

**New Hampshire State Rail Plan
Technical Advisory Committee Meeting
June 15th, 2011 9:00 – 12:00
PSNH Headquarters, Manchester**

Attending TAC Members: Justin Slattery, New Hampshire Department of Resources & Economic Development (DRED); Peter Griffin, NH Rail Revitalization Association (NHRRA); Kerrie Diers, Nashua Regional Planning Commission (NRPC); Nancy Larson, Merrimack Community Development (MCD)/ New Hampshire Rail Transit Authority (NHRTA); Peter Dearness, New England Southern Railroad (NESRR); Cliff Sinnott, Rockingham Planning Commission (RPC); Tim Moore, New Hampshire Rail Transit Authority (NHRTA); Mike Tardiff, Central New Hampshire Regional Planning Commission (NHRPC); Charles Hunter, New England Central Railroad (NECRR); Matt Caron, Southern New Hampshire Regional Planning Commission (SNHRPC); Jay Minkarah, Manchester Economic Development Office (Manchester EDO); Cynthia Scarano, Pan Am Railways; David Preece, Southern New Hampshire Regional Planning Commission (SNHRPC); Maria Stowell, Pease Development Authority; Marc Ambrosi, Strafford Planning Commission (SPC); Tom Irwin, Conservation Law Foundation (CLF); Steve Pesci, University of New Hampshire (UNH); Mark Brewer, Manchester-Boston Regional Airport; Jerry Vest, St. Lawrence & Atlantic Railroad (SL&AR).

NHDOT Staff:

Mike Pillsbury
Mark Sanborn
Lou Barker

Consultant Team:

Ronald O’Blenis, HDR
Pamela Yonkin, HDR
Dick Flynn, CTC Group
Jim Stoetzel, Transit Safety Management (TSM)
Carol Morris, Morris Communications
Ben Ettelman, Morris Communications

HANDOUTS: Meeting Agenda

PURPOSE/SUBJECT: This was the second of three Technical Advisory Committee meetings. The purpose of this meeting was to update the TAC on Stakeholder Interviews and findings to-date, and to discuss these and next steps.

Meeting began at 9:00 am.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Mr. Ronald O’Blenis, Project Manager for the HDR Consultant team, welcomed all committee members and thanked them for attending the second TAC meeting. Mr. O’Blenis asked that the attendees introduce themselves.

Members of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), NHDOT Staff and Consultant Team introduce themselves

Mr. Michael Pillsbury, Deputy Commissioner of NHDOT, introduced himself and thanked the TAC for their time and energy in updating the state rail plan. Mr. Pillsbury explained that NHDOT is committed to exploring multi-modal transportation strategies in the state of New Hampshire.

Mr. Mark Sanborn of NHDOT introduced himself and thanked the TAC for their contributions to the state rail plan. Mr. Sanborn explained that it is important to educate the public regarding the benefits of rail and that he is excited that this study will produce the data to help inform the public. Mr. Sanborn also emphasized the high level of support that rail is receiving from NHDOT.

Mr. Ronald O’Blenis, Project Manager for the HDR Consultant team, presented the following agenda for the meeting:

- Summary of work to date
 - Commodity data
 - Stakeholder interviews
- Discussion of findings
 - Business and planning interests
 - Freight
 - Passenger
- Future activities
 - Draft recommendations
 - Public meetings

Mr. Ronald O’Blenis presented the revised vision statement based on input from the TAC and asked if there were any additional comments:

“Provides an efficiently utilized and well-maintained railroad system, expanded as appropriate to accommodate increases in freight and passenger demand for rail services.

It is a system that is fully integrated with the national, regional and statewide transportation system, connecting the state’s urban and rural communities, maximizing

the opportunities for economic growth, promoting energy efficiency, and providing safe, secure and reliable transportation of people and goods.”

The TAC had no additional comments regarding the revised vision statement

Mr. Ronald O’Blenis made a presentation that covered the topics of New Hampshire Railroads; Miles by Carrier; Data Used by Commodity Analysis; Modal Share in New Hampshire and New Hampshire Shipments by Distance.

Mr. Steve Pesci of UNH asked in reference to the New Hampshire Shipments by Distance slide that since it was noted that this data does not reflect through movements whether that is a significant factor.

Ms. Pamela Yonkin of HDR responded that the initial data that was presented at the first TAC meeting only reflected the FAF data, which does not include through-traffic. Ms. Yonkin explained that the Study Team adjusted the FAF data to reflect the through-traffic and the 3.8% represents an estimate that includes through-traffic.

