



CITY OF CONCORD

New Hampshire's Main Street™

MINUTES

Transportation Policy Advisory Committee

November 17, 2016, 6:00 PM
2nd floor Conference Room
City Hall, 41 Green Street, Concord, NH

Members Present:

Dick Lemieux (Vehicle Traffic Safety Operations; Chair)
Brent Todd (Council Representative)
Ursula Maldonado (Pedestrian and Trails Community)
Craig Tufts, (Bicycling Community)
Sheila Zakre (At-Large)
Rob Mack, Traffic Engineer (City Manager's Designee)

Members Absent:

Rob Werner (Council Representative)
Jennifer Kretovic (Council Representative)
Jim Sudak (Public Transportation Representative)

Staff and Guests:

Keith Mitchell, Deputy Chief - Concord Police Department
John Thomas, Lieutenant - Concord Police Department
Heather Shank, Acting City Planner
David Sky, Resident
Bob Sanders, Resident

1. Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order.

2. Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the September 22, 2016 meeting were approved with minor amendment (Motion-Todd; Second-Maldonado; Unanimous).

3. Presentations - None

4. Public Comment - None

5. New Business - None

6. Old Business

a. Discussion of motor vehicle/bicycle related laws and enforcement practice in Concord

Following up from last month's TPAC discussion of New Hampshire's 'Three Foot Law' and how it is enforced locally, Deputy Chief Keith Mitchell and Lt. John Thomas were in attendance to discuss bicycle-related laws and related enforcement efforts. The Chair noted that this topic grew from prior TPAC-BP discussions of a recent bicycle crash on NH 106 where a bicyclist was riding on the shoulder line of a very wide shoulder and was struck by the side-view mirror of a passing vehicle. Both users were given warnings: the driver for passing too close to the bicyclist; and the bicyclist for failing to ride as far to the right as could be safely done.

Deputy Chief Mitchell noted that no citations were reported last year for violations of the Three Foot Law. That's not to say that there were no citations given to drivers for violating laws related to bicycle travel; the officer preparing the citation uses his or her discretion to choose from a variety of potentially-appropriate violations (e.g. three-foot law, failure to yield, lane violation, unsafe movement, following too close, reckless operation) some which may have more severe penalties than others. While the Three Foot Law is well-intended, it is very challenging to enforce in the absence of a direct collision. Cyclists are moving targets with respect to what might be a somewhat-removed enforcement location and an officer's judgment of how far 'three feet' is, especially if observed from a distance, can have enough uncertainty to be easily thrown out by a judge on appeal. There were 48 citations given to cyclists last year; most were for riding on the sidewalk downtown and the majority of these were issued after a prior warning.

Deputy Chief Mitchell also described enforcement efforts related to distracted driving. In the last 12 months, CPD issued 98 citations and 368 warnings for driving while distracted. CPD was recently awarded a \$10,000 grant to supplement enforcement efforts, including officers using bicycles or patrol vehicles. Several attendees expressed frustration with enforcement practice and felt that the laws should favor the more-vulnerable user (i.e. the bicyclist or pedestrian).

The potential to enhance educational outreach was discussed. Deputy Chief Mitchell noted that some programs are organized in other states that 'reward' bicyclists (kids and adults) for operating properly and safely (i.e. wearing helmets, reflective gear and using properly-maintained equipment). Suggestions from other attendees included: a special 'Three Foot Law' enforcement day during bicycle week in May; including the Three Foot Rule in the drivers' manual; and exploring the ability to geocode crashes city-wide to allow more-effective crash analysis and identification of problem areas. Regarding the latter, it was noted that current crash-data reporting software used statewide in New Hampshire does not include a geo-location application.

Craig Tufts suggested that TPAC-BP would be willing to collaborate with CPD on potential enforcement or education opportunities related to these laws. The subcommittee can provide CPD with bicycle and pedestrian count information to show where high-use areas are for non-motorized travel modes. Attendees discussed the potential for other educational outreach such as promoting a more intense directed enforcement of bicycle-related laws during an event such as bike-to-work week in May. Deputy Chief Mitchell concurred and suggested CPD could meet with TPAC-BP in advance of this event to collaborate on potential enforcement and education opportunities.

b. Review final draft of the Concord Pedestrian Master Plan

Craig Tufts distributed draft copies of CNHRPC's Concord Pedestrian Master Plan for review. After a brief discussion, it was suggested that members further review the document with the goal of approving a final document at TPAC's December 15, 2016 meeting. Craig would also try to distribute a draft copy to the Penacook Village Association for their feedback. Following TPAC

approval, the document would be submitted to the Planning Board for their consideration as a potential amendment to the Master Plan.

