

# PACTS

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Portland Area Comprehensive Transportation Committee

## **PACTS Policy Committee Meeting Notice**

February 15, 2007  
1:30 p.m.

PACTS, 68 Marginal Way, Portland

- 1. Call to order**
- 2. Minutes of the January 18<sup>th</sup> Meeting**
- 3. PACTS Title VI and Public Participation Plan**  
  
Action on recommendation to adopt
- 4. Capital Funding Topics**
  - A. Act on proposal for resolution of new cost increases in 06/07 collector paving projects
  - B. Report on efforts to increase transportation funding in Maine
  - C. Act on recommendation for PACTS submission for FY 2008 Congressional earmarks
  - D. Act on staff proposal to reduce the length and funding of a PACTS collector paving project in Freeport
- 5. Consent Agenda**
- 6. Adjourn**

Next Meeting: March 15<sup>th</sup> at 1:30 p.m.

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## Attachments for February 15<sup>th</sup> Policy Committee Meeting

### Minutes of January 18, 2007 Meeting

**Members Present:** Rick Michaud, Chairman, Saco; Neal Allen, GPCOG; Mike Bobinsky, Portland; Bob Burns (for David Cole), Gorham; Kathi Earley, Portland; Jim Gailey, South Portland; Mike Laberge (for Dale Doughty), MaineDOT; Amy Lamontagne (for Nathan Poore), Falmouth; Donna Larson (for Dale Olmstead), Freeport; Mike McGovern, Cape Elizabeth; Tom Meyers, Public Transit; Tom Milligan (for John Bubier), Biddeford; Jeff Monroe, Portland; Ron Owens, Scarborough; Ed Reidman, Westbrook; Paul Schumacher, SMRPC; Jim Thomas, Old Orchard Beach; Nat Tupper, Yarmouth; Conrad Welzel, MTA

**Members Absent:** Joe Gray, Portland; John Perry, FHWA; Anthony Plante, Windham; Scott Seaver, North Yarmouth; Bill Shane, Cumberland

**Staff and Guests:** Maddy Adams, GPCOG; Peter Cavanaugh, METRO; Julia Dawson, PACTS; Patricia Douglas, NNEPRA; John Duncan, PACTS; Matti Gurney, GPCOG; Judy Harris, Portland; Dan Jellis, Yarmouth; Steve Linnell, GPCOG; Ron Roy, MaineDOT; David Willauer, GPCOG

- 1. Call to Order.** Rick Michaud called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. Introductions were made.
- 2. Minutes of December 14<sup>th</sup> meeting.** *The minutes of the December 14<sup>th</sup> meeting were approved by the Committee.*
- 3. Updates on Passenger Rail Plans and Financing.** Patricia Douglas, Executive Director of NNEPRA, gave an update on the Downeaster using a PowerPoint presentation. The Downeaster is a State of Maine service that is contracted with Amtrak who operates it on our behalf. We have a 20-year operating contract with 15 years left on the contract. Two train sets are always operating (one extra). Amtrak handles the reservations for the Downeaster. We have operating agreements with two host railroads -- Guilford (which is now Pan Am) and MBTA. Food service is contracted out. NNEPRA does the marketing. They also work with TrainRiders. Patricia provided the committee with some recent Downeaster statistics.

Operating Funding Challenge. CMAQ funding was extended to 2009 with \$5.3 million. The state provides \$1.3 million and \$0.4 million comes from other sources.

Infrastructure is limited. New Hampshire allocated \$1.6 million to do some work on the railroad which will allow them to run a fifth round trip and they also hope to cut the time by four minutes.

Currently, there is no garage for layover. Their equipment is getting old; the Capstone is 30 years old. They are looking at a streamlined DMU diesel train that runs similar to a bus.

Ron Roy, Director of the Office of Passenger Transportation at MaineDOT, then updated the Committee on the fragile funding situation. Three initiatives have been carried out. A task force on funding of the Downeaster was formed and we received authorization to use CMAQ funds until 2008-09. Recommendations focused on providing assistance from the General Fund. However, we are looking at options other than the General Fund. A Transportation Committee report will be presented in another month or so. Boyd Marley was the Chair of the Committee. A Commuter Rail study was also completed (at the same time that an I-295 Study was being done). The 295 study suggests that commuter rail could play a role in reducing congestion. Ron spoke of the alignment coming out of Bayside. The Pan Am option would be using the Downeaster only and wouldn't have a commuter option. MaineDOT has continued to try to complement the FTA program with the New Starts Program. We will take advantage of all the studies that have been

done. The Lewiston/Auburn area is working to get a \$1,000,000 earmark for use in the New Starts program. The analysis will look at the two alignments and a bus alternative.

