

SB 364, Chapter Law 242:1, Laws of 2016

(New Title) Establishing a committee to study, in conjunction with municipalities and the Department of Transportation, the feasibility of a Complete Streets Program

FINAL REPORT

The above-named Legislative Study Committee examined the possibility of creating a statewide Complete Streets Program by hearing from many interested stakeholders and state agencies concerning the current process in implementing Complete Street Programs in municipalities throughout the state, including the benefits and difficulties that this process entails. The findings regarding the creation of such a statewide program can be found below, with further content in the attached minutes from each meeting.

FINDINGS

The study committee established by SB 364 met five times since its effective date on June 10, 2016. The Committee, chaired by Senator Regina Birdsell, identified several key findings in the course of its meetings. These findings include the following:

1. The Committee found that it may not be necessary New Hampshire to adopt a statewide Complete Streets Program due to the following:
 - a. The Department of Transportation already works effectively with any municipalities who wish to implement such a program on the local level.
 - b. In addition, municipalities are proactive and approaching the Department of Transportation to express interest and seeking guidance in implementing such programs on the local level.
2. Some federal funding is available for such programs to be implemented in the state through grants available by a federal and local dollar matching system, albeit with significant red tape and with the demand for Complete Streets-related grants from municipalities far outstripping the available federal funding.
3. Complete Streets Programs provide a variety of benefits for communities, including encouraging Millennials to remain in the state, encouraging a healthy population, increasing economic activity, providing environmental relief and curbing emissions, enhancing public safety, and making alternative methods of transportation use available for the public, including walking, biking, and transit.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the Committee's findings in its meetings with various stakeholders, the Committee recommends the following:

1. The NH Department of Transportation, either through existing rulemaking authority or through legislative directed rulemaking, where applicable, to work with stakeholders to:

- a. Create more formalized criteria to help prioritize Complete Streets-related project applications by municipalities, where applicable;;
 - b. Create a guidebook to aid municipalities in implementing Complete Streets, including how to further encourage walking, biking, and a transit system within municipalities; and
 - c. Update any out-of-date documents, such as our state's minimum geometric guidelines for local roads and streets, to aid in the implementation of Complete Streets Programs.
2. Submit legislation to authorize \$2.5 million in State funds to create a unique New Hampshire-based Complete Streets Pilot Program, with the goal of minimizing red tape and involving greater municipality match percentages. Such a pilot program should also involve a report from the NH Department of Transportation that includes the number and types of grants applications received and funded, the estimated return on investment from the grants, and any other relevant information necessary to evaluate the effectiveness of the pilot program.

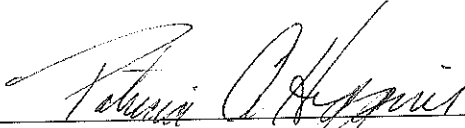
Respectfully Submitted,



Senator Regina Birdsell, Chair

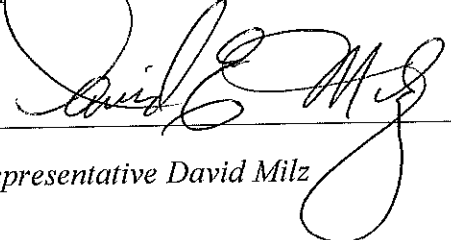


Senator Dan Feltes



Representative Patricia Higgins

Representative Mark McConkey



Representative David Milz

**Committee to Study, in Conjunction with Municipalities and the
Department of Transportation, the Feasibility of a Complete Streets
Program.**

SB 364, Chapter Law 242:1, Laws of 2016

Organizational Meeting Minutes

RE: SB 364 Organizational Meeting

MEETING DATE: August 23, 2016, 9:00 AM, SH 103

Members of the Committee Present: Senator Birdsell
Senator Feltes
Representative Milz

Members of the Committee Not Present: Representative Higgins
Representative McConkey

Others Present:

Michael Rollo, American Cancer Society
Nancy Vaughan, American Heart Association
Marcella Bobinsky, DHHS
Krista Morris, DHHS

Meeting Discussion:

Senator Birdsell opened the meeting and Committee members introduced themselves.

