



NH Railroad Revitalization Association

October 26, 2009

Tonight's meeting was called to order by President Peter Griffin @ 7:10 PM at the Health and Safety Council in Concord.

Attendees:

Name	Town
Peter Griffin	Windham, NH
Tom Noel	New Boston, NH
Bill Remington	Concord, NH
Lenny McGee	Manchester, NH
Bob Hamm	Merrimack, NH

Name	Town
Jim Bull	Windham, NH
Gary Kerr	Chichester, NH
Steve Flanders	Weare, NH
Ken Milender	Warner, NH
Steve Piper	Dover, NH

Guest: Gary Seneschal (Allenstown, NH)

September Minutes

The September 28 meeting minutes were accepted as written.

Treasurer's Report

Steve Flanders reported the organization's account balance. No financial activity took place over the last month.

Marketing Report

Jim Bull submitted draft bumper sticker and window decal designs for review and comment. These would cost less than \$1 each to make and could be done within a week's time. One suggestion made was to put the NHRRA web site address on the detail and to make the window decal background clear to minimize obstruction of view. Jim is working to put a Facebook application onto the web site.

Jim is seeking historic photos of the potential NH Capitol Corridor station locations also for placement onto the web site.

NH Rail Transit Authority Meeting

Tom Noel attended their meeting on Friday, October 23. NHDOT Commissioner Campbell was supposed to attend, but had a conflict. MBTA officials did attend to discuss Plaistow. Plaistow town officials and others made a presentation regarding their interest in bringing the MBTA to Plaistow. David Preece believes that CMAQ money sought for Plaistow would come out of money now earmarked for the NH Capitol Corridor.

The capital funding application was not submitted for stimulus funds because there was no operating agreement with Pan Am as required. However, an application for \$3M for planning was submitted and it looks positive for its approval. The capital funding application is complete and will be ready for submittal at a future date. Robin Comstock of the Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce made a strong argument to continue the course for service to Manchester and Concord. She encouraged the NHRTA to go for the whole thing despite the Pan Am setback citing that it was the business community that raised the \$120,000 for the preparation of the applications.

NHDOT Deputy Commissioner Chris Clement attended, but did not present. He did comment that the Amtrak option is what the state would prefer to pursue. Mike Izbecki and Peter Burling attended a recent "Passenger

Trains on Freight Railroads” conference in Washington and took the opportunity to speak with FRA officials.

NHDOT’s Kit Morgan submitted the current edition of the State Rail Plan as required for applying for FTA funds. If the NHRTA prepares its own NH Rail Plan, it will do so with input from NHDOT Rail and Transit and the regional planning commissions.

Mark Brewer of Manchester Boston Airport emphasized his continued support for rail and Tim Moore of Plaistow offered to chair the NH Master Rail Plan Development Committee.

Membership Issues

NHRRA needs to more actively try to promote the organization. Perhaps a “*Tell your friends about NHRRA*” campaign should be tried. In addition to getting new members, re-attracting former members is also important. Many members getting electronic distributions are in arrears on their dues and should be contacted to find out what their current level of interest is. Also, it is very important that any member who is planning to move or change their e-mail address contact us so we can keep their information current in our distribution database.

New England Planning Association

Peter attended this conference hosted by the Pioneer Valley Planning Association. There were national speakers along with others from the New England states. Commissioner Campbell spoke on the disappointing situation with the NH Capitol Corridor project. Peter spoke with Mike King, the Director of the North Country Council.

Other Business

- There is no new federal transportation bill forthcoming at this point.
- Under the current funding format, the reconstruction of I-93 would not be completed until 2030. The DOT is looking at new tolls and increasing the gas tax.
- Ridership on the Downeaster is down slightly from last year, but still hugely higher than 2007. High gas prices in 2008 resulted in a record year for Amtrak, so by comparison this year’s numbers still look really favorable.
- Tom reported that per the NHDOJ, it’d okay to write letters from NHRRA to the STB or NHDOT supporting the acquisition of 7 miles of existing trackage from Concord to Boscowen.
- Winthrop Buswell recently spoke at Plymouth State College. He discovered that about 90% of the attendees were favorable to the idea of passenger rail service.
- Peter and Bill will be coordinating on language for future rails to trails legislation. Gary mentioned that Piscopo Construction is building a trail adjacent to the rails to Meredith on the Winnepesaukee corridor.
- Bill submitted several documents for review including, “State Rail Plans: Summary of Requirements”, NHRTA’s “Plaistow Station Update”, a letter to the MBTA from the Plaistow Board of Selectmen regarding proposed commuter rail service and several photos of the existing system in the Plaistow and Bradford area.

Meeting adjourned at 8:45 PM

Next meeting: Monday, November 23, 2009 at 7 PM
Safety & Health Council
57 Regional Drive, Concord

Minutes by: Stephen R. Piper, Secretary