

**City of Concord
Transportation Policy Advisory Committee**

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, February 28, 2013 - 6:00pm to 8:30pm
City Council Chambers

1. Call to Order/Introductions

Dick Lemieux called the meeting to order. Those in attendance included:

Committee Members Present:

Jennifer Kretovic (City Council)
Dick Lemieux (Downtown - Chair)
Tom Irwin (North/West Concord)
Brent Todd (Penacook)
Ursula Maldonado (At-Large)
Craig Tufts, (Bike Community)
Ed Roberge, City Engineer - Staff Representative

Committee Members Not Present:

Keith Nyhan, City Council
Rob Werner, City Council
Alex Vogt (Pedestrian Community)
Jim Sudak (Concord Area Transit) (Public Transit)

Staff, Visitors and Guests Present:

Rob Mack, Traffic Engineer - Staff Representative

2. Approval of December 20, 2012 and January 24, 2013 meeting minutes

Following a brief discussion, Jennifer Kretovic made a motion to approve the minutes of the December 20th and January 24th TPAC meetings. The motion was seconded by Ursula Maldonado. The meeting minutes were unanimously approved.

3. Presentations

a. CIP283 - Pleasant/Warren/Fruit Intersection Improvements - Rob Mack

Rob Mack presented the Pleasant/Warren/Fruit Intersection Improvement Project (CIP 283 FY2013) which includes traffic signal equipment upgrades and operational improvements. \$200,000 was budgeted in FY2013 for full traffic signal replacement including pedestrian crossings. Engineering Services has compiled survey base plans of the intersection area and analyzed 2035 design-year traffic projections which include effects of the future Langley Parkway North (Phase 3) as well as area traffic growth at the hospital campus to the west and the NH State Office Park South. In addition to necessary signal updates, Rob Mack indicated that staff assessed additional improvements needed to make the project comply with the 'complete streets' aspect of the City's Comprehensive Transportation Policy, including pedestrian and bicycle accommodation. The current intersection configuration does not accommodate bicycles as there are

narrow multiple-lane approaches without shoulders. Sidewalks on the intersection corners also require upgrading for pedestrians.

Rob Mack indicated that upgraded traffic signalization would generally provide new equipment, but existing lane use and signal operation would continue and additional intersection capacity cannot be achieved without substantial widening for additional approach lanes. The existing diagonal crosswalk would be retained as it is the primary crossing for walkers between the high school and the Memorial Field area. Rob Mack suggested that additional improvements to provide a complete-street improvement would include revised approach-lane markings along all intersection approaches with slightly-narrowed travel lanes and provision of five-foot shoulders for bicycles; and reconstructed sidewalks, curb and ramps on intersection corners. All lane-marking changes can be accommodated on the existing paved width except the high school side of Warren Street which would need to be widened about five feet between N. Fruit Street and the turn-around driveway at the school main entrance. This widening would require some right-of-way from the school district and relocation of several significant utility poles. The overall project, with complete-street compliance, would cost more than the current budget for the signalization upgrade.

Rob Mack noted that another complete-street option includes removal of the traffic signal control and reconstruction of the intersection into a single-lane roundabout. The roundabout option would outperform the signalized option in terms of reducing vehicle and pedestrian delays and queues as well as allowing for additional future traffic growth. Some right-of-way would be needed from both the school district and the State's office park, although all road widening would be limited to the intersection proper; additional lane widening along Warren Street to the east is not necessary. It appears that adequate space can be made available to develop an appropriately-designed roundabout able to accommodate all travel users including large trucks. This option also costs in excess of the currently-budgeted amount for CIP283.

Rob Mack stated that each of the above complete-street improvements can address long-range needs of the corridor, particularly after completion of the Langley Parkway north extension. The new corridor will act to remove a substantial volume of traffic from the Pleasant-to-Warren travel direction, redefining the future needs of the intersection. In that regard, staff suggests reconsideration of the current FY2013 project to avoid construction of substantial signal equipment improvements when the long-range needs of the intersection suggest potentially revised intersection geometry. An option is to install minimal signal hardware improvements now for the short-term viability of existing signal operation, and defer a more comprehensive complete-street improvement for several years, preferably following the Langley Parkway project (currently scheduled for completion in FY2018). Minimal short-term signal improvements include replacement of the controller cabinet and signal control equipment.

Rob Mack indicated this can be reinstalled on the existing cabinet foundation, and could be reused/relocated later at this intersection or relocated to another signalized intersection in need of a control cabinet replacement. Other minor improvements could include upgrading several signal displays to conform to current standards and installing some temporary wiring runs to bypass several underground cables that cannot be serviced due to conduit failure.

After a brief discussion TPAC concurred with the need and appropriateness of the larger complete-street improvement and preferred deferring the signal improvement project to follow the completion of the Langley Parkway North project. The current CIP 283 signal project would provide minimal signal equipment improvements needed to maintain current signal operation over the coming several years, with objective that much of the new equipment installed could be relocated at a later date or reused at another city intersection. TPAC concurred that the roundabout alternative is preferred and should be further pursued when the Pleasant Street corridor improvements are considered.

4. Public Comment

There were no members of the public in attendance.

5. Consent Reports

a. Approval of Subcommittee Minutes (Pedestrian, Bicycle, Public Transit, and Traffic Operations)

The minutes of the January 15th Traffic Operations Committee (TOC) meeting were unanimously approved.

6. TPAC Referrals from City Council, Staff and Chair

a. Referral from City Council to consider establishing a No Parking, Standing, Stopping zone along Conant Drive between South Street and Rundlett Street to mitigate adverse effects of parking for traffic related to school drop-offs/pick-ups at the Abbott-Downing Elementary School. (Council: 10/9/12, 12/20/12, 1/24/13).

