

BARRINGTON  
BROOKFIELD  
DOVER  
DURHAM  
FARMINGTON  
LEE  
MADBURY  
MIDDLETON  
MILTON



NEW DURHAM  
NEWMARKET  
NORTHWOOD  
NOTTINGHAM  
ROCHESTER  
ROLLINSFORD  
SOMERSWORTH  
STRAFFORD  
WAKEFIELD

**Strafford Policy Committee Meeting & Public Hearing  
March 16, 2012  
Rochester Community Center, Rochester, NH  
Minutes**

**Final**

**SMPO Policy Members Present:** Robert Jaffin (Rochester), Paul Lockwood (NHDES-ARD), Beverly Cray (UNH), Ed Comeau (Brookfield), Tom Clark (Dover), Rad Nichols (COAST), Brian Tapscott (Somersworth), Tom Crosby (Madbury), Stephen Jeffery (Barrington), Sandra Keans (Rochester), Glenn Davison (NH DOT), Marcia Gasses (Dover) and Ed Jansen (Rollinsford),

**SMPO Staff Present:** Cynthia Copeland (Executive Director) Marc Ambrosi (Transportation Planner) Dan Camara (Senior GIS/Transportation Analyst) and Marilyn Barton (Executive Assistant)

**1. Introductions**

The Chairman opened the meeting at 9:05 a.m. and asked for introductions around the room.

**2. Staff Communications**

C. Copeland stated SRPC will be recruiting for interns for the summer, which typically begins in mid-May through August and to let us know of anyone who may be interested in applying.

**3.1 Open Public Hearing to receive public comment for updates to Coordinated Public Transit & Human Services Transportation Plan for Southeast NH Region**

The Chairman opened the public hearing at 9:15 to comments and questions.

M. Ambrosi stated The Strafford Regional Planning Commission TAC recommended a Policy Committee approval of the draft Coordinated Plan.

M. Ambrosi noted at the February SMPO Policy Committee meeting, the committee decided to table approval of the draft coordinated plan in order to allow for a second public comment period. M. Ambrosi stated this was due to extensive comments that were received during the first comment period. M. Ambrosi stated the comments have been incorporated and the new draft Coordinated Plan and the document has gone through the appropriate 30-day public comment period.

M. Ambrosi stated only two comments have been received up to this point for the second comment period, one from COAST and the other from NH Department of Environmental Services. M. Ambrosi n noted both comments were in regards to employment access. M. Ambrosi stated in response, new language has been included in the short and long term goals section (chapter 8) of the document to address access to employment through coordinated transportation efforts.

M. Ambrosi stated this update is a collaborative effort between Strafford Regional Planning Commission, Rockingham Planning Commission, and the Alliance for Community Transportation, and service providers from the Southeast NH region. Federal rules mandate this document be updated every five years to maintain eligibility to access specific Federal Transit Administration funding programs including: *5310, 5316, and 5317*.

M. Ambrosi stated on January 18, 2012 the Draft Coordinated Plan [version 1] 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. M. Ambrosi noted the review generated numerous comments regarding wording and other technical changes for chapters 1-5 and 7 and these comments are included in the appendices of the coordinated plan.

M. Ambrosi stated The Alliance for Community Transportation Executive Committee comments for chapters 6 and 8 were more significant, bordering on wholesale rewrites for the two chapters. M. Ambrosi stated the proposed changes to these chapters, with some modifications, were endorsed by the Alliance for Community Transportation Membership Committee.

M. Ambrosi noted the Coordinated Plan, as it was presented for public comment on January 14, 2012, more than adequately met the compliance requirements necessary to access Federal Transit Administration funding for categories *5310, 5316 and 5317*. M. Ambrosi stated the revisions provided by the Alliance for Community Transportation (ACT) for chapters 6 and 8 do enhance the content of those chapters, but are not essential for meeting the requirements for accessing funding streams.

M. Ambrosi stated before the beginning of the second comment period, the comments Strafford Regional Planning Commission received were incorporated into the document. The document that went out for the second comment period reflects those changes. R. Nichols thanked staff for the great job they did on the Coordinated Plan in a very short amount of time.

### **3.2 Close Public Hearing**

After no other comments, the Chairman closed the public hearing at 9:20 a.m.

#### **4.1 Draft MPO Minutes of February 17, 2012**

The Chairman asked for a motion to approve the draft MPO minutes of February 17, 2012. M. Barton noted she had received an email from T. Clark that on page four of the minutes on paragraph 8 it read "The Chairman" when there wasn't one. T. Clark also stated he would it reflected in the minutes that he thanked M. Ambrosi for running the meeting in the Chair's absence and asked if we had a procedure in the by-laws to appoint a Chair from the members present. M. Barton stated she had researched the by-laws and there was no procedure listed regarding appointing a chairman when one is at the meeting and would be something that would need to be addressed at a future meeting and the other corrections were done. B. Tapscott made a motion to approve the draft minutes with the changes as discussed. S. Keans seconded that motion. It was noted there was one abstention-T. Crosby. All in favor, motion carried.