Mr. Steve Pesci of UNH asked if it is possible to look at the Northern New England region.

Ms. Pamela Yonkin of HDR responded that it would be a great thing to do but the limitation to using waybill data is that it has to be requested and that it is confidential. Ms. Yonkin explained that the Study Team could look at the rail plans conducted by other states in the region, which will inform what is happening within New England. This may help identify what the through-traffic is.

Mr. Steve Pesci of UNH responded that this issue has come up with the NHRTA and that there is a desire to understand what is happening in New Hampshire’s neighboring states.

Ms. Pamela Yonkin of HDR asked whether Mr. Pesci would be more interested in an aggregation of regional data or a separation of data amongst neighboring states.

Mr. Steve Pesci of UNH answered that he would like to see the a separation of data amongst neighboring states and that when the NHRTA has policy discussions, the question arises as to where New Hampshire is in terms of infrastructure investment.

Mr. Ronald O’Blenis of HDR explained that the Study could extract data that has been developed by the recently completed Massachusetts Rail Plan, the Vermont Rail Plan as well as the Maine Rail Plan.

The majority of the TAC expressed that this type of data collection would be very helpful.

Mr. David Preece of the SNHPC asked whether there are there any information sources regarding the current conditions of rail corridors in New Hampshire as compared to the rest of the United States?

Mr. Ronald O'Brien of HDR explained that one of the next major parts of the study, which is currently underway, is updating the inventory, which takes into account the mileage and also accounts for the speed that the tracks are operated on and that maintenance tends to be associated with the speed of the track.

Mr. David Preece of the SNHPC asked whether the Surface Transportation Board keeps records.

Mr. Ronald O'Brien of HDR answered that they do and that the Study Team will look at each segment of railroad to categorize it and that the Study Team can identify the numbers and miles of different classes that can be extracted and compared nationally. Mr. O'Brien explained that the next step will be putting the data in context to New Hampshire and part of that will be looking at through-traffic and seeing how New Hampshire relates on origin and destination as well as how it participates in regional connections.

Mr. Peter Griffin of the NHRRA asked whether the Study Team looked at the historic rail system versus today's network.

Mr. Ronald O'Brien of HDR answered that the team has looked at that difference to a degree and that what the Study Team is establishing is what the current conditions are and what needs to be done to see conditions improve as far as access and use. Mr. O'Brien explained that the Study Team is working to identify the specific pressures against sustaining the service that currently exist.

Mr. Dick Flynn of the CTC Group explained that it is important that there be gateways in order for the New Hampshire rail network to connect into the national rail network and that there has been a lot of private investment made in corridors that do connect New Hampshire into the national rail network. Mr. Flynn noted that there is a critical level of volume that is necessary to make some of these connections viable.

Mr. Peter Griffin of the NHRRA commented that he was concerned regarding infrastructure issues within the state's rail network.

Mr. Lou Barker of NHDOT asked, referring to the NH Shipments by Distance slide, whether it would be beneficial to include something to compare truck traffic over 50 miles to rail service, versus the overall distances as that might give a more accurate understanding of what could be shipped by rail.

Mr. Ronald O'Brien of HDR agreed with Mr. Barker's suggestion.

Mr. Ronald O’Blenis made a presentation that covered the topics of Freight Observations; New Hampshire Originating Commodities; New Hampshire Terminating Commodities and New Hampshire Through Commodities.

Mr. Jay Minkarah of the Manchester EDC asked whether the origin of the through-freight is known?

Ms. Pamela Yonkin answered that for some categories the Study Team has information on the states that the components originated and terminated in and that there is still some data being gathered regarding origins and destinations. Ms. Yonkin explained that they are attempting to get that data down to the city level or at least the county level within the state.

Mr. Jay Minkarah of the Manchester EDC noted that that data is important to understand which lines are the most active and have the most potential.

Ms. Pamela Yonkin noted that not all rail lines are required to file waybill data, so this may under-represent some of the more local railroads

Mr. Jay Minkarah of the Manchester EDC added that it is important to understand which lines are moving the most volume, and based on the materials that are being shipped, what investments would lead to the reasonable likelihood of increased rail traffic.

Mr. Ronald O’Blenis explained that this is where the study is headed and that by the next TAC meeting the Study Team will have a better idea of what all of the data means and what recommendations should be made moving forward.