Bond issue(s): MaineDOT is close on the purchase of the St. Lawrence and Atlantic in North Deering to Yarmouth junction – 11 miles. They hope to close on the deal in mid-March. They have an option to purchase about 10-11 miles at the Danville Junction in Auburn for commuter rail. A public hearing will be held tonight on an Auburn intermodal facility.

The twenty-year vision should include a strong rail component. The Mountain Division will also be looked at in our rail analyses. The freight guys have done a good job of working with GPCOG on this.

It was asked what the timeline would be for the Pan Am option versus commuter rail. Ron responded that if it's all state money then either one could be done in two construction seasons or 2½ -3 years. There is \$17 million associated with getting through Portland. The Pan Am option makes the most sense because it costs less and state money would be used. With federal dollars, you have to follow the federal process. Portland has significant intersection issues that would need to be addressed. The last 14 miles would be on Pan Am either way. Judy Harris mentioned that the Bayside alternative looks like it is under water according to the NOAA slosh maps. Ron explained that they would be looking at a trestle bridge across from Tukey's Bridge. It was asked when commuter rail could realistically happen. Ron said that the best case scenario would be five years.

Jeff M. mentioned the option of busses versus commuter rail. Ron responded that in the commuter study, they looked at the travel times and found that commuter rail was pretty competitive with buses time wise for trip times from Yarmouth to Portland, but once you hit Portland it adds time to the trip. It is all about money. The question of New Hampshire contributing to the Downeaster's operating expenses was raised. Ron said that they contributed to the upgrades that will be necessary for the fifth trip -- \$1.6 million. It has to go through an Executive Council. They pay station costs and fill seats. Neal mentioned that the task force did spend some time discussing this issue.

More CMAQ money is not being sought at this time (beyond the 2008-2009 year) because it would be a limited extension and there could be a gap between reauthorizations. Once the train is no longer using CMAQ funds, other projects will be eligible to use those funds.

Conrad asked if the state has ever considered a parking fee charge that could be used for transit alternatives. Ron responded that if there is going to be a creative idea, it will probably come out of COG/PACTS. Federal highway dollars are going down and the cost of construction is going up. It was questioned if MaineDOT's position on rail would change since the size of the pie is staying the same. Ron responded that MaineDOT has a very strong commitment to rail. Mike McGovern said that it is good to have this broader perspective from MaineDOT and NNEPRA; it would be good to have an annual update.

#### **(4) Capital Funding Topics.**

- A. Report on December 15<sup>th</sup> Legislators' Forum, and next steps.** The Legislators' forum was very successful with about 50 in attendance. John Duncan provided a brief update.
- B. Report from Reauthorization High Priority Projects Committee.** The Committee met today to discuss proposals for FY '08 earmarks. They are looking for small projects that are ready to go. An e-mail will be going out soon. Conrad pointed out two projects that drew red flags: the noise barrier in South Portland and the Scarborough Interchange. Both need further

discussion before funding is sought. Mike B. explained that there are two processes: the FY '08 process for earmarks and the other is reauthorization. Rick pointed out that if we are going to get funded, our priorities will need to be the same as MaineDOT's priorities for both processes.

- C. Staff proposal to add/cut funds regarding three collector paving projects.** We will be dealing with only the first motion today, as Freeport has requested more time. Regarding the Old Orchard Beach project – OOB didn't get the 25% increase that was given to all the other collector paving projects last May. *Mike McGovern made a motion to increase funding for PIN 13112 (Old Orchard Road in Saco) from \$184,000 to \$237,038, and for PIN 13098 (Old Orchard Road in Old Orchard Beach) from \$88,000 to \$110,000 in order that they receive the same 25% increase given last may by the Policy Committee to all other 06/07 collector paving projects. The motion was seconded by Mike Bobinsky and all were in favor.*

The Freeport project will be discussed at the next meeting.

