

MINUTES
Rockingham Planning Commission
MPO Technical Advisory Committee
RPC Offices, 156 Water Street, Exeter NH
October 26, 2023

Due to technical issues the meeting began at 9:30 and no recording was made.

Members Present: B. Dion (Greenland); C. Cross (Newington); T. Moore (Plaistow); E. Eby (Portsmouth); D. Seiglie (Rye); R. Nichols (COAST); M. Connors (Stratham); J. Wilcox (NHDES); V. Partington, (NHDES); L. St. John (NHDOT); L. Levine (FHWA); J. Lavacchia (Hampstead).

Staff: D. Walker (Assistant Director); S. Bogle (Senior Transportation Planner); T. Cheever (Transportation/GIS Analyst); M. Jerominek (Regional Planner)

1. Introductions

Roll call attendance was taken. Walker indicated that the chair was not attending and that he would run the meeting.

2. Minutes of 4/27/23 and 8/24/2023 Meetings

Tabled

3. TIP Amendment #3 – D. Walker

Walker provided an overview of the TIP Amendment process and the details of the changes proposed in Amendment #3. No comments were received from the public however NHDOT submitted a request to include changes to the TRAIN programmatic in the amendment. After reviewing the proposed changes the TAC endorsed the project revisions and recommended approval to the MPO Policy Committee.

4. Ten Year Plan Priorities and GACIT Hearings – D. Walker

Walker reminded TAC members of the project priorities identified by the RPC in the Spring and included by NHDOT in the Draft Ten Year Plan this fall. He provided a quick overview of the GACIT hearing dates and locations as well as attendance around the region. Walker finally provided an overview of the comments heard at the hearings both in support of projects as well as in support of larger initiatives and planning processes.

5. Improving TAC Participation – S. Bogle

Bogle reviewed recent staff work to improve participation in the TAC. We have regular, active participation from eleven of the 25 towns currently eligible for voting seats. Three towns currently have no appointee, while eleven towns have either an appointee or a contact for TAC

mailings but have not participated in 2022-2023. Three of the eight agency members with voting seats have also not attended a meeting during 2022-2023. While the 11 active communities and the active agencies constitute a quorum for doing business, at times we've had difficulty getting enough members physically present as opposed to tuning in via Zoom. Staff are currently contacting TAC members who have not been active recently, and communities with no current appointee to ensure that inactive seats are filled. The group discussed providing food as an incentive to attend in person, including moving the meeting to lunchtime and serving pizza as NRPC does with their TAC. There was also brief discussion of adding more outside speakers, so meetings provide more opportunities to learn about transportation topics, beyond just managing the mechanics of the MPO process. Topic suggestions included EVs, the new Public Right of Way Accessibility Guidelines (PROWAG) that set new sidewalk and crossing accessibility requirements for municipalities, and traffic management/adaptive signal control. There was also a suggestion to rotate meeting locations.

6. Agency Updates and Announcements – Multiple TAC Members

Cross shared that the primary discussion in Newington is on how to best reuse the Fox Run Mall as well as industrial development in the community. Dion described ongoing discussions of the future of NH33 and the needs of the corridor. Nichols announced that COAST was restarting some runs that had been previously suspended due to a lack of drivers and is back to hourly service on all routes. Eby discussed a recent Federal Rail Administration grant to address railroad crossings in the City as well as work to study options for the Bartlett Street bridge. Connors indicated that Stratham is working with the Conservation Commission to improve trail networks and access to adjacent private lands. Moore relayed ongoing discussions in Plaistow regarding the Main Street Traffic Calming project, the Main Street/North Avenue intersection, and work on NH 125. NHDOT indicated that the GACIT Hearings are wrapping up and there will be two more meetings in November in Concord to finalize the plan to be sent to the Governor. NHDES shared that they will be hosting two listening sessions related to EV charging in November.

7. Project Updates

- Progress is being made on securing a consultant for the development of Regional Safety Action Plans for the four New Hampshire MPOs.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 11:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
David Walker, Recording Secretary
