



Technical Committee Meeting Notice

April 8, 2008
8:30 a.m.

PACTS, 68 Marginal Way, Portland

Agenda

- 1. Call to order**
- 2. Minutes of March 11th Meeting**
- 3. FWD Overview and Traffic Coordination with Steve Colson of MaineDOT**
- 4. Federal Standards and Procedures Review**
- 5. Future Agenda Items**
- 6. Information Items and Other Business**
- 7. Adjourn.**

Next Meeting: May 6 at 8:30 a.m.

PACTS Technical Committee Meeting Minutes
March 11th, 2008 – 8:30 a.m.

Members Present: Bob Burns, Chair, Gorham; Mike Bolduc, Saco; Jim Carmody, Portland; Mary Ann Conroy, Old Orchard Beach; Eric Dudley, Westbrook; Doug Fortier, Windham; Jennie Franceschi, Biddeford, Vice-chair; Dan Jellis, Yarmouth; Mike Laberge, MaineDOT; Bob Malley, Cape Elizabeth; Dale Mitchell, Policy Committee Appointee; Adam Ogden, Cumberland; Al Presgraves, Freeport; Dave Redlefsen, Public Transit; Skip Varney, Falmouth; Jim Wendel, Scarborough.

Absent: Dana Anderson, So. Portland; Don Chaisson, No. Yarmouth; Julia Dawson, SMRPC; Bob Hough, MaineDOT; John Perry, FHWA; David Willauer, GPCOG.

Staff and Guests: John Duncan, PACTS; Carl Eppich, PACTS; Tom Gorrill, Gorrill-Palmer Associates; Sue McIntyre, GPCOG; Paul Niehoff, PACTS; Ralph Norwood, Gorrill-Palmer Associates.

1. **Call to Order.** Bob Burns, Chair, called the meeting to order at 8:36 a.m.
2. **Adoption of minutes of February 12th, 2008 meeting**
Mary Ann Conroy made a motion for approval of the February 12th, 2008 minutes, seconded by Dale Mitchell. Vote taken. All were in favor. Minutes were unanimously approved.
3. **Collector Road Assessment Review with Gorrill-Palmer - Tom Gorrill and Ralph Norwood.**
Tom Gorrill provided an overview of the road assessment study process. The biggest issue of the scope is getting a list of roads that are included in the 200 miles of roads in the study and to clarify what these roads are.

Paul has worked on some of the MaineDOT shape files. Some discrepancies will need to be clarified. A finite list is also needed from intersection to intersection in the funding area. Once the list has been completed, it will be circulated among the municipalities to make sure that everyone is “onboard”. ***Other items note by Tom:***

- Gorrill-Palmer will be meeting with MaineDOT in respect to the study. They will also meet with each of the municipalities to get maintenance and paving records and other information such as, as-built plans, etc. Once they have gathered all of the information, they will get it organized and will then physically drive all of the 200 miles of roads. This will help in assessing what needs to be done.
- In the scope of service, they need to point out the roadways that do not comply with federal and state design standards. The standards might require significant upgrades, such as shoulders, drainage, etc.

The results may show that towns cannot afford to upgrade some of the roads. One of the policy issues may include considering whether 10 miles of roadway be completed to meet all of these standards and delay the rest, or whether to try to work with these standards and at least maintain about 100 miles of roads ending up with a better road system. The goal is to see what needs to be done to bring these roads up to design standards, and whether that includes drainage, shoulder, etc. The last step would include compiling an overall report as well as a report for each individual town.

Dan Jellis made reference to a list of roads that was compiled when towns went thru the re-classification of roads and that the list had already been submitted by each town to the DOT along with any corrections that were needed. Mike Laberge offered to check with the MaineDOT Mapping Department to get that list. Eric Dudley said that he would also get a list together and send it over to Gorrill-Palmer. Paul noted that any information would be helpful and would also help to verify some of the information on-hand. He made reference to several roads, the classification road list, and the PACTS road funding list. The PACTS funding region is different than all other regions and any information will assist in verifying the road list.

Gorrill-Palmer Associates will be sending out a detailed list of items that they will need from each town. This will provide an opportunity for towns to gather the information prior to their individual meeting with the Consultants. Once they have the list of roads, Gorrill-Palmer will begin scheduling appointments with each municipality.

Tom Gorrill thanked the Committee for choosing them as consultants and said they are looking forward to working group.

