



NH Railroad Revitalization Association

August 25, 2008

Tonight's meeting was called to order by President Peter Griffin @ 7:05 PM at the Health and Safety Council in Concord.

Attendees:

Name	Town
Peter Griffin	Windham, NH
Bill Remington	Concord, NH
Lenny McGee	Manchester, NH
Tom Noel	New Boston, NH
Stephen Piper	Dover, NH
George Katsakiores	Derry, NH

Name	Town
Brian Dame	Monroe, NH
Gary Kerr	Chichester, NH
Gus Sheedy	Derry, NH
Steve Flanders	Weare, NH
Winthrop Buswell	Laconia, NH
Sam Langley	Boscowen, NH

Visitors: Randy Bryant – Sierra Club NH
Anant Panwalkar, PE (Concord, NH) – Nobis Engineering

July Minutes

The July 28 meeting minutes were approved with one typographical error to be corrected.

Treasurer's Report

Steve Flanders reported the organization's account balance. He reported a \$250 corporate membership has been received from Urban Engineers as a result of the rail forum. No expenditures were made last month.

Guest Speaker Mike Izbicki

Mike is from Bedford, NH and is a member and the technical advisor to the NH Rail Transit Authority. He's been in railroading for 32 years beginning his career in the B&M signal department as an electrical engineer. He has also worked at TK Dyer, Union Pacific, Southern Pacific, Canadian National, General Electric and Siemens. He has traveled around the world to build railroads and is now in project management. He is the Governor's appointee to the NHRTA in charge of operations and train control.

In April the Authority's focus narrowed to the NH Capitol Corridor project. He has met with MBTA and MBCR to find out what it would take to get to Manchester with regular service right now. He is also seeking service to the Manchester Boston Regional Airport and understands that a new station at North Chelmsford, MA would need to be constructed. Alternate NH station locations are now being investigated. MBTA wishes to run the service and thinks they can negotiate a deal with Pan Am Railway.

The project is currently at the feasibility stage. The most effective service interval would be at 1-hour train spacing during peaks. Except for one stop at the Anderson Station in Woburn, the service would be express to Boston from Lowell. Parsons-Brinckerhoff will be issuing a revised report next week and has also been hired to model ridership for five runs north of Manchester. Double track must be constructed from Lowell to at least Merrimack with a layover facility in Bow near the power plant. MBTA recommends double track to Manchester. Some other serious problems exist including a major sewer interceptor that is situated in the right of way. Cost is a potential deal breaker.

An intermodal "hub" would be constructed at both Manchester and Concord. Intermediate transit centers would be built at Nashua, the Nashua/Merrimack town line and Bedford with parking garages and access from Route 3. Nine additional trainsets would be required for the service. The Governor has \$1m in budget - \$500k for Nashua

and \$500k for Manchester for land acquisition and could go toward preliminary engineering.

Operational costs are expected to be \$8m-12m per year with the fare box expected to cover about 50%. NH will have to find a revenue source to fund the balance. UNH demographic studies have shown that 22-34 year olds are leaving the state. Rail service would attract them back, as would service to the airport. The airport just began developing their master plan and it includes multi-modal interaction. They are also looking at the Manchester & Lawrence corridor

Mike has met with Carol Shea-Porter and Paul Hodes. Developers are now coming forth to propose public/private partnerships and lots of support is coming from the private sector. Although the NHRTA focus is on the NH Capitol Corridor, there is some work ongoing to relocate the existing MBTA layover facility from Bradford, MA to Plaistow, NH. The NHRTA is also working on developing a budget for some part-time positions and will be meeting with a financier.

Other Business

An Economic Transportation round table discussion will be held in Bedford on September 13th and will include discussions on rail.

Peter will attend tomorrow's I-93 Transit Study meeting. He has also met with the Londonderry Planning Board and encouraged them to evaluate freight service and the big acreage south of the airport.

Gary's survey will be placed on the NHRRA web site.

Tom attended the Southern NH TAC meeting, where they were conducting discussions on regional transit services and bus service to Manchester. The Manchester Transit Authority is studying various possibilities to extend service in several directions, one of which is to the proposed commuter rail station in Bedford (across the Merrimack River from the airport).

Tom is working on NHRRA's annual 501(c)(3) renewal.

Steve Piper reported the Downeaster's record July ridership of over 48,000 that also included the first daily ridership of over 2000 passengers.

Bill Remington submitted an article about Rails to Trails on the M&L corridor.

Bill also submitted a public notice that has been issued as part of the process to require New England Southern to vacate Pan Am Railway property and operations from Concord to Manchester. Atlantic Northeast Rails & Ports has a good chronology of the issue.

Meeting adjourned at 8:40 PM

Next meeting: Monday, September 22, 2008 at 7 PM
Safety & Health Council
163 Manchester Street, Concord

Minutes by: Stephen R. Piper, Secretary