

**CITY OF CONCORD
TRANSPORTATION POLICY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 28, 2023**

The Transportation Policy Advisory Committee (TPAC) met at 6:00 pm on September 28, 2023, in the Second Floor Conference Room at Concord City Hall, 41 Green Street.

Members Present: Mayor Bouley (Chair), Councilor Todd, Councilor Brown, Councilor Rice-Hawkins, Gregory Bakos, Nicole Fox, Dick Lemieux, Ian McGregor, Terri Paige, Boyd Smith, Craig Tufts

Members Absent: None.

Guests: None.

City Staff: Mike Bezanson (City Engineer), Karen Hill (Transportation Engineer), Alec Bass (Senior Planner)

1. Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

2. Introductions

3. Approval of Minutes

Approval of Minutes – August 24, 2023

The meeting minutes of August 24, 2023 were approved.

Motion: Todd. Second: Bakos. Passed.

4. Public Comment

None.

5. New Business

- a. *Update: NHDOT GACIT Meeting scheduled for Thursday, October 5, 2023 at 6:30 pm at NHDOT (Room 114) 7 Hazen Drive.*

Paige shared that she will be attending to advocate for public transit. Tufts encouraged folks to attend to voice support for the CMAQ projects. Lemieux shared that he believes the City should object to the 3-year delay of the I-93 widening project. Believing that the project solves major congestion and safety issues. Bouley believes the funding just isn't there between inflation, project costs, and decrease in toll revenue. He believes the City should continue to foster a good working relationship with NHDOT and focus on what we can do with other projects that could yield a greater value to Concord.

6. Old Business

None.

7. Consent Reports**a. *Acceptance of Subcommittee Minutes***

i. TPAC-BP – None.

ii. TPAC-PT – None.

8. City Council Meeting Update

MRGT, discussed below under item 11d.

Parking Committee referrals, discussed below under items 9a and 9b.

9. TPAC Referrals from City Council, Staff and Chair**a. *City Council parking referral to remove the three-hour time limit for two parking spaces on Washington Street (Concord) between North Main Street and Rollins Street).***

Hill discussed the referral and stated that Council members were questioning the effects of this change on the signal operations as well as if it would actually solve the problem. Hill does not believe the change would affect the signal operations as anyone could park there today, even though it is limited to 3 hours at a time. There will likely be more demand but with the existing bumpout, but it would only restrict the lane usage by two vehicles (approx. 50'), she does not believe that will have a substantial impact on the signal operation. The Committee discussed the evolving neighborhood parking issues, the need for parking turnover, and a potential precedent by making on street accommodations for a private entity, and felt that the change would not solve the problem at hand. Due to many anticipated changes in the neighborhood, including the church redevelopment, the Committee agreed that a more holistic neighborhood parking study might be appropriate once the church apartments have been occupied for about a year. Paige mentioned that maybe CAT could contact the property owner to see if they are interested in setting up a van pool. Hill will draft a report recommending that the parking on Washington Street remain unchanged.

b. *City Council parking referral to remove certain school zone related parking restrictions on the west side of South Street (Conant Drive to Coolidge Avenue).*

Hill discussed the referral and included prior documents in regards to area parking restrictions in the meeting packet. The Committee also viewed photos and videos from 2013 of traffic impacts prior to the restrictions. The Committee had concerns that if the restrictions are lifted, that the traffic issues would return. The Committee felt that it would create an unsafe situation for students being dropped off on the busy South Street, with vehicles also blocking sight lines for folks trying to exit Conant Drive, with all issues being exacerbated in the winter

time with snow banks and narrower travel lanes. Hill will draft a report recommending that the parking restrictions in the area remain unchanged.

