



CITY OF CONCORD

New Hampshire's Main Street™

MINUTES

Transportation Policy Advisory Committee

February 22, 2018, 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)
Sheila Zakre (At-Large)
Craig Tufts, (Bicycling Community)
Rob Mack, Traffic Engineer (City Manager's Designee)

Members Absent:

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

Staff and Guests:

John Stoll (Senior Planner)
Dave Cedarholm (City Engineer)
Robert Baker

1. Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order with introductions by all attendees. The Chair noted that Councilor Kretovic's term on TPAC has ended as the Mayor has reassigned her to another committee.

2. Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the January 25, 2018 meeting were approved with minor amendment (Motion-Zakre; Second-Todd; Unanimous).

3. Public Comment - None

4. Presentations

a. Main Street TIGER Performance Measures – 2017 Interim Report (Rob Mack)

Rob Mack presented the findings of the first post-construction report intending to track and measure changes in vehicle, bicycle and pedestrian traffic volumes; reported crashes; CAT bus stop usage and storefront vacancies. A preconstruction report was published in 2014, and the subject 2017 report was the first of 5 post-construction years to be measured (2017 to 2021). The report is a requirement of the TIGER Grant used for the Main Street project.

Although this is only the first year of a five-year measurement of changes along the Main Street project area, the following trends were evident in the first post-construction year as compared to the 2014 pre-construction condition: through-traffic volumes along the corridor were slightly reduced; bicycle and pedestrian volumes at the Main/Pleasant intersection were substantially increased while volumes at the Main/Loudon/Centre intersection remained fairly unchanged; two vehicle-injury crashes occurred in 2017 as compared to an annual average of 9.8 injuries per year prior to the project; bicycle and pedestrian crashes were slightly reduced in 2017; CAT bus stop boardings and alightings were fairly unchanged at four of the six downtown stops with reduced rider volumes noted at the State House and Eagle Square stops; and the number of first-floor storefronts on Main Street increased from 128 to 133, while the number of vacant storefronts decreased from 14 to 10.

TPAC members discussed the findings and noted the positive outcomes consistent with what would be expected with a complete streets project. It was suggested that a summary of these initial findings be provided for City Council.

5. New Business - None

6. Old Business

a. Continued Discussion of NHDOT's I-93 Bow-Concord Project

The NHDOT's Preferred Alternative F2, as was presented at last week's public information meetings, was discussed by attendees. Also discussed were excerpts from the NHDOT's 2007 Transportation Planning Study for the project. In that former study, an 'Option 5' (comparable to F2) was then considered 'unreasonable' in the community visioning process. Considered 'reasonable' was an Option 1 that also included a westward shift of I-93, a lowering of I-93 between Exits 13 and 15, a multi-modal center and a pedestrian crossing over I-93 to access the river. The general sentiment of attendees was that the Preferred Alternative F2 was detrimental to the city as it did not include key recommendations espoused by the city for many years, and in fact might preclude those recommendations from ever happening in the future.

Attendees strongly felt that the project should also include access to the river, realign the rail tracks to maximize redevelopment acreage, and improve east-west bicycle/pedestrian access. Improvement in bicycle/pedestrian access might include a multi-use path/bridge over I-93, or a multi-use path located out of the Loudon Road travel way as it passes under I-93 at Exit 14. Dick Lemieux and Craig Tufts offered to draft a statement with concerns regarding F2 for submittal to NHDOT. The draft would be available for TPAC discussion and consideration at the next meeting.

7. Consent Reports

a. Acceptance of Subcommittee Minutes

The following subcommittee reports were accepted by unanimous consent: Bicycle/Pedestrian – January 8, 2018; Public Transportation – January 16, 2018; and Traffic Operations – January 16, 2018.

8. City Council Meeting Update

Councilor Todd reported that at its February 12, 2018 meeting, City Council accepted TPAC's responses to the following Council referrals: Christian Avenue traffic volumes and speeds; Loudon Road left turns at the new Dairy Queen driveway; and Main Street delivery truck parking. Council also accepted a TOC recommendation to install a supplemental street light on the northeast corner of the N. State/Franklin roundabout, and a resolution funding renovations at the Concord Airport terminal.

9. TPAC Referrals from City Council, Staff and Chair

a. Referral from Councilor Bouchard regarding constituent concerns on the revised alignment of the Old Loudon Road/Portsmouth Street intersection.

Rob Mack reported that Engineering is working on conceptual alternatives for potential intersection modification and will report back to TPAC when completed.

10. Status Report on Subcommittees

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

Craig Tufts reported that TPAC-BP met this month and discussed: a presentation by Rob Mack of the city's traffic signals, including bicycle and pedestrian detection; and continued work on a list of street segments for possible restriping to better-accommodate bicycles. Councilor Todd noted that High Street residents were interested in meeting with city officials to discuss neighborhood traffic speeds following street repaving as well as sidewalk and traffic control changes that might occur pursuant to the school's safe-routes-to-school plan.

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

Sheila Zakre reported that TPAC-PT met on February 20, 2018 and discussed: CAT's two new buses which are anticipated to be in service this April; the ongoing CAT Service Study in which NHDOT's consultant, RLS, planned to interview CAT staff in mid-March; member observations of the newly-instituted bus stop snow maintenance efforts by General Services; and a concern by CAT regarding USPS delivery vehicles parking for extended periods in the Eagle Square bus stop.

c. Traffic Operations Committee (TOC), Rob Mack

Rob Mack reported that TOC met this week and discussed options for Rockingham Street in response to resident concerns on speeds. TOC concurred to try a weeble deployment on the Bow Street crosswalk after snow season ends.

11. Staff Updates

a. Merrimack River Greenway Trail (CIP 543)

Construction documents and permitting are complete and a request for bids will be published soon.

b. I-93 Bow-Concord (NHDOT)

Discussed in Item 6a, above.

c. Storrs Street Extension North (CIP 18)

Discussed in Item 6a, above.

12. Other Discussion Items

a. CIP Priorities

Councilor Todd reported that City Council is holding its next CIP priority-setting session on March 5, 2018. Some additional shifting of priorities is expected as Council balances community needs with available funding.

b. TPAC 10-Year Anniversary in April

Attendees discussed options for the meeting. The Chair suggested compiling an updated list of TPAC accomplishment since the 2013 list published on the city web site. Staff will coordinate an update with input from subcommittee chairs.

13. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned by unanimous consent at about 9:15 PM.

Upcoming Meeting Dates: March 22, 2018
 April 26, 2018
 May 24, 2018