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Strafford Policy Committee Meeting & Public Hearing
May 18, 2012
Rochester Community Center, Rochester, NH
Minutes

FINAL

SMPO Policy Members Present: Rad Nichols (COAST), Paul Lockwood (NHDES), Ed Comeau (Brookfield), Brian Tapscott (Somersworth), William Connor (Somersworth), Kenn Ortmann (Rochester), Sandra Keans (Rochester), Tom Crosby (Madbury), Victoria Parmele (Northwood) and Robert Jaffin (Rochester)

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

1. Introductions

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

2. Staff Communications

C. Copeland welcomed Katie Davis, SRPC's newest intern to the group and noted returning from the previous year interns, Zach Kahr and Nick Dowhaniuk would be starting the in the next week to work on traffic counts, culvert assessments, access points and other work staff may need help with.

M. Barton reminded everyone of the upcoming Commissioners Annual meeting and that it would be at The Three Chimneys Inn in Durham from 11:30-3 and anyone interested in attending should contact her.

3. Open Public hearing to solicit comments on S/TIP Amendment #5

The Chairman opened the public hearing at 9:15 to solicit comments on S/TIP Amendment #5.

M. Ambrosi noted at the May 11, SMPO TAC meeting, the committee made a recommendation to the Policy Committee for approval of Amendment #5 to the 2011-2014 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). It was noted that Phase A of the Durham-Newmarket Bike Shoulders Project #13080A has been delayed despite a previously scheduled advertising date set for September 2012. Frustration was expressed about how long this project has been delayed (15 years),*especially given that this was scored as the top priority project in the region during the recent Ten Year Planning Process.

M. Ambrosi reviewed the projects list. M. Ambrosi noted this amendment has a number of notable projects, but no significant surprises:

- Phase A of the Durham - Newmarket Bike shoulder and roadway reconstruction project has been delayed from Fiscal Year 2012 to Fiscal Year 2013. This shift in construction funding year is due to the limited time left to advertise the project in 2012 and possibly ongoing ROW issues.

- The Newmarket Bike Shoulders project from Newmarket to Newfields has been put on the back burner. This CMAQ project, originally sponsored by District 6, was initiated by the Town as the Newmarket Main Street TE project was wrapping up. There is some dispute about funding for this project. From what I understand, some amount of funding was not reimbursed by NH DOT upon the completion of the Newmarket Main Street TE project. An agreement was made to use that funding for this bike shoulders project, but the details remain unclear. Follow-up with DOT and Newmarket will be necessary to see if this project remains a priority and if locally the political will remains to complete this locally managed project. The original project was fully funded using state and federal dollars.
- Construction funding for the Newmarket Sky Bridge Project is moving out to Fiscal Year 2014. Through consultation with Nick Alexander at DOT, it was made clear that this change was for the purposes of financial constraint for the State Transportation Improvement Plan. It was also indicated that if this project moves forward at an accelerated pace (which we are hoping for), funding will be made available to accommodate a revised schedule.

M. Ambrosi stated funding for the Somersworth-Berwick Route 9 Bridge rehab has been increased significantly. M. Ambrosi noted we appreciate the recognition from both the NH and ME DOTs that this is an important bridge that acts as the gateway between these two historic downtowns both of which are in the process of being revamped.

3.1 Close Public hearing

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

4.1 Draft MPO Minutes of April 20, 2012

The Chairman asked for a motion to approve the Draft MPO minutes of April 20, 2012. R. Jaffin made a motion and B. Tapscott seconded that motion. It was noted there were two abstentions: W. Connor (Somersworth) and V. Parmele (Northwood), as they did not attend that meeting. All in favor, motion carried.

4.2 S/TIP Amendment #5

The Chairman asked for a motion to approve S/TIP Amendment #5. K. Ortmann made a motion and R. Jaffin seconded that motion. All in favor, motion carried.

5.1 Draft Intelligent Transportation Systems Strategic Plan

D. Camara gave an update on the ITS Plan and reviewed the updates to the Maintenance and Strategic Plans and opportunities. He also reviewed the proposed projects and received comments from the group to include in the Plan. D. Camara encouraged everyone to look at the memos and the projects list. A draft copy is available on the SRPC website.

D. Camara stated further information on current transportation issues and possible ITS project opportunities within the communities are strongly encouraged. D. Camara noted we are especially looking for information from the City of Rochester. D. Camara stated to please submit this information to Dan Camara (dcamara@strafford.org) by May 25th as the project will be wrapping up around the third week in June.

5.2 FY 2013 Unified Planning Work Program

M. Ambrosi stated Strafford Metropolitan Planning Organization has had a busy and productive 2012 Fiscal Year. We made significant strides on project listed in the 2012-2013 Unified Planning Work Program. Among some of the major efforts worked on and completed include: the *Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan*, work on the *Ten Year Plan* and GACIT process, significant effort reviewing and making recommendations for the House and Senate federal transportation reauthorization plans, in which we were able to influence major changes that impact small MPOs nationwide (which Cynthia was recognized

for by AMPO), and major steps forward on creating a “*Project Portfolio Database*” to assist with project tracking, prioritization, development, and organizational efficiency. We also worked extensively on developing baseline data sets to assist with project prioritization, municipal regulations, and moving closer to an environment where we use performance based planning. Major work was done on two Scenic Byway projects, local Safe Routes to School projects, a full update to our ITS Architecture and strategic plan, and a transportation model update.

M. Ambrosi noted as we approach Fiscal Year 2013 we are refocusing our efforts on upcoming work and strategizing for projects scheduled for FY 2013.

5.3. Draft NH Rail Plan

M. Ambrosi stated NH DOT recently released a draft version of the updated NH Statewide Rail Plan that provides information regarding the status of NH’s rail system, identifies underutilized NH transportation assets, and sets goals and direction for the future of the NH Rail system extending out roughly ten years.

M. Ambrosi gave a PowerPoint presentation that gave an overview of the Strafford region’s rail assets and opportunities included in the Plan and regional rail priorities that may be missing in the plan. M. Ambrosi noted he would write up an executive summary and send to everyone.

6. Project Updates

M. Ambrosi stated he has been in contact with Keith Cota of NHDOT regarding a location for the Lee Park and Ride. D. Camara reminded everyone if they have any traffic counts or culvert requests to please send them to him.

7. Other Business

R. Jaffin noted the Emergency Management Conference is being held on June 26, 2012 at the Radisson in Manchester and noted there was no cost to attend the event. P. Lockwood stated handed out a sheet for the Green Your Fleet workshop being held on June 1, 2012. There was no other business.

8. Adjournment

The Chairman asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:10 a.m. K. Ortmann made a motion and R. Jaffin seconded that motion. All in favor, motion carried.

Minutes submitted by,



Marilyn Barton, PHR
Recording Secretary