

City of Concord
Transportation Policy Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, October 22, 2015 - 6:00pm to 8:00pm
City Hall Council Chambers

1. Call to Order/Introductions

Dick Lemieux, Chair, called the meeting to order. Those in attendance included:

Committee Members Present:

Dick Lemieux (At-Large - Chair)
Brent Todd (Council Representative)
Ursula Maldonado (At-Large)
Craig Tufts, (Bicycling Community)
Jim Sudak (Public Transportation Representative)
Rob Mack, Traffic Engineer (City Manager's Designee)

Committee Members Not Present:

Rob Werner (Council Representative)
Byron Champlin (Council Representative)
Sheila Zakre (At-Large)
Tom Irwin (At-Large)

Staff, Visitors and Guests Present:

Nancy Larson (City Planner)

2. Approval of August 27, September 1 and September 24, 2015 meeting minutes

The August 27 and September 24, 2015 minutes were approved as submitted and the September 1, 2015 minutes were approved with several grammatical changes (Motion-Todd; Second-Sudak; Unanimous, with Tufts abstaining from the September 24, 2015 item).

3. Presentations

a. Exit 16 Roundabout Project

Rob Mack presented a concept plan for the proposed roundabout at the Mountain/Shawmut/East Side/Exit 16 intersection. The current intersection was constructed by NHDOT in 2001 and was designed to accommodate future signalization, although traffic levels were insufficient at the time to warrant signalization. Traffic volumes had increased over the following years and the city's consideration of the next stage of intersection improvement began in 2003. In 2005 city staff sponsored a neighborhood meeting to discuss the intersection and receive feedback on the options of either a signalization or roundabout solution. Neighborhood feedback was strongly in favor of the roundabout solution as it was felt to be more consistent with the residential and rural character of the area.

Additional engineering study comparing signal versus roundabout options was developed through 2006, culminating with a February 2006 follow-up public meeting. Strong public

support for the roundabout solution continued based on: maintenance of the residential/rural character of the area; lower traffic speeds afforded by the roundabout; less traffic queuing versus signalization (an issue for access to the gas station and at the Eastman Street intersection); and safer and more inviting pedestrian travel. The roundabout solution illustrated on the concept plan presented to TPAC tonight was accepted by City Council in October 2007. Design and construction of the roundabout is programmed in this FY2016 capital budget. Staff is currently reviewing consultant proposals for design services. It is anticipated that design of the project will occur over the winter, with construction planned for the 2016 construction season. Public information meetings will be planned both early in the design phase to solicit neighborhood input on potential design features as well as late in the design process to present and discuss the final design recommendations. At least one presentation to City Council is also anticipated.

TPAC members concurred with the roundabout concept as the appropriate intersection solution. A suggestion, based on a review of the concept plan, is to consider adding sidewalk across the W. Portsmouth Street approach to the roundabout.

4. Public Comment

None.

5. New business

None.

6. Old Business

None

7. Consent Reports

a. Approval of Subcommittee Minutes (Pedestrian, Bicycle, Public Transportation, and Traffic Operations)

The following subcommittee reports were accepted by unanimous consent: Bicycle/Pedestrian - July 6 and August 3, 2015; Public Transit - April 21, 2015; and Traffic Operations - August 18, 2015.

8. City Council Meeting Update

Councilor Todd reported that at its October 13 meeting City Council: sent a referral to TOC regarding a resident concern about traffic speeds at the Mountain/Hoit intersection; discussed state funding status for the Loudon Road Corridor Improvement project; and discussed the potential use of the recently-cleared Tunis property as an alternative winter walking route to the Friendly Kitchen.

9. TPAC Referrals from City Council, Staff and Chair

a. Referral from City Council regarding a resident concern on wheelchair accessibility on Union Street (City Council: 8/10/15)

The Chair tabled TPAC discussion of the item until the next meeting in order to get feedback from TPAC-PT which plans to further discuss the referral at its November 17, 2015 meeting.

b. **Referral by the Chair to discuss the status of the sections of N. and S. Main Street immediately north and south of the Downtown Complete Streets Project**

Rob Mack noted that the Main Street project team made up optional plans to ‘repave/restripe-only’ the areas south and north of the current project that were removed from the project limits last year due to budget constraints (S. Main Street between Concord and Storrs Streets; and N. Main Street between Centre and Storrs Streets). After this construction season closes in late November, staff will review the TIGER project budget to complete the S. Main Street segment next year and make a determination if project funds might be available (or not) for the ‘paving-only’ segments. If not, these repaving segments would need to be considered as future CIP projects. Also noted was the segment of N. Main Street between Storrs and Washington Streets that has not yet been addressed insofar as recommending a pavement marking change to allow for complete street uses.

