

**City of Concord
Transportation Policy Advisory Committee**

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, January 27, 2011 - 6:00pm to 8:30pm
City Council Chambers

1. Call to Order/Introductions

Dick Lemieux called the meeting to order. Those in attendance included:

Committee Members Present:

Dick Lemieux (Resident - Chair)
Ed Roberge (City Engineer - Staff Representative)
Ursula Maldonado (Resident)
Peter Rhodes (Bicycling Community)
Brent Todd (Penacook)
Jennifer Kretovic (Public Transportation)
Frank Drouse (East Concord)
Jim Sudak, Concord Area Transit (CAT)

Committee Members Not Present:

Councilor Werner (City Council)
Alex Vogt (Pedestrian Community)
Domenic Ciavarro (Large Employer)
Tom Irwin (North/West Concord)

Staff, Visitors and Guests Present:

Rob Mack, Traffic Engineer - Staff Representative
Craig Tufts, Planner, Central NH Regional Planning Commission
Ginny Schneider, CAT

2. Approval of October 28, 2010 and November 18, 2010 meeting minutes

Peter Rhodes made a motion to accept the minutes of the October 28, 2010 and November 18, 2010 meetings. The motion was seconded by Ursula Maldonado. Following brief discussion, the meeting minutes were unanimously approved.

3. Presentations

a. CIP35 - US Route 3 Corridor Improvement - Phase 4a, Ed Roberge

Ed Roberge presented the 60% design drawings of the Phase 4a improvements (North State Street from Palm Street to Call Street). The project is the continuation of the overall corridor improvements along US Route 3 and will include similar roadway and utility improvements as in the 3 previous phases. Lane configurations include 12' travel lanes and 5' shoulders and will feature the addition of a left turn lane at McGuire Street. Ed Roberge reported that design warrants for traffic signals at McGuire Street have not been met so it is likely that the intersection will be readied for signals and not installed at the time of 2011 construction. The sidewalk along the east side of North State Street will be replaced and several driveways along the NH State Prison property will be

closed as a result of access management. Final design should be completed by late March 2011 and construction is expected through the 2011 season.

After a brief discussion, TPAC members supported the design and commended staff and City Council for their steadfastness in completing another section of this priority traffic corridor.

b. Bike Master Plan, Craig Tufts, CNHRPC

Craig Tufts of the Central NH Regional Planning Commission (CNHRPC) presented the 2010 Bike Master Plan via PowerPoint presentation. The key aspects of the master plan effort including project organization, need, purpose and public participation were outlined in detail. Final review of the draft documents is underway and it is expected to forward the final documents to City Council in February for a March 2011 presentation.

As part of the 2010 Bike Master Plan, Craig Tufts also presented the final draft report of the Merrimack River Greenway Trail (MRGT) project via PowerPoint presentation. The brief presentation highlighted on the origins of the project, the public support for it, costs, and potential funding sources. This report will also be presented to City Council in March 2011. The Bike Committee is expected to submit both the 2010 Bike Master Plan and the MRGT project to the Planning Board in February for a March public hearing.

At the conclusion of the presentation, TPAC members unanimously supported the efforts of the project steering committee as well as the members of the Bike Committee and offered comment and insight on improving the presentations. Given that TPAC should endorse the reports to be forwarded to City Council, Ed Roberge indicated that TPAC should formally accept the 2010 Bike Master Plan and prepare a cover report to Council for submission. In that, Peter Rhodes made a motion to accept the 2010 Bike Master Plan. The motion was seconded by Ursula Maldonado. After brief discussion, TPAC unanimously accepted the master plan documents and recommended that staff prepare a cover report to City Council indicating same.

4. Public Comment

There was no public comment at this meeting.

5. Consent Reports

a. Approval of Subcommittee Nominations

There were no subcommittee nominations to consider at this meeting.

b. Approval of Subcommittee Minutes (Pedestrian, Bicycle, Public Transportation, Traffic Operations)

The Committee unanimously approved the meeting minutes of the Pedestrian, Bicycle, Public Transportation, and Traffic Operations Committee meetings.

