

## Nashua Rail Transit Committee Minutes, 6-Sep-19

Attendance: Chair Steve Michon, Rep. Bette Lasky, Alderman Richard Dowd, Gregg Lantos, Jay Minkarah, Rep. Carl Seidel, Dan Kelly, Alderman Michael O'Brien and Paul Patti  
Guest: Peter Schafer, Julie Chizmas and Komba Lamina

Committee minutes starting @ 8:20am ...

Jay mentions Federal consideration of housing and transportation connectivity in planning.

- 1) Competitiveness in application process
- 2) Employer perspective (transportation) actually meets needs they truly have

Committee discusses BAE renting parking spaces and the potential benefits of a private public cooperative.

Carl suggests having backup options in case funding falls through.

AECOM's report included potential interest and motivating factors for MBTA, related general legal permitting issues.

The 2016 study was updated, est. \$153M to start service – rolling stock, etc. and \$4M annual operating cost.

Mike mentioned that with layover requirements diesel engines may need to run all night due to cold temps, Jay highlighted a similar issue in Plaistow.

Steve proposes dividing the Committee's work into 5 main areas:

- 1) Tracking the Project Development Phase & keeping up with DOT, participating as much as we can.
- 2) Outreach communications: Regarding the study & Project Development Phase, working with Dan O'Neal, also connecting with folks in Manchester – is the Rail4Biz group still active there? Lowell too? Surrounding towns? Employers & PR? (Also: Citizens for NH Capital Corridor Passenger Rail Facebook group run by Elise MacDonald)
- 3) Technical issues: Helping the city prep if we get the green light (zoning, station, employers PPP, financing, etc). Perhaps a Jim Donchess & Joyce Craig meeting?
- 4) Exploring regional authority/Amtrak alternatives.
- 5) Legislative piece: How leadership changes ever 2 years.

Also to consider regarding legislation: What may be keeping rail from getting through politically – is the usual questioning/blocking on “cost” possibly masking some other issue(s)?

Mike O'Brien will talk with Danny O'Neal in Manchester.

Committee discusses if we should we still be considering other alternatives now that the Project Development Phase is moving forward? What would a regional or state authority possibly look like?

Jay mentioned there was a meeting with Amtrak, who was interested in short routes with high passenger counts that may be viable for service expansion. Carl suggests looking at Baltimore to DC, which has both commuter rail and Amtrak service, which has been very successful. How does each serve the needs of that region?

Dan asks if Amtrak would have all rights of way?

Pete Shaffer asks why aren't buses going to Lowell?

Dan highlights the need for us to see the SOW to find out who has responsibility for the station(s)?

Steve asks that each Committee Member decide which of the previously mentioned areas they would like to work on.

Next meeting planned for October 18<sup>th</sup> @NRPC.

Meeting adjourned @ approximately 9:15am.

\*End\*