



Technical Committee Meeting Notice

December 9, 2008
8:30 a.m.

PACTS, 68 Marginal Way, Portland

Agenda

1. Call to order
2. Public Comment
3. Minutes of October 14th Meeting
4. 10/11 Work Program Revisions
5. PACTS/MPO LPA Project Manager
6. Collector Report
7. Information and Other Business
8. Adjourn.

Next Meeting: January 13, 2009

PACTS Technical Committee Minutes
October 14th, 2008 Meeting
8:30 a.m.

Members Present: Jennie Franceschi, Chair, Biddeford; Dana Anderson, South Portland; Mike Bolduc, Saco; Bob Burns, Gorham; Mimi Cerveny, MaineDOT; Jim Carmody, Portland; Mary Ann Conroy, Old Orchard Beach; Sara Devlin, MTA; Eric Dudley, Westbrook; Mike Laberge, MaineDOT; Dale Mitchell, Policy Committee Appointee; Al Presgraves, Freeport; Dave Redlefsen, Public Transit; Jim Wendel, Scarborough

Absent: Jack Berman, Policy Com. Appt.; Don Chaisson, No.Yarmouth; Julia Dawson, SMRPC; Doug Fortier, Windham; Dan Jellis, Yarmouth; Bob Malley, Cape Elizabeth; Bill Shane, Cumberland; Skip Varney, Falmouth

Staff and Guests: Maddy Adams, GPCOG; Norm Baker, MaineDOT; John Duncan, PACTS; Carl Eppich, PACTS; LaRay Hamilton, MaineDOT; Bob Huff, MaineDOT; Jeff McEwen, FHWA; Paul Niehoff, PACTS; Ralph Norwood

1. **Call to Order.** Jennie Franceschi called the meeting to order at 8:35 a.m. Introductions were made.
2. **Public Comment.** None.
3. **Minutes of September 9th meeting.** *A motion was made by Mary Ann Conroy and seconded by Jim Carmody to approve the September 9th minutes. All were in favor.*
4. **Collector Road Paving Ranking and Final List.** Paul Niehoff explained how the list was developed. Economies of scale were looked at in regard to the proximity of roads to one another; short sections were taken off the list. This new list is a compilation of the three lists. There are some detailed questions that will need to be answered as we move forward.

Mary Ann noted that Union Avenue, which had ranked forty points, had fallen off the list. Ralph explained that it had a PCR of over 4 and that could be why it was removed from the list. Using the latest formula, it scored 17 points. Regarding the Baxter Boulevard project, Ralph explained that the cobblestone “historic” gutters would be left in place and wouldn’t be part of the project. Jim Carmody added that Portland is talking about reducing the width of the travel lanes and making a bigger bike lane. The idea of splitting sections of the Baxter Boulevard project into two BTIP’s was suggested. Paul noted that the #4 Baxter Boulevard project was not on the original list. Splitting the projects into two BTIP’s makes sense. Combine Baxter projects #2 and #3; drop #4 off the list for this year. However, project #4 will not be guaranteed funding for the next biennium. Baxter project #1 could probably drop off for now. It was asked if doing it altogether would save on mobilization costs. Ralph responded that typically they carried 10% for mobilization. You definitely will run into higher mobility costs on the smaller projects. It was asked if it makes sense to do such short segments. Paul explained his reasoning; they are trying to get projects within the same area done.

Dana A. stated that South Portland is doing Foden Road and Gorham Road because they weren’t on the list until 2014, so they had to do it themselves. The Maine Mall area is crumbling as fast as he is talking. Mike L. asked if you have a tenth of a mile section that is ranked high, do you combine it with another section near it that doesn’t rank as high just to get more bang for your buck? Paul responded that he did look at that. The problem with doing that is that some projects that ranked higher would get bumped from the list. It was suggested that local matches might be a discussion for the Policy Committee.

There was some discussion about the Deering Avenue project – there are two sections of Deering. It wasn't clear if it should be on the list or if it was already accounted for. Paul said that he didn't think it had been accounted for. The Park to Congress section has a number but it may have lost its funds.

Mimi said she checked the estimates on four of the projects and the numbers looked good. The Committee agreed to adopt the list up to \$5,000,000. If something drops off, then the next one on the list would move up. The Policy Committee will need to decide if the towns have the match for their projects. North Road in Yarmouth is off the list. *Mary Ann Conroy made a motion to accept the collector road paving list dated 10/14/08 with the exclusion of Yarmouth's North Road. Jim Carmody seconded the motion. Motion passed.* Bob asked that a column be added to the list with the totals.

- 5. Appointments to Planning, Transit and TIP Process Committees.** Dave Redlefsen reported that the Transit Providers are working on a universal fare pass system, and a universal signage project. They are also looking at shelters as well as the design. Regarding FTA, there isn't any funding for new transit vehicles so they are working with the state to purchase used vehicles.

Mike Laberge reported that the Planning Committee is getting ready for updating the long range plan. At the last meeting, there was a presentation from the City of Portland on their adopted Bike Parking Ordinance. The ordinance requires bike parking with new developments. At the meeting Tex Haeuser discussed the idea of TIF's for mass transit. The Planning and Transit Committees met jointly this month.

- 6. TIP Process Committee.** Jennie volunteered to serve on the committee.

- 7. Potential for MPO Hired LAP Project Manager.** Paul explained that the thinking behind this is to get more projects completed faster. The idea came up that the MPO's could hire a LAP Project Manager that could focus specifically on project management in the MPO regions. MaineDOT cannot afford to hire someone but perhaps the MPO could. A consultant could still be hired but they would work with the project manager. Between MaineDOT and the towns, it is difficult to get projects out. The project manager would not be able to do it all; designers would still be needed. Mike L. explained that Bangor has a staff member that is dedicated to doing just the LAP's and he's doing a great job of moving the projects. The design is completed in house in Bangor.

