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**Strafford Policy Committee Meeting
January 18, 2013
Rochester Community Center, Conf. Rm. 1A, Rochester, NH
Minutes**

FINAL

SMPO Policy Members Present: Tom Clark (Dover), Tom Crosby (Madbury), Robert Jaffin (Rochester), Steve Brown (Wakefield), Kenn Ortmann (Rochester), Marcia Gasses (Dover), William Connor (Somersworth), Edmund Jansen, Jr. (Rollinsford), Brian Tapscott (Somersworth), Ed Comeau (Brookfield), Rad Nichols (COAST), Victoria Parmele (Northwood), Sandra Keans (Rochester), Glenn Davison (NHDOT) and Beverly Cray (UNH)

SMPO Staff Present: Cynthia Copeland (Executive Director) Marc Ambrosi (Transportation Planner) Dan Camara (Senior GIS/Transportation Analyst), Marilyn Barton (HR Specialist/Events Coordinator) and Greg Jones (Regional Planner)

1. Introductions

Chairman Tapscott opened the meeting at 9 a.m. and asked for introductions around the room. B. Tapscott noted that the SMPO Bylaws state those non-dues paying communities have one vote at the meeting due to federal requirements.

2. Staff Communications

M. Barton reminded the Commissioners in attendance that the next Commissioners meeting would be taking place on Thursday, January 24, 2013 at 7 PM at the Rochester Community Center in Conference Room 1A.

3.1 Draft MPO Minutes of December 21, 2012

The Chairman asked for a motion to approve the draft MPO minutes of December 21, 2012. T. Crosby made a motion and E. Comeau seconded that motion. All in favor, motion carried.

4.1 Project Solicitation Process and Schedule

M. Ambrosi stated over the last two years Strafford MPO staff has created a GIS Project Database that includes all of the projects from the last project solicitation round. M. Ambrosi noted this database allows for superior project analysis capabilities, project tracking and facilitate more efficient project delivery.

M. Ambrosi noted to ensure the project database remains up to date and meets the Strafford MPO's project solicitation procedures, updates will be made and will be initiating the Project Solicitation process over the next month. M. Ambrosi stated the MPO will be streamlining the project solicitation process and the goal is to make the process easier to understand, more organized and take less time for the communities.

M. Ambrosi gave a PowerPoint presentation on the packages that would be sent out to the communities and agencies and gave an example of the Google Earth files. He explained the dots on the maps are projects and a person can click on the project and get additional information about that project. R. Nichols asked how new expanded bus service is portrayed on the map. M. Ambrosi explained the lines on the map show the bus service. M. Ambrosi stated the project solicitation packets would be going out soon. M. Ambrosi noted the goal is to have enough information filled out by the community on their own, get it endorsed by their board or council and then he will meet with the communities to discuss.

4.2 Ten Year Plan Process and Schedule

D. Camara noted the Strafford MPO has recently taken part in a collaborative Lean process with NH MPOs, RPCs and NHDOT to attend to make NH's Ten Year process more efficient and more valuable to its end users. D. Camara stated through a series of meetings we were able to map out the current process in order to assess where individual steps could be improved (or removed entirely) in order to meet the goal of creating a more efficient and valuable process. D. Camara noted two major efforts were determined to be undertaken: one being a standardized project solicitation criteria and the other being a project initiation form for new projects being proposed for the Ten year Plan.

M. Ambrosi stated currently the SMPO has not received a regional budget. G. Davison stated the RPCs will be provided a threshold of funds and would be similar to the last round, based on population and lane miles. G. Davison noted the process is going to change and would be more open and transparent. G. Davison noted NHDOT projects would be ranked along with regional projects, put into a large list and ranked by criteria from NHDOT. There was a discussion about the new software, Decision Lens that will assist in the ranking of the projects.

D. Camara noted the Ten Year Plan is a two year process and in January through April SRPC will be reaching out to communities. G. Davison reviewed the NHDOT public hearing process. A discussion ensued regarding scoring and ranking of projects.

M. Ambrosi noted a draft review would be available in February, adopting at the March meeting and submitted to NHDOT in April.

4.3 Unified Planning Work Program and Schedule

The Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) is a biennial requirement to provide a scope of work for the use of the federal funding our organization receives to fulfill transportation planning in the region.

M. Ambrosi stated during the last UPWP cycle (Winter-Spring 2011), the Strafford MPO worked collaboratively with NH DOT, FHWA, FTA, other RPCs and MPOs to develop new core work products for the plan. M. Ambrosi noted this was used as an opportunity to overhaul the structure and content of the plan to meet the new standards set in place. M. Ambrosi stated we have been using the new Unified Planning Work Program format for the last year and are satisfied with the product.

C. Copeland noted we have not heard from NHDOT what the budget will be and the assumption is it will be the same as last year. It was noted there was a focus on performance measures. It was noted there would be a public comment period starting in February and would be presented to TAC for their recommendation at their March meeting and approval by the Policy Committee at their March meeting and sent to NH DOT by March 29, 2013 for their review.

The discussion included a review of the scope of work contained in the current UPWP, identifying new federal planning emphasis areas and review anticipated changes to the scope of work to meet new requirements.

4.4 Public Participation Process and Schedule

M. Barton stated she was currently working on updating the Public Participation Plan. She noted some of the updates included new public outreach events and technology that are being done: Facebook, Twitter, blogging, listening posts, SRPC newsletter and local festivals. M. Barton stated she had been reviewing the RSA's listed in our current Plan to make sure we are being compliant. M. Barton noted the schedule for the update was as follows: Public comment and local libraries in April 2013, to TAC and Policy Committees for comments in May 2013 and for recommendation and approval in June 2013.

4.5 Metropolitan Plan Update and Schedule

M. Ambrosi noted the Strafford MPO is in the process of fully updating our regional long term transportation plan, the Metropolitan Transportation Plan. M. Ambrosi reviewed updated outline and gave examples of the enhancements the document will have and make it more user friendly and meaningful to people. M. Ambrosi noted the schedule to complete this update would be next December – January. M. Ambrosi stated the SMPO is looking to form an advisory committee, which include transit folks and people who rely on transit to help form strategies.

5. Project Update(s)

M. Ambrosi stated he spoke with NHDIOT about the Lee Park and Ride and going forward there will be a meeting with NHDOT COAST regarding design. A discussion ensued about the UNH bus route and that it would begin on Route 125 on February 18, 2013, using the Home Depot lot as the pickup and drop off location. It was noted there was a lot of right of way and safety concerns along Route 125 and there was discussion if the Route 125 Corridor Plan was being implemented. M. Ambrosi stated that some of it was.

M. Ambrosi stated the Rochester Park and Ride has been delayed to 2013 and has been put on the NHDOT project page. M. Ambrosi stated the SMPO is now a member of the I-95 Corridor Coalition which has live traffic data and historic data. M. Ambrosi noted TIP Amendment #1 will be out next month and will have that out for public comment in February and for approval to the Policy Committee at their March 15, 2013 meeting.

G. Jones spoke about the culvert assessments and sidewalk inventory done over summer 2012 and review process and procedures to see what's working and not working.

D. Camara noted regarding the ITS Maintenance Plan that updates would be given every January and June to the Committee and there are no updates or projects to report.

6. Other Business

There was no other business.

7. Citizen's Forum

There were no comments from the public.

8. Adjournment

The Chairman asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 11 a.m. S. Keans made a motion and W. Connor seconded that motion. All in favor, motion carried.

Minutes submitted by,

Marilyn Barton, PHR

Marilyn Barton, PHR
Recording Secretary