

**MINUTES OF THE  
BLUE RIBBON COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION POLICY**

**March 13, 2013**

**Conference Room A**

**7:30 a.m.**

**Members Present:** Councilor Ken Smith, Councilor Brad Lown, City Manager John P. Bohenko, Cliff Sinnott, Bill Lyons, Eric Gregg

**Members Absent:** Rick Chellman, Paige Roberts

**City Staff Present:** Rick Taintor, Juliet Walker, Mark Nelson, Adam Cannon

---

Chairman Smith called the meeting to order at 7:30 a.m.

As the first order of business, the Committee unanimously approved the minutes from the February 12, 2013 meeting.

Next, Mr. Cliff Sinnott gave a presentation on regional transportation coordination. He started with an overview of the regional transportation infrastructure, including roadways, public transit, and rail. He then described the regional transportation planning process on three levels: federal/regional, state and local. Planning at the federal and regional level involves the statutorily mandated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) in all urbanized areas with populations greater than 50,000 people. MPOs were created to ensure local input into the allocation of federal transportation funds. Mr. Sinnott continued by describing the key elements in MPO planning including integration with state-wide transportation agency planning, development of a regional long range transportation plan and an ongoing update to the transportation improvement program (TIP).

In New Hampshire, regional and statewide transportation projects that receive state and/or federal funding are first listed in the MPOs Long Range Transportation Plan, which has a 20-year horizon. Members of the MPO solicit all of the communities in the region to identify projects, needs, and priorities. RPC (acting as the region's MPO), then recommends projects for inclusion in the the State's Ten Year Plan (TYP). The first four years of the State's TYP make it to the State / Regional Transportation Improvement Programs (STIP / TIP). Simply because projects are included on these lists doesn't guarantee funding and projects are often delayed beyond the intended time frames. Mr. Sinnott mentioned that there are a number of Portsmouth projects included on these regional lists. City Manager Bohenko mentioned that all of the projects listed on the TIP are also included in the City's Capital Improvement Plan under the Transportation Management – Indirect Funding section. Both Mr. Sinnott and the City Manager explained that most of the projects listed in the TIP also require a local match of funding and that some take years to implement depending on when state or federal funding becomes available.

Mr. Sinnott also said that projects are evaluated using many factors including feasibility, mobility, accessibility, congestion, safety, preservation of infrastructure and land use. He also discussed the various policy drivers of the MPO and in particular highlighted the growing transit-dependent population.

The Committee then entered into a discussion on costs and funding. City Manager Bohenko touched upon this subject by mentioning COAST transportation and how costs are increasing exponentially due largely to the growing costs of ADA services. Following the discussion on Mr. Sinnott's presentation, Transportation Planner Juliet Walker reviewed a draft outline of the report for the City Council. Chairman Smith asked the Committee to contribute ideas. Mr. Gregg recommended giving some examples of how the policies would work in action. City Manager Bohenko added that this report should be written so that it doesn't get stale and the principles can be used for years to come.

Mr. Bill Lyons asked for the recommendations to be framed first as a broad policy statement with supporting strategies or actions listed second.

Councilor Smith noted that it is important to finish the work of the Committee by the sunset date in order not to miss transportation planning opportunities. Additionally, he noted that following the report to the City Council, Portsmouth Listens is planning to conduct a series of Transportation Study Circles using the report as a basis for recommended courses of action. The input received from the Study Circles can inform the planning of the next Master Plan.

The next meeting date was set for Tuesday, April 2, 2013 in Conference Room A at 7:30 a.m.

The meeting adjourned at 8:39 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Adam Cannon  
Special Projects Manager