#### **4.2 Coordinated Plan**

The Chairman asked for a motion to approve the Coordinated Public Transit & Human Services Transportation Plan for Southeast NH Region. R. Jaffin made a motion and R. Nichols seconded that motion. All in favor, motion carried.

### **5.1 Intelligent Transportation Systems Update**

K. Ortmann asked D. Camara to explain ITS. D. Camara explained that Intelligent Transportation Systems are mainly in-vehicle or on-road technologies used to increase efficiency and safety on the transportation network. D. Camara noted they can help users of the roadway make their mobility more efficient. M. Ambrosi noted that ITS improves transportation safety and mobility and enhances American productivity through the integration of advanced communications technologies into the transportation infrastructure and in vehicles. M. Ambrosi stated that ITS encompass a broad range of wireless and wire line communications-based information and electronics technologies.

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 noted 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. Costly capacity improvement projects have left little opportunity for smaller safety/efficiency- improvement projects to move ahead as scheduled and as needed. M. Ambrosi stated 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 noted some recent examples of improvements to our region's ITS 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.

E. Comeau asked if the ITS program was required to receive federal funding. D. Camara explained that it is a required document for MPOs. An ITS-specific project, such signal coordination needs to be referenced in the Plan. D. Camara noted if it is a subcomponent of the project than it is not required but doesn't hurt to include it anyway. M. Ambrosi stated the goal is to have standardized of way of doing things and consistency across jurisdictions.

A discussion ensued about the publicly available live-feed cameras and privacy issues as the insides of vehicles could be seen to some degree. K. Ortmann stated any tool can have multiple purposes.

D. Camara stated the next steps include compiling the information received at the Stakeholder meeting such as major needs and systems needed, and to follow up with stakeholders that were not able to attend the Stakeholder meeting. D. Camara noted there will be a meeting approximately every month until June as this needs to be completed by the last week of June.

### **5.2 Access Management**

D. Camara gave a quick overview of the Access Management project that Greg Jones has been working on. D. Camara noted that it is well-known that there are too many curb cuts on major arterials in the area. D. Camara noted the GIS aspect analyzes and measures this information. C. Copeland noted that these data and others like it will be a major component to any new transportation reauthorization that may occur.

### 5.3 Federal Reauthorization update

C. Copeland gave an overview of updates regarding the Transportation Reauthorization Bill that was passed by the Senate on March 14, 2012. The major changes included impacts to small MPO's and Rural Planning Organizations, which sets the new threshold for MPOs at 200,000 with a new three step process for existing small MPOs in metropolitan areas between 50,000-200,000 population to be allowed to continue including sequential approval needed by local officials in the area, by the Governor of the state and US. Department of Transportation. The amendment language supported by Senator Jeanne Shaheen included:

- Allow existing MPOs 50,000 to 200,000 to apply for a Tier II designation to US DOT without the approval of the Governor
- Allows MPOs that receive a negative determination from the US DOT Secretary to receive a one year extension and technical assistance from US DOT to meet the new minimum requirements for Tier II MPOs with the support of the Governor
- Requires the US DOT Secretary to provide a substantive written justification to MPOs that are deemed unqualified to continue as an MPO
- More clearly defines the minimum requirements for a Tier II MPO designation.

R. Nichols stated Senator Shaheen and her staff did a fantastic job on COASTs behalf to protect them in case the region goes over 200,000. C. Copeland stated the MPO worked with Senator Shaheen's office and staff since last fall regarding this and stated Senator Shaheen worked diligently on this to protect existing MPOs in NH. C. Copeland noted Congressman Guinta has been working on the House side. C. Copeland noted our NH delegation has stood by us and we are very appreciative and thankful for their support.

### 6. Project Updates

M. Ambrosi gave an update regarding the Park and Ride Tool kit and noted SRPC has been working with SouthWest Planning Commission and Central Planning Commission. M. Ambrosi noted meetings have been set up and will be meeting with Jim Jalbert of C&J and Chris Parker in Dover.

M. Ambrosi noted he participated in an interagency meeting on March 7, 2012 and there will probably be an Amendment #5 and should be the last amendment and would start updates around the end of September 2012. M. Ambrosi stated if there is a project that needs to be in this, to let him know as soon as possible.

M. Ambrosi noted M. Auen has been working on Safe Routes to School in Wakefield and assisting them with their Travel Plan.

D. Camara reminded everyone that SRPC will begin work on requested traffic counts by NH DIT and if any community has a need to have traffic counts done, to contact him.

### 7. Other Business

There was a wider span on the Sara Long Bridge and G. Davison noted NHDOT is working with the Maine DOT regarding options, studies and goals.

R. Jaffin noted a class regarding G402 that he could teach and it is a two hour class and he would get that information to M. Ambrosi so that it could be included in the next meeting packet.

There was no other business.

**8. Adjournment**

The Chairman asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:35 a.m. B. Tapscott made a motion and R. Jaffin seconded that motion. All in favor, motion carried.

Minutes submitted by,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marilyn Barton, PHR". The signature is written in a cursive style.

**Marilyn Barton, PHR**  
**Recording Secretary**