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**Strafford Metropolitan Planning Organization
Technical Advisory Committee Meeting
SRPC Office, Rochester, NH**

February 3, 2012 Minutes

Final

Present: Bill Hoke (NHDOT), Bill Watson (NHDOT), Leigh Levine (FHWA), Paul Lockwood (NHDES), Jon Hotchkiss (Middleton), Melodie Esterberg (Rochester), Steven Ireland (NHDOT-District 6), Rad Nichols (COAST), Connie Brawders (Barrington), Diane Hardy (Newmarket) and Victoria Parmele (Northwood)

Members Not Present: Chris Parker (Dover), James Campbell (Durham), Laurel Cox (Lee), Wallace Dunham (Madbury), Patrick Carroll (Rollinsford), David Sharples (Somersworth) and Stephen Pesci (UNH)

Staff: Cynthia Copeland (Executive Director) Marc Ambrosi (Transportation Planner) Marilyn Barton (Executive Assistant), Dan Camara (Senior GIS/Transportation Analyst), Matthew Sullivan (Regional Planner), Kyle Pimental (Regional Planner) and Michelle Auen (Regional Planner)

1. Introductions

Chairman M. Esterberg opened the meeting at 9 a.m. and introductions were given around the room.

2. Staff Communications

M. Sullivan discussed upcoming marketing strategies for the Planning Commission which is made up of a four-pronged plan to include: Web updates and to make them interactive so the user can link to certain parts of a document rather than scroll through the entire document, the SRPC newsletter with news and project updates, a blog about trending topics in planning and the use of Twitter. It was noted at the meeting that a newly developed Twitter feed is in progress and can be found at [Twitter.com/Strafford RPC](https://twitter.com/StraffordRPC) and encouraged everyone to check it out.

M. Barton noted that M. Ambrosi and D. Camara would not be at the next meeting and asked the Committee if they still wanted to have a meeting next month. It was decided that if there were action items to vote on besides minutes, than there would be a meeting; otherwise the meeting could be cancelled.

3.1 Approval of Draft Strafford MPO TAC December 2, 2011 Minutes

The Chairman asked for a motion to approve the draft Strafford MPO TAC December 2, 2011 minutes as presented. R. Nichols made a motion and J. Hotchkiss seconded that motion. All in favor; motion carried.

3.2 Coordinated Public Transit & Human Services Transportation Plan for Southeast NH – Updates recommended to SMPO Policy Committee

M. Ambrosi noted the Plan has been out for public review since January 16, 2012. M. Ambrosi noted on January 18, the Draft Coordinated Plan was reviewed by the Alliance for Community Transportation Executive Committee. M. Ambrosi stated in this meeting the group conducted an in-depth review of the entire document and the review generated numerous comments regarding wording and other technical changes for chapters one through five and seven. M. Ambrosi stated The Alliance for Community Transportation Executive Committee comments for chapters six and eight were more significant, bordering on wholesale rewrites for the two chapters. M. Ambrosi noted the proposed changes to these chapters, with some modifications, were endorsed by the Alliance for Community Transportation Membership Committee.

M. Ambrosi stated the Coordinated Plan, as it was presented for public comment, more than adequately met the compliance requirements necessary to access Federal Transit Administration funding for categories 5310, 5316 and 5317. M. Ambrosi noted the revisions provided by the Alliance for Community Transportation for chapters six and eight do enhance the content of those chapters, but are not essential for meeting the requirements for accessing funding streams. M. Ambrosi noted chapter eight saw the most significant changes, as there was additional language added and more in depth descriptions.

M. Ambrosi gave a PowerPoint presentation reviewing the technical changes to chapters one through five and seven and reviewed the major changes to chapters six and eight.

M. Ambrosi stated due to the scope of the comments received, there were two recommended alternatives for TAC to consider:

1. TAC recommendation to the Strafford MPO Policy Committee for approval of the Coordinated Public Transit & Human Services Transportation Plan for Southeast NH with the comments endorsed by the ACT Membership committee incorporated.
2. If the Strafford MPO TAC feels that the scope of the comments received fundamentally change the Coordinated Plan to the extent that the public was not offered an adequate opportunity to provide comments received on the draft up for approval, then Strafford Metropolitan Planning Organization is seeking a TAC recommendation to the SMPO Policy Committee to incorporate the comments and recommend the updated version of the Coordinated Plan go back out for an additional public comment period before SMPO Policy Committee approval.

