pedestrian facilities is that when DOT provides bike/pedestrian infrastructure the municipality is obliged to maintain it. Because of this sometimes communities are unwilling to have bike/pedestrian improvements.

Project Perspectives – Newfound Pathways - Bill Dowey of Newfound Pathways described the five-year process of working with the towns of Hebron and Bridgewater and NHDOT to reallocate lane space along a portion of NH 3A narrowing travel lanes to 10 feet. This resulted in 30 inches of paved shoulder beyond the white line. Recently cyclist stencils were painted onto the road at half-mile intervals. Bill has seen that the traffic has slowed down, making it safer for cyclists. The Selectmen of the towns wrote a letter to DOT

saying they wanted 10 foot lanes and they got them. At four miles, this represents the longest lane width restriping project NHDOT has done.

Project Perspectives – WOW Trail - Gretchen Gandini, Executive Director of the Winnepesaukee, Opechee, and Winnisquam (WOW) Trail, with Allan Beetle described the formation of the WOW Trail and future plans as well as obstacles that exist such as liability issues. WOW stands for WOW trail is part of a regional trail network that hopes one day to connect from Meredith to the Northern Rail Trail. The plan for this trail was originally conceptualized by LRPC and Laconia many years ago to showcase the lakes of the region. Currently 1.3 miles have been built in Laconia. Working with DOT to design the pathway alongside the active rail corridor. Fencing required to accompany the trail has been a costly barrier at times, but the group has been working with the state on some alternative fencing requirements. Liability remains a big issue for rail with trails. WOW trail Phase two will hopefully go out to bid in November. Phase two extends the trail south to nearly the Belmont town beach. Belmont is in the process of building their Phase one, which will connect to WOW Phase two and extend to just shy of Mosquito Bridge. The result will be about 5 miles of continuous trail. Phase two is pending final approval from the Laconia City Council. The city voted to invest \$400,000 of downtown Tax Increment Finance (TIF) funding in Phase two. These trails once built are then turned over to the town as linear parks. Trail group puts away money every year for ongoing maintenance.

Complete Streets - Dan Callister, Regional Planner at Lakes Region Planning Commission provided an overview of the concept of Complete Streets and encouraged TAC members to think about opportunities for making streets more complete as they participate in the project development process. The purpose of the right of way is to facilitate the movement of people, but infrastructure in the right of way is often built to the exclusion of some modes of travel. The idea of Complete Streets is to utilize the right of way to accommodate not only cars, but bikes, pedestrians, wheelchairs, busses, trucks. Any of our streets could be more complete, and there are a lot of things we can do that don't require any construction at all like lighting or striping.

Other Business

L. Djuvelek-Ruggerio encouraged TAC members to continue this conversation with your town selectmen boards. All modes of transportation are community transportation. She encourages thinking about having a representative from your town join the Mid-State Regional Coordinating Council for Community Transportation. Joining doesn't cost anything and nothing is asked of you, they just want your participation.

M. Izard requested NHDOT copy the RPCs when they contact communities about upcoming paving. L. Keniston said this is a recommendation in the plan. His presentation will be made available to the TAC.

Tentatively, the next TAC meeting will be December 2, 2015 in Meredith by default, but possibly in Tuftonboro (venue TBD).

Motion to adjourn at 3:45
Gotjen/Favorite

M/S/Passed