

**Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission
Meeting of the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC)**

June 9, 2009 Meeting Minutes

Center for Elder Services- Lebanon, NH

Attendees:

Van Chesnut, Chair, Advance Transit
Dick Jones, Vice Chair, Lyme
Dave Edkins, Charlestown
Barbara Brill, CATS
William Rose, NHDOT
Nate Miller, UVLSRPC
Ed Tinker, Claremont
Richard Lee, New London
Jessie Levine, New London
Peter Kulbacki, Hanover

Review and Approval of May 12th Meeting Minutes

Following introductions, Dick Jones moved that the minutes of May 12th be accepted as submitted. Barbara Brill seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Election of TAC Officers

Nate Miller explained that, at the TAC's June meeting each year, officers are elected for the following fiscal year. Dave Edkins nominated Van Chesnut as Chair and Dick Jones as Vice-Chair. Peter Kulbacki seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Transportation Enhancement Program Overview

Nate Miller provided an overview of the Transportation Enhancement (TE) Program, noting the 12 activities eligible for TE funding (per the application guidance document):

- Provision of facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists
- Provision of safety and educational activities for pedestrians and bicyclists
- Acquisition of scenic easements and scenic or historic sites
- Scenic or historic highway programs
- Landscaping and scenic beautification
- Historic preservation
- Environmental mitigation
- Rehabilitation and operation of historic transportation buildings, structures, or facilities
- Preservation of abandoned railway corridors
- Inventory, control, and removal of outdoor advertising
- Archaeological planning and research
- Establishment of transportation museums

Nate Miller continued, noting that there have been a number of important changes to the TE program since the last solicitation in 2005. The first is that a mandatory, but non-binding Letter of Intent is now required. The letter must include the contact information for the municipality or organization that is applying, a brief description of the project, information regarding which of the 12 eligible activities applies the project, and a budget estimate. William Rose noted that the Letters of Intent will allow the NHDOT and Regional Planning Commissions to better plan the

TE program and begin a dialog about the project. Nate Miller explained that the letters of intent are due by July 2, 2009.

Nate Miller explained that participation in a NHDOT Municipally Managed Project Workshop will also be mandatory. The workshops will be organized following the deadline for letters of intent, and will be held around the state for the convenience of applicants. William Rose explained that the workshops will “get everyone on the same page” about the requirements for administering TE grants.

Nate Miller highlighted the new NHDOT scoring system for TE applications, which places highest priority on the projects ranked No. 1 by each Regional Planning Commission. William Rose explained that NHDOT’s No. 1- No. 9 priorities will be the top priority project from each of the nine Regional Planning Commissions. Nate Miller continued, noting that NHDOT is placing additional emphasis on project planning. Applicants must demonstrate that they have evaluated the purpose and need for the project, analyzed existing conditions, investigated potential alternatives, and selected a preferred alternative through a legitimate public process.

TE project applications will also be evaluated for their conformance to local and regional transportation and land use plans. If a project is specifically identified in a local, regional, or state transportation or land use plan, the project will receive additional bonus scoring. Lastly, Nate Miller mentioned the additional focus on intermodal projects, noting that projects that benefit multiple modes of transportation (e.g. pedestrian, bicycle, transit, rail, marine, and automotive) would receive additional state scoring emphasis.

TAC members asked a number of questions about the TE program:

Is in-kind match allowed? Can volunteer time be match?

Yes, soft match is allowed, but the type and amount of soft match need to be included in a plan that is approved by NHDOT prior to the work being done

When will successful applicants be notified?

The plan is to notify applicants in March 2010.

When would the funds actually be available?

Funds would be available in October 2010.

How detailed does project engineering have to be at the time of submission?

You don’t need submit fully engineered plans, but you will need to demonstrate that the project has been through a planning process that included an analysis of alternatives and their costs.

Is maintenance required as a condition of the grant funding?

Yes, maintenance is required. This includes snow and ice removal in the winter.

Congressional Appropriation Request Update

Following up on the TAC's discussion in May, Nate Miller reported that UVLSRPC has heard back from Congressman Hodes' office about the High Priority Project request to develop a public transit service between Claremont and the Upper Valley. The Congressman's staff indicated that Mr. Hodes strongly supports this project. The challenge is securing the required \$80,000 per year match. Nate Miller reported that UVLSRPC staff would be working with the Upper Valley Transportation Management Association (UVTMA) over the course of the summer to see if it is feasible to build a coalition of public and private funders to provide the required match.

Other Business

- Van Chesnut reported that bids have come in within the budget for Advance Transit's building expansion project. Governor and Council approval of the project has been secured, and a groundbreaking is being organized for late June or early July.
- Barbara Brill reported that CATS will begin providing public transit services between Claremont and Charlestown on July 1st.

The TAC scheduled their next meeting for July 14th at 5:00 PM at the Lebanon Senior Center. Dick Jones made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:30 PM. Richard Lee seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.