Mr. Dick Flynn of the CTC Group noted that the Study Team can get the information on where the greatest concentration of existing rail traffic is and we will continue to try and identify what industries not utilizing rail might potentially benefit from using rail in the future.

Mr. Ronald O’Blenis made a presentation that covered the topics of NH Rail Traffic and The Majority of Tons on NH Railroads.

Mr. Ronald O’Blenis presented the following overview of the stakeholders that the Study Team conducted interviews with:

- Business and planning interests
 - Economic development organizations
 - Chambers of Commerce
 - Regional Planning Commissions
 - NH DRED

- PSNH
- Freight
 - Diverse Group: 9 Shippers and/or Receivers
 - 3 Railroads –One Regional, Two Short Lines
- Passenger
 - New Hampshire Rail Transit Authority (NHRTA)
 - Tourist railroads
 - Amtrak –Downeaster & Vermonter
 - MBTA

Mr. Steve Pesci of UNH asked whether the Study Team met with NNEPRA.

Mr. Jim Stoetzel of TSM answered that yes, the Study Team has worked with NNEPRA before and that we know their people well. An interview was held with NNEPRA.

Mr. Ronald O’Blenis presented the following synopsis of stakeholder interviews with Business and Planning interests:

- “Diversity” of understanding regarding rail in NH
- General agreement that transportation, including rail, is important to NH economy
 - Some entities focused on passenger only
 - Other entities familiar with freight
- Discussion related to interconnectedness of passenger and freight rail
 - All passenger rail service runs on freight infrastructure
 - NH has rail capacity for both freight and passenger growth

Mr. Jim Stoetzel of TSM noted that when you add passenger rail onto a freight railroad, that process tends to increase the growing capacity.

Ms. Cynthia Scarano of Pan Am noted that there are pros and cons to running passenger rail on freight lines and vice versa, because when you add passenger rail you tend to run the freight at night as the passenger usage takes precedence. Ms. Scarano noted that when you run freight rail at night there are increased impacts and while the improved service is a pro, the impacts to the communities can be considered a negative and it limits the window for shipping freight.

Mr. Peter Dearness of NESRR explained that the level of inhalation hazard of the materials being shipped could change the dynamic with respect to infrastructure improvements unless current federal legislation is changed. Mr. Dearness explained that if a freight railroad is handling chlorine for example, there is a law that mandates additional security measures on lines that run passenger service on the same track, and those security measures mean the entire infrastructure of the rail needs to be rebuilt, which equals billions of dollars of costs across the rail industry.

Mr. Dick Flynn of the CTC Group presented the following synopsis of stakeholder interviews with Freight Rail users:

- Significant number of NH shippers depend on rail and many support manufacturing jobs in the state
 - Tend to move bulk commodities and specialty products and chemicals
- Trucking is available alternative but not suitable for some shippers
 - Rail can handle heavier, bulkier freight
 - Rail can transport freight at a lower price than trucking can offer
 - Much of the existing rail traffic is not convertible to truck because of weight, cost and distance
- Rail rates not highlighted as significant issue
- Dependability, consistent delivery and available frequency of service critical to ensure:
 - Ability of existing business to expand
 - Establishment of new rail-served business in NH
- If transit is delayed, shippers' inventory and logistics costs increase even with lower freight rates –rail cars not optimally utilized
- Could some rail shippers switch to truck transport?
 - Transportation costs likely to be higher
 - Increasing fuel costs have a greater impact on trucking operational costs
- Higher costs passed on to NH consumers and businesses
- Without rail service, business viability questionable
 - Some shippers may not efficiently compete
 - Leads to reduction or elimination of jobs, loss of revenue to NH
- NH has an opportunity for shared use of passenger and freight rail corridors:
 - Freight railroad owners willing to consider passenger rail service on their lines in NH
 - Opposition to shared use of rail lines occurs in other parts of the country
 - Freight rail infrastructure improvements benefit passenger rail and vice versa –passenger and freight rail complement one another in NH

Mr. Tim Moore of the NHRTA commented that some of the goods that are moved by rail terminate in Eastern New York or Southern New England so there is an opportunity to move the intermodal transfer stations further north into New Hampshire, so these goods could be dispersed by truck or rail in either direction.