A short question/answer/comment period followed:

- John Duncan clarified that the results of this Study will most likely be used in the ranking of Collector Road Paving.
- Paul Niehoff and Gorrill-Palmer will be meeting with MaineDOT as one of the next steps.
- With respect to road classification, Al Presgraves noted that he thought Julia Dawson had also prepared and sent along a list of collector roads which then went thru reclassification.
- Tom Gorrill elaborated that the goal of the final report is that it should include something for each individual town that can be updated at least every three years. Every town would have the option of updating the information in-house or sub-contracting the work out. He added that they have done several pavement assessments and could train personnel to do that. Each town should have the availability to use that information and be able to update it every three years.
- Paul added that the goal is to simulate the MaineDOT's Highway Adequacy Index because PACTS will be using a large percentage of MaineDOT data. This effort would not only allow for better comparisons with the MaineDOT's road information but could also make it possible to be on the same "page" with them in regards to terminology. There are some questions with regards to some of their attributes. Some may be different than the MPO. Those items will need to be worked out but it should be very similar and comparable. The MaineDOT reassesses the roads every "even-numbered" year and the idea would be to factor that in.
- Tom noted that he didn't think the DOT's factors included items such as truck routes or truck counts. That is one item that will be discussed with the towns. Consultants will ask if there is a significant amount of trucks traveling on these roads. The town could do a spot count or maybe a formula could be used to estimate the number of trucks traveling on some of these roads. It should be factored in the study.

4. Pros and Cons of Municipal funding of Collector Rehabilitations

Paul noted that there had been many conversations about whether the towns should provide the funding for the paving and/or rehabilitation of collector roads without the use of state or federal funds. If a town should decide to do that, there are some things to keep in mind. One item is that the project might not be eligible for federal funding at a future date because it would not meet federal design standards. Discussion began. Eric Dudley spoke of some simple overlay projects currently being considered in Westbrook. After going through some calculations which reflected the cost of doing these roads without the addition of state or federal funds, he found that Westbrook would still be spending the same amount of money. Additionally, when you go thru the funding process, oftentimes projects get delayed and by the time funding does become available, the roads have deteriorated even more. Questions that Westbrook asked were "does it make sense to spend these federal monies on larger projects that they just can't fund as an individual community?", or, "does it make more sense to actually be building the "unbuilt collectors" instead of doing overlays?" Dan Jellis felt that it really came down to each town's individual choice. He referenced rte. 88 noting it is a state aid road but that federal guidelines would have to be met for federal funding. Yarmouth has not been able to do what they want with that road. Members shared several scenarios pertaining to some of their own road

projects. Mary Ann Conroy explained that Old Orchard had done some of the roads themselves. One road in particular is locally owned while the rest is state owned. The town paved their locally owned section with local monies. Since one section is locally owned while the rest is state-owned, the road will be used for a comparison later on. Mary Ann added that LD 1790 "An Act to Secure Maine's Transportation Future" had passed saying that there is a need for more legislative policy changes to address some of these issues. Perhaps federal monies should be steered toward another category, like bridges and towns should only focus on MaineDOT funding.

Dale Mitchell wondered if PACTS could be the liaison between the town and the DOT in some of these projects during the interim before a municipality works with the project manager. He added that if there is a ruling on one particular road, then the same ruling should be honored with all other roads as well. The DOT guidelines do not mandate that roads be 12-foot wide lane. They do allow 10-foot wide lanes as well.

Paul spoke of the letter that had gone out to John Dority referencing the LAPs, asphalt pricing, and modern design standards. The modern design standards will be discussed further when Gerald Varney from FHWA comes to the next PACTS Technical Committee meeting. This will provide the group an opportunity to discuss this topic in depth. Doug said that it was his feeling that we should concentrate on doing the roads that apply to the federal design standards instead of looking at design exceptions. He referred Rte. 88 noting that it goes through three towns and that if each town does their own section differently it might look odd to the public.

Bob Burns said Gorham had done a sidewalk project with federal monies and had also done another one as an LAP. He noted that there were not too many differences between both projects and that it would be good to outline a comparison of what the differences were in a letter format.

With respect to Westbrook and two of their road projects, Eric spoke of the scope of the DOT and said that it included a 1-inch overlay. They looked over both streets, took measurements, and did calculations estimating what they would have lost in funding. The local match was at 80% of what they could do the road for. As a result, he felt the best thing would be for towns to make sure that they are checking the thickness of the asphalt as it is being put down and to check the compaction. Discussion on this topic followed. It was felt that it would be good to be able to compare roads that are similar, maybe four or five projects, and show the differences. If the comparison shows that it costs the municipalities "x" amount then why does it cost "y" amount with DOT? It would be nice to get this information into a line item format and forward it to the MaineDOT. Dale pointed out that as part of that comparison the group should be clear to explain if the differences are in the design aspect or if it is a unit cost element. Paul added that another item to consider in the comparisons would be the administrative cost aspect. Federal standards can cost more money due to the cost of time and resources for just going through the permitting process. Several scenarios were discussed that could affect outcome. There was consensus among the group that making these comparisons and equating items on a line by line format was a good idea. Bob recommended that members send in any comparisons that they might have on any of their roads to Bob or Paul.

Jim Wendel referenced that the comments among the group and said that he felt that the best approach is to make sure that the municipalities totally understand what the federal and state standards are and then approach the choice of doing it themselves on reduced funding. It wouldn't mean that the towns wouldn't continue to discuss the state and federal systems and work through a consistent prolonged effort to make some rationality to those policies. It would help to get more roads done including safer roads as well. This would be a comprehensive approach that allows us to move forward at least in the short term and to then continue to work on the long term issues.

