

MEMORANDUM

To: Route 1 Corridor Coalition and Interested Parties

From: Josh Mack, Transportation Planner

Date: September 20, 2007

RE: Meeting Notes from Route 1 Corridor Meeting on August 22, 2007

Those in attendance included Diane Brandon – Community Wellness Coalition; John Bubier – Biddeford Town Manager; Dawn Hill – Maine State Representative; Michael Huston – Wells Planner; Chris Mann -- MaineDOT; Nate Moulton – MaineDOT; Tom Reinauer – SMRPC; Jim Spiller – Wells Selectman; Charles Szeniawski – York Police; Wells Police; Steve Workman – Eastern Trail Management District. The meeting was held at the Wells Town Hall.

1. Welcome/Introductions

2. Committee Updates

Staff updated the committee on several activities that have occurred since the last Route One Corridor Coalition meeting.

- *Traffic Incident Management Meeting*
 - This group continues to be very active. SMRPC is assisting MaineDOT in planning for a Quick Clearance workshop series to be held in the October. One workshop will be designed for responder management and another workshop will be for top senior management people involved in incident management as well as legislators. Josh Mack continues to meet with towns to discuss what kind of routing protocol they would likely follow given an incident in various locations on I-95 or other major arterials in So. York County. Josh has met with Kittery, Portsmouth, Wells and York. He will be meeting with Eliot and South Berwick soon. Staff are also examining the possibilities of enhancing mutual aid between public works departments for traffic incidents.
- *Shoreline Explorer*
 - Reports from the “Shoreline Explorer” service is that it has experienced about a 20% growth in total ridership since last year. Each branch of the service has experienced increases.
- *Maine Turnpike Updates*
 - The Maine Turnpike has completed a survey of motorist origin and destinations for the Route One area. The survey was conducted all day on 8/10. Surveys were also conducted on Route 236 and 9. The survey was a follow up to an origin destination survey done with cameras last fall. Maine Turnpike will use this information to inform the public about diversion trips.
 - The Maine Turnpike is conducting a toll equity study. Tom Reinauer was asked to sit on a technical advisory committee and Cathy Goodwin was recruited to sit on a citizens committee for the study.

3. Freight in Southern Maine

Josh Mack explained that staff are trying to address the top 10 action plan items for the Route One Action Plan. The second highest ranking action item describes a desire for the committee to “Investigate possibilities of increasing use of freight rail and intermodal facilities within the corridor.” Freight traffic is expected to double in the next 20 years in Maine and the rest of the country, placing new demands on all of our transportation infrastructure. Chris McClinchy did some research and put together a packet on freight information for the committee to review. This packet was distributed to the meeting attendees. Major findings were as follows:

- Between 1997 and 2002, there has been a decline in truck registrations, truck miles traveled and the average miles per truck in Maine, New England, and the US as a whole, though the decline in Maine outpaces the others.
- In Maine for 2002, almost 79% of commodity shipments (by value) were made by truck. 83% of total tons were shipped by truck.
- Looking at the Commodity Flow Survey for all modes of transportation, we see that between 1997 and 2002 Maine saw a 48% increase in the value of the commodities originating in Maine. This is almost twice the increase realized by New England and the US. We also see a 42% increase in tons shipped, which is more than four times the rate of the region and the nation.
- We do see a decrease of about 17% in the average miles per shipment for goods originating in Maine, compared to a 60% increase in New England and 12.5% nationwide. This may just be a sign that more of the goods from Maine are staying in Maine or the region. In fact, more than 61% of goods travel less than 250 miles.
- The value and weight of commodities shipped by truck and rail are increasing faster than the region and the nation.
- For commodities shipped by air transportation we see a decrease in value from 1997 to 2002 however there was a significant increase in weight and average miles per shipment.

Nate Moulton from MaineDOT’s Office of Freight was introduced to the group. Nate was invited to discuss existing conditions for freight conditions in the state. Major parts of the presentation are listed below:

On Truck Freight:

- Motor carriers are the predominant mode of freight transportation in Maine. Truck freight will continue to be the predominant mode.
- Maine’s trucking industry currently has a problem in that it is not exporting as much as much as it is importing. In order to improve efficiencies, trucking companies would like to be filled up on trips back and forth between destinations. Some companies, such as Walmart are finding new creative ways to use trucks for export— Many Walmart trucks heading south are loaded with paper.
- Despite inefficiencies experienced by trucking industry, they are extremely competitive with other freight modes. They are more flexible in where they can pick up and deliver product and they are reasonably fast for domestic shipments.

On Marine Freight:

- Maine continues to have a three-port strategy for its marine freight system consisting of Portland, Searsport and Eastport.
- Marine cargo tends to be international shipments. Maine expects to improve truck and freight intermodality in Portland.

On Rail Freight:

- The other major port in Maine is at the Auburn Intermodal Facility, which is located on I-95 and the Saint Lawrence and Atlantic Railroad.
- Maine continues to purchase rail line in the State. It is currently negotiating some of the Mountain Division ROW between Westbrook and Windham.
- Pan Am Railways (formerly Guilford) owns all of the existing Boston and Maine railroad track that passes through the Southern Maine Coast area south of Portland. There is tandem track throughout Wells. There are several locations on the leg in York County that have height restrictions, which would prevent double stacking on the line. More study is needed on the connections further south, impediments, etc.,.
- MaineDOT's Industrial Rail Access Program, which has been designed by the Maine Department of Transportation to encourage economic development and increased use of the rail transportation mode. The 2007 program is funded with \$1,000,000 in state funds to provide a maximum of 50% of estimated project costs. For more information go to: <http://www.maine.gov/mdot/freight/irap.php>
- Rail is generally a competitive mode choice when it carrying heavy commodities that don't require fast shipment. Gravel, cement, hazardous materials are some examples of commodities shipped on rail in Maine.

On Air Freight

- Major airports in this area are Biddeford, Sanford and Portland.
- Air freight is most competitive in lighter commodities that require quick shipment.

The following ideas were provided to staff as next steps for action based on the presentations and questions and answers:

- Float idea of developing regional multimodal industrial park for this region. Possibly build off efforts already underway between South Berwick, Eliot and others.
- Investigate impediments to rail further on down the line on the Boston and Maine railroad south of Maine. Inventory existing impediments on the Maine portion.
- Investigate rail spur that goes into Kittery near the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard—future intermodal facility?.

4. Other Business

Jim Spiller asked if other committee members had noticed that trucks delivering to the new Stop & Shop in Kennebunk were getting off at the wrong exits. Josh said he would try to reach the Stop & Shop Transportation Manager to see what if any official routing directions they are

giving drivers. Tom mentioned that he is hoping to have a freight manager breakfast to talk about freight issues in the near future.

Staff announced that it is working on an initiative to get the parking inventory it has collected onto a website. More information on this initiative will be given at a future meeting. **No meeting date was announced.**