Mr. Dick Flynn of the CTC Group responded that we tend to be on the consuming end on the east coast and if it is not loaded in a railcar, it will probably be delivered by truck, which is why so much of the rail industry is embracing intermodality. Mr. Flynn explained that the Study Team has looked at the intermodal volumes coming into New England and at some point there will be enough saturation that it will make sense to

have feeder terminals in New Hampshire. Mr. Flynn noted that there is a feeder terminal owned by St. Lawrence & Atlantic rail in Maine, and that intermodalism will be looked at in this plan.

Ms. Cynthia Scarano of Pan Am commented that it costs the same amount of money to keep a track if you have 500 shippers or 2 shippers online, so increasing intermodality in New Hampshire where shipping is spread out is a good way to increase dependability.

Mr. Charles Hunter of NECRR commented that on the intermodal side, saturation is a good word to use as the region stands now. He said a few game changers down the road would be the construction of a Class 1 Railroad that would create the desire for more competition to penetrate this market in a larger way; the other game changer would be if the state or government entity wanted to use this as an incubator to develop business in the state, not unlike what was done in Auburn, Maine, with the St. Lawrence & Atlantic.

Mr. David Preece of SNHPC asked whether there would be a cost analysis prepared with various scenarios, such as a “do nothing” scenario as opposed to a “move more freight by rail” scenario.

Mr. Ronald O’Blenis of HDR answered that the Study Team will do some high level analysis and we anticipate setting some priorities of initiatives, such as intermodal, or priority corridors.

Mr. David Preece of SNHPC asked whether the Study would incorporate the UNH survey that was recently done that showed overwhelming support within the state for passenger rail.

Mr. Ronald O’Blenis of HDR answered that yes the Study Team will follow up on that and incorporate that into the plan.

Mr. Steve Pesci of UNH asked that when you interviewed shippers whether you spoke with Pease in Portsmouth as they have a deep-water port that looks to expand. He said that as a resident, he sees many trucks picking up salt at the Port and driving on the local streets, creating impacts. Mr. Pesci also mentioned that scrap metal has been shipped out on ships and it is being transported to the Port on trucks that impact the local and regional highway network.

Mr. Dick Flynn of the CTC Group commented that the opportunities at Pease and the Port in Portsmouth have emerged in the interviews and there is a lengthy list of opportunities that could realistically happen with both of those locations.

Mr. Steve Pesci of UNH commented that it would be helpful for our legislators to have something that quantifies the impact of trucks on the highway system as opposed to increasing rail usage.

Ms. Maria Stowell of the Pease Development Authority commented that the scrap comes from a variety of places within the region and the salt is going out to communities throughout the state so that range of dispersal will make it challenging to utilize rail. Ms. Stowell added that at the airport, management had hopes for it to be a cargo center but it has not panned out that way. She said that through recent airport studies, they learned that they should not rely on cargo. She will follow up with the Port to verify what is happening with the salt and scrap.

Mr. Ronald O'Blenis asked the TAC about the effort to increase service in New Hampshire.

Ms. Cynthia Scarano of Pan Am commented that that is something the marketing department is focusing on, and she is not interested so much in new shippers but going out to customers that Pan Am already has and seeing what they can do to increase what they are shipping on rail.

Mr. Dick Flynn presented a series of slides showing the following Freight Rail Examples: Cement Inbound to New Hampshire; Propane Inbound to New Hampshire; Quarry Sand Outbound from New Hampshire and Coal Inbound to New Hampshire

Ms. Cynthia Scarano of Pan Am commented, regarding the consistency of service frequency, that when you look at coal in Bow at PSNH, Pan Am needs three crews maximum, two crews as a best scenario. This means they have to move fast or they won't make it to their destination, which backs up the whole system. Ms. Scarano noted that Pan Am is working on its service plan for the entire system to keep things timely and to keep the traffic fluid - when things get backed up it can take two weeks for things to get caught up. Ms. Scarano continued that when we go through Lowell and Lawrence there is an MBTA bridge (Haverhill Bridge) that is 5 mph and two culvert areas that make a move that would normally be a half hour extended to an hour and a half. She added that when you have a crew that can only stay on a train for 10 hours, this is a significant delay.

Mr. Ronald O'Blenis of HDR asked if there were an investment in the rail infrastructure to support passenger service, would freight benefit?

Ms. Cynthia Scarano of Pan Am answered that yes, it would benefit in increased speeds but noted that that is currently already a passenger area.