R. Nichols stated he thought SRPC did a great job with the document. R. Nichols noted during the start of the comment period, D. Smith was out of the office for a significant period of time and timing was just off in regard to the comment period. He noted the comments didn't change the content of the document, rather just moved locations of the descriptions around. R. Nichols stated going out to the public comment period again is the right recommendation. B. Watson stated the Plan should go back out for public comment again. It was suggested a glossary be included to explain abbreviations throughout the document. The Chairman asked for a motion to recommend to the Policy Committee to extend the comment period to mid-March due to the many changes to the document so the public has a chance to review and make comments. R. Nichols made a motion and D Hardy seconded that motion. It was decided that a letter would be sent to the Policy Committee to let them know of this recommendation.

M. Ambrosi stated the MPOs are comfortable with comments received but would like to retain some of the historical information that was not included in the comments. C. Copeland noted these plans are learning tools for new planners and others as they come along and it is helpful to have a history to move forward with a process. L. Levine stated another public comment period won't preclude comments from the TAC and Policy groups. R. Nichols noted M. Ambrosi and M. Auen did a great job pulling in information in such a tight timeframe.

After further discussion an amendment to the original motion was as follows: TAC accepts the changes and to follow in the spirit of the discussion at the ACT and TAC meetings, and to give latitude to use the language of the Planning Commission and MPO to further enhance the document and to go out with a second public comment so that the public has another chance to review the changes. The Chairman asked for a motion. R. Nichols made a motion and D. Hardy seconded that motion. All in favor, motion carried.

4.1 Intelligent Transportation Systems Update

D. Camara stated the Strafford and Rockingham MPOs are working with IBI Group to update our Regional ITS Architecture and Plan. D. Camara noted this Plan lays out the coordination framework (architecture) and timelines for completing ITS projects in the region (plan). D. Camara stated ITS improves transportation safety and mobility and enhances American productivity through the integration of advanced communications technologies into the transportation infrastructure and in vehicles and ITS encompass a broad range of wireless and wire line communications-based information and electronics technologies.

D. Camara stated in such a fiscally constrained time, ITS projects are a relatively low cost way of improving the safety and efficiency of our region's transportation infrastructure. D. Camara stated costly capacity improvement projects have left little opportunity for smaller safety/efficiency- improvement projects to move ahead as scheduled and as needed. D. Camara noted with NHDOT's current Ten Year Plan focus on preservation and maintenance; ITS projects are a great, lower cost method of increasing the safety and efficiency of our region's current transportation infrastructure.

D. Camara gave some recent examples of improvements to our region's ITS, which include: Open Road Tolling (ORT) in Hampton, Dynamic Message Signs (DMS) and CCTV cameras on NH 16 and I-95, and Highway Advisory Radio (HAR) on I-95. Other examples of common ITS include: signal coordination, automatic vehicle location (AVL) for emergency management and transit operators, road weather information systems (RWIS), variable speed limit signs, and automatic traffic signal enforcement.

D. Camara stated a kickoff meeting with IBI Group is being held on February 10, 2012 at the Newington Town Hall at 10 a.m. to begin discussions about the current status of ITS in the region and neighboring regions.

D. Camara stated the Strafford MPO is currently looking for volunteers to be on the region's Working Advisory Group (WAG) to help steer the update to the region's ITS Plan. D. Camara noted members of the WAG would be looking at a commitment of 3-4 meetings between February and May of this year. [The project must be done by the end of May as this contract is extended for one year only.] D. Camara noted municipal officials, transportation professionals, transit operators, emergency management officials and alike are all welcome to help improve the region's transportation safety and mobility.

D. Camara noted ITS projects are **required** to be in this plan in order for them to move forward into the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) and consequent Ten Year Plan.

D. Camara stated for additional information regarding the Regional ITS Architecture and Plan update or join the Working Advisory Group to please contact him at the following: dcamara@strafford.org or (603) 994-3500.

