

# **Route 12 North Transit/Paratransit Feasibility Study**

## **MINUTES**

**February 10, 2010**

**Present:** Joe Bonanno, *Southern Windsor County Regional Planning Commission*; Barbara Brill, *Community Alliance*; Harry Costick, *Home Healthcare, Hospice and Community Services (HCS)*; Gary Fox, *Interested Citizen, Windham Regional Planning Transportation Advisory Committee*; Brian Waterman, *Connecticut River Transit*;

SWRPC Staff Present: J.B. Mack, *Senior Planner*

### **I. Welcome and Introductions**

J.B. Mack called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. and introductions were made.

### **II. Minutes**

The minutes of the January 5, 2010 meeting were approved by unanimous vote.

### **III. Consultant Proposals**

J.B. Mack announced that one proposal was received for the NH 12 North Transit/Paratransit Feasibility Study from Steadman Hill Consulting, Inc. of Vermont. He contacted Shelley Winters, the Public Transportation Administrator at NH DOT, to make sure that the process that SWRPC used to solicit bids was adequate given that only one bid came in. J. B. noted that the Request for Proposal (RFP) was submitted to 22 consultants in New England and other parts of the country and was also posted on six planning and transit websites. Ms. Winter's indicated that in speaking with Steve Dubois of the NH DOT Bureau of Planning and Community Assistance that the process was adequate. She stressed that it is important for the committee to follow through with the RFP by scoring the one proposal to ensure that the process described in the RFP document was followed from beginning to finish.

J. B. Mack asked if any members were familiar with Steadman Hill Consulting's work? Both Brian Waterman and Gary Fox indicated that they are familiar with their work. J. B. Mack noted that Patricia Crocker had indicated that she was familiar with their work as well and had positive comments about the firm.

J. B. Mack asked the committee to proceed by reviewing the proposal after today's meeting and following the scoring guidelines as they were outlined in the RFP. J. B. Mack indicated that he would forward the scoring criteria to the committee following today's meeting. Barbara Brill stressed she thought the sooner

scores could be made by individual committee members the better. J. B. Mack suggested a score submittal date of Wednesday, February 17<sup>th</sup> and the group agreed. Joe Bonanno asked if Southern Windsor County Regional Planning Commission should score the proposal. J. B. Mack answered that if the RPC is able to do so, that would be helpful, but that it is most critical to have the four transportation agencies review the proposal.

J. B. Mack asked the Committee if they would like to have the opportunity to interview the candidate as well. He suggested that a conference call interview could be set up. The group agreed that this would be a good idea. Barbara Brill suggested that the Committee develop a list of questions. Harry Costick recommended sending J. B. Mack potential questions by Friday, February 19<sup>th</sup>. J. B. Mack agreed to coordinate a conference call for the week of February 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Brian Waterman asked if the group chose not to use Steadman Hill Consulting, what would be the next steps. J. B. Mack indicated that they would have to send out another RFP and perhaps change the way that it was distributed. Gary Fox said that the Team looked good considering that our study includes a number of different types of service providers. This team appears to have experience with a variety of transportation services.

#### **IV. Survey Update**

J. B. Mack announced that Tara Germond has been working with the Research Methods class at Keene State College by answering any questions they have as they develop their household and destination surveys for the Route 12 study. They have set up a webpage that they are using to communicate with Tara, their professor, Niall Moran, and each other about this project (this webpage is available for viewing <http://docs.google.com/leaf?id=0B7kgeLaU9HekN2I4NjlhMGQtNTQyNC00MTZmLWE1YTQtZjk0MTk5MmFINjg3&hl=en> at: <http://docs.google.com/leaf?id=0B7kgeLaU9HekN2I4NjlhMGQtNTQyNC00MTZmLWE1YTQtZjk0MTk5MmFINjg3&hl=en>). Tara Germond has reported that they have already provided a lot of good questions and critical thinking on this project.

J. B. Mack told the group that SWRPC is checking into a possible liability issue it might have in using volunteers for surveys if it is done through SWRPC. SWRPC is checking in with its insurance carrier to understand what kinds of coverage it has, if any, for volunteers. SWRPC might not have workers compensation coverage for the volunteers. Barbara Brill said that it would be interesting to see what RSVP has for coverage of its volunteers since they use volunteers all the time. J. B. Mack stated that he would check with RSVP to find out. He stated that he would also report back at the next meeting about SWRPC's coverage.

#### **V. Market and Needs Study Update**

J. B. Mack announced that he and Tara Germond continue to work on a Market and Needs Study update and expect to complete the study by the conclusion of March. Gary Fox asked how origin and destination information would be determined through the study. J. B. Mack responded that general town level information about origins and destinations would be derived by commuter data. More specific information would come from the surveys. J. B. Mack said that SWRPC would be contacting each of the providers for route mapping information that they currently do not have in order to complete an existing conditions map on transportation services.

## **VI. Other Matters**

Committee members provided the following updates.

Barbara Brill, Community Alliance

- Community Alliance is working with Granite State Independent Living to provide travel training services. She is working with approximately 20 different agencies in her region on this project.
- Through funding available from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, Community Alliance is purchasing scheduling software, vehicle maintenance tools, and a larger garage door.
- Community Alliance has been very active working with the Sullivan and Grafton County Regional Coordinating Councils. The group is looking to boost volunteer driver services for the area as well as doing an outreach campaign to involve people and agencies in the area.
- Barbara Brill has been working with the State Coordinating Council's (SCC) Alternative Strategies Subcommittee. The group is currently developing some data collection standards for RCC participants for the SCC to consider.

Brian Waterman, Connecticut River Transit

- Connecticut River Transit has hired a new Executive Director who comes from the Pittsburg, PA area. Her name is Mary Habig, formerly of First Transit and she starts on March 1<sup>st</sup>.

Gary Fox, Destination Bellows Falls

- Destination Bellows Falls is currently made up of a four person board that is trying to develop a trolley and charter service for the area to take advantage of tourist attractions in the Bellows Falls area. They are seeking grant funding for a couple of trolleys. They are also working with the local historical commissions to come up with package deals for tourists interested in visiting historical sites and having lunch. Gary Fox is also working on revitalizing the area around the Bellows Falls train station.

Joe Bonanno, Southern Windsor County Regional Planning Commission

- Joe Bonanno announced that his RPC is working on park and ride lot study for the area. He welcomes any input from the agencies regarding park and ride lots in the area.

Harry Costick, Home Healthcare, Hospice and Community Services

- Harry Costick announced that the overall ridership trend is rising, but Keene State College ridership has gone down a little.
- HCS is continuing its Travel Training program and has had good participation this year. They have graduated one person and more graduations are expected in the near future.
- HCS experienced over 800 paratransit users so far this year.
- Through ARRA, HCS is purchasing a two way radio repeater system, plug-in's for diesels, fare boxes, computer hardware and two buses. An additional bus is on order.

- HCS is working with Janet Kingsbury-Warren and the American Red Cross to coordinate on veteran's transportation.
- Harry Costick announced that HCS is ready to begin a Regional Coordinating Council development process for Region 5. HCS, SWRPC and others will start this process in March.

**VII. Next Meeting**

The next meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, March 10, 2010 at Connecticut River Transit

**VIII. Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 11:40 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

J. B. Mack  
Senior Planner