



Meeting Minutes

Date: December 17, 2008

Project: 08316

Subject: South Berwick Transportation Study
Advisory Committee Meeting, South Berwick Town Hall

By: Steve Sawyer

Attendees: Tom Reinauer, SMRPC
Steve Sawyer, STI
Julia Dawson, SMRPC
Tom Harmon, Business Owner
Gerald MacPherson, Sr. Town Council
Roberta Orsini, Town Manager
Terry Oliver, Town Public Works Director
George Muller, Citizen
Terrance Parker, ETMD
Ken Creed, YCCA
Raymond Snell, Old Mill
Dennis Emidy, MDOT
Bill Bent, HNTB
Carol Morris

CC: Tom Reinauer, SMRPC
Jason Schrieber, Nelson/Nygaard
Marcia Bowen, Normandeau Associates
Carol Morris, Morris Communications
Lynne Seeley

This was the initial meeting of the Advisory Committee and the agenda for the meeting is attached. The turnout for this meeting was compromised by the snowy weather. The following notations were made during the conversation:

- Tom began by explaining the goals and role of the Steering Committee to the new attendees and to refresh those who had attended the initial meeting. The Steering Committee would be small technical group, who would meet every other month throughout the study process.
- Tom also explained that there would also be a larger group (Advisory Committee) that currently had an email list of 50-60 members. This group would meet 3-4 times during the study process, or at major milestones. Steve indicated that these milestones would include a

discussion of the potential alternatives to be considered, the findings of our subsequent investigations, and a review of our final recommendations.

- SMRPC will post minutes of all meetings on their website.
- Tom next asked if our outreach should extend further to the outlining communities, since many at the Public Meeting indicated that “downtown issues” were a regional problem not just a South Berwick issue. The group felt that an attempt should be made to include Town Managers of the upstream communities within the commuter watershed. The 1998 Legislative Study did and there was good cooperation.

ACTION: Tom to make contact with these individuals.

- A brief discussion followed on the regional issue and the best way to present this study to the public and surrounding communities. It was also suggested that the final Study should have Town Council, MPO, and State approval/endorsement.

The Study Team was also urged to make contact with the major employers in the region.

ACTION: Study Team to compile a list and contact major regional employers.

- Terrance asked if we would be evaluating a bypass. He indicated that the former Town Transportation Committee had ruled out a bypass. We said all options would be evaluated in order to have a complete evaluation.
- Gerry MacPherson mentioned that the Turnpike, through its tolling and oversized load policies, has a big impact on the number of oversized loads traveling through Downtown. He indicated that past work had identified these issues as problematic for South Berwick. He also commented that the Easy Pass could be used as a means to entice Sanford commuters to use the Turnpike verses Route 4 and 236.
- Tom Harmon asked if a Downtown Master Plan was part of this Study. We indicated that it was not, but one sure would be helpful to the process. He said the Town had recently purchased the Catholic Church for use in redeveloping the downtown. Roberta indicated that a Master Plan was not a new idea, but funding was not available for this effort. Tom Reinauer followed up by saying the SMRPC had a small amount of funding to assist the Town if needed.

Someone asked that the attendance list be added to the public meeting minutes on the SMRPC website.

ACTION: Tom to add the public meeting attendance list to the minutes on their website.

- The discussion then moved to the “Basis for Purpose & Need Statement” that was handed out. Carol indicated that she had tried to capture the former Town Transportation Committee’s issues as well as additional comments made at the Public Meeting. The committee was asked if this list seemed to cover everything.

- It was noted that traffic in the summer, especially on a Sunday afternoon can be very bad, if not worse than midweek peak hour congestion.
- It was also mentioned that the road curvature of Main Street north of Route 4 obscures the crosswalks and pedestrians are fearful of crossing Main Street as vehicles are accelerating to leave town. More signs should be added to alert drivers to pedestrians in crosswalks.
- We were asked if park-and-ride lots north of South Berwick would be considered. The answer was yes. A park-and-ride lot in Sanford is a possibility. Tom Harmon's firm did the project at the North Berwick town line that had a park-and-ride lot component.
- As part of the NEPA process all alternatives must be considered, including a "no build" approach. Therefore the bypass option will need to be in the mix of alternatives in order to make the study complete.
- Oversized loads are not as big a problem as they were several years ago, i.e. before a meeting was held with the state police a couple of years ago. Currently SB is less of a problem than NB. – not sure what this means – Tom
- The discussion then turned to the three Draft Purpose and Need Statements. Carol offered some introductory remarks, and the group had some differences of opinion on which one captured their objectives the best. Generally speaking no one had any objections to any of the three. It was agreed that trying to better define "quality of life" would be advisable. Less stress, walkable, greener, sustainable, improved air quality were all suggestions to help get at this definition, but the nothing was agreed upon. As such, it was decided to let these simmer for awhile and come back to them once we had begun looking at improvement alternatives.

ACTION: Carol is to try to wordsmith these three Drafts by defining the "quality of life" reference. Tom will forward the document to the study email list and asked for feedback. He will also post it on the web site.

- It was then agreed that the next step would be for the Study Team to meet separately and brainstorm a list of possible improvement actions for consideration by the Committee at the **next meeting which would be January 27th at 5:00 PM.** A snow date will be January 29.

These minutes represent the understanding of the author as to what transpired at this meeting. If there has been a misinterpretation of any aspect of the discussion, please let STI know so that these minutes can be updated. Thank you in advance for your cooperation in this regard.

Respectfully submitted,



Steve Sawyer
SEBAGO TECHNICS, INC.

SSS:sss/df