

## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Route 236 Implementation Committee and Interested Parties

**From:** Josh Mack, Transportation Planner

**Date:** May 4, 2006

**RE:** Meeting Notes from 236 Meeting on March 3rd, 2006

---

Those in attendance included David Burke, South Berwick Planning Board; Diane Brandon, Community Wellness Coalition; Ken Creed, York County Community Action Corporation; Jeff Hoerth, South Berwick Transportation Committee; Jonathan Labonte, Maine Turnpike Authority; Dana Lajoie, South Berwick Police Chief; Josh Mack, Southern Maine Regional Planning Commission (SMRPC)/KACTS; Terry Oliver, South Berwick Public Works; Tom Reinauer, SMRPC/KACTS; John Rudolph, South Berwick Transportation Committee; Rick Rossiter, Kittery Public Works; Steve Workman, Eastern Trail Management District.

### Staff updates:

After introductions, the meeting began with a staff update on various Route 236 Corridor Committee activities. Major activities included the following:

- Staff developed a May 3, 2006 update to the Route 236 Action plan. Highlighted Action Items are documented below:
- Short Term Action Item #2 (Maine Turnpike Authority review of toll and bridge infrastructure constraints and policies for some overlimit vehicles) - Jonathan Labonte announced that the Long Range Planning Committee for the Maine Turnpike Authority is nearing completion of an internal review of its existing overlimit commercial freight vehicle policies as well as the physical constraints of its existing infrastructure for overlimit vehicles. Information relating to its findings will be shared with the Route 236 Corridor Implementation Committee at a future date.
- Short Term Action Item #4 (advisory in newsletter to manufactured home haulers) Staff contacted Karen Brown-Mohr of the Manufactured Housing Association of Maine for an update on the progress of a newsletter advisory indicating the school and commuting hour congestion of South Berwick. Karen expects to issue one of these in their April 2006 letter. Staff has no confirmation to date. May want to pursue this again in the fall as school year is currently approaching its end.
- Short Term Action Item #5 (letter requesting additional resources to Maine State Police Commercial Vehicle Enforcement Division). Staff developed and mailed a letter requesting additional funds for the Maine State Police. Dana Lajoie expressed interest in looking into feasibility of contracting with state for a State Police detail on Route 4 and 236. John Rudolph asked for staff to examine if KACTS funding could be used as seed funding for a regional detail.
- Short Term Action Item #7 (town assistance on jake brake enforcement). Staff distributed a handout from Maine DOT that discusses "jake braking". Interest in jake braking regulation was brought about by the noise that large trucks make when traveling

through downtown areas. Staff suggested South Berwick Traffic Committee read over the handout, as jake braking is differentiated with other noises that trucks make, and there are recommendations on how local enforcement can deal with this issue.

- Short Term Action Item #8 (Maine DOT engineering study of existing and future performance of Route 236) Staff spoke with Dennis Emidy, the Maine DOT engineer managing the Route 236 Engineering Study. The repaving project on Route 236 is not yet completed, but is scheduled to be completed by the end of May. Dennis Emidy has scheduled May 31<sup>st</sup> as the first day of data collection for his study. Staff are working with Dennis to develop a written study scope to ensure that all study needs possible are addressed.
- Short Term Action Item #10 (local police request for training on federal motor carrier enforcement laws). Chief Ted Short of Eliot and SMRPC recently received a letter from the Commercial Vehicle Enforcement Unit rejecting the training request by local Route 236 communities. The letter identified several reasons for not granting the request, the most important of which is that a Maine Statute currently defines motor carrier enforcement as a Maine State Police activity. Other issues with regard to local enforcement are reporting, coordination, and other logistics.
- Dana Lajoie announced that Robby Nichols, a commercial vehicle enforcement officer from the Maine State Police recently held a training on what local police officers can currently enforce on Route 236. 19 officers from Kittery, North Berwick and South Berwick attended. Training was two weeks ago lasting about three hours. South Berwick has already reaped benefits from the training. Several vehicles have been stopped with violations, and the state police have coordinated well by coming in to assist local enforcement authorities after vehicles were stopped. Dana believes that illegal trucks will start getting the message that the corridor is now starting to be enforced more.
- Short Term Action Item #14 (strengthen local access management). Josh Mack met with Terry Oliver and Jim Fisk a couple of weeks ago, and Josh was given direction to develop access management language for the local South Berwick ordinance that is at least as strong as Maine DOT's Highway Driveway and Entrance Rules. Josh is working on an Access Management proposal for the Town of Eliot.
- Short Term Action Item # 17 (redesign of southern portion of Route 236 between Marshwood Middle School and Route 4). KACTS and South Berwick are completing a gateway design project for this portion of Route 236. Mitchell and Associates should have some concepts available in late May or June. Terry Oliver noted that he sent some drawing ideas to Mitchell Associates several weeks ago for them to incorporate in their sketch planning.
- Diane Brandon asked about how Smart Growth South Berwick and if a proposed zoning change for South Berwick will impact the project. Tom Reinauer said that as talks in South Berwick about zoning changes and "smart growth" are currently in progress, the design review contract is going forward. Diane announced that the Community Wellness Coalition and the Greater York County Chamber of Commerce, serving the KEYS towns have bought several copies of a recently released video, "Growing Together: Consensus Building, Smart Growth, and Community Change," which has good examples of public planning processes. She announced that both agencies will provide them on loan. Growing Together is 53 minutes long, but can be viewed in segments, with 4 case studies and several information segments. It was funded by EPA's New England Environmental Finance Center at USM, to help with local planning that involves citizens. The dvd can be ordered from USM at <http://efc.muskie.usm.maine.edu/>.