6. TPAC Referrals from City Council, Staff and Chair

a. There were no referrals for consideration at this meeting.

7. Status report on subcommittees

a. Pedestrian Committee, Alex Vogt

In Alex Vogt's absence, Ed Roberge reported that the Pedestrian Committee met in December and continued discussions on the Walk Friendly Community application. Applications are due on December 15th and it will be several months before decisions are made. Alex Vogt reported that the Trail Committee had met in December to walk the area at Russell Martin Park to 13 Rolinda Avenue. The area has some nice woods and some thick brush. The Trail Committee felt that a trail could be blazed and cut over the winter. Next step would be contact the property owner that the easement is on.

The Pedestrian Committee continues to plan for the Green Commute Week (May 20). There is a planning meeting on February 4th at 11:00 AM at Central NH Regional Planning Commission (CNHRPC) office located on Commercial Street. Any ideas or thoughts for events are welcomed. The committee will discuss the Merrimack River Trail project in upcoming meeting. The Pedestrian Committee has indicated support for this project.

A pedestrian accident on Loudon Road was discussed at the December meeting. The pedestrian was walking in the road as the sidewalk had not been plowed. It was night and the pedestrian was wearing dark clothes. Jennifer Kretovic indicated that she spoke to Rob Mack about writing a letter to the editor about winter safety for pedestrians. Jennifer Kretovic indicated that the letter to the editor will be going out in the next day or so to raise safety awareness with pedestrians in the winter months.

b. Bike Committee, Peter Rhodes

Peter Rhodes reported that the Bike Committee met in December focusing its efforts on completion of the Bike Master Plan and review of the Merrimack River greenway Trail project report. The Bike Committee will be hosting its 3rd public meeting on February 8th at 6:15 PM in City Council Chambers, 39 Green Street for final review of the Bike Master Plan report and findings.

Additional Bike Friendly Community signs will be purchased by members of the committee and staff will coordinate their installation in spring 2011.

Jeff Warner, Engineering staff liaison to the Bike Committee presented the initial plans of the US Route 3 - Phase 4a (North State Street from Palm Street to Call Street) improvement project to the Bike Committee. The committee provided support to the bike facilities shown on the plan.

c. Public Transit Committee, Jennifer Kretovic

Jennifer Kretovic reported on the recent activities of the Public Transit Committee. With respect to the temporary bus signs, the winter has been particularly harsh. The Committee has a volunteer that is working with BM-CAP staff to keep up with replacement signs.

In August/September 2010, the committee submitted a letter to NHDOT in support of reprogramming AARA funds from purchasing bus shelters to the

purchase of bus stop signs instead. TPAC and City Council approved the letter. Since then, it may not be possible to move the allocation and so we are working on another letter of support, so BM-CAP & CAT may find areas which seem best suited for bus shelters. There are some due diligence issues to work through for the Committee and City Council but we are getting close. We may have to send an email request out to the full TPAC as we near completion of the letter but will follow-up in the coming days.

Some time ago it was recommended that the Public Transit Committee host a daytime meeting in order to allow and accommodate input from CAT's customers. Arrangements have been made with St. Paul's Church to hold the meeting on April 14th from 3 to 5pm. It is in close proximity to the downtown bus shelter, it is accessible and it will be important for riders to understand there is an outlet in the city to share their thoughts and comments.

Jennifer Kretovic also noted that route modifications will be discussed later in the meeting.

d. Traffic Operations Committee, Rob Mack

Rob Mack reported that the Traffic Operations Committee (TOC) met in January and discussed recent issues with school bus flashing light use. Representatives from Concord School District as well as NH State Police were in attendance to specifically discuss issues related to school bus safety and use of flashing lights when loading and unloading students at Concord High School. There has been practice where flashing lights were not used and concerns with safety have been raised. Of concern was stopping traffic completely particularly along North Fruit Street in the vicinity of the day care facility. Following discussion, staff and the school district will continue to work closely to evaluate school bus flashing light use and options to improve facilities.

