

Strafford Metropolitan Planning Organization Policy Committee

Meeting Minutes

Friday, September 18th 2020 9:00 – 11:00 AM

Strafford Regional Planning Commission
Virtual Meeting Via Zoom
Rochester, NH

The meeting was called to order at 9:05am
Prior to beginning the meeting, the Chair read the following statement:

As Chair of the Strafford MPO Policy Committee I have found that, due to the COVID-19/Coronavirus crisis and in accordance with Governor Sununu's Emergency Order #12 pursuant to Executive Order 2020-17, this Committee is authorized to meet electronically. Please note that there is no physical location to observe and listen contemporaneously to the meeting, which was authorized pursuant to the Governor's Emergency Order. However, in accordance with the Emergency Order, this is to confirm that we are:

a) Providing public access to the meeting by telephone, with additional access possibilities by video or other electronic means;

We are utilizing the Zoom platform for this electronic meeting. All members of the Committee have the ability to communicate contemporaneously during this meeting through the Zoom platform, and the public has access to contemporaneously listen and, if necessary, participate in this meeting through dialing the following phone # 1-646-558-8656 and meeting ID 852 4088 7267, or by clicking on the following website address:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85240887267>

b) Providing public notice of the necessary information for accessing the meeting;

We previously gave notice to the public of how to access the meeting using Zoom, and instructions are provided on the SRPC website at Strafford.org, and clicking on the link for the May Policy Committee.

c) Providing a mechanism for the public to alert the public body during the meeting if there are problems with access;

If anybody has a problem, please call 603-559-3500 (ext. 102) or email Colin at:
clentz@strafford.org.

d) Adjourning the meeting if the public is unable to access the meeting.

In the event the public is unable to access the meeting, we will adjourn the meeting and have it rescheduled at that time. Please note that all votes that are taken during this meeting shall be done by Roll Call vote.

Let's start the meeting by taking a Roll Call attendance. When each member states their presence, also please state whether there is anyone in the room with you during this meeting, which is required under the Right-to-Know law.

1. Attendance:

Committee Members

Don Hamann (Rochester), Tim White (NHDES), Leslie Schwartz (Durham), Michael Williams (COAST), Mark Richardson (Somersworth), Bill Fisher (Farmington), David Landry (Dover), Richard Michaud (Somersworth), Victoria Parmele (Northwood), Barbara Holstein (Rochester), Peter Nelson (Newmarket), Michael Bobinsky (Somersworth), Joe Boudreau (Rochester), Glenn Davison (NHDOT).

Staff

Jennifer Czysz, Colin Lentz, Nancy O'Connor, Jackson Rand,

2. Staff Communications

J. Czysz explained that SRPC had a regional roundtable on recycling the day before the Policy meeting. It was the first of a series and participants discussed the various regional challenges around recycling and solid waste, and potential collaboration between communities to address those challenges.

J. Czysz said the SRPC resilience sub-committee would be meeting for the first time next week. She added that the quarterly commission meeting was scheduled for Thursday September 24th. At that meeting the commissioners will be reviewing the proposed municipal dues, Shayna Silvia will have a draft of the 2020 Annual report, Jackson Rand will be demonstrating how to use SRPC's ArcOnline mapping features, and the resilience sub-committee will have a brief recap of their meeting.

C. Lentz noted that the November Policy meeting will be kept to 45 minutes (9:00 – 9:45) because at 10:00 staff from NHDES will be offering a separate special training for municipal staff on the process for permitting and installing electric vehicle charging infrastructure. The presentation will be geared for municipal technical staff and the intent is to advertise to other RPCs in addition to SRPC.

3. Action Item(s)

3.1 Minutes from August 21st 2020 [VOTE]

M. Bobinsky made a motion to approve the minutes as written.

Seconded by D. Hamann

Vote: R. Michaud and L. Schwartz abstaining, otherwise unanimous in favor (via roll call vote)

3.2 Ten Year Plan Project ranking results [VOTE]

C. Lentz provided a recap of the current state of Ten Year Plan (TYP) project development and scoring. He noted that NHDOT needs a list of candidate projects so they can conduct an engineering review since SRPC does not have engineering staff. NHDOT requested that the list include projects that fit in the region's allocation of TYP funding (\$4.9 million), plus up to two contingency projects. Seven projects came out of the project solicitation process that were ready for submission to the TYP. C. Lentz said he developed scopes and cost estimates with municipal staff and various resources. He recapped what had occurred through the scoring process to this point:

- TAC recommended a set of weights for the project scoring criteria
- Policy requested some modifications to shift weight from the "mobility" criteria to the "state of repair" criteria
- TAC supported Policy's requested changes and C. Lentz averaged the TAC and Policy weights to conduct preliminary scoring
- TAC reviewed the draft ranking of projects and recommended to the Policy Committee that the projects be submitted as follows:

Projects approximately within the regional allocation:

- Rochester (L14001) Route 11 and Nashoba Drive: to replace an existing TYP project
- Barrington (L01001) NH125 and NH9 Intersection: \$761,944
- Rochester (L14002) Route 11: \$3,620,000
- Farmington (L05001) Route75, 153 Downtown Corridor: \$1,233,902

Two contingency projects

- Milton (09001) Dawson Street and Silver Street: \$543,200
- Durham (L04001) Main Street/NH155A/Mast Road Intersection: \$969,600

- The project list originally included three possible contingency projects but TAC recommended removing that project to meet NHDOT's request because it scored the lowest
- The Farmington project made the total slightly over the regional allocation (by about \$600,000) but C. Lentz said NHDOT was comfortable with that since the costs were conservatively estimated

C. Lentz explained that there were two primary decisions before the Policy committee: 1) confirm the proposed averaged criteria weightings, and 2) discuss and approve the list of candidate projects. He noted that the list needed to be sent to NHDOT by the end of October.

C. Lentz explained that even if projects were not included on the candidate project list, they would be retained in the Metro Plan for refinement and so they could be ready for other funding sources. He explained that once NHDOT has the list of projects they will conduct their engineering review between November and December. During that time SRPC staff will be compiling additional data on demographics and crashes. Once NHDOT finishes their review, they will share the results with RPCs. RPCs then need to conduct a second round of discussion about the candidate projects to refine the list to only those projects that fit within the regional allocation.

C. Lentz said he proposed forming a sub-committee of TAC and Policy members to meet and discuss the projects in greater detail. They would review additional data on each project. The sub-committee would recommend a final list of projects for TAC and Policy review. The final list needs to be submitted to NHDOT by the end of March.

M. Bobinsky made a motion to approve the weights averaged between TAC and Policy
Seconded by D. Hamann

D. Hamann made a motion to approve the list of candidate projects as recommended by the TAC.
Seconded by L. Schwartz

4. **Project Updates**

C. Lentz asked for volunteers for the TYP project scoring sub-committee. He said he imagined the sub-committee would meet around three times.

J. Boudreau, M. Richardson, and B. Fisher volunteered.

5. **Other Business**

C. Lentz said staff were developing a program to better utilize SRPC's three bicycle and pedestrian counters. They were going to start identifying priority locations to set counters to get baseline data for pedestrian and bicycle activity around the region.

Commissioner Roundtable

D. Hamann said NHDOT and the City of Rochester had recently agreed on the initial safety improvements at the intersection of Tebbetts Rd and Old Dover Rd.

B. Fisher said Farmington had installed a temporary bridge on Hornetown Rd while the permanent structure was under development.

P. Nelson said he was working with the Newmarket energy committee to explore ways to reduce local energy costs and increase sustainability. This would involve a community power agreement, which other communities could join. He said people could contact him about joining that agreement and he was developing a template for prospective communities.

D. Landry said the Dover community trail expansion through the high and middle school to the Bellamy park was underway and he hoped it would be completed soon. He added that local development and real estate market is the highest he's ever seen, in spite of – or maybe because of – COVID-19. C. Lentz said he had heard of a general migration out of heavily populated cities, but he said Dover's housing market had been on the rise for several years (from his experience looking for houses in the region). J. Boudreau added that the people who have been able to continue working from home are realizing they can live wherever they want regardless of proximity to their job.

G. Davison noted that the changes were already having an impact on transportation. Imagine the positive impact on congestion if some people only had to drive one day a week for work and could work from home the rest of the time.

V. Parmele asked for confirmation about the construction of a park and ride at the Lee traffic circle. C. Lentz confirmed that it was an NHDOT project funded through the CMAQ program. The park and ride is the last part of the group of projects associated with the Newington-Dover highway and bridge expansion. C. Lentz said the park and ride would be an expansion of the parking lot behind the Wentworth Douglas urgent care facility just north of the traffic circle.

6. **Citizen's Forum** – Citizens of the Strafford region are invited to speak on the subject matter of the meeting. Statements should be limited to three minutes.

No members of the public were present to provide comments

7. **Adjournment**

B. Fisher made a motion to adjourn; seconded by D. Hamann

The meeting was adjourned at 10:00am