



## Route 113 Corridor Committee

Corridor Committee Meeting  
August 17, 2010  
Brownfield Town Office  
2:30 – 5:00 PM

### Agenda

#### I. Welcome and Introductions

- A. Meeting Minutes of 05/13/10 *Action: Committee vote requested*

#### II. Updates

- A. Town News  
B. Gorham East West Study Committee

*Action: Information only*

#### III. Scenic Byway

- A. Debrief on Byway Clean-up of May 22  
B. Hiram Falls Rest Area: Update on the process for requesting improvements.  
C. Corridor Management Plan: Update on the status of the grant to develop a management plan for the Pequawket Trail Scenic Byway.

*Action: Information only*

#### IV. Mountain Division

- A. **Question 3:** Update on the \$4 million in Bond funds approved by Maine voters for the Mountain Division rail line, plus a visual walk through corridor. *Action: Committee may vote to take a position.*
- B. **Conway Scenic Excursion:** The Maine Rail Group is sponsoring a trip on the Conway Scenic Railroad for Maine policymakers to inspect the New Hampshire section of the Mountain Division. The trip will be organized by SMRPC and GPCOG on behalf of the Route 113 Corridor Committee. *Action: Information only*
- C. **Trail:** An update on the Quality Communities applications by the communities of Westbrook, Windham, and Brownfield to construct a multi-use trail alongside the railroad bed. *Action: Information only*
- D. **Economic Impact Study:** The committee will review and prioritize a potential scope of work for examining the economic impact of freight, passenger, and excursion rail as well as the trail. *Action: Appoint a subcommittee of volunteers to work with SMRPC and GPCOG staff*

#### V. New Business

- A. Other  
B. Next meeting date  
C. Agenda items

**Route 113 Corridor Committee Meeting**

**May 13, 2010**

**2:30 – 5:00 PM**

**Brown Memorial Library, East Baldwin**

**Meeting Notes**

**Committee Members:** Marlene Livonia (Hiram); Phillip Pomerleau (Standish); Representative Mike Shaw (Standish); Lou Stack, Vice Chair (Standish); Larry Seidl (Baldwin); Marlee Turner (Brownfield)

**Guests:** Gary Higginbottom (Portland); Bob Jewett (Baldwin Business Association); Tony Donovan (Portland); Nate Moulton (Maine Department of Transportation); Wayne Newbegin (Standish); Representative Helen Rankin; Representative Ralph Sarty; Dean Wood (Baldwin); Steve Wood (Baldwin)

**Staff:** Myranda McGowan (SMRPC); Caroline Paras (GPCOG), Tom Reinauer (SMRPC)

**I. Welcome and Introductions**

**II. Meeting Minutes of 02/10/10 and 03/10/10**

Larry made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 10, 2010 and the March 10, 2010 meeting. The motion was seconded by Lou. This motion passed unanimously, with one abstention from Marlee.

**III. Updates**

**Town News**

*Baldwin:* Things are peaceful in the town of Baldwin. Larry thanked the state representatives present at the meeting for supporting the development of a bond package and for doing things for the people and not for political parties. The Baldwin Business Association is planning a Business Appreciation Day on July 24<sup>th</sup>. Paving of a section of Route 113 will be completed this summer.

*Hiram:* Someone has purchased the Four Corners Store and hopes to have it opened this summer, probably after the 4<sup>th</sup> of July weekend.

*Brownfield:* Local churches have begun having community breakfasts and suppers. There is a new business on Depot Street, located off of Route 113.

*Standish:* Standish is hosting a Summer Spectacular on June 25-26 to celebrate the 225<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the town. Festivities, which will include fireworks, will take place in Steep Falls, Sebago Lake village, and Standish Corner. The Town is currently in negotiations with the

Portland Water District to create a public beach for residents at the Sandbar but it is moving along slowly due to the economy.

*Fryeburg:* No representative in attendance.