Rob Mack reported that this referral from Councilor Nyhan had been previously reviewed by the TOC and TPAC and that the matter continues to be monitored by staff and the school district. A meeting was recently coordinated by staff and the school district where vehicle drop-off/pick-up, bus stop locations, and crosswalk locations were reviewed.

Rob Mack noted that the TOC met in February and discussed this matter and agreed to refer the matter to the Parking Committee. At its February meeting, the Parking Committee agreed to recommend the extension of the no parking limits along South Street and tabled action on parking restrictions on Conant Drive until a neighborhood meeting could be convened. Staff will provide an update of actions at the March TPAC meeting.

- b. Referral from City Council to consider removal and installation of STOP signs at Heather Lane intersections, including: installation of a STOP sign on the New Meadow Road eastbound approach to Heather Lane; installation of a STOP sign on the Gabby Lane eastbound approach to Heather Lane; and removal of the STOP sign on the Heather Lane northbound approach to Gabby Lane. (Council: 10/9/12, 12/20/12, 1/24/13).**

Rob Mack reported that staff will be coordinating a neighborhood meeting to be held at a future TPAC meeting – perhaps the March meeting. A draft invitation letter will be developed for TPAC review and the meeting will be noticed. Brent Todd suggested that TPAC members should take an opportunity to view the neighborhood and asked if the committee members wanted to schedule a time to visit. After brief discussion, the committee agreed to not schedule a formal visit but instead suggested that committee members visit the neighborhood to be familiar with the condition.

Staff will finalize an invitation letter and schedule the neighborhood meeting during an upcoming TPAC meeting.

7. Status report on subcommittees

- a. Pedestrian Committee, Alex Vogt**

Given that Alex Vogt was not in attendance, there was no report given.

- b. Bike Committee, Craig Tufts**

Craig Tufts reported that the Bike Committee did not meet in February. No report was given.

- c. Public Transit Committee, Jennifer Kretovic**

Jennifer Kretovic reported that the Public Transit Committee met in February and without a quorum, did not act on any regular business. Jennifer Kretovic did report that route changes took effect on February 11th and that the Crosstown route is still underutilized. Jennifer Kretovic also reported that the committee reviewed a concern regarding a driver napping at a traffic signal on Main Street.

It was indicated that the State is likely changing the funding program for public transportation given pending Federal funding changes. The committee and CAT will monitor this closely. Annual budget proposals are not due until March 23rd. The committee is also looking at potential route changes if funding is drastically cut.

- d. Traffic Operations Committee, Rob Mack**

Rob Mack reported that the Traffic Operations Committee met in February and discussed the Pleasant/Warren/Fruit intersection project (as noted above in presentations) and the Conant School Parking issue.

8. Staff Updates

a. **Downtown Complete Streets Improvement Project - TIGER 2012 (CIP460)**

Ed Roberge provided a brief update on the Main Street project. At a public hearing on February 11th, City Council accepted a staff and project design team report outlining the Main Street layout and the closure of Phenix Avenue to vehicular traffic. The action was not specific on streetscape details and project amenities but did endorse the two-lane section and intersection improvements. Council also confirmed that a roundabout will not be considered at the intersection of Main Street and Pleasant Street.

TPAC requested details of the snow melt system and although the status of the Concord Steam project is not known at this time, staff has been reassured that the project will be approved and that construction is expected to begin in 2013. Ed Roberge indicated that the new steam plant would be required in order to construct a sustainable snow melt system otherwise any other energy driven system would not likely be reasonable in terms of capital and operating cost.

b. **Sewalls Falls Bridge Replacement Project (CIP22)**

Ed Roberge reported that at its meeting on February 12th, City Council accepted the staff report recommending that the bridge replacement option be selected and authorized staff to complete the necessary permitting to complete the cultural and environmental permitting process. Final environmental documentation is underway and planning study approval is expected by NHDOT in early spring 2013. It is expected that final design will be underway by May 2013.

9. Old Business

There was no old business to consider.

10. New business

a. **Review of Membership Terms with April 2013 Expiration**

i. **Lemieux, Todd, Irwin, Maldonado, and Sudak**

Ed Roberge indicated that the terms of Dick Lemieux, Brent Todd, Tom Irwin, Ursula Maldonado, and Jim Sudak are all due to expire on April 30th. In that, Dick Lemieux asked if each member was still interested in serving on TPAC. All with the exception of Jim Sudak responded in the affirmative. Ed Roberge thanked and expressed appreciation to those that serve and indicated their continued interest to serve will be forwarded to the City Clerk for Council action. Ed Roberge also indicated that he will contact Jim Sudak to see if he is still interested in serving.

b. **Complete Streets Policy**

Tom Irwin indicated that in recent discussions, a policy on the design of intersections to include roundabout analysis should be considered. Tom Irwin noted that a number of municipalities that have complete streets policies also have policy on considering roundabouts for intersections.

Tom Irwin also suggested that perhaps TPAC could review such a policy with the Energy Committee and issue a joint policy statement on a roundabout analysis requirement.

Dick Lemieux supported that thought and suggested TPAC review its policy at its next meeting and look at possible revisions. Staff indicated that the policy will be made available to committee members for review.

c. Potential Transit Funding through HB617

Tom Irwin indicated that he is part of a coalition proposing an amendment to HB617 (proposed gas tax bill) to earmark a part of the revenues generated by the gas tax increase for transportation demand management. The amendment is specific to road based transportation generally including transit. The group called "Transport NH" has developed a web site where folks can review their mission statement and actions.

11. Adjourn

With no other items to discuss; Ursula Maldonado made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Brent Todd. The motion carried unanimously and the meeting adjourned.