

# Route 113 Corridor Committee

Corridor Committee Meeting

September 13, 2007

3:00 – 5:30 PM

Standish Municipal Center

## Meeting Notes

**Attendance:** Senator Bill Diamond; Representative Don Marean; Representative Gary Moore; Marlee Turner (Brownfield); David Knapp (Fryeburg); Phil Pomerleau (Standish); Gordy Billington (Standish); Mike Shaw (Standish); Lou Stack (Standish); Bob Jewett (Baldwin); Gordon Miliken (Baldwin); Steve Wood (Baldwin); Glen Reynolds (Baldwin); John Chwaszczenski (Hiram); Eric Noble (Hiram); Steve Knudson (Baldwin); Dan Feeney (Portland); Steve Estes (Baldwin); Larry Mounce (Baldwin); Jon Shute (North Yarmouth); Ralph Sarty (Denmark); Ralph Mazzeo (HNTB Corporation); Jack Sutton (Downeast Rail); Ira Schreiber (Scarborough); Toni Seger (Western Maine Cultural Alliance); Wayne Davis (Train Riders Northeast); Nate Moulton (Maine DOT); Josh Mack (SMRPC); Caroline Paras (GPCOG).

### 1. Town News

Standish: Standish is working on a Village Plan for Standish Corner. The Town was selected by GrowSmart Maine as a Model Town. This designation will bring with it technical assistance around smart growth and village revitalization. A new gazebo is going up in Steep Falls.

Baldwin: Members of the Business Association talked to the Conway Scenic Railroad re: their interest in the Mountain Division..

Hiram: The Cotton Store is back on track and back in business.

Brownfield: The Town is revising its Comprehensive Plan for the first time in 18 years. This will be followed by development of a land use ordinance.

Fryeburg: Fryeburg was designated as the site of the 2008 Maine Bike Rally next summer. The Mountain Division Trail captured \$1.38 million dollars in the next biennium for construction. Along with the grant, the MaineDOT is giving the Town funds for development of a communitywide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.

### 2. Scenic Byway Application

Josh reported that Route 113 was designated by the Maine Department of Transportation in August as a Scenic Byway. This brings with it incorporation of Route 113 into the state Scenic Byway marketing program, including signage and the ExploreMaine website. The next step is development of a Corridor Management Plan by a Committee comprised of stakeholders in the region. Questions for the Route 113 Corridor are as follows:

- *Should the Corridor Management Committee = the Route 113 Corridor Committee? Or should it be a subcommittee or a new group altogether?*
- *What elements of a Corridor Management Plan are missing from reports already produced, including the Scenic Byway application and Economic Opportunities Strategy?*

### **3. Economic Opportunities Strategy for the Saco River Valley**

A paper copy of the draft study has been circulating since May. Before it can be posted online to elicit feedback from the region, the following actions need to be taken:

- *The Route 113 Committee members need to review the document for red flags, or strategies that must be revised.*
- *The Route 113 Committee needs to endorse the strategy by vote or consensus.*

Caroline will circulate a hard copy of the document to elected officials in the corridor. It was decided that no further action would be taken individually by municipalities until the actions above have been pursued.

### **4. Mountain Division Rail Study**

Nate Moulton, Rail Manager for the Maine Department of Transportation, introduced Ralph Mazzeo from HNTB Corporation, who gave an overview of the proposed scope of work for the Rail Engineering and Economic Study. The legislative resolve gives HNTB until January 15, 2008 to complete their work. The study will look at what it would take to bring the line up to Class 1, 2, or 3 standards for freight, commuter, and excursion service, including cost structure, station locations, operations, and maintenance. The following issues were discussed:

- Importance of securing operating rights in the City of Portland from Guilford. If we don't get the train to Portland we don't go anywhere else!
- Portland Water District concerns about the rail and trail
- Compatibility of rail with trail in terms of design and safety
- Public subsidy for rail versus public investment in rail infrastructure
- Importance of commuter service
- Communications with New Hampshire
- Future business investment in the corridor in terms of undeveloped land, Pine Tree Zones
- Intermodal connections, especially container cargo
- Current commodities shipped by rail, including lumber, automobiles, chemicals, and beer
- Investment in rail versus long term wear and tear on roads
- Development at Thompson's Point, where the Portland Transportation Center is located
- Hours of operation for future service
- Grassroots campaign, e.g., coffee and cookie discussions throughout the region. Also Colorado's adoption of a transit bill with 65% of the vote, giving Denver its rail system
- Crown of New England – a vision for a circumferential rail loop from Portland to White River Junction in Vermont