Mr. Peter Griffin of NHRRA commented that the maps that Mr. Flynn shared are perfect examples of New Hampshire's lack of connectivity and the Haverhill Bridge is a good

example of how in that area there is only one way in and one way out and that bridge is 90 years old. Mr. Griffin explained that if that bridge went out it would have far-reaching impacts on the entire rail network in New Hampshire and Northern New England.

Mr. Dick Flynn of the CTC Group commented that the bridge that crosses the Hudson River is a problem as well and acknowledged that lack of connectivity is a problem.

Mr. Jim Stoetzel of TSM commented that NNEPRA has recently applied for and received money to make improvements on the Downeaster line's tracks in the Massachusetts area to add capacity, which will benefit freight as well.

Marc Ambrosi of the SRPC asked how freight rail fits into DRED's economic development strategy for this state and whether the two plans are integrated.

Justin Slattery of DRED answered that it is something that DRED is getting more of a handle on; on the business recruitment side of things, rail can be used as a marketing tool to attract new business.

Mr. Cliff Sinnott of RPC commented that there were conversations regarding rail in regard to the Schiller Plant in Portsmouth, using rail to bring in wood products. He said when that was under review; there was talk about the ability to serve that plant by rail. Mr. Sinnott asked if any members of the TAC knew what became of that opportunity.

Mr. Dick Flynn of the CTC Group answered that there was some discussion regarding the Schiller Plant, that even though the opportunity exists there would be a need for special equipment for the shorter haul shuttle services. Mr. Flynn noted that this opportunity exists in New Hampshire for biomass processing as well as wood chips.

Mr. Cliff Sinnott of RPC commented that it seems like those opportunities are few and far between and the freight plan needs to be an economic development strategy as well.

Jay Minkarah of the Manchester EDC commented that he would be interested in seeing where the clusters of industries currently using rail are, where the industries that indicated that they would use it more are, and what the volumes are. Mr. Minkarah noted that he would also like to see how many jobs are associated with these industries and to what extent do we have industrial areas where there is a potential to create new industries along these corridors.

Mr. Dick Flynn of the CTC Group responded that the Study Team has created some elements of that and will continue to integrate those interests into the plan.

Ms. Pamela Yonkin of HDR commented that in addition to interviewing the freight shippers, the Study Team is asking economic development folks what industries have approached them regarding the use of rail so the Study Team can understand and document the concentration points.

Mr. Ronald O'Blenis of HDR commented that what is interesting is that when people ask about rail, they not only want to know what the service is but they also want to know about the sustainability of the rail over the long term so they have more of an understanding and confidence that it will be there in the future. Mr. O'Blenis introduced Mr. Jim Stoetzel of TSM, who examined passenger rail within New Hampshire.

Mr. Jim Stoetzel presented a slide with a map showing Regional High Speed & Intercity Passenger Rail

Mr. Jim Stoetzel of TSM commented that there is a potential federal plan being considered that would take the infrastructure away from Amtrak and privatize it in order to open competition up on the North East Corridor to increase service.

Mr. Lou Barker of NHDOT commented that the proposal would open passenger rail to private investment and that is something that has not happened in five decades.

Mr. Jim Stoetzel of TSM responded that the private investment aspect is true and added that Amtrak operates 15 state-supported services and since 1995, those services could potentially be used by another operator but that has never happened, so this legislation could provide that opportunity.

Mr. Jim Stoetzel of TSM presented the following synopsis of stakeholder interviews regarding Passenger Rail:

- Passenger rail service is attractive & beneficial to NH
 - Almost 45% of “Downeaster” ridership (more than 200,000 trips per year) over the past three years comes from NH stations
 - Service extremely popular with the UNH community in Durham
 - Dover’s economic development plans are focused around the train station
 - Nearly half of NH ridership comes from Exeter –parking lot is over capacity on a daily basis
- Potential commuter rail service opportunities, Plaistow area, Nashua-Concord (Capitol Corridor) could produce similar result
 - Manchester Airport could benefit from such a service expansion
- Providing more than one mode of passenger transportation and integrating those modes is critical
- Host railroads recognize potential benefit from passenger service
- Improved infrastructure/increased capacity required for passenger service can

- enable freight rail operators to provide customers with more reliable/frequent service
- Improved/expanded passenger rail service may offer a viable alternative to driving to many destinations
 - Major tourist attractions
 - “Reverse commute” opportunity for businesses wanting to establish/expand in NH

Mr. Mark Brewer, Director of the Manchester-Boston Regional Airport, commented that when they meet with international carriers, the first thing they ask is whether there is rail service at the airport - the economic impact of international flights is huge. Mr. Brewer noted that one international flight a day brings in roughly \$37 million of economic impact and if you add cargo to that equation it jumps to a \$100 million economic impact. Mr. Brewer explained that having rail service wouldn't guarantee an international carrier, but the lack of rail service is absolutely an impediment to making that a reality.

