



**Route 113 Corridor Committee Meeting**

**June 15, 2011**

**5:30-7:30 PM**

**Brownfield Community Center**

**Meeting Notes**

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**Committee Members:** Steve Gourley (Brownfield); Marlene Livonia (Hiram); Phil Pomerleau (Standish); Larry Seidl (Baldwin); Lou Stack, Vice Chair (Standish)

**Guests:** Tom Bartell (Windham); Tony Wood (Baldwin)

**Staff:** Myranda McGowan (SMRPC); Caroline Paras (GPCOG)

**I. Welcome and Introductions**

**A. Meeting Minutes of 04/20/11**

Phil made a motion, seconded by Larry, to approve the minutes of the April 20, 2011 meeting. The minutes were unanimously approved.

**II. Updates**

**A. Town News**

*Standish:* The Town approved monies to purchase land to construct a new road at the intersection of Oak Hill and Route 25, which would alleviate traffic congestion and improve safety. The three-day Standish Summer Spectacular will kick off at the end of June. Roadway Utility Trailers signed a lease at Seidl's Trucking on the Pequawket Trail in East Baldwin.

*Hiram:* There is a parcel for sale on the Pequawket Trail with as much as a mile of frontage along the Saco River. Corridor Committee member Ed Pierce, who owns the Hiram Rail Museum, will be entering assisted living in Fryeburg. Everything at the museum will be up for sale.

*Baldwin:* With so many ill members, the Baldwin Business Association decided not to host Baldwin Appreciation Day next month. The event, which last year attracted over 400 people, was getting too big.

*Brownfield:* The Town had a raucous Town meeting. The new Back Burner restaurant is very busy.

*Fryeburg:* No member present at the meeting.

*Windham:* Bushmaster is back in business as Windham Weaponry, with 25 new jobs. This year, the Town is hosting a combined Town meeting and summer festival on the same day.

#### **A. Byway Clean-Up Day**

Five people in Standish participated in the May 7<sup>th</sup> annual clean-up of the Pequawket Trail. The Mount Washington Valley clean-up, held on the same day in Brownfield and Fryeburg, reportedly had a good turnout.

### **III. Scenic Byway**

#### **B. Corridor Management Plan**

The next meeting of the Corridor Advisory Committee is June 29. Members from all communities are still needed. It was suggested that perhaps we could change the format of the meetings: a meeting could be held in each town with a Q&A, an activity-oriented session, and then a business meeting. We might get a better turnout, but would lose the continuity of consistent membership. Other ideas included asking Stow to participate, providing food at meetings, and electing a chair of the committee.

Myranda checked to see whether Byway funds could be used for maintenance of the Hiram Falls Rest Area. The answer was no. We are still waiting for an answer on whether NextEra Energy is willing to restore the scenic view at the rest area without making other improvements, such as picnic tables, that would necessitate a no-cost maintenance agreement.

### **IV. Mountain Division**

#### **A. Bond**

Senator Diamond sponsored LD 63, a \$21 million bond to complete reconstruction, including new ballast and ties, of the Mountain Division rail line from Portland to Fryeburg. Unfortunately, there will be no bonds heard in the Legislature this year, but they may be carried over to the next session.

Tony Wood gave a report of the meeting with Governor LePage on the Mountain Division, which included Senators Diamond and Hastings, Reps. Shaw and Sarty plus Donnie Thibodeau from Green Thumb Farms and Gary MacFarlane and Pat Maillett from HarMac Steel. The Governor seemed enthused about the revival of the forest products industry as well as the involvement of Sprague Energy. Although the Governor would not support a bond at this time, he stated that he and his Administration would do everything they could to find alternative State and Federal resources.

During the downtime before the next legislative session, Tony suggested we host a legislative tour of the line that includes the port as well as the site of the pellet plant. Perhaps a portion of the trip could be hauled, with a return during rush hour to the port. Standish set aside \$1,000 in its economic development budget that could be tapped for a bus and/or food.

In a subsequent conversation with Nate Moulton, Lou was assured that the Mountain Division was still high on the MaineDOT's priority list but that there was no money in the STAR account or any other State source to fund the project. Although there will be no bonds this session, there is still a chance for a TIGER III round at the Federal level. Hopefully, the Mountain Division is positioned to be "next in line," since many of the other capital projects previously proposed, including Portland's cruise ship megaberth and the reconstruction of the Maine, Montreal and Atlantic rail line, have been funded.

Roadway Utility Trailers could be another major shipper on the line. They are in conversations with a dealer that could put them in 230 distribution outlets throughout the Northeast.

## **B. Trail**

Phase II of the Fryeburg section of the Mountain Division from Porter Road to the Town line received \$995,000 in construction for the next biennium. A public hearing will be held at the Fryeburg Town Office next week. The Westbrook-Windham section of the trail received \$150,000 for design/engineering. The goal is to complete this phase in time to submit for construction funds in the 2012 application cycle.

## **C. Maine DOT Committee on rail with trail**

Lou, Steve, and Caroline attended the MaineDOT's May 5<sup>th</sup> advisory committee meeting on the Mountain Division rail with trail. Lou made a point at the meeting that we have all had enough of the "shenanigans" perpetuated by the trail groups over the last year, in terms of pressuring the MaineDOT to stop the rail reconstruction and to divert the rail monies to the trail. For our part, the Route 113 Corridor Committee applauds the continuing construction of the trail within the Mountain Division right-of-way and has not asked the MaineDOT to spend trail money on the rail reconstruction.

Caroline pointed out that, in the future, a lingering unanswered question may yet divide the rail and trail groups: What source of funds will be tapped to achieve adequate separation of the trail from the railroad bed in accordance with MaineDOT policy on the Windham to Standish section that does not meet the standard? HNTB has pegged these costs at \$3 million.

## **D. CDBG Planning Grant for the Mountain Division**

Cumberland County has awarded a \$13,000+ grant to the Town of Standish to conduct a buildout analysis of industrial and commercial land along the Mountain Division corridor. Because there are 10 towns abutting the corridor, our hope was to get the full \$25,000 request,

match that with State CDBG funds, and then ask the Economic Development Administration for \$50,000, bringing the total to \$100,000. Although that scenario is not quite possible now, GPCOG is willing to kick in some of its Brownfields Assessment funds for the study and then apply to the EDA for matching funds. Committee members agreed to serve in an advisory capacity until such time that the study is fully funded and other Towns are invited to the table. Unfortunately, the City of Westbrook and the Town of Windham declined in January to be part of this effort. Cornish, whose village is just 1 mile from the line, should be invited to participate.

**A. Next Meeting Date:**

Instead of waiting for September, the committee decided to host an additional meeting on August 17.

**B. Election of new Chair and/or Vice-Chair**

No action was taken.

The meeting adjourned at 7:40PM.