*Legislative Update:* Representative Sarty gave an update on the state budget, including past and future budget cuts due to the economic climate. The Maine Legislature approved a bond package that will be voted on in June. The initial version did not include any money for the Mountain Division; however, the approved version includes \$4 million for the Mountain Division rail line. He also discussed the competitiveness of the Mountain Division compared to other lines in the state. Representative Sarty also gave an update on the Highway Simplification Study being completed by the Maine Department of Transportation as a directive from the Legislature. A report was recently released that discussed giving minor collector roads back to towns once they are brought up to a ten-year standard. Most of these minor collectors are located in rural communities. The committee then discussed how the bond money for the Mountain Division will benefit Western Maine.

Representative Rankin expressed her support for the Route 113 Corridor Committee. She also mentioned that the Fryeburg flower show is May 15-16<sup>th</sup>.

Representative Shaw reported on an upcoming Veterans Night in Standish on May 19<sup>th</sup>. The event, which will feature Major General John Libby, will help veterans apply for benefits. The largest one-day car show is being held at Bonny-Eagle High School on May 15<sup>th</sup>. The Downeaster passenger rail service has been very busy, with yesterday's trains completely sold out.

Discussion then switched to the Gorham East-West Corridor Study. Some members of the committee feel that the study has focused on the towns of Scarborough, Westbrook, Gorham, and Windham to the exclusion of other communities that were required to be studied as part of the legislative directive. The discussion focused on the importance of studying the movement of people within the study area as well moving commerce. Municipal participants of the committee also expressed frustration at the number of people moving to their communities without a corresponding increase in business, turning their towns into *bedroom communities*. Caroline discussed the results of a transit workshop that took place on April 15<sup>th</sup>. A transportation meeting of the East-West Study on June 1<sup>st</sup> will include a discussion on freight.

#### **IV. Mountain Division**

##### **A. Bond Package**

Update from Nate Moulton of MaineDOT on how the \$4 million in the Bond package for the Mountain Division might be spent.

Nate Moulton from the Maine Department of Transportation gave an update on potential improvements that could be implemented with funding from the bond package. The plan at this point is to use the funding to install rail on the 5-mile section from Westbrook to Windham, where the rail and ties were removed by Pan Am prior to the State's purchase. The amount of work that would be completed would be dependent on bids received and the cost of materials. Project development and engineering staff at the Maine Department of Transportation are currently reviewing potential projects.

Action: The group agreed with MaineDOT's plan to spend the \$4 million set aside in the bond package for the Westbrook-Windham section of the Mountain Division.

Issues discussed included the following:

- Could local contractors be used? Contracts will be awarded based on established procurement policies. Maine companies have the opportunity to bid on such contracts.
- Could the rail ties be manufactured in Maine? At this time, no companies in Maine have the ability to treat the rail ties. The closest company is located in Pennsylvania.
- Could cement rail ties be used instead of wood rail ties? Cement rail ties are more costly and in many locations have broken down. As a result Amtrak is currently replacing hundreds of miles of these. Examples are located in the greater Boston region.
- This region could be a potential location for a bulk fuel storage facility so that trucks do not have to travel to the congested South Portland waterfront to load up oil.
- The Downeaster received funding for interstate transit; people will have the ability to connect from the Mountain Division to the Downeaster.
- We need rail before trail. However, each activity is associated with different pools of funding and cannot be shared.
- If the bond package is approved, funding will be available 90-days after June 8<sup>th</sup> (day of voting), pending approval from the Secretary of State. Materials will be purchased after that time.
- Tony Donovan of the Maine Rail Transit Coalition expressed extreme concern about locating trails next to rail lines. A forum on rail, sustainability and livable communities has been postponed from May 19<sup>th</sup> to June 3<sup>rd</sup>.
- The second round of TIGER funding is opening soon. Pre-applications are due on July 21<sup>st</sup> and final applications in late August. \$600 million is available. USDOT has advised the State to limit its number of applications. The State of Maine is submitting one rail application for approximately \$8-10 million to put the Maine, Montreal & Atlantic in a state of good repair.
- Where are the private sector funds for rail improvements? A century ago, the private sector built the nation's rail lines.
- An example of good planning is the Auburn Intermodal Facility, where rail, air and highway are located in close proximity to an industrial park..

