

# New Hampshire Rail Transit Authority - Project Committee

## Minutes

April 22, 2015

Southern NH Planning Commission  
438 Dubuque Street  
Manchester, NH 03104

### **In Attendance:**

Peter Griffin	NH Rail Revitalization Association
Bob Jaffin	Strafford RPC
Dan Kelly	NH RTA
Tom Mahon	NH RTA
David Preece	Southern NH Planning Commission/NHRTA Vice-Chair
Adam Hlasny	Southern NH Planning Commission

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### **I. Call to Order**

Mr. David Preece called the meeting to order at 9:02 AM.

### **II. Minutes – March 24, 2015**

**Motion by Mr. Tom Mahon to approve minutes as written, seconded by Mr. Bob Jaffin.**

### **III. Public Input**

There was no public input.

### **IV. Legislation Status Update**

Senate Bill 63 was discussed at an executive session on April 21, 2015. An amendment to the makeup of the board was suggested (adding two House members appointed by the Speaker, remove a Governor's appointee and the HR/Labor appointee). The Transportation Committee chair was unhappy with the proposal, and the session recessed until April 28, 2015. No final decisions have been made at the committee level.

Both Public Works and Transportation Committees claim to have not received Senate Bill 88, and no action has been taken on the legislation thus far. Mr. Mahon suggested placing a call to the House Clerk to question the whereabouts of the bill. Mr. Dan Kelly has a message in to Mr. Mike O'Brien, Transportation Committee Chair, to inquire of the bill's status as well.

The status of House Bill 25 (Capital Improvements) is currently unknown.

## **V. Strategic Plan 2015**

Messrs. Mahon and Jaffin expressed concern that the current iteration of the Strategic Plan is too lengthy, and that much of its content could function as an addendum. Mr. Mahon suggested basing the strategic plan on that of NNEPRA, and including short-term (5-year) goals and action steps. Other suggested changes to the plan included:

- NH Capitol Corridor:
  - Reorganization of the board
  - Public-Private Partnerships Legislation must be in place
  - Encourage Manchester & Nashua to update zoning to include TIFs and TODs
  - Explore and pursue alternate funding sources for project development phase
- Claremont Station:
  - Should be under headline of 'Vermont' or 'Knowledge Corridor'
  - Determine what role NH RTA can take on this project
- Downeaster:
  - Actively monitor operations/expansion plans, and provide support where necessary
  - Encourage development of NH station areas
- North Country:
  - Continue to support and encourage increased rail operations in the north country
- Other:
  - Due to lack of immediacy, it was recommended the following be moved to an appendix:
    - Plaistow/MBTA Extension
    - Somersworth
    - Portsmouth
    - Lebanon
    - Pan Am Railways Eastern Branch

## **VI. Other Business/Next Steps**

Mr. Jaffin introduced the idea of monitoring the tourist railway operations (Lincoln, Meredith, N Conway), at least in an informal manner. Mr. Mahon suggested keeping tabs on the happenings of rail support groups, such as New Hampshire Railroad Revitalization Association. Mr. Preece suggested holding another Northern New England rail conference. "Train Day", held nationally each day, was briefly discussed. Mr. Mahon said he would contact Congresswoman Kuster's office to see if any activities are planned. Mr. Griffin noted that ripple effects from MBTA's recent negative press must be addressed; Mr. Preece said that this is a job for Mr. EJ Powers of Montagne Communications.

**Motion by Mr. Mahon to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Kelly. The meeting stood adjourned at 10:14 AM.**

*Respectfully submitted by Adam Hlasny, SNHPC, 4/22/15; approved 5/20/15.*