Senator Feltes nominated Senator Birdsell as Chair of the Committee. Representative Milz seconded this motion. All were in favor.

Senator Birdsell explained the handouts provided to Committee members. She also introduced information regarding the Transport New Hampshire Seminar taking place on September 7th. She requested that members attend this seminar in order to gain a better understanding of SB 364. She hopes that after the seminar takes place, the Committee will have an idea of what interested parties they would like to request testimony and information from at meetings.

The meeting closed at 9:15 AM.

Next Meeting(s): The next meeting will take place on Thursday, September 15, 2016 at 2:00 PM in SH 103. Subsequent meetings will be scheduled every two weeks on Thursdays at 2:00 PM.

Report Due: November 1, 2016

**Committee to Study, in Conjunction with Municipalities and the Department
of Transportation, the Feasibility of a Complete Streets Program.**

SB 364, Chapter Law 242:1, Laws of 2016

Regular Meeting Minutes

RE: SB 364 – Regular Meeting

MEETING DATE: September 15, 2016, 2:00 PM, SH 103

Members of the Committee Present: Senator Birdsell
Senator Feltes
Representative Milz
Representative Higgins

Members of the Committee Not Present: Representative McConkey

Others Present:

Nancy Vaughan, American Heart Association
Krista Morris, DHHS
Tim Blagden, Bike Walk Alliance New Hampshire
Rep. John O'Connor
Scott Bogle
Jennifer Kuzma
James Marshall, DOT
Rebecca Harris, Transport NH

Meeting Discussion:

Senator Birdsell opened the meeting at 2:01 PM.

Senator Birdsell stated that she would like to discuss the Transport New Hampshire Seminar, which took place on September 7th. Some members of the study committee also went to this event. Based on the event, she would like to set forth some topics that the study committee would like to discuss throughout its duration, as well as individuals who may be helpful in giving testimony to the committee. Additionally, she would like to go over the Massachusetts “Healthy Transportation Policy Directive” handout, which shows a similar Complete Streets program set forth in the neighboring state.

Representative Milz stated that the Transport New Hampshire Seminar was very helpful and gave a broad background on where the study committee may like to go with its information. His opinion is that the committee should look at putting together guidelines of information that they would like to encourage as

permitted uses for this program, and to leave it up to towns to decide if this will work for their citizens, depending on the costs incurred.

Senator Feltes stated that he also thought the seminar was a great event. He has more questions than conclusions based on the seminar. Obviously, this is a large topic and deciding how to proceed in such a small period of time is difficult. Clearly, there are public health, economic, and broader benefits about attracting young people to the state and keeping them here. One question is what kind of process the study committee should take in getting input and what this policy would look like on the state level. Would this be a general enabling legislation, a broader state policy, or a hybrid of both? Senator Feltes believes that it would be helpful to hear from as many people and advocates as possible as to what they believe this program should look like. Afterward, a debate or discussion as to what the study committee should incorporate would be best.

Representative Higgins did not attend the seminar, but has questions on the topic in general. She stated that, as many know, DOT currently has a context-sensitive solution policy. She would wish to see a comparison and contrast between this and any possible policy that the study committee develops. Some members believe that this program is already taken care of in DOT initiatives and others may not. The committee should address whether: 1. the project is within one or more municipalities; 2. certain projects can be connected if they are between municipalities and; 3. the discussion is about state roads, urban roads, or rural roads. She believes that a state policy may be useful in order to set a standard.

Senator Birdsell stated that Representative Higgins did well in describing what she would like the committee to accomplish. She added that she thoroughly enjoyed the seminar and did not realize that there are so many communities taking part in this program. It began to allow her to think about communities who cannot do these projects or get them done because of certain limitations.

Senator Feltes suggested that individuals look at the Massachusetts DOT policy that was handed out. Senator Birdsell asked if perhaps someone from Massachusetts DOT would be fit to explain this. Others recommended that our current DOT Commissioner, Victoria Sheehan, who has much experience in Massachusetts, would be fit to describe this program. Towns may need guidance on how to design their programs for their desired outcomes, such as increased health, increased physical activity, etc. Towns may not also wish to simply "opt in" or "opt out" of all.

