

**STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
BUREAU OF RAIL AND TRANSIT**

MEETING REPORT

DATE OF MEETING: December 16, 2015

LOCATION OF MEETING: NHDOT, 5 Hazen Drive, Concord NH - Room 205

SUBJECT: Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Advisory Committee (BPTAC)

STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Felice Janelle, NHDES (Chair)
Dave Topham, Granite State Wheelmen
Eric Feldbaum, DRED – Parks and Rec.
Erik Paddleford, NHDOT – Rail and Transit
Scott Bourcier, Dubois and King
Mary Poesse, North Country Council
Craig Tufts, CNHRPC
Scott Bogle, RPC (by phone)

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS/ OTHERS PRESENT:

Larry Keniston, NHDOT – Rail and Transit
Jim Kirouac, NHDOT – Highway Design
Matt Waitkins, NRPC
Tod Powers, Mount Washington Valley Bicycle Club (MWVBC)
Glen Ashworth, MWVBC (by phone)
Sally McMurdo, MWVBC (by phone)

NOTES ON MEETING:

The regular meeting of the BPTAC was called to order at 11:00 a.m. by the Chair.

Approve October Minutes

The minutes of the October 28 meeting were approved as amended.

Review Subcommittee Charters

Felice reviewed the subcommittee charters that were developed. A “general” charter was developed to cover all BPTAC subcommittees present and future. This charter is meant to provide general information that will be relevant to any subcommittee that is formed. Specific charters were also developed and include specialized subcommittee information relevant to each subcommittee. The four subcommittees charters developed were: Lane Marking, Conference, Counting, and Stakeholders’ Guide. Erik suggested submitting the charters to Shelley for review and/ or feedback and approval. Committee members agreed with this approach.

Chip Seal Review

Erik gave a [presentation](#) on the chip seal bicycling review that was conducted on the Route 112 (Kancamagus Highway) and Route 302 with members of the MWVBC. The bicycling review was conducted as a result of comments received from bicycle club members indicating how the roadway had become undesirable for bicyclists due to the installation of the chip seal. The bicycle club also sent a letter to Assistant Commissioner Cass outlining their concerns (available in the online report). [A report documenting the review is available on the DOT Bike/ Ped website.](#)

Due to the feedback received from members of the MWVBC, the Department tried additional shoulder treatments in hopes of minimizing the negative impacts experienced by the bicycle club members and bicyclists in general. The shoulder treatments were intended to smooth out the shoulder surface by filling in the void spaces present in the chip seal. A goal of the bicycling review was to determine if these additional treatments were beneficial and improved the overall “bicycle friendliness” of the chip sealed section of roadway.

To document condition in the field, each participant filled out an evaluation form rating the five (5) sections of roadway encountered during the field review. Based on the results documented on the evaluation forms, the additional treatments did not improve the conditions for bicyclists. The additional treatments were rated worse than the chip seal with no treatment. As a result, these treatments were not recommended for future use to improve chip seal for bicyclists.

Tod Powers, MWVBC President, commented that he regularly rides the Kancamagus and Bear Notch Loop. Bicycling on the chip seal for the approximate 7 mile stretch causes his hands to go numb from the vibration. He also commented that the route is arguably one of the most revered routes in New England and has received many comments on how great a bicycle route the Kancamagus Highway is. Tod commented that the Department needs to consider these types of bicycle routes when planning chip seal projects.

Erik reviewed recommendations for improving chip seal for bicyclists in the future. Some of these recommendations included: sweeping the shoulders in the spring to remove loose aggregate, additional compaction of the shoulder, using smaller aggregate for the chip seal within the shoulder, and determining what routes are considered “high use” by bicyclists and look at using a different pavement preservation technique for those roadways.

Erik indicated that shoulders would need to be at least 8 feet wide in order to perform additional compaction since the specialized 30-ton roller needed is 8 feet wide. Glenn Ashworth commented that vibrating or non-vibrating rollers should be considered and it should not be difficult to obtain a narrower roller for work on shoulders less than 8 feet. (Larry subsequently passed Glenn’s comment on to Eric Thibodeau.)

Glenn Ashworth asked about the possibility of chip sealing the travel lane only while leaving the shoulder as is. Erik thought there would be difficulty in matching a new chip seal layer up with an old conventional pavement layer because the joint between the two layers would likely weather over time perhaps leaving a longitudinal groove or ridge which could prove unfriendly for bicyclists.

Tod also mentioned that the chip sealed surface could be more dangerous not only to bicyclists, but also to motorcyclists in the event of a sliding crash.