Ms Cynthia Scarano of Pan Am commented that the Downeaster has worked very well, but it is important to note that the Downeaster has worked because of the risk that the State of Maine was willing to assume regarding the FRA stimulus funding. Ms. Scarano explained that when this funding is provided for passenger rail, and the passenger rail does not work, whoever owns the railroad, in this case Pan Am, is liable to pay that federal investment back. Ms. Scarano explained that in this case, that was a \$40 million investment, and the State of Maine agreed that if the Downeaster fails, the State of Maine would pay that money back. Ms. Scarano continued to explain that Pan Am is a private company and is incapable of assuming the liability of an accident, so Maine passed legislation to protect the railroad in order to secure the passenger service on the Downeaster.

Mr. Peter Griffin of NHRRA commented that the I-93 Transit Study identified the Manchester-Lawrence corridor as a potential transit corridor and asked why that was not included as a potential corridor in this plan.

Mr. Ronald O'Blenis responded that the I-93 study has not been issued yet, but it will be reflected and what is shown in the presentation represents corridors that the stakeholders identified.

Mr. Cliff Sinnott of the RPC commented that the RPC has been involved in the Plaistow project with MBTA (the Plaistow project is 4.5 mile extension from Haverhill station into Plaistow). Mr. Sinnott explained that this would be a partnership between MBTA and Plaistow and that a park and ride lot would be built in Plaistow.

Mr. Tom Irwin of CLF asked why Concord was not considered as part of the Nashua-Manchester corridor and commented that it is important to see what other states are

doing in terms of passenger rail. He said that there is a risk if New Hampshire does not get involved and that could potentially lead to New Hampshire becoming isolated.

Mr. Lou Barker of NHDOT commented that the reason the Nashua-Manchester corridor is considered is because that is where the interest is and Concord is a little bit of a stretch for service to Boston.

Mr. Tom Irwin of CLF commented that people have been viewing the Capitol Corridor as a potentially viable line and not including it is a big decision as the inclusion of Concord is what the state has been marketing to the federal government.

Mr. Ronald O'Brien commented that one of the things that the Study Team will look at is rail compared to air, for example. He said that rail is able to serve a number of pairs and they find that it is not just the end pairs that are providing the bulk of the ridership and revenue. Mr. O'Brien noted that the commuters on the Downeaster are not Monday through Friday users; they tend to have modified commuter schedules where people commute only a couple of times a week. Mr. O'Brien also noted that another element at play is the reverse commute, where people are coming into New Hampshire to work, so there is a lot of flexibility with rail and the Downeaster line specifically.

Mr. Cliff Sinnott of RPC commented that it has been a real surprise how much interplay there has been among the three communities that the Downeaster serves in New Hampshire. He said that over time that will change the way that those communities interact and the way that economic development happens as those communities are not well connected by the interstate system. Mr. Sinnott noted that while the I-93 study has not been made public, he would say that it did not dismiss the Manchester-Lawrence corridor, but rather showed a pathway on the southern end of it by suggesting a bus on shoulder alternative to develop a commuter base and then perhaps the Salem southern end could be considered on a smaller scale.

Mr. Tom Irwin of CLF noted that NHDOT is taking measures to protect that line to make sure that it is there in the future.

Mr. Cliff Sinnott of RPC noted that MassDOT is not taking those same protective measures.

Mr. Peter Griffin of NHRRA commented that if you look at the development that is happening along the Manchester and Lawrence corridor, there is millions being invested in turning railways into trails, and with that investment does anyone believe that the money will be spent to turn them back into railways?

Mr. Ronald O'Brien of HDR agreed and commented that one of the constraints of the Downeaster is the length of the bus operations and the train, and that these need to be linked to create a more flexible network. Mr. O'Brien noted that one of the major

constraints to the Exeter location is parking, so the demand is there but there other pieces of the puzzle that need to be addressed.

