

# **Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission Transportation Advisory Committee**

## **MEETING MINUTES**

May 16, 2018

3:00-4:30 PM

UVLSRPC Offices

10 Water Street, Suite 225

Lebanon, NH 03766

Attendees: Dick Jones (Lyme), Paul Carreiro (Orford), Van Chestnut (Advanced Transit, Chair), Don Nichols (Grantham), Peter Kulbacki (Hanover), Scott Sweet (Claremont), Scott Osgood (Enfield), Jay Buckey (Grantham), Richard Lee (New London), Paige Heverly (Vital Communities), Karen Liot Hill (Lebanon), William Rose (NHDOT), Steve Schneider (UVLSRPC), Meghan Butts (UVLSRPC)

### **1. Call to Order**

Mr. Chestnut called the meeting to order at 3:05 PM.

### **2. Action on Minutes from March 20, 2018**

Mr. Sweet made a motion to approve the minutes from March 20, 2018. Mr. Osgood seconded the motion to approve. The motion passed unanimously.

### **3. Regional Transportation Plan with William Rose from NH DOT**

Mr. Rose gave a two part presentation regarding the transportation planning process and the potential future of regional long range transportation plans that is not required but encouraged by NHDOT.

Part one focused on the current four “silo” system of the regional plan, the regional Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), the State Ten Year Plan (TYP), and the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). The current system addresses each process as its individual piece. Mr. Rose explained how these four “silos” will be looked at as interlocking processes that inform each other starting. Mr. Rose explained how they relate, the importance of each piece in the process, as well as where the implementation lies. For more information see attached slides.

Part two of the presentation focused on a regional transportation plan that is corridor-focused at a sub-regional level. This plan would be corridor-focused as opposed to the current mode focused plan. This plan would narrow in on each regional corridor and could discuss many attributes of each corridor including safety, modes, traffic, land use, commuter data, financial planning etc. The plan could assist in identifying projects for the Ten Year Plan. For more information see attached slides.

### Questions/Comments

- Mr. Rose referenced a Corridor-focused plan from a region in Vermont and Mr. Schneider asked what the feedback from the region was to the plan. Mr. Rose replied that the plan was well-received and included increased community engagement from transportation group sand the general public.
- Mr. Carreiro asked what NH DOT wanted from the public meetings. Were the public meetings before-hand to receive public input or to inform the public of what is already happening. Mr. Rose replied with both of these efforts and to find out what is being missed in the data gathering for the plan. Mr. Carreiro explained that in his experience the effort before-hand is important for community engagement so people can prepare for and become interested in the topic. Ms. Butts responded that all meetings of the TAC are public. Mr. Rose replied that this is a local challenge and each municipality is unique.
- Mr. Jones discussed his experience where if a project is already funded or the belief that something will be done, people will come to public meetings. In the past, people were not confident that projects in plans would be funded and completed.
- Ms. Liot Hill asked what the connection between regional public participation vs. local public participation when the municipalities already have plans that include public participation. Is there a requirement for how many members of the public need to participate? What is the value of public participation? Mr. Rose said no there is no requirement for how many members of the public need to participate. The value is that decisions are not just made by the TAC or DOT or the RPC but are directed by public input.
- Ms. Liot Hill asked if there is a connection between the City of Lebanon's 5-year plan and the regional ten-year plan? Should the municipal plans inform the regional plan. Mr. Rose: yes. Ms. Butts: TAC members are municipal and Agency experts throughout the region that inform the TAC on regional issues which could include municipal plans. The Ten-Year Plan is focused on State roads in which the funding doesn't typically come from municipal dollars. So while they are both important, the projects should be different coming from each plan.
- Ms. Liot Hill asked if the corridor approach is similar to reorganizing the current plan and asked if the data already exists? Ms. Butts replied that yes, the corridor approach is reorganizing the current plan from modal to corridor-focused while also becoming much more detailed and subregional. She continued to say that the current regional plan is very broad with a heavy focus on Lebanon and Claremont. The corridor-approach would include in greater detail how the other communities in the region use corridors to access the more popular destinations as well as impacts of development along a corridor to all communities along the route. It is a way to put all of the data in one place to truly inform projects.
- Mr. Rose commented that this process allow recognition of the value of regional planning commissions and what they can provide. More municipalities may participate in this process if they understand the value of

the work being done as well as the impacts on their communities being assessed.