- (5) **PACTS Two-Year Work Plan for July 2007 to June 2009.** Action was requested on a proposal to do a PACTS work tasks priority setting exercise at the February and March Policy Committee meetings. It would be a brainstorming process rating items with a 1, 2 or 3. Projects rated with a 1 would be projects done in the first year; 2 being the projects that would be done in year 2, etc. The meeting next month would be used to begin that process. Nat asked if the idea is to go through the list starting from scratch or to go through the priorities that we already set. Rick explained that we would start at the beginning. He asked that everyone take some time to look over the list before the next meeting. Each of the four PACTS committees will be asked to prepare a list of priorities to bring to the table. Nat asked John what his sense was of how much has been driven by the priority-setting process versus those projects that would be done anyway or are driven to be done. How much is this process really the driver versus reality? John responded that he's not expecting a major change in direction. PACTS' staff do not do as much planning as they do running the program. John mentioned that we have about 15 Tier 1 strategies and we have made some progress on all of them. Mike Bobinsky suggested that we receive a list of Tier 1 priorities before the next meeting. *Mike McGovern made a motion to approve doing a priority-setting exercise at the February and March meetings as part of the development of our two-year work plan. Mike Bobinsky seconded the motion and all were in favor.*

- (6) **Consent Agenda.**

Regarding the idea of John Duncan preparing weekly reports, Mike McGovern thought it would be too much to ask and thought the monthly progress reports were sufficient.

Item #5 on consent agenda: Tom Meyers said that while it is important to do monitoring of *Destination Tomorrow*, the Chairs of the committees are involved with a number of other subcommittees so adding another meeting would be difficult. He suggested using the session next month to talk about where we're at.

*A motion was made to approve items 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 of the consent agenda. The motion was seconded and all were in favor.* Regarding #5, Donna agreed with Tom. She didn't feel another committee was necessary. Neal pointed out that he doesn't care how it is done, whether it is through the committee or another way. He just felt that a lot of time has been invested in creating *Destination Tomorrow* and we should periodically monitor where we are with the plan. He urged the committee to keep it foremost in their minds when making decisions. No action was taken on item 5.

- (7) **Adjourn.** The meeting adjourned at 3:15 p.m.

### **Agenda Item 3 – PACTS Title VI and Public Participation Plan**

Staff Resource: Julia Dawson and David Willauer

Member Resource: Not applicable

Recommendation: Staff recommends approval.

Draft Motion: To adopt this Plan update.

Background: Julia and David will make a short PowerPoint presentation which will include an overview of the process for developing the Plan. Julia provided a draft of the Plan to members two months ago.

### **Agenda Item 4 – Capital Funding Topics**

#### A. Proposal for resolution of new cost increases in 06/07 collector paving projects

Staff Resource: Eric Ortman and John Duncan

Member Resource: Rick Michaud and Mike Bobinsky

Recommendation: Staff recommends adoption of the motion.

Draft Motions:

1. To defer \$238,153 for South Portland garage replacement from 2008-09 to 2010-11.
2. To defer \$300,000 (of the total \$500,000) for Casco Bay Lines vessel replacement from 2008-09 to 2010-11.
3. To fully fund the 2006-07 collector paving projects through the MPO Allocation by cutting the required number of 2008-09 collector paving projects.
4. To adopt the amended title to PACTS Cost Increase Policy.
5. To direct staff to develop an improved process for estimating the cost of collector paving projects.
6. To direct staff and the Technical Committee to work with MaineDOT and FHWA to develop recommendations for future cost efficiencies in our region.

Please see the attached lists of 06-07 and 08-09 projects and current funding. ***You need to print both sheets in the file. One is designed for 11x17 paper.***

## General Background

Despite our collective best efforts, the latest estimates for our 2006-07 collector paving projects are higher (many by more than 50%) than the amounts funded (programmed) even with the 25% contingencies that were subsequently added. The cost increases are a result of: (1) the process used to develop the initial cost estimates (upon which PACTS based its funding decisions); and (2) fluctuations in market conditions. They are not a result of municipal additions to scopes.

The collective funding gap for the 29 06-07 collector paving projects is currently \$1.3 million. However, five projects have not had their estimates updated which will likely increase the size of the funding gap. Percent increases between the funded amount and the latest estimate range from 8% to 106% with three projects being “over funded”. The Committee Chairs and staff agree that bridging the funding gap is more appropriately done through the MPO Allocation than through requiring municipalities to fund the gap. In addition, the large variance in amount of under funding between projects creates difficulty in developing an equitable resolution.