Rob Mack noted that the school consolidation projects are underway and TOC reviewed site access and logistics plans for the school district. Comments were generated following several public meetings outlining construction schedules and site access. The TOC also considered a request to relocate a handicap parking space along Main Street at the Park Street intersection as well as several other parking and operational issues.

8. TPAC Policy Objectives/Programs/Initiatives

a. City-wide Speed and Pavement Marking Policy Update

Although nothing specific to report on the city-wide speed and pavement marking policy, Rob Mack did indicate that staff as part of the City's Neighborhood Traffic Program has been monitoring speeds and traffic volumes along Community Drive and High Street in Penacook in response to recent neighborhood concerns following the 2010 paving operations. While nominal increases in speed were found, traffic volumes and overall speed was generally low for the neighborhood. Staff will continue to monitor conditions in Penacook in advance of the major US Route 3 corridor project currently in the 2013/2014 program.

- b. **Concord Bike Master Plan Update**
See presentations and subcommittee reports above.
- c. **Riverfront Multi-use Path (Bow to Boscawen)**
See presentations and subcommittee reports above.

9. Old Business

a. **TPAC Accomplishments - Develop list for publishing**

Ed Roberge distributed a copy of an unedited list of accomplishments obtained from each subcommittee and TPAC members. The initial thought was to compile a comprehensive list of accomplishments by type such as policy developments, procedural documents, physical improvement projects, as well as plans, reports, and studies. Following brief discussion, it was suggested that accomplishments be listed in similar functional order as the comprehensive transportation policy. Brent Todd agreed to draft a first pass of the document for initial review in anticipation of committee review at the February TPAC meeting. TPAC set a working date of February 18th to complete the first draft.

b. **“Rethinking Main Street” - Downtown Streetscape Improvement Project**

Jennifer Kretovic reported that the draft project study has been distributed to the project steering committee and is under review. The project team has spent considerable time discussing leakage surveys and how best to integrate the results into the final report document. Project team members have been reaching out to other communities to see how similar improvement projects have fared. The project team has focused its efforts on melding the streetscape concept plans with the economic development aspects of the project in a clear and concise communication package.

Jennifer Kretovic also reported that members of the project team completed a trip to Littleton, NH where a recent downtown project was completed. The purpose of the trip was to gather information regarding the economic and construction impacts of the downtown retailers and merchants. The project team reported that overall, while there were a number of problems associated with limited utility detail that resulted in project construction delays, the project appeared to be well supported and most downtown residents and businesses are appreciative of the project. The Littleton Town Manager noted that projects of this type only come every 30-50 years so a community should take full advantage of the opportunity. The trip resulted in information such as the need for benches and shade trees for the elderly and barrier-free access.

The project team is continuing its efforts in reviewing the final report and documents. The next public interest meeting will be scheduled in February with the downtown retailers. A brief video entitled “Insights to a Lively Downtown” has been placed on the Main Street Concord, Inc. website as a resource.

10. New business

a. **Status of CAT Fixed Route and Trolley Route Modifications, Jennifer Kretovic**

Jennifer Kretovic reported that the Public Transit Committee has been working closely with CAT to review upcoming changes to the fixed bus routes.

The federal funding associated with the trolleys will expire on June 30, 2011 and without a dedicated funding source to operate the trolleys, route changes will be required. The Nelson-Nygaard transit study outlined a number of route modifications including eliminating the underperforming Industrial Park Drive route. Route changes will be required to sustain service without the trolleys in fiscal year 2012 so the Public Transit Committee will continue to work closely with CAT to facilitate the route changes in preparation to FY2012 funding requests.

11. Adjourn

There being no other items to discussed, Brent Todd made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Peter Rhodes seconded and the meeting adjourned.