Senator Feltes mentioned that AARP should remain involved in this project. Additionally, Tim Blagden, DHHS, DOT, Transport NH, DRED, the Municipal Association, someone from the Regional Planning Commission, DES, John Corrigan re: safe routes to schools (DOT), the American Cancer Society, and potentially the BIA would all be helpful to hear from. Senator Feltes also asked to track down the Massachusetts legislation to enable this language or the statutory framework. Senator Feltes stated that, presumably, the committee would make some sort of recommendation on a type of legislation. He added that the additional New England states' legislation would be helpful.

Senator Birdsell asked if Complete Streets concerns anything about rail trails. Others described that each really did not have much to do with each other, except for how crossing at rail trails can be handled with pedestrians in the safest way possible. One example is in Lebanon, where there is a difficult area to find right-of-way, there is a parallel trail. There may be places in the state where it is impossible to accommodate bicycles and pedestrians in the road.

Representative Milz stated that the Good Roads Association may also be helpful in obtaining information. He stated that the Commissioner will certainly have helpful information, especially about the specifications of the projects, since it is clear that not all projects are "one size fits all" for each town.

Representative Higgins stated that she believes that all of the above-mentioned organizations are the ones she would like to recommend as well. She specifically recommended Nate Miller from the Regional Planning Commission, as he has been working with both New Hampshire and Vermont regarding these plans. He is currently with the Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission in Manchester.

There was also a recommendation to hear from Beth Richards who worked at the national level on these projects. Tim Blagden believes she would be able to give excellent testimony.

Senator Birdsell stated that she will work to set up testimony from the above-mentioned groups or individuals for each scheduled meeting. For the next meeting, she suggested that five groups or individuals come in to testify. She suggested beginning with the Commissioner of DOT and any others from state agencies.

Senator Feltes asked that the statutes from other states be sent to all interested in order to give any input, specific or general.

The meeting closed at 2:30 PM.

Next Meeting(s): The next meeting will take place on Thursday, September 29th at 2:00 PM with subsequent meetings taking place every two weeks on Thursdays.

Report Due: November 1, 2016

**Committee to Study, in Conjunction with Municipalities and the Department
of Transportation, the Feasibility of a Complete Streets Program.**

SB 364, Chapter Law 242:1, Laws of 2016

Regular Meeting Minutes

RE: SB 364 – Regular Meeting

MEETING DATE: September 29, 2016, 2:00 PM, SH 103

Members of the Committee Present: Senator Birdsell
Senator Feltes
Representative Milz
Representative Higgins
Representative McConkey

Members of the Committee Not Present: None

Others Present:

Nancy Vaughan, American Heart Association
Bill Cass, DOT
Sylvia Von Aulock, Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission
Mike Rollo, American Cancer Society
James Marshall, DOT
Timothy White, DES
Tim Blagden, Bike Walk Alliance New Hampshire
James Marshall, DOT
Rebecca Harris, Transport NH
Commissioner Sheehan, DOT
John Corrigan, DOT
Marcella Bobinsky, DHHS
Kristi St. Laurent

Meeting Discussion:

Senator Birdsell opened the meeting at 2:01 PM.

The committee voted to approve the minutes from its last meeting by a vote of 3-0.

Senator Birdsell discussed the agenda for today's meeting and the organizations who would be presenting to the committee. These agencies include individuals from the Department of Transportation and the Department of Health and Human Services.

Commissioner Sheehan; Department of Transportation

Commissioner Sheehan explained that the Department has embraced Complete Streets as a methodology and has been working with communities to accommodate their projects. In the past, their focus has been on larger-scale projects, including new road constructions. Now, as part of routine maintenance work, it is looking to enhance accommodation for other modes of transportation. Providing more space for walking and biking by striking a road differently is just one example. The Department is pleased with how many communities have adopted Complete Streets.

