

**City of Concord
Transportation Policy Advisory Committee**

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, August 25, 2011 - 6:00pm to 8:30pm
City Council Chambers

1. Call to Order/Introductions

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

Committee Members Present:

Dick Lemieux (Resident - Chair)
Councilor Nyhan (City Council)
Jennifer Kretovic (Public Transit)
Jim Sudak (Concord Area Transit) (CAT)
Alex Vogt (Pedestrian Community)
Brent Todd (Penacook)
Ed Roberge, City Engineer - Staff Representative

Committee Members Not Present:

Councilor Werner (City Council)
Frank Drouse (East Concord)
Tom Irwin (North/West Concord)
Ursula Maldonado (Resident)
Domenic Ciavarro (Large Employer)
Peter Rhodes (Bicycling Community)

Staff, Visitors and Guests Present:

Ginny Schneider, Director of Transportation, CAPBMI

2. Approval of July 28, 2011 meeting minutes

Given that the minimum number of members attending to make a quorum was not met, Dick Lemieux requested that members in attendance suspend the rules to allow for the acceptance of the July 28, 2011 meeting minutes and the approve the TPAC action items on the agenda. The committee unanimously agreed.

Brent Todd made a motion to accept the minutes of the July 28, 2011 meeting. The motion was seconded by Alex Vogt. A brief discussion on review of the minutes followed. Ed Roberge noted that Domenic Ciavarro was inadvertently left off the attendance list and would be added to the revised minutes. Jim Sudak noted a type error on page 4, Section 7.c, paragraph 2, where a period needed to replace a comma. Jim Sudak and Ginny Schneider also noted that the next to last sentence on page 4, Section 7.c, paragraph 2 indicated that "CAT presented the committees' recommendation along with several alternate routes plans which had been presented to NHDOT". Jim Sudak requested that this be clarified in the meeting minutes to indicate that CAT had presented the committee's recommended plan and the plan was modified by NHDOT. This was followed by a lengthy discussion regarding the preparation of meeting minutes and clarifications to minutes. Ed Roberge indicated that the meeting minutes prepared for these meetings are a recordation of what is

said and reported at the meeting. If testimony is not given to a topic for clarification during that meeting, meeting minutes are not revised to include clarification to a previous testimony.

Following further discussion regarding the changes and clarifications, Jim Sudak made a motion to accept the changes to the minutes as discussed. The motion was seconded by Alex Vogt. The revisions to the minutes were unanimously approved. The committee returned to the original motion to accept the minutes of the July 28, 2011 meeting. There being no further discussion, the revised minutes were unanimously accepted.

3. Presentations

There were no presentations at this meeting.

4. Public Comments

Jim Sudak stated CAT's disagreement with the following statement in the July 28 meeting minutes, Item 7c, Report from the Public Transportation Committee: "No update on the projected ridership and operational costs associated with this layout [the new Cross-town Route] has been offered."

5. Consent Reports

a. Approval of Subcommittee Nominations

There were no subcommittee nominations to consider.

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

The Committee unanimously approved the meeting minutes of the Pedestrian, Bicycle, Public Transportation, and Traffic Operations Committee meetings.

6. TPAC Referrals from City Council, Staff and Chair

a. Referral from Council Patten regarding a request from a resident in the Cricket Lane neighborhood to consider opening the gate on Cricket Lane (*City Council: 5/2011, TPAC 7/28/2011*)

Ed Roberge indicated that a final report from TPAC to City Council had been drafted and distributed regarding the referral by a resident requesting the City consider opening the gate along Cricket Lane that separates the north and south sections of the street.

Following up from the discussion at the July TPAC meeting, Ed Roberge had discussed this matter with Councilor Patten who reported that the resident requested to drop the request. Given that no further action is required, a final report to Council indicates that this matter had been considered by both TPAC and the Traffic Operations Committee (TOC) and concurs that this matter is closed. No further action is required.

TPAC considered the final report to City Council and unanimously approved same. Ed Roberge will forward the report to the City Clerk for inclusion on the September City Council agenda.

7. Status report on subcommittees

a. Pedestrian Committee, Alex Vogt

Alex Vogt reported that the Pedestrian Committee met in August and discussed a number of items including the Merrimack River Greenway Trail (MRGT) project and sidewalk assessments.

Alex Vogt indicated that an organizational meeting for the Friends of the MRGT project met on August 22nd at the Central NH Regional Planning Commission (CNHRPC) offices to discuss the organizational structure as well as to plan a walk of the PSNH land south of Manchester Street. The trail along the PSNH land will link to Pembroke along an abandoned rail corridor.

