



Nashua Region Complete Streets Advisory Committee

Meeting Notes

12/5/2023

NRPC Conference Room

Attendees:

Levent Akinci, City of Nashua Chris Buchanan, Town of Amherst (via Zoom) Nelson Disco, Town of Merrimack Betsy Gamrat, Nashua (via Zoom) Rick Katzenberg, Town of Amherst (via Zoom) Beth Scaer (via Zoom)	Tyrel Borowitz, NRPC (via Zoom) Ned Connell, NRPC Emma Rearick, NRPC
---	--

Call to Order and Introductions

N. Connell called the meeting to order at 12:03pm and attendees introduced themselves.

2023-2050 Long-Range Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)

N. Connell gave a PowerPoint presentation on the MTP process to date and asked for comments.

R. Katzenberg: some page numbers are missing, should be more focus on health.

B. Gamrat: should include emissions and noise, too.

C. Buchanan:

- 1) the LTS is a flawed metric because it considers posted speed limit of vehicles and not actual speeds, which inflates bikeability and walkability
- 2) The biggest potential for Nashua is to work towards the Souhegan Valley Rail Trail (rail with trail), especially since CSX recently acquired the relevant rail.
- 3) Page 112, the Amherst multimodal path and Baboosic Greenway are the same project.
- 4) NH101A – he proposes a sidepath instead of bike lanes.
- 5) Replace Amherst side path name with Baboosic Greenway.

B. Gamrat (via chat): would like to see a reduction in lanes for motor vehicles on 101A.

R. Katzenberg: This plan is aspirational – how do we get money to pay for these projects?

B. Gamrat: there should be a weight-based vehicle tax.

C. Buchanan: 101A is currently a stroad (neither street nor road). He would like to see it converted to a commercial boulevard, which would have to happen in phases. Two lanes are adequate, and NAACTO has good guidelines for converting stroads into effective infrastructure.

R. Katzenberg: At a minimum, synchronizing the traffic lights would help.

C. Buchanan: He doesn't support putting more money into a vehicle facility when the ultimate solution is to remove the conflict between local traffic and through traffic.

Complete streets guidelines

N. Connell shared that NRPC is working on complete street guidelines as a resource for the region's communities. He shared the Montgomery County Maryland guide as an example and asked for input.

C. Buchanan: In about 2020 this group worked on very similar guidelines. Brian Groth from Hudson, Matt Waitkins from NRPC and he worked on the project.

E. Rearick: what happened to the guidelines?

C. Buchanan: Not sure. The guidelines were created according to systematic safety principles and vehicle speeds. Different treatments for different types of streets. Sidepaths should be prioritized for safety, especially for children. He does not recommend bike lanes because they are not safe.

B. Gamrat (via chat): Private owned vehicles are inherently unsustainable. We really need to rework everything to be public and active transit.

Bike and Ped Data Collection

N. Connell: NRPC has completed about 32 bike/ped traffic counts in the last year. He shared an example of a bike/ped traffic count report from the Heritage Trail in Nashua.

C. Buchanan: the town of Amherst has two permanent bike/ped counters and Vince Noga was the administrator who could access the data. Vince has since left NRPC.

T. Borowitz: he will connect with C. Buchanan to access the data.

T. Borowitz: NRPC has also acquired camera-based counters used for vehicle traffic counts and progress is being made for those to work for bicyclists and pedestrians. The camera-based counters will give more flexibility to count at sidewalks without posts located in between the sidewalk and the road.

Statewide, Regional, Local Updates

Statewide: N. Connell said that NHDOT is starting to work on a potential complete streets policy.

E. Rearick: the final State Bike and Ped plan was finally released in August.

Local: N. Disco: groundbreaking finally happened on the Souhegan River Hiking Trail in Merrimack, 9 years after funding! A contractor is actively working there, and the project could be finished as soon as June.

L. Akinci: The Livable Nashua planning process is underway. Right now, they are working on draft actions for the plan and collecting public feedback. There are some potential items in it related to complete streets.

C. Buchanan: NHDOT has offered to move forward with the Baboosic Greenway segment North 02. The Amherst Board of Selectmen must vote to move forward on December 18. This segment is from Baboosic Road to Walnut Hill Road and would take four years to construct. They have also had several private land acquisitions or easement donations.

Other Business

There was no other business.

Adjourn:

The meeting was adjourned shortly after 1pm.

Next Meeting

March 5, 2024 12:00 pm.