

# LAKES REGION PLANNING COMMISSION

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**To:** Lakes Region Transportation Technical Advisory Committee

**From:** Michael Izard, Principal Planner

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'M. Izard', is written over the printed name 'Michael Izard'.

**Date:** November 5, 2014

## TAC Meeting Minutes: Wednesday, October 8, 2014 Minot Sleeper Library, 35 Pleasant St. Bristol, NH

### VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT

Sheldon Morgan (Chair), Gilford  
Brad Harriman (Vice-Chair), Ossipee  
Jeff Haines, Center Harbor  
Lloyd Wood, Tuftonboro  
David Kerr, Barnstead  
Bruce Woodruff, Moultonborough  
Elizabeth Dragon, Franklin  
John Gotjen, Tamworth  
Rick Ball, Belmont  
Steve Favorite, Bristol  
George Tuthill, Alexandria  
John Edgar, Meredith  
David Ford, Wolfeboro  
Glenn Smith, Northfield  
Brian Bordeau, Sanbornton

### OTHERS PRESENT

Daniel Callister, LRPC Assistant Planner  
Michael Izard, LRPC Principal Planner  
Bill Rollins, NHDOT District 3  
Michael Capone, Bristol  
William Rose, NHDOT  
Glenn Cordelli, Carroll County Delegation  
Fran Newton, Ashland  
Mark Howard, Tuftonboro  
Paul Lockwood, NHDES

### Call to Order and Introductions

Meeting called to order at 2:03PM by Chairman Morgan. A motion was made to approve the draft Minutes of the September 10 meeting.

M/S/Passed – Gotjen/Favorite (abstaining: Ford, Edgar, Smith)

Open for public comment. None provided.

### Regional Updates

D. Callister provided an update on the completion of the Transportation Assessment element of the Lakes Region Tour Scenic Byway Corridor Management Plan. The assessment included identification of traffic volumes, locations of bike routes and adjacent multi-use trails, a description of the way-finding assessment conducted last winter, and a list of identified infrastructure improvement projects. Findings included highest traffic volumes on the byway being primarily on the west side of the lake between Moultonborough and Laconia, seasonal and weekend influx in traffic can be significant, over 90 percent of the byway is identified as a bike route, but 30 percent has less than 3 foot paved shoulders. Most communities have several amenities that are attractive to tourists, but they are not always clearly marked or visible from the byway. Infrastructure improvements identified in the assessment would increase safety for all modes of travel. Additional concerns were expressed about NH Route 171 in Tuftonboro and NH Route 28 at Middleton Road in Wolfeboro.

M. Izard discussed details in preparation for the upcoming Ten Year Plan (TYP) evaluation process. There is an effort to identify criteria that applicants could use statewide with a standardized form. LRPC staff will be discussing this more at an upcoming Transportation Planners Collaborative meeting next week. Is there a need to make any recommendations to the Directors about how the TYP update experience could be changed? One suggestion to make is that LRPC looked at both the positive and the negative impacts of transportation improvements on identified resources affected by the project. M. Izard explained that there is an opportunity for applicants to work with their RPC staff before proposals are evaluated by the TAC and

NHDOT has made time after receiving submissions to talk to applicants and address concerns.

W. Rose of DOT explained that 'gas tax' projects were culled from the back-list. When more money became available, DOT identified candidates already in the system that were most likely to succeed. Pavement betterment projects are determined through an internal process at DOT aside from the TYP. TAC decided last time that projects already in the TYP are the regional priorities. J. Edgar added that it is good to review these projects because if there are changes, it gives communities a chance to improve their position, but the eye should be towards enhancing the position of the projects on the TYP.