Alex Vogt noted that the sidewalk assessment field work by UNH graduate interns has been completed and that the information obtained will be used to determine the most needed area for improvement based on a standard rating system.

The Walk Friendly Community Report Card was reviewed by the committee to determine what projects should be worked on. One item the committee discussed was to develop a Pedestrian Master Plan.

A City-wide Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program is being organized by CNHRPC and expects to host quarterly meetings. Each school would have an action committee with an overall policy committee structured above them. Anyone interested in joining the policy group should contact Nik Coates at CNHRPC.

Alex Vogt reported that on September 30th, Red River Theaters and the Capital Area Wellness Coalition will be sponsoring an event with Mark Fenton as the key note speaker. Mark is a nationally recognized expert on complete streets and brings great insight to community planning.

The committee noted that the in early August, crosswalks in East Concord had still not been painted. Some were quite worn that it was impossible to recognize that a crosswalk existed at that location. Of particular concern was the crosswalk nearest the Merrill Park and Pool. There are a large number of kids that walk to the park location. Alex Vogt did indicate that the crosswalks in East Concord were painted on August 24th but that the pool has been closed for over a week now. An email was forwarded to General Services inquiring about the painting schedule with recommendations to paint earlier in the year.

Alex Vogt also noted that the sidewalks in Boscawen at the new roundabout on US Route 4/Harris Hill Road have been removed by NHDOT as part of the roundabout project because the Town of Boscawen would not sign a maintenance agreement with the DOT to maintain the existing sidewalk in the area. This leaves a large gap in the sidewalk from Penacook to the Hanna Dustin park-n-ride. TPAC thought this most unfortunate and questioned the authority to remove an existing sidewalk segment where one was there before.

b. Bike Committee, Peter Rhodes

In Peter Rhodes' absence, Dick Lemieux reported that the Bicycle Committee did not meet in August given that it was in conflict with the MRGT meeting. Jennifer Kretovic reported that the installation of signs along the North-South Bike Route began this week. Ed Roberge indicated that following the sign installation, pavement marking "sharrows" will follow soon thereafter. Ed Roberge indicated that staff will present the progress of the project at the September TPAC meeting.

c. Public Transit Committee, Jennifer Kretovic

Jennifer Kretovic reported that the Public Transit Committee met in August and discussed the Public Transportation/Concord Area Transit article that was featured in the Concord Insider. The article included a great deal of positive information but also misinterpreted some of the statistical data. For example, the article confused the number of rides per day with riders per day, making the assumption that each ride given was a different person. A correction to this fact was run in the Concord Monitor in a later addition.

The Committee reviewed preliminary results of the new Crosstown Route which indicated that timings on the connections to other routes don't work and will need to be modified. According to CAT, it makes more sense to finalize the route and timings after school starts and so CAT will work with the transit company assisting them with the route changes in September, after school starts. Jennifer Kretovic reported that the committee is concerned that the delay of the route change might be drawing down federal dollars at a faster rate than anticipated in the current budget and that the cost of continuing to operate essentially four routes may result in CAT not having sufficient funds to operate the route for the entire fiscal year. The committee understands that CAT is reviewing this with NHDOT.

Jennifer Kretovic indicated that CAT is intending to survey riders in August and September along Pembroke Road, Industrial Park Drive and Regional Drive about current operations and potential changes to the route. They will also be asking CNHRPC to assist with conducting a boarding and alighting analysis in October and November to get a better understanding of where passengers are getting on and off the buses.

The subcommittee is awaiting CAT's Program Goals for the year. A number of items from the program goals for FY2011 need to be carried over as the initial timelines were not met, such as the new website. Knowing what is reasonable and feasible to accomplish under CAT's new route structure will be important in guiding the subcommittee and its recommendations to TPAC and City Council. Subcommittee members have also been submitting their review comments of CAT's new Communication Plan which is expected to have timelines added and be finalized soon.

d. Traffic Operations Committee, Rob Mack

In Rob Mack's absence, Ed Roberge reported that the TOC met in August and discussed several referrals by residents. Of particular note, Ed Roberge indicated that the TOC reviews accidents throughout the City on a monthly basis and was

pleased to report that where we generally see accident counts ranging from 90 - 100, the month of July reported only 72 accidents. This is a significant reduction despite the major traffic generating event scheduled in Loudon in July.

