

MEMORANDUM

To: Route 236 Implementation Committee and Interested Parties

From: Josh Mack, Transportation Planner

Date: June 24, 2005

RE: Meeting Notes for June 23, 2005 Route 236 Corridor Implementation Committee

Those in Attendance: Diane Brandon, Community Wellness Coalition; Jon Carter, Town of Kittery; Ken Creed, York County Community Action Corporation; Carrie Eisner, Greater York Chamber of Commerce; Lauren Fleming, HNTB/Maine Turnpike Authority; Josh Mack, Southern Maine Regional Planning Commission (SMRPC); Brad Moulton, State Representative; Terry Oliver, South Berwick/KACTS; Kate Pelletier, Eliot; Tom Reinauer, SMRPC; Rick Rossiter, Kittery/KACTS; John Rudolph, South Berwick; Duane Scott, Maine DOT; Steve Workman, Eastern Trail Management District.

Staff & Committee Activities Since May Meeting

Several activities have occurred since the last Route 236 Corridor Implementation Meeting on May 5, 2005. These activities are described below.

Commercial Vehicle Overlimit Permitting Meeting

The Kittery Area Comprehensive Transportation Study Committee (KACTS) and the Route 236 Corridor Implementation Committee convened a Commercial Vehicle Overlimit Permitting Meeting on May 25th. Gary Hinckley of the Bureau of Motor Vehicles Motor Carrier Services Division, Chris Grotton of the Maine State Police, Conrad Welzel of the Maine Turnpike Authority and several DOT staff were present at the meeting. The objective of the meeting was to work on a way to reduce the number of overlimit vehicles passing through the Route 236 corridor. Presently, it appears that the Bureau of Motor Vehicles and the Maine State Police are doing everything they can based on their available resources. However, there was consensus that some new management approaches could be instituted to reduce overlimit traffic on Route 236 (see the May 25, 2005 Commercial Vehicle Overlimit Meeting Notes). Both the Department of Motor Vehicles Motor Carrier Services and the Maine State Police Commercial Vehicle Enforcement Division have agreed to implement some short-term steps to increase cooperative efforts with corridor communities. A follow-up meeting is set to be scheduled, this time with more representation from the trucking community and area legislators. The following discussion points surfaced with regard to the Commercial Vehicle Meeting:

- John Rudolph said the meeting was well organized and productive, but expressed his disappointment that there was not more town representation and agency representation at the meeting. South Berwick was well represented, Kittery had one representative, but there was no representation from Eliot. He emphasized that the committee cannot affect change without broad based support, and that Committee-wide support including all the towns and agencies represented on the Corridor Committee makes a stronger statement. Ken Creed responded that the impression he was left with at the May 5 meeting was that the 236 Committee agreed the Commercial Vehicle meeting would not advertised as a public meeting and that only people directly impacted by overlimit permitting would be strongly encouraged to attend. Diane Brandon thought this probably came from a question she asked at the last meeting, as to whether she should advertise the meeting through a broadcast newsletter that she sends out. Tom Reinauer explained that the strategy at the May 5 meeting was to keep the meeting on track with direct discussion about overlimit trucks, but there was a large e-mail list of people that were made aware of the meeting. The Committee agreed that for the next Commercial Vehicle meeting and other meetings with outside groups, a broad segment of the Corridor Committee should be strongly encouraged to attend. SMRPC agreed to write a letter to other towns beyond 236 to make them aware of the next meeting.
- Terry mentioned that several years ago, South Berwick was considering hiring a local man, a retired officer, to inspect commercial vehicles on a part time basis. The Committee may want to find out if this is still a possibility. There may be a benefit to cost-sharing (through South Berwick, Kittery and Eliot) a patrolman for this purpose.

Maine DOT Route 236 Traffic Study

The KACTS Committee met last Wednesday (June 15, 2005) and approved budgeting \$45,000 towards a \$90,000 Maine DOT Route 236 Traffic Study through the KACTS Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). KACTS hopes that with a \$4,500 dollar contribution from Kittery, Eliot and South Berwick, Maine DOT will cover the rest of the study amount. The \$4,500 local match may come from SMRPC dues, a cash contribution from the towns, or both. Maine DOT is currently examining the offer and should get back to the KACTS Committee in the next couple of weeks. The following discussion points surfaced with regard to the 236 Traffic Study:

- Tom Reinauer stated that he would like to use the Route 236 Corridor Implementation Committee as a steering committee for feedback on the 236 Traffic Study.
- Diane Brandon asked if the study would account for the traffic implications of the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard. Josh Mack answered that SMRPC (with advise from the Committee) will be developing a scope for the traffic study and this issue should be considered.