The Committee further discussed the pros and cons of PACTS hiring a LAP Project Manager. There were questions as to how the Project Manager would bill his time among the various projects, the necessity for a well-defined scope, whether or not the Project Manager would get into issues with the towns, how the design work would be done, how the Project Manager would interact with a consultant, as well as the issue of local control. There would be expectations from the towns and expectations from the state. If a consultant is hired, who would they be answering to? It was unclear as to how the position would be funded. John D. mentioned that Congress sends a certain amount of planning funds to the MPO. If we had consensus to go this route, he thought FHWA funds might be used.

Bob B. stated that the easiest way to do this would be to hire a consultant; he was not in favor of having an MPO-hired project manager. He would prefer to see MaineDOT getting more help for this. He was concerned that it would get too complicated. However, having someone who can focus on doing the same type of process every time has its benefits. There was also a concern about the workload for a Project Manager. There are a number of projects that need to get done, however MaineDOT is not seeing a lot of new projects. PACTS would have to cover the salary for any down time. It was suggested that a consultant be hired to do one set of projects (overlays, signals) to take some of the workload off of MaineDOT to get projects moving. Having an MPO hire a LAP Project Manager would be a policy change. Currently, MaineDOT is responsible for getting projects completed. It remains a MaineDOT project until a town asks it to be a LAP. MaineDOT encourages towns to do LAPs because there is more local control. MaineDOT only has so many resources so they are looking for other ways to get projects done.

This discussion will be continued. Staff can look into what MaineDOT can take on and see what the workload would look like should PACTS decide to hire a LAP Project Manager.

8. **Information and Other Business.** Mike L. reported that to improve communication, they have developed a policy where project managers will add a municipality and an MPO person to their e-mail list for various projects. They will receive the PDR and the PSE package.

It was decided that there would not be a November Technical Committee meeting.

PACTS has received a draft Collector Study Report from Gorrill Palmer and it will be finalized. There is a chapter for each town. John would like to get the report out and asked for Technical Committee input. The draft report will be sent out via e-mail (along with the map) and if anyone has any comments please let staff know. It was asked that the most up-to-date rankings be included in the report. It was suggested that an Executive Summary would be useful. A draft collector road study will be circulated after PACTS staff have reviewed it. The report will be formally approved and adopted in December.

It was suggested that a needs analysis and how to meet the funding gap be included on an upcoming agenda. Perhaps Marty Rooney could be invited to speak on this topic.

9. **Adjourn.** The meeting adjourned at 10:25 a.m.

Agenda Item 4. 10/11 Work Program Submittal and Revisions

Our PACTS 10/11 work plan was finalized and submitted two weeks ago. To balance the federal funding in the collector set aside, Route One in Freeport was replaced by Bow Street in Freeport and Cumberland Avenue in Portland. If we receive our anticipated allocation we will have positive balance of \$83,000 and \$46,000 respectively in our federal and state holding PIN's.

Agenda Item 5. PACTS/MPO LPA Project Manager

As we discussed in our last meeting and recently at the Executive Committee meeting, the issue was raised in respect to getting projects through the process more efficiently. MaineDOT is unable to hire more PM's and designers and some towns have a resource shortage that impacts LAP's and some towns believe the process is too complicated. One alternative is for a MPO to hire a project manager to manage specific LAP's for the entire MPO region.

We have had brief conversations related to the viability of moving in this direction and will be meeting with DOT and Federal Highway to talk about the potential in more detail. The Executive Committee would like us to discuss the pros and cons of this approach. Please read the minutes of our last meeting (above) as a refresher.

Agenda Item 6. Collector Report

The final draft report was forwarded to both the Tech Committee as well as the Executive Committee, comments have been received and most have been submitted to Gorrill- Palmer. The report needs to be final by the next Policy Committee meeting so G-P can do a presentation to that group. We also will have at least a final draft "brochure" available for the December 19th for the Transportation Forum for State Legislators and Local Elected Officials.

Agenda Item 7. Information, Potential Future Agenda Items and Other Business

1. On November 21st MaineDOT notified all the MPO's to develop a list of projects which could be ready to bid in 90 days. The submittal deadline was December 3rd. Working with our communities PACTS submitted 30 infrastructure projects totaling over \$50 million and \$60 million in transit projects.
2. PACTS staff and other PACTS community members attended the 58th Maine Transportation Conference on December 4th. PACTS staff networked, lobbied and talk policy and funding and all things transportation.
3. This Thursday we will convene the next TIP process committee.
4. Also Thursday Carl and Paul will meet for the second time with the traffic model group consisting of DOT and the other MPO's.
5. Other items

Summary of MaineDOT-MPO Survey Responses

I. Background

- MaineDOT received a total of 11 completed surveys (out of 24 sent):
 - ✓ Six from MaineDOT staff.
 - ✓ Consolidated responses from three of the MPOs (ATRC, BACTS, PACTS)
 - ✓ Two from FHWA.

II. Overall themes

- There is a greater need to improve communication between MaineDOT project managers, MPO staffs and municipalities during the project development process.
- MPOs and municipalities need to be brought into the process early on and kept in the loop. MPOs and municipalities should be invited to project team meetings.
- Roles and responsibilities of MaineDOT, the MPO and municipality during the project development process need to be better defined – especially during public meetings – so that all parties understand what is expected of them and frustration is reduced.
- There is a need for better education and training of MPO and municipal staffs regarding the required steps in the project development process.
- There is a need for better project scopes and cost estimates from MPOs and municipalities, to reduce the time project managers must spend on remedial tasks.
- MPOs need to think more regionally and reduce parochialism in the MPO project selection process.