D. Camara gave an overview of a part of the USDOT website called RITA, Research and Innovative Technology Administration and explained this was good for research purposes and had a lot of good data.

5. Project Updates

K Pimental gave a PowerPoint point discussion on The Mills Scenic Byway Corridor Management Plan. K. Pimental stated this included the communities of Durham, Newmarket, Madbury, Dover and Rollinsford. K. Pimental noted this plan is being submitted to NHDOT to be considered as part of the Scenic Byway Plan. K. Pimental gave an overview of the natural, historic, cultural, recreational and archeological conditions and noted pictures were taken along the route and the plan is to have a group work on this in early spring. This byway would go through scenic and historical parts of the communities via Routes 108 and 4 and downtown areas.

6. Other Business

C. Copeland reviewed the handouts about some of the highlights regarding Map-21. C. Copeland noted the Senate version reauthorizes the Federal-aid highway program at the Congressional Budget Office's baseline level-equal to current funding levels plus inflation for two fiscal years, which includes FY 2012. C. Copeland reviewed some of the highlights and noted it keeps the Tier 1, 2 and 3 MPO levels. C. Copeland noted we would be a Tier III as the urbanized area for that would be 50,000 to 200,000, which means no PL funds board designation, no legal designation or funding. C. Copeland reviewed HR 7 which is a five year \$260 billion bill that would fund highway, transit and safety programs and it also included grandfathering existing MPOs, which takes a big burden off of the MPOs so they are not spending all their time and money justifying themselves. C. Copeland stated she and other RPC/MPO Executive Directors would be participating in a conference call with Senator Shaheen staff regarding this on Monday, February 6, 2012 and let them know what are needs are and how it impacts us.

C. Copeland also discussed HR 3864 which essentially eliminates dedicated funding for public transportation from fuel tax receipts and would unlink mass transit from a funding stream that has guaranteed funding for commuter transportation. R. Nichols stated it would bring great variability every year to what mass transit would receive for funding and if it moves forward, he would have very serious concerns for mass transit in this country.

M. Esterberg reminded everyone about the upcoming, required Local Public Agency training at NHDOT and encouraged everyone to attend. B. Watson spoke about the training and noted the certification goes with the person and not with the organization. B. Watson stated in the case a person left, NHDOT would work with the community to get another person certified as soon as possible

D. Hardy spoke about the TE project in Newmarket and that one of the new requirements (Independent Cost Estimate) makes it difficult for smaller communities to continue on with their projects and just wanted to

make that comment as NHDOT was present at the meeting. B. Watson spoke about the need for this manual to be updated as it was approximately ten years old. B. Watson noted a closer look was taken at regulations and requirements and that Nancy Mayville and her staff are looking closely at what should and should not be done. B. Watson stated essentially we are asking the municipalities to look at the scope of work being done and ask if it's reasonable. B. Watson noted at the training sessions it isn't going to be technical and will have exercises to help educate and explained who needed to take the training. B. Watson noted the certification is three years.

C. Brawders stated she had attended the public hearing regarding SB 291, which would allow the use of impact fees for state roads and whether their community should support this bill. D. Hardy and M. Esterberg gave their experiences using impact fees.

K. Pimental noted there will be a Source Water Protection workshop here at the Community Center in Conf. Rm. 1A on March 22, 2012 and noted it would be an approximately all day even (9-3) and there would be various speakers with pending AICP credits as well as technical credit hours for certified NH Water Works Operators. K. Pimental stated information would be coming out shortly and invited those interested to attend.


B. Watson spoke about TIGER IV funding and up to three projects can be applied for. B. Watson noted Mark Sanborn is the point of contact and pre-applications are due on February 20, 2012 and the final application is due either March 19, 2012. B. Watson stated the Ten year Plan public hearings will be on the following dates: February 14, 16 & 21, 2012.

C. Copeland stated on Feb 9 there is a hearing at 10:30 regarding HB 1561, which is a bill to discontinue Regional Planning Commissions and letters of support would be appreciated.

7. Adjournment

The Chairman asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:25 a.m. C. Brawders made a motion and J. Hotchkiss seconded that motion. All in favor, motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,



Marilyn Barton, PHR
Recording Secretary