LRPC staff will be meeting with Bristol Board of Selectmen next Thursday to discuss a recently conducted Safety Assessment of the recent improvements at Bristol Square. This is the first time LRPC has been engaged in a post-construction evaluation of improvements. Comments from TAC members regarding the improvements included that it "looks 100 times better", that it works well functionally, the left-hand turning is good, it's an improvement to the aesthetics, that it "makes downtown square more attractive", and that it is the kind of place people would want to spend some time. Traffic counts conducted in November and again in July at Bristol Square show that there was little change in total volume between the two seasons, but the times people travel showed seasonal variability. Folks have voiced concerns that the reverse angle parking impacts downtown and businesses. M. Capone has seen nothing to indicate that there are any issues. Others have commented on the roads being narrower, but as far as he knows there is not any actual shrinkage. W. Rose explained that when this assessment is done, it will be the only data DOT has for this kind of work. LRPC will make the report accessible after the study has concluded and the results finalized.

### **Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)**

Six TAP applications were submitted from four Lakes Region communities (Ashland, Bristol, Laconia, and Wolfeboro), with Bristol and Wolfeboro each submitting two. Franklin and Alton did not submit applications. M. Izard provided two handouts, one summarizing the proposals that were submitted by Lakes Region communities and the other showing the contents and link to a Dropbox file where the applications and proposal scoring information can be accessed. The folder includes a scoring sheet, definitions and a single document with all proposals that could be printed if a paper version is preferred. In addition there are copies of the original .pdf applications, though it was cautioned that these are not print ready.

A letter was sent to applicants last week indicating that presentations to the TAC on November 5 will be optional, but encouraged. While the agenda will be based on the number of presentations, TAC members may want to pencil in TAC meeting time as 1:00 – 4:00 or 1:00 – 4:30 for November 5. The score sheets can be completed electronically by rating each item on a 1 – 10 scale.

The TAC discussed the value of presentations by TAP applicants. D. Ford asked why he should give a presentation if it's not valuable. J. Edgar explained that a presentation might affirm the merits of the application. E. Dragon suggested that scoring should be done only after the presentations because it doesn't feel right scoring in advance if someone took the time to prepare additional detail. S. Morgan added that applicants should be treated equally so a community that has a really good project, but lacks the resources to give a fancy presentation isn't being penalized for that. E. Dragon expressed that the

presentations were valuable to the TAC as a means of getting a sense of what's happening in the region, we don't want to alienate people who would come in to talk to us about issues they're having in their communities.

Concern was expressed that the existing system for project selection does not ensure that the money will be spread around the state in a fair manner. W. Rose explained that the DOT in the past has tried to make sure that each region gets at least one project funded, but this year there is a new committee developing the methodology for making recommendations to the commissioner. TAC members are encouraged to review the TAP applications and scoring materials in advance of the presentations at the November 5 meeting. The goal is to have TAC scores compiled by LRPC and submitted to DOT by November 15.

### **Scenic Byways**

William Rose of NHDOT Scenic Byway Program Coordinator provided the TAC with program updates. The stand-alone federal funding program has ended and NHDOT has elected not to fund project categories typically associated with Scenic Byways through the TAP program. Because of this the NH Scenic & Cultural Byways Council is focusing on establishing a 'designated NH Scenic & Cultural Byway' as a brand, and improving required oversight of nationally designated byways in NH. Regular Council meetings are second Thursday of May and possibly November. Despite the national program having no money, there are still some active projects including the Corridor Management Plan (CMP) for the Lakes Region Tour. There are also five others throughout the state.

The longevity of the byway's advisory committee hinges on people seeing value in participating. Having assistance in this process and with the marketing piece is critical because the current make-up of the committee doesn't have the expertise. M. Izzard explained that the TAC was not the end-all, be-all and that we'd always talked about having other people onboard. The TAC subcommittee represents a starting point. We have until November of next year to finish up the CMP and the hope is that this will be a grassroots effort and people will see the merit of the brand.

### **Other Business**

P. Lockwood of NHDES Air Resource Division addressed the TAC briefly and explained that transportation accounts for roughly 50 percent of air pollution. He has been asked to work with the northern regional planning commissions. Paul is a resource if the TAC has any concerns related to the environment.

S. Favorite noted that the new draft of the Regional Plan is available online and that it is excellent and being utilized in other areas such as school site space needs.

The next TAC meeting will be held November 5, 2014 in Meredith.

At 4:05PM, Chairman Morgan entertained a motion to adjourn.

M/S/Passed – Haines/Harriman