Ed Roberge noted that the TOC discussed the installation of traffic control signs, reviewed concerns of traffic operations at the Pembroke Road/Blodgett Street intersection, and requests by residents to install speed advisory signs on Hoit Road and add handicap parking in the vicinity of the West Street Ward House.

8. TPAC Policy Objectives/Programs/Initiatives

a. City-wide Speed and Pavement Marking Policy Update

Ed Roberge indicated that there were no new items to report but confirmed that City Council adopted the STOP Sign policy recently drafted by the TOC and endorsed by TPAC.

In light of the crosswalk striping discussion reported earlier by the Pedestrian Committee, Dick Lemieux inquired as to the striping schedule by the General Services Department (GSD). Ed Roberge reported that as a recommendation by TPAC, GSD now stripes City-wide in the spring and re-stripes priority traffic corridors and critical cross-walk locations in the fall. Ed Roberge noted that GSD developed a plan outlining the priority areas and will bring it to the September meeting for TPAC review.

9. Old Business

a. TPAC Accomplishments - Develop list for publishing

Ed Roberge noted that as a result of initial review and setup by Dick Lemieux and Brent Todd, the latest version of the draft accomplishments report (Draft #8) were distributed via email to TPAC and some copies were handed out at the meeting. The report outlines accomplishments in the order of the policy heading, the example given pedestrian policy accomplishments were listed under the policy item pertaining to walkable neighborhoods, etc. Ed Roberge noted that some format changes will be added to the draft report including decision flow arrows included in the pedestrian and bike policy accomplishments, and a section in the leading paragraph on how to read this report.

Committee members asked if the report could include page numbers and accomplishments be set up in chronological order by year of accomplishment. Ed Roberge indicated that changes would be made to the draft report and distributed for review. Ed Roberge noted that TPAC will review the report at the September meeting in hopes to finalize the report format for review by City Council and ultimate placement on the City's webpage.

10. New business

a. Loudon Road Water Replacement Project

Alex Vogt inquired if the Loudon Road water project pavement patching was complete or was there opportunity when resurfacing the roadway to restripe a 3-lane section. Ed Roberge indicated that the Loudon Road project only carried funds for trench patching and that staff has been working on updating the 2001 corridor study for a lane conversion project and has been coordinating that project with NHDOT for inclusion in the Highway Safety Improvement

Program (HSIP). Staff expects to do a full project presentation to TPAC in the coming months.

b. Auburn/Penacook/Little Pond YIELD Signs

Brent Todd inquired as to the recent changes to the YIELD/STOP signs at the Auburn/Penacook/Little Pond Road intersection. Ed Roberge indicated that TOC reviewed a change in the 2011 Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) which prohibits stop and yield controls at the same intersection.

As a proactive step, TOC agreed that it would be appropriate (and required) to remove the YIELD signs and replace them with STOP signs. Staff drafted an Ordinance which will be presented to City Council in September. Upon agreement by TOC, GSD staff replaced the signs prior to final approval by City Council. Understanding that only City Council has the authority to place STOP signs, staff returned the YIELD signs until Council has opportunity to approve the installation. If approved in September, the YIELD signs will be replaced by STOP signs permanently.

c. Merrimack River Greenway Trail Project Update

Dick Lemieux reported that the Merrimack River Greenway Trail (MRGT) project team has developed an 11 member Board of Directors and is finalizing its non-profit organization application. The MRGT organization continues to look for members and folks interested in supporting the project.

d. TIGER III Grant Application Status

As a follow-up to the discussion at the July TPAC meeting, Ed Roberge indicated that staff is in the process of preparing a report to City Council on recommendations to apply for TIGER III grant funds. Noting that staff discussed 3 projects including the Downtown Streetscape project, Langley Parkway - Phase 3, and the MRGT project at the July meeting, Ed Roberge requested that TPAC members voice their opinion on project priority and recommend how many projects should the City apply for. Following brief discussion on the 3 projects noted above as well as other projects staff reviewed that could be representative of the grant program, the general consensus by the TPAC members present was to support the Downtown Streetscape project as the first priority and to limit the application to 1 understanding the effort required to submit a winning grant application.

Given that only 6 members attended the meeting, Ed Roberge noted that an email would be sent out to all TPAC members soliciting comment on the TIGER III grant applications. The final report is due to the City Clerk by August 31st so staff will ask those interested in participating to respond by August 30th for inclusion in the final staff report.

11. Adjourn

There being no other items to discuss, Alex Vogt made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Brent Todd. The meeting adjourned.