

Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission Transportation Advisory Committee

MEETING Minutes

May 10th, 2022

4:00-5:00 PM

Remote Meeting via ZOOM

Members Present: Van Chesnut (Advance Transit), Dick Jones (Lyme), deForest Bearse (Claremont), Jeremy Clay (Hanover), Rob Taylor (Enfield), Liz Emerson (Charlestown), Everett Hammond (Lebanon), George Sykes (Lebanon), Jerry Coogan (New London), Ellen Hender (Vital Communities_

Staff Present: Alex Belenz

I. Call to Order

Chair Van Chesnut called the meeting to order at 4:05PM. Roll Call.

II. Action on Minutes from January 11th, 2022

The minutes from January 11th were approved unanimously via motion from Emerson/Taylor, with Hammond abstaining.

III. FY 2025-2034 Ten-Year Plan Process Overview

Alex provided an overview of the proposed process the TAC will follow to solicit and prioritize infrastructure projects for the Ten-Year Plan. UVLSRPC will solicit non-binding letters of intent from municipalities, which will give staff an opportunity to screen out ineligible projects and provide guidance to municipalities before they prepare full proposals. As with the prior round, we will pull together a scoring sub-committee and have an engineering review of final proposals before the TAC reviews them. Alex noted that the TAC could also change the weighting of the project evaluation criteria, but this can be discussed at a future meeting.

Dick Jones asked about maintenance-oriented projects, particularly bridge projects. Alex noted that the TAC has prioritized bridge projects in the past; however, NHDOT is currently being aggressive in addressing Red List bridges and there are new federal programs from the IIJA that will increase bridge funding. By comparison, UVLSRPC's \$3.8 million regional allocation is not sufficient to complete a typical bridge replacement.

Van Chesnut noted that there are new opportunities for federal funding for infrastructure projects outside the Ten-Year Plan, such as earmarks. Alex noted that NHDOT is working with the RPCs to identify existing Ten-Year Plan projects that may qualify for new federal discretionary grant programs under the IIJA. This could free up other Ten-Year Plan projects to be added or advanced.

Everett Hammond asked about addressing bridges that were not yet on the Red List in a preventative way. Alex noted that there are increased bridge funds (which are separate from UVLSRPC's regional allocation), but that the process would look similar to any other Ten-Year Plan application.

IV. *Regional Corridor Transportation Plan* – Implementation Update

Alex noted that several *Corridor Plan* projects were proposed for the new National Scenic Byways Program:

- Hanover: streetscape/pedestrian improvements on South Main St and East Wheelock St
- Lebanon: multi-use path through Westboro Park from Bridge St to NH 12A/South Main St
- Enfield: multi-use path along NH 4A from the Shaker Bridge/Main St to the Shaker Museum; additional parking for the Northern Rail Trail at Lakeside Park

UVLSRPC staff also met with several communities to discuss technical assistance for *Corridor Plan* project development. Staff will keep the TAC updated as to *Corridor Plan* implementation progress.

V. Updates from Members

Rob Taylor, Enfield:

- Town has contracted with consultant to advise on roadside management of invasive species; will share key recommendations with TAC
- Difficult mud season was made easier by the purchase of high-quality crushed stone and gravel in recent years.

Van Chesnut, Advance Transit:

- AT recently put out bids for building upgrades to accommodate electric buses, received zero bids – currently revising.
- Adams Carroll will be the new Executive Director of AT, starting June 1st. Van will overlap with him for 4-6 months.
- 15-minute Blue Route service connecting downtown Lebanon, DHMC, and downtown Hanover is now operational. Timely given the significant housing development pipeline on Mt. Support Rd.
- Ridership is slowly but steadily coming back.

Jeremy Clay, Hanover:

- Town has partnered with Pavement Management Group – low-cost road surface assessment using GoPro and proprietary software. Will provide Town with streetview-like imagery as well as assessment results (e.g., Pavement Condition Index).
- Road maintenance plans include crack-sealing + shims, redecking several bridges.

George Sykes, Lebanon:

- EPA has lifted consent decree Lebanon's sewer system; City still needs to pay off balance of the bond but it will help free up money for other infrastructure projects. City used CSO improvement projects as an opportunity to reconstruct roadways and add sidewalks and bikeable shoulders.
- I-89 Connecticut River bridge project will require lane closures.
- Spencer St reconstruction and sidewalk project is being wrapped up.
- Sidewalks on North Park St are being rebuilt.
- Alex added that the City continues to make progress on its multi-modal transportation plan, with which UVLSRPC is assisting.
- Everett added that the City is making progress towards the development of an infrastructure asset management plan.

Liz Emerson, Charlestown:

- The NH Route 12 slope failure is getting a "band-aid" fix that will allow the road to reopen by end of May. The long-term fix will happen via the existing Ten-Year Plan project scheduled for 2024.

Jerry Coogan, New London:

- The Town has budgeted for a water/sewer upgrade project on Main St, during which sidewalks will also be improved.
- The New London Bike-Walk Coalition continues to gain steam and do good work.

VI. Adjourn

*Rob Taylor moved to adjourn and Dick Jones seconded the motion. All in favor.
Meeting adjourned at 5:07 PM.*