- \$28 million was spent on the construction of the Gorham Bypass. What jobs were created from the new road? Quality of place and quality of life should be brought together.
- Will the public outreach process for the rail and trail happen together in the Westbrook-Windham section? The track restoration will likely proceed on its own schedule independent from the trail's construction.

The group discussed whether to take a public position to endorse passage of the Transportation Bond. Various options were discussed, including the establishment of a subcommittee, creating advertisements that specifically mention each town that has council support, and creating one unified Route 113 Corridor Committee advertisement. It was decided that since this item was not noticed in advance on the agenda, the risk of a political backlash was too high. Individual select boards ought to review political endorsements proposed by the committee, but this was not practical given the short time before June 8.

**ACTION:** The Route 113 Corridor Committee declined to make a public endorsement of the Transportation Bond. However, individual municipalities and organizations volunteered to make their own endorsements:

- Representatives Sarty, Rankin, and Shaw offered to write a unified Letter to the Editor in support of the Transportation Bond noting that there is funding set aside for the Mountain Division.
- The Baldwin Business Association may create their own advertisement, with potential help from a group in Washington DC. Tony Donovan offered to assist with this effort.
- The Town of Standish may place an advertisement in the Shopper's Guide.

## **B. Trail**

The communities of Westbrook and Windham will be applying for a MaineDOT grant to construct a paved trail alongside, not on, the Mountain Division railroad bed.

Caroline distributed a draft letter of support that she created for the group. The towns will not be asking for funds to construct any portion of a trail on the line – it will be located adjacent to the rail and adhere to MaineDOT guidelines. The group discussed the positive and negative benefits of rails-with-trails, including the Mountain Division and other examples around the United States. Some members of the group feel that trails near rails can potentially become safety hazards, and could prevent rail operators from returning to the Mountain Division. Nate told the group that the Maine Department of Transportation allows trail use in rail corridors that meet set-back and other requirements, and also will not prohibit future rail use. Every example is different. The Maine Department of Transportation has set standards in place, and his office reviews all trail plans and designs.

The group was reminded of the original position of the Route 113 Corridor Coalition, and their strategy included in the Economic Development strategy – “Apply for Transportation Enhancement funding to construct the Mountain Division Trail in a manner compatible with freight and regularly scheduled passenger rail service.”

**ACTION:** A motion was made by Phil and seconded by Larry to take no action with regard to a letter of support for the Westbrook/Windham application. The motion passed unanimously.

Representative Rankin announced that she had received a flyer in the mail from the Maine Department of Transportation for a public hearing on May 18<sup>th</sup> re: development of the Mountain Division trail in Fryeburg from the Fryeburg Visitor Center to Porter Road (1.4 miles).

At this point in the agenda, it was 5:30pm, so the group decided to only discuss the following agenda item.

## **V. Scenic Byway**

### **Clean-Up Day**

The Committee has sponsored a byway clean-up two years running. According to the group, Route 113 does not look too bad and will not require a lot of work. The last clean-up day occurred in May of 2009. Hiram will not be able to participate this year. Standish will organize an event for their section of Route 113. Possible volunteers included Boy Scout troops and inmates of the Windham Correctional Facility. Although a fall clean-up was considered, the committee realized that spring is a better time to spruce up the corridor for the tourist season.

**ACTION:** Standish and Baldwin will host a clean up day on May 22. SMRPC staff will contact the Maine Department of Transportation to borrow vests and trash bags and will then bring the equipment to Standish. Lou and Larry will coordinate the clean-up effort.

The meeting adjourned at 5:45pm.