Completing appropriate pavement striping on the above, remaining three segments will provide a complete street solution to the US Route 3 corridor from Manchester Street north to Penacook Village. The Chair suggested that TPAC could consider pavement marking alternatives using a matrix method as was done for the Main Street Complete Streets Project. If possible, perhaps staff can coordinate a small work session to look into potential alternatives prior to the next TPAC meeting.

10. Status report on subcommittees

a. **Bicycle/Pedestrian Committee, Craig Tufts**

Craig Tufts reported that the CNHRPC has not yet planned a Heights Public Information Meeting for the Pedestrian Master Plan study. TPAC Bike-Ped discussed the I-93 Bow Concord study that is underway by NHDOT, including consideration of potential ways correct the current I-93 barrier to east-west travel by non-motorized users. Also noted was the League of American Bicyclists’ field view and ride in Concord and attendance at Biketoberfest as follow-up to Concord’s re-application for designation as a Bicycle Friendly Community.

b. **Public Transit Committee, Tom Irwin**

The Chair read a report from Tom Irwin that noted that TPAC-PT discussed CAT’s planned bus acquisition with particular regard to the type of bus that may ultimately be acquired based on either front- or rear-engine mount specification. At issue is the lower maintenance cost of a front-engine bus versus the visual attractiveness of a modern rear-engine bus. Jim Sudak was requested to determine whether there is more than one front-mount engine bus model that “kneels”. If not, CAT’s specification should require rear-mount. If so, TPAC should be part of the discussion in an effort to reach consensus on this issue. Central NH RPC is hoping to do its Boarding & Alighting study this November, but the completion date for the Main Street project may complicate matters. It remains to be seen when the study will happen.

c. **Traffic Operations Committee, Rob Mack**

Rob Mack reported that TOC met on October 20, 2015 and considered a concern on traffic speeds along W. Portsmouth Street related to visitors to the athletic fields at the end of the street. Also discussed was a CPD concern that the city’s ‘No Thru Trucking’ postings should be reviewed. An example is trucks coming off Exit 14 and traveling up Centre Street only to

find a restriction to continued westward travel beyond the roundabout at Liberty Street. The item will be further discussed by TOC next month.

11. Staff Updates

a. **Downtown Complete Streets Improvement Project - TIGER 2012 (CIP460)**

Rob Mack reported that construction continues on the west side of N. Main Street and should be complete this November. The contractor has been allowed longer work hours and work on Saturday to facilitate completion of work before the holiday shopping season.

b. **US Route 3 North Improvements (CIP 35)**

Rob Mack reported that construction of the final segment of Village Street is underway. Most of the street and sidewalk work will be completed this November, with the street opened fully to traffic on binder pavement course over the winter. Final pavement surfacing and pavement markings will be completed next spring.

c. **Sewalls Falls Bridge Replacement Project (CIP 22)**

Rob Mack reported that construction of bridge continues with the first segment of new bridge deck to be installed shortly.

d. **Loudon Road Corridor Improvements (CIP 19)**

Rob Mack reported that the consultant team is preparing final design plans for the project. Staff is coordinating the right-of-way effort which includes obtaining necessary easements to facilitate construction of sidewalk and bus pull-off improvements.

e. **Mountain/Shawmut/East Side/Exit 16 Roundabout (CIP 24)**

(See Item3a)

f. **I-93 Bow-Concord (NHDOT)**

Rob Mack reported that the calibration of the regional model is still underway. TPAC members expressed interest in an initial discussion with the NHDOT project team to share thoughts on problem identification as it relates to non-motorized east-west connections across the current barrier posed by I-93. Staff reported that the City Manager is in the process of formalizing a project review committee to represent city interests and that an opportunity to discuss the project will be available afterwards.

12. Other Discussion Items

Craig Tufts reported that the Merrimack River Greenway Trail (MRGT) project was recently awarded a Land and Water Conservation Fund grant for \$100,000. This, together with \$100,000 in matching funds from Friends of MRGT will fund the design and construction of the southerly end of the trail at Terrill Park.

13. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned by unanimous consent at about 8:00 PM.

Upcoming Meeting Dates: November 19, 2015
 December 17, 2015
 January 28, 2016