Senator Feltes stated that one of the things the committee is considering is whether or not to recommend a formal state policy with respect to Complete Streets. He asked if the Department had any recommendations, perhaps language similar to or different from other states, which would be beneficial for the committee's use. Commissioner Sheehan spoke of her experience in Massachusetts and why there was a policy implemented in this area. At the time, there were several green initiatives and goals set forth, after much public involvement, concerning increasing the number of walking and biking trips by 2030. This is what sparked the policy. The law required the Department to consider Complete Streets whenever it implemented a new policy. One thing that the Department struggled with was how to strike a compromise between carrying out their projects and giving Complete Streets elements proper weight in such projects. Although this was cumbersome at times, it did help to set a complete record as to why the Department would choose one policy over another. Some waivers would be issued to not meet the full directive of the program if the cost significantly outweighed a different policy.

Here in New Hampshire, things are different than they were many years ago. We are already seeing communities embrace these types of "green" concepts. Many urban communities have already been thinking in this way and rural communities are coming forward to advocate for other modes of transportation. That being said, Commissioner Sheehan does not know if a state-wide policy is necessary in New Hampshire. The Department, however, is very supportive of Complete Streets principles and would work on this language should the committee see it as necessary. Commissioner Sheehan spoke of an advisory group currently working with the Department to help them considering all other modes of transportation in addition to vehicular traffic.

Senator Feltes asked what the most important principles are in the Complete Streets program. The Commissioner stated that looking at adjacent land use is important and was stressed in Massachusetts. Sidewalks should be provided when averages reach a certain point and when density levels reach a certain point. Those types of standards are what the Department is looking at as an agency to meet the needs of the future. Working closely with regional planning commissions is also very important to make sure that we are building the correct structures for future usage. Another important factor to consider is tourism. We need to keep these needs in

mind regarding biking, jogging, and the like. It is important, however, to not change the character or rural settings but to simply provide facilities to accommodate such tourism.

Senator Feltes asked what the state can do to better incentivize municipalities to include a Complete Streets program in their area. Commissioner Sheehan stated that this is a challenge since so many communities are already advocating projects of this type. Her experience in Massachusetts included a need for education and awareness. Again, this is not necessarily the case in New Hampshire. One way to incentivize may include scoring criteria.

Representative Higgins asked for information regarding the difference between Complete Streets and context-sensitive programs. The Commissioner stated that this is a balance as to how the state can encourage the needs of all modes of transportation without having unnecessary impacts on the environment or creating issues with rights of way. We want to make sure that we are working with communities to come up with practical compromises regarding innovative programs that do not sacrifice the character of an area. Listening to the communities is very important in order to understand what their vision is.

Representative Higgins asked if there is a difference in balance between rural areas and urban areas. The Commissioner explained that they are a slightly different. Some communities may want to be more walkable and limit vehicle use in downtown areas. She noted that Concord's Main Street has been transformed and one can see the benefits of lane configuration changes and parking changes to develop a downtown area. In an urban area, this would clearly be different in maintaining traffic flow and increasing economic growth than somewhere that is more rural.

Representative Milz stated that he is getting the idea that the Department is not comfortable with Complete Streets being a mandated program. He was originally going to suggest that the Department work with the committee to come up with guidelines, but it seems that DOT has been proactive in this area already and clearly has some working plans in place. The Commissioner stated that an official policy requiring the Department to look into all modes of transportation would mean that communities are thinking this way, but a more flexible process in establishing how to accomplish these programs would be something that the Department is more in favor of. DOT would be interested in working on these guidelines.

Senator Birdsell asked how many rural areas or towns have actually taken part in Complete Streets or have implemented such a plan. The Commissioner stated that she was unsure of an exact number, but many communities have been working with DOT. The Department works closely with regional planning commissions and advocacy groups who also work with members of the public. In many ways, the Department is listening closely and giving communities what they are asking for.

Representative McConkey stated that over the course of twenty years in his involvement in his district, he has found the Department of Transportation to be very cooperative regarding what his towns are looking for, including expanding pathways and bike paths. He has found that the planning commission is always willing to discuss issues, as well as local chambers of commerce, and to work with DOT. He understands wanting to set forth more guidelines on Complete

Streets, but wanted to note how well he believes the Department is conducting itself surrounding these programs.

