



NCC Transportation Advisory Committee
Littleton Regional Healthcare, Littleton, NH
Meeting Summary
October 22nd, 2018
No quorum present

Members: Carl Martland, Sugar Hill; Clayton Macdonald, Stratford (Chair); Doug Grant, Randolph; Cabot Ronish, Whitefield; Robin Irving, Northumberland; Rick Hiland, Albany;

NCC Staff: Alex Belenz

NHDOT Staff: Linda Dusenberry (Bureau of Planning and Community Assistance)

Guests: Steve Knox, Town of Albany; Chuck Henderson, Sen. Shaheen's Office

Call To Order: Mr. Macdonald called the meeting to order at 11:10 AM and introductions were made.

1. Approval of Minutes

Mr. Macdonald reviewed the minutes with the Committee, noting that there was not a quorum present at this meeting so accepting the minutes of the past meeting would be tabled to the following meeting. Mr. Macdonald noted that his last name was spelled with a lower-case "d." There were no further comments and the minutes were tabled to the next meeting. Mr. Belenz noted that there was a confirmed quorum on Friday, but had a few members who were unable to attend at the last minute.

2. Regular Updates

North Country Council Updates. Mr. Belenz provided several updates:

- NCC assisted NH State Parks and NHDOT in submitting a joint Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP) application for funding for a transit feasibility study for Franconia Notch. The study would inform capital purchasing and scheduling for a shuttle system that would meet the demand for overflow parking once a parking ban is enforced on the interstate. The study would also provide an overview of the challenges and opportunities related to potential transit-based solutions to other areas in the White Mountain National Forest that have issues with overflow parking.
- NCC has wrapped up its culvert assessment project for the Androscoggin Watershed and will be working with NH Fish & Game to schedule meetings with communities to review

the results and provide information on strategies and funding sources for culvert upgrades and replacements.

North Country Scenic Byways Council Updates

- Mr. Martland noted that NCSBC recently adopted “Spend a Day on the Byways,” a document that lays out potential promotional strategies and lists potential infrastructure improvements (e.g., pull-offs, kiosks). Mr. Martland recently gave presentations on the byways to Androscoggin Valley Chamber of Commerce and the North Country Council Commissioners, and will be giving more talks to interested parties.
- Mr. Belenz added that NCC recently submitted applications for new byway designations that will be considered by the state committee in November.
- Mr. Martland noted that the Town of Sugar Hill recently received a notice from NHDOT that the Department intends to add additional signage to highways in District 1. He counted 37 state highway signs along an 8 mile stretch of NH 117 in Sugar Hill, and feels there are already too many signs. It was also frustrating to hear after being told previously that towns would be responsible for maintaining byway signage if installed. Mr. Macdonald added that the Town of Stratford asked NHDOT to reduce the speed limit on US 3 in the two Stratford villages and were told no.

3. Transportation Alternatives Program Project Rankings

Mr. Belenz reviewed the process that was agreed upon at the last TAC meeting for developing the draft rankings of projects. A committee of 4 NCC staff reviewed the projects independently, submitted their scores based on the presented criteria, then had a meeting to discuss and adjust the rankings. TAC members were invited to participate; however, there were no takers.

Mr. Belenz presented the TAP project proposals that were submitted by the Towns of Albany, Conway, Franconia, Northumberland, Whitefield, and the City of Berlin (presentation is available here: http://www.nccouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/TAC_TAP-Presentation.pdf). In the discussion of the Northumberland proposal, Mr. Belenz noted that one potential challenge will be the conversion of Church St to a one-way in order to accommodate the sidewalk. Ms. Irving added that it would need to be approved by the selectboard; however, she believes it would be. Mr. Macdonald noted that Church St would be safer as a one-way street. In the discussion of the Albany proposal, Mr. Knox noted the significant bicycle traffic that the road receives. Mr. Belenz noted that NCC believed that all of the proposals had merit, with all receiving fairly high scores. Mr. Martland agreed that all projects were strong, and that any communication to NHDOT should indicate that the TAC believes all projects are worthy of consideration for funding. Mr. Martland also noted that

while Albany's proposal would be worthy of funding, it also has somewhat less relevance to the goals of the TAP program, and makes sense to be ranked last. Members agreed that NCC's preliminary ranking list reflected the relative strengths of the proposals. Mr. Belenz noted that the TAC would need to vote to finalize the list at the next meeting (November 15th).

4. Ten Year Plan process

Mr. Belenz provided a summary of the conversation of the Ten Year Plan process at the September 20th meeting. Project proposals are due to NCC on November 9th, and NCC will present a preliminary list of ranked project proposals to the TAC on November 15th. NCC will then submit the preliminary list of projects to NHDOT for review and engineering estimates. Depending on the total cost of the projects received, the TAC may need to vote to narrow down the initial submission list. The final ranking of project proposals will take place at the April TAC meeting, after NHDOT has completed their review and provided feedback to NCC.

Mr. Belenz shared the Ten Year Plan project ranking criteria with members. The criteria are defined by NHDOT; however, NCC and the TAC can weight them differently to reflect the priorities of the region. Mr. Belenz noted that most of the criteria are the same as the last Ten Year Plan round with the exception of the Resiliency criteria, which is new. Mr. Belenz noted that NCC is happy to see this as a criteria given the damage that has been done to the region's transportation network in the past year from severe storms. Mr. Martland noted that the Congestion criteria should be weight lower, as it is not a consideration for the vast majority of the region, and that Network Significance should be weighted higher, given the lack of alternative routes along some of the region's travel corridors. Mr. Martland added that having different criteria for rural projects and downtown/Main St projects might be a good idea. Mr. Macdonald agreed, noting that the weights should be context-sensitive. Mr. Knox inquired about the traffic volumes criteria, Mr. Belenz replied that it is an objective criteria based simply on the traffic volumes on the road in question.

Mr. Belenz noted that NCC would take the feedback received today into consideration when developing weights. He will also send around a survey for TAC members to assign relative importance to the criteria.

5. Regional Transportation Plan Work Session

Mr. Belenz noted that he intended to give a presentation but will skip it due to not having enough time left in the meeting. Mr. Belenz circulated maps highlighting the regional travel corridors that will be the focus of the Regional Transportation Plan. The idea is break the region up into the main travel corridors, and describe current conditions, issues, and opportunities along each corridor. This will make it easier to understand corridor-specific considerations and

aid in project development. For each corridor, the key arterial and collector routes will also be highlighted and discussed. Mr. Macdonald noted that the corridor-based approach makes sense. Mr. Macdonald suggested that the US 3 corridor be split at Lancaster and at the intersection with Interstate 93.

Mr. Belenz noted that the public outreach component of the Regional Transportation Plan will be a good opportunity to bring communities together to discuss shared challenges and opportunities along regional corridors. Mr. Hiland noted that he supports this approach and suggested that NCC get in touch with NHMA who is also trying to get communities to work together more.

6. Adjournment

Mr. Martland moved to adjourn, Mr. Grant seconded, and the Committee agreed unanimously to adjourn at 2:05 PM.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Alex Belenz