Matt Waitkins wondered if there has ever been any input from motorcycle groups on chip seal. Especially, when chip seal is first installed and there is loose aggregate with the potential of being “kicked up” by vehicles.

Jim Kirouac commented that over time vehicles cause additional compaction in the tire paths which can cause

the surface to become more “glassy” which could lead to a skid hazard for motorcyclists.

Erik indicated that the Pavement Management section would share their draft chip seal plan, when developed, with the DOT bike/ ped section and then the BPTAC would be asked for input on the chosen chip seal areas.

Tod and Glenn thanked the committee and DOT for work on this issue.

Erik also discussed that another use of the Strava data would be to show areas of high bicycle usage that could be used to compare against the chip seal project locations. The group can revisit this issue when the chip seal paving plan for next year is determined.

Steering Committee Members

Three steering committee members’ terms will be ending on December 31, 2015. Those members include Jeff Latimer, Scott Bogle, and Tim Blagden. Each of those members is eligible for another 2 year term. Felice had previously contacted each of the individuals and all indicated they were interested in a second term. The committee voted to appoint Jeff, Scott, and Tim for another term. Their terms will end on December 31, 2017.

The committee discussed the nomination of Will Schoefmann, City of Keene, to the Municipal member steering committee position. Committee members agreed to nominate Will and forward his name to the Commissioner for consideration. Erik will put together the paperwork and forward to the Commissioner for approval.

DOT Research Proposal

Ann Scholz, NHDOT Research Engineer, discussed the research program and the current solicitation that is out for research projects. Ann passed around an informational handout. The research section solicits projects every 2 or 3 years. Research problems come from within DOT but can come from outside DOT as long as there is a DOT “champion”. Typical project duration is about 2 years and in the past the Department has worked with universities, the US Geological Survey (USGS), the US Army Corp of Engineers, various consultants, as well as in-house personnel. Ann noted that the easiest method would be to work with one of the Universities in the state since they already have agreements with the Department.

A [problem statement form](#) is available online as well as a list of [past projects](#). There hasn’t been a bicycle or pedestrian based research project in the past, so it would be nice to get one this time. In a previous research round a proposal to quantify the costs for winter maintenance of sidewalks on state maintained roadways was proposed but was not chosen for funding.

The research proposal will have a greater likelihood of success if it can address the FHWA’s six high priority highway challenges (e.g. advancing safety, enhancing performance, improving mobility, promoting sustainability, maintaining infrastructure integrity, and preparing for the future) or is related to Every Day Counts (EDC) technologies and practices. <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/innovation/everydaycounts/>

Past projects ranged from \$25K to \$100K and during the last funding round and approximately 10 projects were chosen out of 22 proposals received. The total funding available for grants in this round will be in the \$500,000.00 range

The committee brainstormed research project ideas including: enforcement of the “3 foot law”, bicycle and pedestrian counting, Strava data analysis, LTS mapping, an incident reporting system, chip seal as it related to bicyclists, federal crash reporting system underreporting bicycle and pedestrian incidents, what it would cost the Department to have a policy of installing and maintaining bicycle markings, develop an outreach campaign and

study if it had an effect on the public knowledge of bicycle and/or pedestrian issues, and studying the possibility of widening roads to accommodate all road users. The committee will discuss potential research projects during the next meeting. Providing several potential projects may be a way to boost the chances of getting a bicycle or pedestrian project approved for funding. The deadline to submit a research proposal is March 15, 2016.

Strava Purchase Update

Erik indicated he recently submitted a proposal to purchase the next 2 years of Strava bicycle and pedestrian data to the Planning Bureau for consideration. To accompany this request, a letter was sent to all the RPC directors asking for support for the purchase by explaining what types of regional planning activities each RPC would conduct with the updated Strava data. Several RPCs have responded so far. Responses were requested from the RPCs by January 14. Once responses are received, they will be forwarded to Planning to make the funding decision.

Project Ranking List

The committee looked at the project ranking list that was first developed in 2013 when the BPTAC was reestablished. At the time, the update to the 2000 Statewide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan was ranked as the # 1 priority of the committee. Funding constraints have prevented this project from moving forward. Erik informed the committee that recent discussions indicated there was some funding available for this, but it was likely not enough based on reviews of costs for plans completed by other states. At this point, a first step would be to send a letter from the BPTAC to the commissioner outlining the need and reasons why funding for a bicycle pedestrian plan should be allocated. The committee agreed to this recommendation and will work on a letter.

Meeting adjourned at 1:00 pm

Next Meeting: January 27th, 2016 11:00-1:00pm, NHDOT: 5 Hazen Drive, Room 205 – Materials and Research Building.