5. Future Agenda Items

Paul provided a brief overview of future agenda items as detailed in the meeting packet. Gerald Varney and others from FHWA along with Shawn Smith and Todd Pelletier of the MaineDOT will be attending one of our next meetings. Steve Colson from MaineDOT is also scheduled to attend providing a video on the FWD.

6. Information and Other Business

MaryAnn Conroy invited all to attend the APWA meeting where the Public Works Leader of the year will be announced. The meeting is scheduled for April 3, 2008 at the Waterville Elks Club in Waterville. All are welcomed to become a member.

Paul has emailed Pete Coughlin inviting him to attend one of our next meetings to discuss among other things, URIP funding. Fred Hutchinson might also be attending our May meeting. Paul will also contact the MaineDOT Region 1 folks.

John Duncan summarized the recent PACTS TIP information session. Another two-hour session is scheduled for March 27th. Please RSVP if interested. For those who attended the first session, John welcomes any feedback on how to improve the next session.

Jonathan LaBonte from the Maine Turnpike Authority announced that he has accepted a position as Executive Director of the Androscoggin Land Trust. This will be his last PACTS Technical Committee meeting. We all wish Jonathan luck in his new endeavor.

Dale Doughty is also leaving the MaineDOT Augusta office and will be the Director of the MaineDOT Bangor Regional Office.

7. Adjourn:

Meeting adjourned at 10:40 a.m.

Agenda Item 3. FWD Overview and Traffic Coordination with Steve Colson of MaineDOT

Steve Colson of MaineDOT will be giving an overview of the Falling Weight Deflectometer (FWD), the technology behind it, the data acquisition process and some of the issues surrounding the process in the PACTS (i.e. urban) region. The following is a short overview of the FWD:

Beginning with the summer of 2006, Falling Weight Deflectometer (FWD) data is being collected on approximately 5,800 miles of Maine roadways. This data will be utilized by the Highway Adequacy Index (HAI) program. Seven tests per mile are being collected in an effort to represent the overall structural capacity of roadway sections. This information will be combined with other criteria to prioritize highway improvements and to better quantify system needs.





The FWD is a non-destructive testing apparatus that determines the strength of a structure by imparting a force or load to the structure utilizing a falling weight. The weight (750 pounds) is dropped from a pre-determined height to generate a dynamic load of 9,000 pounds. This force load is used to simulate ½ of an 18,000-pound axle load. Seven velocity transducers, positioned along the pavement surface measure the resulting deflection. These readings are then analyzed to determine structural strength at each test location.

Steve will be handing out a list of roads in each municipality that they are planning to test. Some of those roads are outside the PACTS funding region but it is still necessary to collect that data as well. A few towns have had the data collected last fall.

We will be talking as well about traffic management during the data collection. There will be an impact on the traveling public which also affects the time and expense to DOT during this process. Some work may be completed at off peak hours or overnight. Police escorts will most likely be a viable option and will be part of our conversation. Any assistance from Public Works crews and the local PD will be greatly appreciated.

Agenda Item 4. FHWA and MaineDOT Review of Federal Processes of Project Development

Individuals from both FHWA and MaineDOT will be explaining the federal and state process of project development. We expect this to be an important discussion leading to a better understanding of some of the reasons why projects can take so long to develop and construct.

Agenda Item 5. Future Agenda Items

May's agenda will include:

- a. Pete "Wilbah" Coughlan, Director of the Community Services Division and possibly Fred Hutchinson, Urban-Rural Initiative Program Administrator, will be at our May meeting to discuss primarily road classifications, the RRI program (outside the PACTS funding region) and the URIP program. Given our collector road study and questions related to the road designations, some of the funding questions of late and a couple newer PACTS members we figured a "refresher" was in order.

- b. Carl Eppich will be giving an overview of the signal coordination findings and report recommendations from the study Julia Dawson originally initiated.

Agenda Item 6. - Information and Other Business

1. Bike/Ped and Intersection Applications were due last Friday (4/4). We received ____ Bike/Ped and ____ Intersections applications and will be ranking them in the next couple weeks.
2. Mark Eyerman and John Melrose are working on the alternatives funding study.
3. Paul Niehoff and Tom Gorrill met with MaineDOT to initiate data exchange for the collector study. Data acquisition begins this Thursday (4/10) at DOT.
4. MaineDOT individuals involved with project development conducted an internal meeting yesterday (4/7) to discuss project scope and rising cost issues. Mike Laberge may have a brief update.
5. Our MPO quarterly meeting is scheduled for tomorrow (4/11). A few agenda items are: projected 2010-2011 allocations, 6 year plan status, State/MPO/municipal 3 party agreements and the MPO guide.
6. On May 7, MaineDOT, Healthy Maine Partnerships and other health partners are holding a conference on “The Built Environment and Physical Activity” at the Eastland Hotel.