Multiple options have been investigated to close the gap in funding. Options that have been investigated but that are not included in the recommendation include:

- Borrowing against a future MPO Allocation – MaineDOT is willing but unable at this time to assist PACTS in this option.
- Asking municipalities to fund projects through Advance Construction using 100% local money and later reimbursing municipalities for the federal and state shares. – This remains a viable option but would be up to individual municipalities. Staff’s concern and reason for not including it in their recommendation is the equity issue that such a process would likely raise. One (or a small number) community would, in essence, use local funds to “free up for current use” federal/state funds for another community.
- Reconciliation of unallocated funds from PACTS 06-07 MPO Allocation – Until reconciliation is complete staff cannot recommend using these funds. PACTS continues to work with the Department on this matter. We hope to report some final actions on this at our meeting on Thursday.

## Background on Draft Motions 1 & 2

South Portland and Casco Bay Lines are in the process of securing funds for fairly large projects. The PACTS funding constitutes a portion of this funding. South Portland’s project will not be ready to build during the 08-09 biennium. Tom Myers has indicated South Portland’s willingness to defer the \$238,153 in funding. Casco Bay Lines needs \$200,000 (of the total \$500,000) for design work on the new vessel during the 08-09 biennium and is willing to defer the other \$300,000 to the 10-11 biennium. These two deferrals total \$538,153.

### Background on Draft Motion 3

The Chairs and staff believe getting projects done should be the highest priority. Deferring projects is a less acceptable option. Cutting projects is the least desirable options. The recommendation is premised on this concept.

Money needs to be “found” to fund the ~\$1.3 million (and likely to grow) gap in 06-07 collector paving projects. During the decision process on the 08-09 MPO Allocation the Policy Committee voted to fund the 08-09 collector paving list in order and to make any necessary cuts starting from the bottom of the list.

The concept of cutting an 08-09 project in Town X and transferring those funds to the same Town X to fund an 06-07 project was examined but discarded because three towns (Freeport, Saco, Scarborough) either do not have an 08-09 project or have insufficient 08-09 projects to be able to do this.

Because there are still five projects whose estimates have not been updated, staff recommends that the Policy Committee give John Duncan the discretion to make additional cuts as necessary to fully fund all of the 06-07 collector paving projects. There have been no increases in the scope of any of the projects.

Projects that are cut will receive no preferential treatment in the 10-11 biennium and will compete on an equal basis with all other paving projects. The rationale for this is two-fold: (1) the cuts are being made purely on a technical and regional basis; (2) projects that were on the 08-09 list should also make it on the 10-11 list based on technical merit. There is the potential for road conditions to deteriorate on some cut projects to the point where resurfacing is no longer the most appropriate treatment.

### Background on Draft Motion 4

Stipulating no change in project scope there are two general types of cost increases for collector paving projects: (1) market forces and (2) increases required to meet fed/state requirements that were not fully understood during development of cost estimates for the 06-07 biennium.

The Committee Chairs and staff concur that a municipality should not be held responsible for cost increases that are wholly beyond their control. As such, they recommend that the PACTS Cost Increase Policy be amended to transfer the financial responsibility for cost increases in 06-07 collector paving projects from the municipality to PACTS. The amended text is shown below using the standard underline and strikethrough method.

### Background on Draft Motion 5

While it may not be possible to fully anticipate fluctuations in market forces, the process used to estimate the 06-07 collector paving projects was flawed in that it: (1) did not adequately include consideration of the myriad federal and state requirements; and (2) did not adequately reflect the full scope as presented by the municipality. These are flaws that should be corrected.

Implementation of a “Collector Paving Cost Estimating Process” that fully incorporates all federal and state requirements and that incorporates the full extent of the agreed upon scope would correct these flaws. Development of such a process should be undertaken before the next biennial funding cycle.

In addition, the process used to develop the cost estimates for 08-09 projects was similar, though improved, to that used for the 06-07 projects. That being said, there is a good probability that the final design estimates for the 08-09 paving projects will be higher, perhaps significantly, than the programmed amounts. This possibility should be considered in deliberation of the current set of circumstances. Pending resolution of funding the 06-07 paving projects, thought should be given to re-estimating the 08-09 projects to avoid a repeat of the current circumstance.

#### Background on Draft Motion 6

A year ago the MaineDOT worked on several fronts with many participants in the Governor’s Capital Transportation Funding Working Group. That work produced several strategies designed to reduce the cost of maintaining and upgrading the state’s highway network.

The purpose of the motion above is to have PACTS staff meet with MaineDOT and FHWA to learn how those strategies are affecting the cost of delivering projects in our region, and to discuss other ideas such as the grouping of collector paving projects and the easing of certain FHWA procurement and bidding requirements.