7. Consent Reports

a. Acceptance of Subcommittee Minutes

The following subcommittee reports were accepted by unanimous consent: Bicycle/Pedestrian – September 6, 2016; Public Transportation – September 20, 2016; and Traffic Operations – September 20 and October 18, 2016.

8. City Council Meeting Update

Councilor Todd reported that at its November 14, 2016 meeting, City Council voted to de-authorize the \$1,440,000 funding of Highway Safety Improvement Program funds for the former three-lane conversion project, and authorized \$1,250,000 for a revised plan that keeps the four-lane configuration but includes select sidewalk and access management improvements. Council also approved the installation of multi-way STOP at the Warren/Rumford intersection. TPAC members had considerable discussion regarding the Loudon Road project.

9. TPAC Referrals from City Council, Staff and Chair

a. Referral from Concord School District regarding resident requests to install APS push buttons at the McKee Square traffic signal (Engineering: 10/06/16)

At issue is a communication from the Transportation Director at Concord School District indicating several vision-impaired walkers (not school children) in the South End that inquired of the crossing guard at McKee Square if ‘talking’ push buttons could be installed at the traffic signal crosswalks there. Rob Mack noted that Accessible Pedestrian Signal (APS) push button upgrades are a significant investment and the city is planning for their installation in all new signal installations as well as at existing signal locations where substantial equipment upgrades are programmed. In the past few years, APS upgrades with the ‘talking’ feature have been focused on Main Street intersections downtown with plans to continue upgrades to other intersections in the downtown core over the next several years to provide consistent application of APS push button control across the downtown. A major upgrade of signal equipment is not programmed in the near term at McKee Square, as the intersection may be completely reconstructed as a roundabout or a larger signalized intersection; City Council has programmed this major-upgrade project for 2025. Staff requested TPAC’s opinion on programming priorities for these upgrades in light of the McKee Square request.

TPAC members concurred with the city’s focus of first expanding the use of APS push buttons across the downtown core with its heavy pedestrian demands. Regarding setting priorities, TPAC felt that the city’s annual Capital Improvement Program (CIP) priority-setting program, culminating with City Council review and approval, was the appropriate course of action. Staff will keep the McKee Square request in mind when drafting next year’s CIP plan.

10. Status Report on Subcommittees

a. Bicycle/Pedestrian Committee (TPAC-BP), Craig Tufts

Craig Tufts reported that TPAC-BP met this month and considered developing an inventory of bicycle-detection capabilities and needs at the city’s signalized intersections. This could assist city staff in adjusting existing equipment to better detect bicycles as well as to identify locations where more extensive capital improvements might be programmed. Also discussed was the need for locating a bicycle rack at Bicentennial Square; the several existing bollards there were felt to be ineffective for bicycle parking demand.

b. Public Transportation Committee (TPAC-PT), Sheila Zakre

Sheila Zakre reported that TPAC-PT met earlier this week and continued its discussion of snow maintenance at bus stops. CAT planned to monitor sidewalk conditions at bus stops city-wide this winter to better determine the scope of snow maintenance needs. Also discussed was CAT's revised No-Show/Ride Cancellation Policy as well as the potential relocation of a Pleasant Street CAT bus stop from the intersection at N. Main Street to just north of the intersection at N. State Street. CNHRPC will be conducting a CAT boarding and alighting survey next week.

c. Traffic Operations Committee (TOC), Rob Mack

Rob Mack reported that TOC met earlier this week and discussed: resident concerns on speeding along Mountain Road, Abbott Road and Village Street; a resident request to pave Tallant Road; and a resident request to install a School Bus Stop sign at an Elm Street driveway.

11. Staff Updates

a. Loudon Road Corridor Improvements (CIP 19)

Engineering Services will redesign the project this winter to retain the four-lane roadway and implement select driveway closures and sidewalk improvements. Construction planned for 2017.

b. Mountain/Shawmut/East Side/Exit 16 Roundabout (CIP 24)

The lowest construction bid came in over the project budget, thus an additional appropriation request of \$375,000 has been submitted to City Council for consideration at their December 12, 2016 meeting. A two-phase construction is anticipated. Phase 1 will occur this winter and will focus on utility pole relocation. Roundabout construction will occur next spring under Phase 2.

c. Merrimack River Greenway Trail (CIP543)

The project design is about 80 percent complete and necessary permitting is under NHDOT review.

d. I-93 Bow-Concord (NHDOT)

No report.

e. Storrs Street Extension North (CIP18)

Traffic analysis is underway. Concept plans are being developed for two corridor options: a direct connection to I-393 at S. Commercial Street with an intersection at Constitution Avenue; and a direct connection to Constitution Avenue with an intersection at S. Commercial Street.

12. Other Discussion Items - None

13. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned by unanimous consent at about 9:30 PM.

Upcoming Meeting Dates: **December 15, 2016**
 January 26, 2017
 February 23, 2017