



NCC Transportation Advisory Committee Meeting

**Granite State Room
at North Country Resource Center
629 Main St B, Lancaster, NH 03584
Tuesday, January 24, 2023
10:00AM-12:00PM**

MINUTES

1. Call to Meeting

The meeting was called to order at 10:30AM.

Carl Martland, Sugar Hill
Rbin irving, Lancaster
Michelle Cormier, Randolph
Hary Juergens, Stratford
Emily Benson, Jackson (Virtual)
David Campbell, Jackson (Virtual)
Rosalind Page, Lisbon (Virtual)
Chuck Henderson, Senator Shaheen's office
Ray Gorman (Colebrook), arrived at 10:45AM

Nick Altonaga, NCC
Bill Watson, NHDOT (Virtual)
William Rose, NHDOT (Virtual)
Phil Beaulieu, NHDot District 1 (Virtual)

2. Approve Meeting Minutes: November 1, 2022**

Nick presented the Meeting minutes from November 1st, 2022. He asked if any members had questions or comments about what was discussed. Voting to approve the minutes will be added to the next meeting due to a lack of a quorum.

Carl: The only thing of note was the need to change some language: "Was US 2 the most important East-West route", Change from "Interstate." There are various styles of taken minutes, these are very long, but I do appreciate having the details. If there is any way to highlight certain portions in the future that would be great.

Nick will look at the discussion from HEB designs from last meeting and get more details on what was said.

3. Discussion

a. On-Call Engineering Services

Nick presented the On-call engineering request form.

Emily: Am I correct in understanding that if we have any needs in Jackson we can fill this out and submit it? Can you send me a separate version of the form?

Nick: Yes, I have separate files for PDF and Word. And if submitted, the requests will be looked at first-come, first serve.

b. Federal Grant Opportunities

Nick presented the Federal Grant opportunities he included in the packet (FHWA, DoE, FTA). He let members know to let him know if they have any questions about what is offered or if they need any assistance in applying.

c. CDC Covid Disparity Grant

Nick presented the COVID disparity grant funding information.

Robin: Would a feasibility study be able to funded through this?

Nick: No, the DHHS is very specific about trying to get pilot programs out and clients being serviced. But this might change in the future.

Emily: This also is the same pot that has been talked about in Carroll County by their Mobility Manager Scott Boisvert. He plans to set up a bike share program and repair program with Kennet high School.

4. Regional Transportation Plan - Draft **

Nick presented the updates he has made to the Draft RTP.

Ray: For the maps, I attended the Planning Commission meeting for the unincorporated places. Several hours of discussion about the Balsams Project. Has NCC done any specific counts for that possible development?

Nick: Is that for the regular seasonal counts or specialty?

Ray: I thought you had done some work for counts and mapping?

Nick: Not that I know of but I can ask Michelle about it.

Carl: The Corridor sheets include a mention of the Byways they are included. Could you possibly include a byway system map in the plan?

Nick: Yes, I can include those maps.

5. Updates

a. Ten-Year Plan Process

William: NHDOT has completed our review of all the projects in all nine regions. We are finalizing comments on the projects and will be sending those out soon. Will also be identifying meeting dates to have RPC staff discuss the comments and how to move forward.

b. Other NCC Projects

Traffic Counts: Anticipate a good season in 2023. Seems like it will be much more organized than 2022. Will have myself and our Planning Specialist fully trained, with intern support. Let us know if you want any counts done in your community.

c. Scenic Byways

Carl: Scenic Byways will be meeting on 1/30/2023. Byway Awards are now set; Nansen Ski Jump received funds. They plan for ski jump events at the end of the month. Shelburne Trail that provides access to the river (By the Byway Award). Tom Howe Trail, Route 302 at Bethlehem/Carroll Town line (New Attraction Award). Trail leads down to the river. It is part of a significant chunk of land acquired by SPNHF. Let your communities know about the awards and if there are any projects they want to submit.

Carl: Does NHDOT have any information on the Federal Level scenic byways program, from the submittals from last year?

William: Wondering what the update from FHWA. FHWA has announced nothing yet and has not let us know when we can anticipate one.

Carl: We went through a significant process to get things ready and even more work from NHDOT. Surprised about no announcements.

Bill: Hoping that the Scenic Byways announcements will be tied to the upcoming Appropriations bills. We have no control over that at the Federal level.

Nick: Will be trying to get the council active again and get some meetings scheduled.

Carl: We will also be looking at the Corridor Management Plans for each of the byways. These each had established processes and goals for improving the corridors. These have largely been completed so it is time to update them.

d. Updates from Communities

Sugar Hill: Nothing to report.

Colebrook: Solar project is incoming. Our Town manager resigned due to health problems. County Administrator noticed that a replacement needed by April 1st (as per County). Sewer and Water projects and other utility projects are moving along. Lot of conversations with partners and agencies. Nice to have the additional federal funds to use.

Lancaster: Funding is trickling in from grants. Asset Management plan will be mapping out our service lines and vertical and horizontal assets. When it was last done, reported that 80% of mains needed to be replaced. Have asked Lancaster departments to prioritize their requests in next Capital Plan.

Have funding for planning and zoning through Housing. Will be redoing our regulations and demolitions. Will be seeing some proposals for subdivisions. 14 Acres near Agway; people are interested in spec. Homes with solar to create a sustainable development. There are a few others that would be more rural and not as impactful for transportation.

Solar proposal for Spreading Field. 14 acres, 999KW. Have not seen a problem with zoning but needs a special exception. Anticipate some opposition when it goes to site plan review.

