

NCC Transportation Advisory Committee Meeting

Meeting Minutes

@Zoom

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83462437307?pwd=ZEh4M01LYWVOSW1PbExCSUY1cEh4UT09>

Thursday, March 11th, 2021

9:00 AM – 11:00 AM

MEMBERS PRESENT: Carl Martland (Sugar Hill), Mark Decoteau (Waterville Valley), Raymond Gorman (Colebrook), Paul Robitaille (Gorham), Robin Irving (Northumberland), Joe Chenard (Lincoln), Marianne Borowski (Cross New Hampshire Adventure Trail),

OTHERS PRESENT: Katie Lamb (NCC), Jared Cape (NCC), Stacey Doll (NCC), William Rose (NHDOT), Phillip Beaulieu (NHDOT), Chris Turgeon (NHDOT) Chuck Henderson (Office of Sen. Shaheen)

1. INTRODUCTION/ATTENDANCE

The meeting was called to order at 9:06am and a roll call and round of introductions was completed.

2. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES (11-02-2020)

A motion to approve the minutes was made by Mr. Larson and seconded by Mr. Robitaille. A unanimous agreement from all members present at the prior meeting was taken by roll call.

3. Recovery & Resiliency (Stacy Doll, Community Resiliency Planner)

Ms. Doll presented on North Country Council's current recovery and resiliency initiative called North Country Rising (See attached presentation slides). This initiative will produce a plan, help with implementation, and may continue in some form to enable follow through. Ms. Doll stated that the series of meetings with stakeholders has received widespread involvement and representation. Ms. Doll asked how TAC would like to be involved in this process.

Mr. Martland, chair of the North Country Scenic Byways Council, introduced NCSBC's new "Byway Achievement Awards" that they will be implementing to encourage improvements

along the byways. He stated that this program will be a part of improving the area's community capital.

Mr. Robitaille stated that the challenges of the area has faced during the pandemic will be enduring and that resources and the flow of resources is a concern. Additionally, he asked how we can include people of socio-economic classes that are under-represented in similar types of planning processes.

Ms. Doll stated collaborative efforts that have and continued to occur with organizations to address that exact concern. Ms. Doll welcomes any suggestions and appreciates the concern.

More info can be found at: <http://www.nccouncil.org/north-country-rising/>. Ms. Doll can be contacted at: sdoll@nccouncil.org

4. Ten Year Plan

Ms. Lamb stated that all four eligible projects were submitted to NHDOT and North Country Council has since received NHDOT's cost estimates and comments. As a reminder, the four projects are:

- Gorham (US2): sidewalk reconstruction and Complete Street upgrades, including bike lanes
- Whitefield (NH116): new sidewalk construction, crosswalk improvements, and intersection improvements
- Berlin (NH16) road reconstruction, sidewalk reconstruction, and drainage improvements
- Littleton (NH302): new sidewalk construction and pedestrian crossing improvements at Walmart intersection

Cost estimates increased due to an added NHDOT inflation cost of 2.8% per year and a 10% NHDOT administration cost applied to non-urban compact areas. Gorham's project estimated sidewalk costs were considered low once reviewed by NHDOT due to overlay and curb estimates determined by NHDOT. The Berlin project was compared by NHDOT to a completed project that resulted in a cost \$4m. The Littleton project scored the lowest, so it was not considered for recommendation. Due to the project estimate increases, the top three projects exceed the regional allocation by \$1.4m. Ms. Lamb proposed that the top three projects (Gorham, Whitefield, Berlin) be voted to progress, with the excess \$1.4m pre-committed in the next Ten Year Plan.

Ms. Irving stated that funding should be pre-allocated for the Berlin project due to the rate of inflation and it would be better to get the project in now then wait another 2 years. Mr. Martland and Mr. Robitallie agree that funding should be pre-allocated for the Berlin.

Mr. Henderson stated that conversations regarding transportation funding are starting to occur in the Legislature and will hopefully yield more infrastructure investment, so it could be possible that the next Ten Year Plan round offers a bigger pot of money.

Mr. Martland made a motion to progress the top three projects with a pre-allocation of \$1.4m for the remainder of the Berlin project cost in the next Ten Year Plan round. Ms. Irving seconded. A unanimous agreement from all members present at meeting was taken by roll call with one recusal from Mr. Henderson.

3. REGULAR UPDATES

NCC Updates

- Ms. Lamb updated the committee on the “Rack & Ride” program and noted that the online map is beginning to fill out nicely. She also mentioned that planning guidance for bike rack placement/installment will be available soon, and can be used by communities and businesses who wish to install bike racks. Lastly, Ms. Lamb noted that she hopes to have a bike rack design contest later on this year and has recently connected within a local forger to make the winning designs.
- Ms. Lamb stated that she will be working on hosting a Complete Streets policy workshop where communities can sit with her and each other to outline vision and goals of a Complete Streets policy in their community. She also hopes to have a Complete Streets pop-up program this field season.
- Ms. Lamb noted that the Regional Transportation Plan and Coordinated Public Transit and Human Services Plan will be presented at the next meeting.

Scenic Byways

- Mr. Martland noted that the annual report available on the NCSBC page on the North Country Council website, along with other materials. Information about the “Byway Achievement Awards” to come soon.

Updates from Communities

Lincoln:

The town is seeing a large number of new residents and housing prices are increasing. New flashing beacon crossings seem to be working well and increasing safety. Noted that the town now requires AirBnB hosts to have their guests register with the town office to avoid blockages of traffic on private roads.

Northumberland:

The town is seeing more traffic on US3 and high turnover in real estate. The town is looking to increase connectivity and trails for both biking and hiking. The town submitted to the TAP grant for rehabilitation of their covered bridge.

Colebrook:

The town finally held its public consultation of the Main Street project and it is now progressing forward. The town is seeing similar trends in real estate and notes that the glove factory has increased its workforce, so the impact on roads, water, and sewer will have to be considered as the town experiences growth.

Sugar Hill:

The town is looking at solar streetlights, as well looking into excess to new town forest trails, noting that the trails set up by the volunteer work of Rose & Chris Elms.

Gorham:

The town is experiencing similar real estate stresses and so much so that homeless is up more than it ever has been, with local people struggling the most to be able to afford housing. Currently working on the NBRC grant to extend sidewalks from Moose Brook trailhead to NH16, as well as from Main Street to Libby Pool. The town now requires any new projects to apply for new driveway permit from NHDOT, even if they have existing driveways. There will be a public hearing on April 12th regarding the Presidential Rail Trail head.

Cross New Hampshire Adventure Trail:

The “North Country Welcomes Cyclists” program is now launched and bicycle amenities, such as secure storage, tools, and cleaning equipment will be available as various businesses along the trail.

NHDOT District 1

The District is starting to commence their spring cleaning, including prep work before repaving takes place. Planning a culvert replacement along 117 and recently worked with the Natural Conservancy in Stratford to replace a box culvert along US3. Also working with the Town of Franconia on coordinating work on closed drainage system with sidewalk and bicycle improvements along Main Street. Noted that the driveway

permit requirement Mr. Robitaille mentioned can be implemented in any town and should be considered.

ADJOURN

Ms. Irving made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Gorman seconded the motion. The decision to adjourn was unanimous without further discussion. The meeting adjourned at 10:59 am.

Respectfully submitted by Katie Lamb & Jared Cape