Mr. Jim Stoetzel of TSM mentioned that another study that should be mentioned is NNEPRA's service development study to determine where they are going. The Downeaster is extending to Brunswick, Maine, and they would like to expand to seven trips a day, and parking then becomes an issue.

Mr. David Preece of SNHPC asked if the Rail Plan is considering inner-city bus connections to the stations because he believes we can't keep building parking stations.

Mr. Ronald O'Blenis responded that the opportunity and demand for rail is there, but the passenger wants flexibility and linking bus and rail is a big piece to providing that.

Mr. Peter Griffin commented that if you go to any major airport internationally they are connected to the host city by rail.

Mr. Lou Barker of NHDOT commented that we have to get into the discussion as to how rail will interact and complement bus service. Many people see rail as a competitor to bus service, and we need to help create a complementary relationship between the two.

Mr. Jim Stoetzel of TSM commented that there are new ways of linking bus and rail such as employers providing buses from rail stations to their employers, wireless connectivity on trains.

Mr. Steve Pesci of UNH commented that he would like to have a graphic that is more informative to the scale of investments in different states, and we want to make sure the work that has been done by the NHRTA for funding is shown there as well. Mr. Pesci noted that one of the limits to the growth of the Downeaster is the five round trips, there is no early northbound train to UNH and UNH faculty with early classes would use this service. Mr. Pesci continued to explain that the park and ride model that New Hampshire uses for all transit has one flaw; there is not enough parking because it is free. He noted that many of the cars are not commuters, and a charge for the spaces would discourage non-commuter parking.

Mr. Lou Barker of NHDOT agreed and pointed out Anderson RTC in Woburn, which charges a nominal fee. It's convenient and buses run through there as well.

Mr. Tom Irwin of CLF agreed with the need to connect rail and bus, and in addition to that link there needs to be strong emphasis on linking these modes to land use, to create more compact communities to increase transit viability.

Mr. Lou Barker of NHDOT agreed and mentioned that transit oriented design has a lot of positives but the problem is land uses are so diverse right now.

Ms. Pamela Yonkin commented that one of the things that the Study Team discovered is that some of the land that is perfectly suited for commercial and industrial use is zoned as residential, which is limiting some potential opportunities.

Mr. Tim Moore of the NHRTA commented that one of the myths of passenger rail is that it is only for the people in the southern part of the state. If you include the Downeaster stations, Plaistow and the New Hampshire Capitol Corridor, 68-69% of the state's population is within 15 miles of those stations. Mr. Moore noted that about a year ago the people from Lebanon made an excellent presentation about their desire to extend service down to Claremont, and a short time after that there was data that showed that they have in that area 700,000 bus boardings a year.

Mr. Ronald O'Blenis of HDR commented that there would be one more TAC meeting before we have public meetings in September.

Ms. Carol Morris of Morris Communications commented that the Study Team has prepared an update and that it will be emailed out to the TAC and to please forward this to their extensive network of interested parties throughout the state.

Mr. Charles Hunter of NECRR commented that the Boston to Montreal high-speed corridor is a USDOT-designated corridor, which is rare in the US and asked whether the state was going to get more involved in that corridor.

Mr. Peter Dearnness of New England Southern Railroad commented that the Phase 1 Study was done but the Phase 2 died due to lack of funding from New Hampshire. Mr. Dearnness commented that the Phase 1 study suggested there was a demand, but it never got to the next phase.

Mr. Peter Griffin of the NHRRRA commented that the ridership projections on that study were roughly 600,000 people annually and that line would be tremendous for New Hampshire, especially the tourism industry.

Mr. David Preece of the SNHPC commented that the high-speed rail corridor is very important to New Hampshire and the NHRTA as well.

Mr. Steve Pesci of UNH commented that priority needs must be reflected in this plan and that New Hampshire must decide whether they are going to pursue this (the high speed corridor) or whether the corridor will end up going through other states as opposed to New Hampshire. He noted the Phase 1 study needs to be followed up.

Mr. Jim Stoetzel of TSM commented that the federal government has made a lot of grant money available for these corridors and sometimes people get hung up on the lack of tracks, and that is not the end of the world anymore.

CLOSING REMARKS

Mr. Ronald O'Blenis of HDR thanked the TAC for their input and commitment to furthering the plan and asked that if any members have any follow up questions or comments on any part of the presentation to reach out to him, Pamela Yonkin or Carol Morris.

Meeting adjourned at 11:36 am.