### **Proposed Text for Motion 4**

#### **Policies and Procedures for the 2008/2009 Transportation Improvement Program As Amended August 17, 2006 (page 28)**

##### **E. Project Cost Overruns and Contingency Funds Policy.**

This section is divided into three parts, each part pertaining to one or more of the six set-aside categories.

No projects will receive additional funding through the PACTS MPO Allocation for cost increases that result from a municipality or agency adding to the scope of the project, aka “scope creep:.

**Intersection, Reconstruction, Widen Road and Bike-Ped Projects** PACTS MPO Allocation projects (excluding Transit set-aside projects) will ~~have~~include a 25% contingency. The contingency will be added to the project’s cost estimate at the time of funding by the Policy Committee. The contingency plus the amount(s) originally programmed by the Policy Committee will constitute This amount—the cost estimate plus 25% contingency—represents the total the entire amount that PACTS will fund program for a particular project. There will be no supplemental funding to a project for inflation, right-of-way acquisition or other reasons. Any

amounts above this figure will be entirely the responsibility of the municipality or agency for which the project is being done of behalf of.

~~With the exception of Transit Projects, all projects funded through the PACTS MPO Allocation will include a 25% contingency. The contingency plus the amount(s) originally programmed by the Policy Committee will constitute the entire amount that PACTS will program for a particular project. There will be no supplemental funding to a project for inflation, right-of-way acquisition or other reasons. The contingency and policy will be administered as described below. A cost increase contingency will not be applied to Transit Projects.~~

Simple projects are projects where when PCE and Construction are funded at the same time in one in the same biennium.

For simple projects, the 25% contingency will be added to the cost estimate used by the Policy Committee in their final funding decision to which project to fund in the next biennium. The estimate may be a result of the PACTS EPS process, or a MaineDOT/PACTS field review, or may be supplied by the municipality or agency putting forth the project. Municipal/agency cost estimates will be reviewed by MaineDOT/PACTS.

Example: The most refined cost estimate for Project X at the time of the Policy Committee decision is \$1 million. The Policy Committee will approve spending a maximum of \$1.25 million of the PACTS MPO Allocation for this project. (This amount is comprised of the federal, state and local shares also called total dollars.)

Complex projects are projects where when PCE and Construction are funded in separate biennia. To be eligible for funding, all Complex Projects must first complete an EPS Report. Preliminary Construction Engineering (PCE) will be funded in the initial biennium based on the project's EPS Report. A 25% contingency will be applied to this estimate to ensure sufficient funding to complete project development through PDR (Preliminary Design Report). based on the most refined estimate at the time of the Policy Committee decision on which projects to fund in the next biennium. This estimate will normally be based on a percentage of a planning level estimate for the entire project. Historically, the amounts estimated to be needed to complete PCE have been accurate. However, in a limited number of projects, additional design may be required that exceeds the funded PCE amount. The Policy Committee will address these projects on a case by case basis.

Construction will be funded in the biennium subsequent to completion of at the final PDR PDR. (Preliminary Design Report) amount plus a A 25% contingency will be added to the PDR's construction estimate. If the PDR is not complete at the time of the Policy Committee final MPO Allocation decision, the Policy Committee will not fund the project for construction during that biennium.

Collector Paving Projects will be funded based on the cost estimate developed during the Collector Paving Cost Estimating Process. A 25% contingency will be added to the cost estimate at the time of funding by the Policy Committee. In addition, PACTS will fund, through its MPO Allocation, project cost increases that result from fluctuations in market conditions. Increases in

cost beyond the 25% contingency that result from design changes required to meet federal and/or state requirements will be the responsibility of the municipality.

Transit Projects will be funded at the project's cost estimate at the time of funding by the Policy Committee. Transit Projects will not have a 25% contingency added to the cost estimate at the time of the funding. Transit Projects will receive no additional funding to offset cost increases. Transit Projects that receive partial funding may receive additional partial funding not to exceed the project's cost estimate at the time of the original funding by the Policy Committee.

B. Report on efforts to increase transportation funding

Staff Resource: John Duncan

Member Resource: Conrad Welzel, Dale Doughty and Neal Allen

Background

Representative Boyd Marley, a Co-Chair of the Transportation Committee, has submitted LD 26 "to authorize counties to adopt by referendum a *local option sales tax* on sales within the county that are subject to the state sales tax. The tax would be collected and administered by the State. Ten percent of revenue from any county local option sales tax would be deposited in the State Transit, Aviation and Rail Transportation Fund, established in the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 23, section 4210-B, for use as authorized under that section to support transit, aeronautics and rail transportation. Ninety percent of revenue from the county local option sales tax would be returned to the county where collected for use on transportation-related projects within those counties." *Representative Marley is amending his bill to have the local option sales tax be administered within the state's four MPO regions.* John Duncan has met with the Representative twice on this.