- Short Term Action Item #19: (impact fees educational workshops). Staff announced that they would like to discuss impact fees at the next June meeting and discuss within the committee before approaching the towns. The Committee agreed. Steve Workman suggested also discussing contract zoning. The meeting could be about local or regional planning tools that can be used for transportation fundraising. Jonathan Labonte suggested that the activities of the state in developing new ideas for transportation fundraising might be helpful too. Josh said he would contact someone at Maine DOT and ask if they would be willing to report on the state's current financial plans for transportation infrastructure. The Committee agreed that **Staff should develop presentation, materials and potential guest speakers for a June 6 meeting on creative transportation financing, local, regional and state tools.**
- Short Term Action Item #22: (study feasibility of Sanford Park and Ride Lot). Tom Reinauer has contacted Anna Price for direction on how to get the feasibility study started.
- Short Term Action Item #23: (improving park and ride publicity in corridor area). Tom is setting up a meeting with Carey Kish and the GoMaine Program to discuss ways to improve Park and Ride publicity and participation in the area. John Rudolph advocated that action items 22 and 23, as well as transit are extremely important considering the gas crisis we are facing. High gas prices may also make this an opportune time for people to pay attention to these action items.
- Short Term Action Item #24: (transit task force). Tom has contacted Tim Roache from Strafford Regional Planning to set up a transit meeting in June.

#### Future Public Meeting

- Staff announced that they would like to hold a public meeting soon to engage the public and keep them informed about the Corridor Committee's work thus far. Staff would like to have an open house style forum in the middle of the week from 4 to 7 pm, possibly at Marshwood High School sometime in June. There would be tables with displays and information, and there would be food and drink. People can drop in and out at their convenience and speak to staff, Maine DOT, and committee members. Staff would like to put signs out on 236 prior to the meeting to notify commuters and others well ahead of time, in addition to press releases and other outreach efforts.
- The Committee advised that staff should wait until September as June is a difficult month with school getting out. Marshwood Junior High was suggested as a more central location for the future public forum. It was noted that September might be a better date anyway to show preliminary findings of Dennis Emidy's study. **There was consensus to hold the next Route 236 public meeting in September.**
- Diane Brandon suggested having tables where people could sit around displays, read and discuss information.
- Steve Workman asked if presentations from Eastern Trail could be included? Maybe MTA and MDOT would also like to have displays?
- **Tom also mentioned that in the interim, staff would work on a letter/report which they will send to all town councilors/selectmen summarizing the committee's progress on the corridor's transportation issues.**

#### Long Term Action Item #1, "Improve transportation routing/infrastructure in the vicinity of South Berwick

- Per the committee’s request, staff had met for several hours to examine the physical constraints map of southern York County to discuss alternate routing possibilities. Staff developed some simple scenarios based on existing knowledge, asking questions about where would an alternative route possibly go (based on physical constraints), what purpose would it serve, and how would it impact regional traffic movements and land uses in the region. Although this exercise had some beneficial aspects, understanding the traffic issues that are known, and the major physical constraints that exist, Tom Reinauer made the case that the exercise does not inform us with enough information to help the committee develop a policy on long-term routing at this point. Several things that the committee are currently doing now will better improve our long-term vision for the corridor including:
  - The committee’s request for an alternatives analysis from Maine DOT for the South Berwick traffic problem. This process, which will likely include members of this committee on the advisory committee, will have the means that we currently do not have to more effectively understand forecasted regional traffic patterns and the impacts of various mobility alternatives for the region through modeling technology and better data collection. Tom distributed a written draft letter requesting the alternatives analysis. He explained that he would like to have town letters of support as well as KACTS policy committee support.
  - Maine DOT engineering study. The study will provide some modeling for Route 236 specifically. Staff believe that Maine DOT can relatively easy do some very simple scenario planning with his modeling program which will better inform the committee’s work on the long term needs of the corridor. Staff will be work to ask for alternatives modeling in the scope.
- John Rudolph expressed his concern that the Committee ensure that the long term visioning for the corridor is a holistic process (multi modal, considerations of land use, economic development, etc.) He would like to have this approach “built in” to any formal processes like Maine DOT’s study or an alternatives analysis. John discussed the fuel issue and how this provides some impetus for broadening our look at the transportation system.
- Terry Oliver stated that he believes the hydrogen car is on its way and although it may solve pollution and energy affordability problems, it will continue to cater to America’s love with the automobile, and will not fix our rising congestion issues. John responded that even while we wait for such technology, it is an opportune time to begin building alternative transportation infrastructure that people can grow accustomed to.
- Dave Burke expressed his concern that he would like to have deadlines developed for Dennis’ study. **Tom agreed he would work with Maine DOT to develop some deadlines for Dennis’ study.**

The next Route 236 Corridor Implementation Committee meeting was scheduled for June 6, 2006 from 9AM to 11 AM, at Eliot Town Hall.