- Brad Moulton suggested that the group consider transportation issues that are more important to Maine DOT policy, so that eventual projects for Route 236 will be more competitive with the rest of the state.
- John Rudolph recommended that when producing the scope that we consider both technical and political implications of the study. Improvements recommended from the study should appeal to political leaders as well as solve technical problems with the roadway.
- Duane Scott asked that the group keep in mind that this study is a KACTS sponsored study, not a Maine DOT study. Maine DOT will be acting as a consultant and will be asked to complete study components that are recognized as important to KACTS. With regard to funding of eventual 236 projects, many projects will come from the KACTS MPO. Other projects will compete with the rest of the state for different pots of money (safety, hazard elimination, etc.,)

KACTS Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

In addition to covering the Route 236 Traffic Study, the UPWP will be covering planning activities for most other short-term planning action items in the Route 236 Corridor Action Plan (see the Draft Action Plan as of 6/15/05 for details). Tom Reinauer spoke to Tim Roche at Strafford Regional Planning on working with COAST and YCCAC to meet with transit groups in New Hampshire. At this time, the New Hampshire planners and transit agencies have their agenda's full, but Tom expects to meet with the group to discuss transit as it relates to the Route 236 Corridor in a couple of months. SMRPC staff did mention the Route 236 Committee's interest in setting up a Bike and Pedestrian Subcommittee for KACTS. There was no detailed discussion about this idea, however, several KACTS Committee members suggested instead of a subcommittee, it might make more sense to have an advisory group that KACTS could work with and notify about possible bike and pedestrian funding opportunities. KACTS will discuss this further at the next Policy Committee meeting.

South Berwick Origin-Destination Study

SMRPC met with Maine DOT last week to talk about data issues they have had in fulfilling Maine DOT's request to determine pass-through vehicles versus local trips passing through downtown South Berwick. The analysis came from data collected from the South Berwick Origin-Destination Study in 2003, a KACTS sponsored study. Maine DOT agreed with SMRPC that because of two major issues with the data, it would be difficult to stand behind results of the data analysis. The first issue with the data was that there were very infrequent time stamps associated with license plates recorded by volunteers. The second major issue, was that volunteers did not regularly record full license plates. The result is that there were a number of matches, making it impossible to conclusively match one entering license plate to an exiting license plate. SMRPC will see if data collection can be folded into the Maine DOT 236 Traffic Study effort.

Regional Transportation Assessment

The Southern Maine Regional Planning Commission, in conjunction with the Greater Portland Council of Governments, is in the process of completing the Regional Transportation Assessment. This assessment identified six corridors in York and Cumberland County, three of which are in York County. Recommendations that came from the Route 236 Corridor Implementation Committee were transferred to this policy recommendation document. The final draft of the document should be complete by next week. Route 236 Corridor Implementation Committee members will be notified when it is made available on the SMRPC website.

Feedback on Final Draft Action Plan and Rollout of Action Plan

There is a new version of the Route 236 Corridor Action Plan. The version incorporates several new items (see 6/15/05 update of Action Plan for details):

- Detailed committee updates on action items that are being addressed as of 6/15/05;
- New short-term action items based on the Commercial Vehicle Overlimit meeting held on May 25, 2005. These include action item numbers S1A2, S1B2-S1B5, S3A2, S3A3.
- A new long-term item (L2) based on the Commercial Vehicle Overlimit meeting.
- New short-term and medium-term action items based on the May 5, 2005 Route 236 Implementation Committee meeting. These include action item numbers S13, S14 and M5B.
- Two new short-term action items that were medium term action items previously (S10B, S11B).

SMRPC recommended that after getting final feedback from the 236 Corridor Implementation Committee, to schedule a “roll-out” of the plan to select boards and councils of Kittery, Eliot and South Berwick. This had been done relatively successfully through a similar corridor committee process. In the meantime, staff were thinking that a fundraising workshop be set up for the next internal Route 236 Committee meeting including an educational discussion on impact fees. The Committee had several feedback comments:

- Diane Brandon expressed an interest in rolling out the planning effort as more than just a transportation effort. She pointed out a KEYS document that David Versel from SMRPC helped KEYS put together that looks at planning issues beyond transportation. Tom responded that SMRPC’s experience with corridor committee process is that they often take a life of their own and that staff will encourage an expansion of regional cooperation beyond transportation.
- Steve Workman recommended that a preamble be attached to the current draft action plan that acknowledges the links between transportation, economic development and other planning issues.

- John Rudolph recommended that action item L2 (work with MTA to ensure complete accommodation of overdimension vehicles) be changed to a medium term goal. He also asked that a broader long-term action plan could take its place, not specific to commercial vehicles. Something with wording such as “ensure all modes of transportation are accommodated in their appropriate place with respect to the Route 236 corridor.” This recommendation would ideally address all modes, and different stakeholders that currently use the Route 236 Corridor system or would like to use the system more.
- John Rudolph also suggested that instead of holding a fundraising meeting as the next meeting, that there be a strategizing/marketing meeting. This meeting could focus on ways the Route 236 can successfully organize and present information and materials to towns, to the public, and other parties. There was consensus among the Committee to hold a strategizing/marketing/organizing meeting for the next meeting.

The next meeting is scheduled for August 11, 2005 at South Berwick Town Hall at 10 AM. The meeting will be held in the third floor meeting room above the South Berwick Council Chambers.