One of the questions in the public consultation meeting is who will have a direct benefit from this? Taxes was the big selling point. Developer was willing to discuss providing power to government buildings. Seeking to put in a charging center next to the Lancaster Motel.

Have had talks about the Byway adjacent to Weeks State Park on Corrigan Hill. Have talked about an Easement to clear trees to improve the view.

Someone wants to buy the old Thompson Mill property that has a massive event hall. Want to create an event center for Lancaster. If this goes forward, there might be traffic pattern issues that will need to be solved.

Assessment done on Town Forest, people have sought out additional hiking and biking trails. Assessment reported prime wetland and other habitat. People want to create a better trail system through the Town Forest. Section existing right now should possibly be relocated.

Fat Tire Biking: they are travelling on ATV and Snowmobile trails. Have not had snow up until now but should we look for how to separate these uses or is this acceptable?

Chuck Henderson from Senator Shaheen's Office: had travelled around the state and highlighted the congressionally directed spending. Brought \$111 million to the state to support different projects. Appropriate to here: \$1.4 million award for Union Street in Whitefield. Has been a problematic area for decades and fixes drainage and safety issues. Have our arms around most of the pieces of the project, but we are looking for other sources of funds to complete this effort. Would like NCC expertise to assist with the program as well. Bill Watson at NHDOT has been a big help.

Randolph: Most of our energy is going towards a self-funded project. Durand Road, former rte. 2. Durand has not been repaired for decades. Will be bringing this project to town meeting. Anticipate it to be a phased project due to cost. \$4.8 million not-to-exceed, hope to move forward in 23-24. Grateful for the effort put into the TYP Planning process and hope to move forward. This has been a concern for many years. Happy to see that there was positive support from the committee.

Another not-so-little project is improving the parking lot at the Appalachia Trailhead. Want to follow up on possibly Scenic byways funding to study and design an alternative. Have put together a draft list of all stakeholders. If each group contributed, it might be do-able. Working with the Forest Service can be slow and cumbersome.

Stratford: Completed The Grange restoration and are looking forward to making that a public kiosk as a small museum or public space. Continue to work on the sidewalk issues. Have received grant funding to revive the Salt Shed. Have relocated a historic marker down by the River to be more accessible to the public.

Carl: Documented how many cars were at the historic markers in Franconia. There were always 1 or 2 cars stopping by. Might be good to track and see how many are there. There is a funding opportunity that sounds like a possible candidate to help support the Appalachia project.

Emily: Want to reiterate my support for these projects along route 2. It gets so much traffic and the speeds are so high. I would hate for it to take something tragic to get something done. This could be a great opportunity for multiple agencies to work together to solve this problem. Was so grateful for states who have properly funded road amenities and rest areas during multiple trips.

Emily: Jackson is in the final stages of getting results for a community survey on the use of public facilities. This will be used to inform the upcoming Master Plan update. Looking at major transportation routes: We are about to update our Emergency management plan. Always includes discussion of Pinkham Notch and influx of traffic and issues associated.

Bill: Not only do we have the Congressionally Directed Spending award in Whitefield, Congresswoman Kuster has also secured an award for Profile High School for Safe Routes to School between Franconia and Bethlehem. We are currently in CMAQ project selection process.

Received 40 at the start of last fall, Applications were due early this month. \$60 million requested, with \$30 million available. 3 CMAQ applications from the North Country.

Our office is responsible for the distribution of Block Grant Aid to communities. Adds up to 12% of gas tax revenue statewide. Last session allocated \$30 million to communities with an additional one-time allocation of \$36 million for communities with local bridges. This was based on population and sqft of bridge decking owned by the municipality.

Want to mention this in context with the TYP because we will be restarting the State Aid Bridge program. In the past it was first-come, first-served program. Many communities have bridges in design that never hit the red list. Goal is the reach out to towns with the highest amount of red-listed bridges to see if they want to be included on the SAB program.

District 1: Finally getting snow. Here at DOT we don't like the rain or ice, just like dealing with the snow. We have started to think towards Summer maintenance projects. Might have some impacts for traffic. One thing we have planned is a box culvert replacement on Rte. 117 near Polly's Pancakes. Will try our best to minimize our impact on the Lupin festival. Were recently contacted by the Balsams to get some additional headway. They did mention they're getting more momentum with the development, but we have not seen any traffic generation numbers or driveway permit applications yet. Will definitely be looking at the traffic numbers and traffic study needs and solutions for Rte 26.

Robin: HEB is finalizing the engineering for sidewalks in Northumberland. When that was first scoped, the paving was put off until the next year. Would that still be the case?

Phil and Bill: We will look into it and follow-up later.

Carl: The historical marker for the Balsams is at the guardrail right off the road. Anticipate that the upgrades and development along the roadway might be a good time to relocate the Marker to someplace more useful.

6. Other Business

7. Meeting Scheduling

Mondays aren't the best.

Might be good to plan for the next meeting after Town Meeting (Second Tuesday of the Month).

Ray: Want to thank Phil and Bill for being involved and providing insight.

8. Adjourn

Meeting Adjourned at 11:55AM.

****Indicates vote of the TAC is required**

An in-person quorum (7) is needed in order to conduct any votes, so please plan to attend if you are willing and able. If this is not possible, please use the information on the following page to attend virtually. While attending in-person, please wear a face covering for the duration of the meeting and keep a safe distance between yourself and others. Thank you.

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