10. Status Report on Subcommittees

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

Tufts shared a summary of the meeting held on September, 11, 2023. The Subcommittee discussed the upcoming paving program, the Sewalls Falls and Abbott Road intersection improvements, CIP#17 sidewalks, future activities and master planning.

b. *Traffic Operations Committee (TOC), Karen Hill*

Hill mentioned that most concerns that the Committee discussed were in regards to speed, especially in neighborhoods. She discussed the importance of the Transportation Master Plan update as it relates to many concerns brought forward each month. She discussed that a lot has changed since the last update, including the removal of Langley Parkway Phase III, and a lot of development.

c. *Public Transportation Committee (TPAC-PT), Terri Paige*

Paige discussed the proposed CAT expansion route to Laconia, and mentioned that they are nearing the staffing levels to be able to implement. There was a brief discussion on ridership (approx. 150 rides/day) and budget (approx. \$1.2 million). Paige also shared that they recently completed an MST mail donation ask and collected \$1,600 in 3 weeks. She is still focusing her efforts on gaining corporate sponsors in the future.

11. Project Updates (Staff)

a. *CIP #17 – Sidewalk, Bikeway and Streetscape Improvements*

No update, moving forward with analysis.

b. *CIP #31 – McKee Square Intersection Improvements*

Project meeting with VHB next week to discuss preliminary traffic study findings.

c. *CIP #520 – Intersection Safety Improvements (Sewalls/Abbott)*

Hill mentioned that a neighborhood meeting was held Tuesday, September 26th at Beaver Meadow Golf Course. There were about 30 residents in attendance and voiced various concerns that Hill feels can be addressed, all were generally in favor of the project. Hill explained that concerns were mainly in regards to the house at #164 Abbott Road and the impact of headlights to their property, speeding on Sewalls Falls and Abbott, and the proposed crosswalk location. The Committee discussed the crosswalk location and Bakos mentioned that shifting it further to the north would allow for a vehicle to make the right turn fully before the crosswalk. It was questioned at what point does shifting it get it outside of the influence of the intersection and it would act more like a midblock crosswalk.

Hill will make modifications to the plan and draft a supplemental report to go to Council for approval.

d. CIP #543 – Merrimack River Greenway Trail

Lemieux shared that Council accepted recent donations and that Phase II construction will tentatively begin in the Spring, from behind #6 Loudon Road to the northern edge of the wetlands. Tufts mentioned that the Friends of MRGT have been negotiating with #6 Loudon Road for the trail to be able to pass between their parking lot and the river.

11. Other Discussion Items

McGregor shared his concerns that there have been 3 pedestrian fatalities in the last few years, all on north-south corridors. He feels that the Committee should consider the 2009 traffic calming manual and potential implementation/updates.

Fox asked if Hill had considered the Complete Streets information she sent. The Committee agreed to discuss Complete Streets and the City's existing policy at the next meeting.

Rice-Hawkins asked about the Middle School traffic study. Hill confirmed that the School District has a traffic consultant assisting them in the process and that the scope of work was recently adjusted to include counts and is still in need of a scoping meeting. She asked if the City can require that information prior to a final location being selected. Hill responded that typically, the information would be asked for when they submit their project to Planning Board, which the school is exempt from the requirements. Councilor Todd recalled the Abbott-Downing school had some traffic related items come before TPAC to assist in dealing with queuing problems, but that was after a site was selected.

Boyd asked about regulation flexibility for rail trail parking lots, specially in regards to the Concord-Lake Sunapee Rail Trail and parking on Carter Hill Road. He mentioned that the group is having a hard time and would like to know how they can proceed. The Committee felt that all projects should have to follow requirements.

Bouley mentioned that the Department of Justice will be moving from their Capitol Street location and that the State is gearing up for a future project which includes demolition of the existing Storrs Street garage and construction of a 4-story parking garage across from City Hall at the current DOJ site. Bouley is hopeful that the project comes before TPAC to review the impact of traffic in the area.

12. Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 pm by unanimous consent.

13. Upcoming Meeting Dates

October 26, 2023 - Complete Streets Discussion.

*November 23, 2023 (Reschedule? – Thanksgiving)**

*December 28, 2023 (Reschedule? – Christmas week)**

*The Committee discussed the potential to combine the November and December meetings into an early December meeting. Will discuss at next meeting.