- Mr. Chestnut commented that a common local conversation revolves around a local project or bridge. The corridor approach would include these bridges as well as other issues along the corridor, but at what point is the local bridge in question addressed?
- Mr. Rose responded that the plan would identify the issues in each corridor that can be prioritized per corridor. He continued to say that the TAC will identify the region's corridors and not NHDOT. He also suggested to not include I-89 or I-91 as corridors because their maintenance is already determined by the states and the TAC has no control over. He did suggest that the interstate is discussed within the context of the other corridors. Corridors have a starting point and end point.
- Mr. Chestnut responded that this is important to the TAC as prioritizing and ranking interstate project has been a difficult task as these projects are expensive and take away from regional funds.
- Mr. Carreiro asked how would this process help the TAC and municipalities get more local projects to be funded? Mr. Rose responded that the amount of dollars allocated to the State is determined by the Federal Government. The State then allocates dollars regionally based on population and federal-aid eligible road miles. Ms. Butts replied that the past Ten-Year Plan round only had 2 eligible project submissions from the region. This process would help us determine projects together which could include financial information as well. It would also provide the scoring committee more information to best score projects that are not in their respective municipalities because it would provide adequate detail of the regional impacts of the project.
- Mr. Rose also commented that there are often non-Ten-year plan funding opportunities that come through State programs. There could be projects identified in through this planning process that could identify projects that are eligible for funding through these programs when they occur. The State is working to assist in identifying these projects. Mr. Rose also included that this process could help identify projects that could be impacted by future development or land use changes at the local level that could be eligible for public-private partnerships or other cost-share opportunities. This could also include cost-share with future Ten-Year Plan projects if they are identified earlier in the planning process as having an increase in impacts from development.
- Mr. Rose discussed that the MUPCA program is no longer a separate program but that federal aid eligible roads within the urban compact are eligible to compete for Ten-Year Plan funding.
- Ms. Liot Hill asked what is next for the TAC in this conversation. Mr. Rose replied that there are no requirements or deadlines at this point. The TAC has an opportunity to consider if and how they would like to proceed with the corridor-focused planning process.
- Ms. Liot Hill asked how often we update the regional transportation plan. Ms. Butts replied that the update is typically every 5 years. Mr. Schneider agreed

and commented that the State Ten-Year Plan process will start again in the fall.

- Ms. Butts commented that the corridor-focused regional transportation plan would help inform the Ten-Year Plan process but we are not expected to have that plan put together before this coming cycle of the Ten-Year Plan. She said that this conversation is a look toward the future of this process.
- Mr. Schneider suggested that the TAC could start to look at corridors in the next Ten Year Plan process.
- Mr. Chestnut commented that a good example is the Route 120 Corridor group that has been meeting to discuss issues along the Route 120 Corridor.
- Mr. Schneider commented that the corridor planning process could lead to some projects getting completed sooner and not waiting to join the Ten-Year Plan. Ms. Liot Hill commented that having these projects identified in the regional plan could assist the region when the Governor signs off of funding opportunities. Ms. Butts commented that having projects identified in the regional plan could support municipalities in finding grant funding for local projects because oftentimes grant applications ask if the project is supported by the regional plan.
- Mr. Jones commented that there is no direct numbered corridor from Lyme to Hanover that can make travel confusing.
- Mr. Carreiro asked if there were best practices or frequently asked questions that other organizations could provide to us. Ms. Butts commented that there is a connection between UVLSRPC and the Southwest RPC and there have been discussions on this topic already and information sharing. Ms. Butts said that they will continue to reach out as we move forward. Mr. Carreiro commented that we could travel to other organizations that have been through a similar process to learn more.
- Mr. Chestnut commented that there is a lot of interest in this topic and that any change in process can take time to get people on board. The interest is there and he would like to see more people engaged in this conversation in the future.

#### **4. NH Draft Beneficiary Mitigation Plan**

Mr. Schneider and Ms. Butts led a brief discussion on the contents of the draft plan that can be found here <http://www.uvlsrpc.org/projects/comitees-related-to-projects/transportation-advisory-committee/>. They stated that the RPC will be submitting comments on the draft plan to support regional needs. They encouraged TAC members to submit questions and comments due June 5<sup>th</sup>.

Ms. Butts commented that NH DES mentioned at the public hearing that they are looking for collaborative projects in economically challenged areas.

Mr. Carreiro commented that he was unaware that this plan was released as there were no paper copies sent to the Town of Orford. He commented that some Towns still prefer paper information through the mail vs. relying on email or the internet for information.

## **5. State Freight Plan Comments**

Ms. Butts commented that State Freight Plan Comments are due June 30<sup>th</sup>. For more information see <https://www.nh.gov/dot/org/projectdevelopment/planning/freight-plan/>

## **6. NHDOT Updates**

No updates at this time.

## **7. UVSLRPC Staff Updates**

No updates at this time.

## **8. TAC Member Updates and Other Business**

- Scott Osgood (Enfield) – Mentioned the progress on the Jake's Market on Route 4.
- Peter Kulbacki (Hanover) – Mentioned sidewalk construction in Hanover on 120 and the traffic issues surrounding this construction.
- Ms. Liot Hill (Lebanon) – Mentioned the large construction project on Mechanic St and Mascoma St and the traffic issues as a result including Advance Transit work arounds.
- Paige Heverly (Vital Communities) – Mentioned Upper Valley Curb Your Car Day is May 18<sup>th</sup>. All Upper Valley residents are encouraged to walk/bike/take transit etc. to work and leave their personal vehicle at home. Participants are welcomed to various locations for free breakfast.
- Scott Sweet (Claremont) – Mentioned a large construction project on Main St.

## **9. Adjourn**

Mr. Chestnut motioned to adjourn. Ms. Heverly seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 6:30PM.