We will brief you on the status of other efforts at your meeting.

C. Recommendation for PACTS submission for FY 2008 Congressional earmarks

Staff Resource: Julia Dawson and John Duncan

Member Resource: High Priority Projects Subcommittee

Recommendation: Staff supports the recommendation.

Draft Motion: To submit to the Maine Congressional Delegation three proposals for FY 2008 Congressional annual appropriations earmarks. The PACTS priority order for the three projects will be the same as the order that MaineDOT gives them (to be determined).

- Reconfiguration of the Old Orchard Beach intersection of Smithwheel Road and Ocean Park Road (\$400,000 cost)

- Coordination and interconnection of 4 traffic signals in Portland (\$500,000 cost)
- Coordination and interconnection of 7 traffic signals in South Portland (\$838,000 cost). (If it were to make any difference, the funding of only the 3 higher priority signals (\$359,000 cost) would make sense.

### Background

Staff and the Subcommittee developed a set of selection criteria based on advice from Congressional staff and MaineDOT. The 3 proposals above were selected from a set of 7 candidates developed by staff and by our members. A key factor in the Subcommittee's recommendation is that these 3 are the only ones that MaineDOT supports as earmarks. Congressional staff will give our three proposals a lot more weight given that they have MaineDOT's support.

MaineDOT will also submit a statewide list of earmark proposals. Portland will also submit proposals.

#### D. Proposal to reduce the length of a PACTS collector paving project in Freeport

Staff Resource: Eric Ortman

Member Resource: Dale Olmstead

Recommendation: Staff supports the recommendation.

Draft Motion: To reduce the funding from \$220,000 to \$165,000 for PIN 13094 (Mallett Drive), and to shorten the project length by moving the western endpoint from Route 125 eastward to the PACTS boundary, and to return the \$55,000 difference to the PACTS Reserve Account.

### Background

Many months ago PACTS staff learned that the western endpoint for the Mallett Drive paving project (which was already funded) was .15 mile outside the PACTS boundary. John Duncan decided to allow the project to proceed as is.

PACTS staff initiated today's recommendation in light of the recent widespread increases in collector paving project estimates. We met with Freeport staff. Dale Olmstead agrees with the recommendation.

MaineDOT's current cost estimate for the shortened project is \$161,000.

## **Agenda Item 6 – Consent Agenda**

### Draft agenda for March 15<sup>th</sup>

Perform the PACTS work plan priority setting exercise initially scheduled for today.

### Eric Ortman's Resignation

As reported earlier, Eric Ortman has resigned effective March 16<sup>th</sup> after six years at PACTS. Eric will be difficult to replace after developing very effective leadership and technical skills. Eric has been a key player in challenging us all to assert the role of PACTS. His legacy will help us to continue our good work for many years to come.

### MaineBiz Article

MaineBiz will print an article about *Destination Tomorrow* this week. John spent a lot of time with the reporter last week.

### Context Sensitive Solutions Sessions on March 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>

We are hosting a public forum on the topic of at Hannaford hall at USM on March 29<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. A nationally known planning consultant (Projects for Public Spaces) from New York will make a presentation to the public on how *placemaking* techniques and involving the community in planning projects can bring positive change to neighborhoods, streets, mixed use development and public spaces. On March 30<sup>th</sup> we will hold a day-long training exercise for 50 to 75 municipal planners, engineers and public works directors, MaineDOT and FHWA staffers, and members of interested advocacy groups. Please encourage your staff to attend.

### Recent Committee Agendas

- Transit Committee
  - Welcomed David Redlefsen, the new GM of the METRO
  - Began to develop work plan suggestions for Policy Committee
- Regional Transit Study
  - Continued work on an implementation work plan.
- Planning Committee
  - Context sensitive solutions event with Julia Dawson and Donna Larson
  - Discussed access management work plan with Eric Ortman
  - Developed PACTS work plan suggestions for Policy Committee
- The Technical Committee
  - Discussed collector paving cost increase issues (Feb. 13<sup>th</sup>), and PACTS collector pavement management system scope of work