John Corrigan; Department of Transportation

Mr. Corrigan has been the Safe Routes to Schools Coordinator for DOT since 2006. Safe Routes to Schools (SRTS) plays a key role in directing federal funds to local communities and has an oversight rule that states that money be spent in a way that is accountable. The goals of the SRTS program, including many other programs within this department, are consistent with the Complete Streets philosophy.

Mr. Corrigan gave some historical context for state and federal roads regarding Complete Streets.

SRTS encourages children to safely walk or bicycle to school, including students with disabilities. This program encourages students to use these modes of transportation beginning at kindergarten. The primary purpose of Complete Streets is to provide safe access for everyone, regardless of age or mobility. All programs are reimbursement programs. Under SRTS, they are reimbursed at 100%. In other programs, reimbursement is typically around 80%. Involving the public in the earliest stages of project development is vital. Since SRTS is based on an area within two miles of a school, it is an extremely community-oriented project. Recognizing that every community is extremely unique is important. These communities who want to participate in SRTS must first establish a local task force to discuss their options.

DOT forms a true partnership between state government and local communities. In many communities, there is simply no safe place to walk or ride a bicycle to schools. Members of community task forces are often surprised at how little funding will get them. Many communities have used Safe Routes funding in very creative ways. He cited Gorham, Concord, Bristol, Keene, and Dover as examples. Beyond SRTS, the Department has a history of including Complete Streets considerations in their projects, including incorporating extra-wide sidewalks in some areas, connections to trails, and the like.

In summary, these programs support Complete Streets projects at the local level. Amounts requested far exceed the amount of money that is available. \$5.4 million dollars is currently available to award, with requests for projects being over \$20 million.

Representative Higgins spoke of the federal funds available versus the amount of dollars request. She asked if this was the money that was reimbursed at 80 percent. Mr. Corrigan stated that it was and that there is a competitive grant process and application. The focus is on an alternative transportation system, but mostly on the importance of biking and walking.

Representative McConkey stated he was familiar with past programs for bike path funding. This program speaks of reimbursing for costs. He asked if the more successful applicants are towns who have already agreed to do these projects and committed and are now asking for money,

versus those who are looking for their town to commit. Mr. Corrigan stated that, in general, towns that have planned better are more successful in getting grants. However, some areas, like Gorham, had not focused on this area before. He has not seen a difference in small towns or larger communities in their success for gaining grants.

Marcella Bobinsky; Department of Health and Human Services

Ms. Bobinsky is the acting Director of the Division of Public Health at DHHS.

She echoed the willingness of DOT to work to support Complete Streets. She hopes to discuss how DHHS can promote the concept of Complete Streets to encourage better public health and lower costs, in addition to working in conjunction with DOT.

Ms. Bobinsky submitted written testimony (PowerPoint). First, she discussed the importance in establishing how the state can take a guideline from DOT and use it to make a community healthier. Expanding the understanding of health is also important. She stated that living and working in a place that is healthier naturally makes people healthier. Having a strengthened community capacity encourages such action.

She discussed health in all policies, including looking to education, natural resources, good schools, transportation, a quality environment, safe public spaces, quality housing, and much more. Many of these aspects are incorporated into Complete Streets.

Ms. Bobinsky described how health is defined and the various aspects that it is made up of, including physical environment. This is where Complete Streets is more applicable, including housing, transportation, safety, parks, playgrounds, and walkability, although other factors make up health as well. In general, New Hampshire experiences a high quality of life.

She also noted a diagram from the World Health Organizations discussing policy goals commonly addressed in the transport sector. Many of these goals fit into the Complete Streets model.

Ms. Bobinsky spoke of health impact assessment (HIA) and its process. This is a common understanding of core procedures to be used to monitor the impact of community policies and activities on health and health care. This can be a long and expensive process. However, it is very important. Steps including screening for possible health impact, scoping of health impact assessment, reporting of findings and recommendations, monitoring by interested stakeholders and evaluating HIA. These same steps are included in assessments by the DOT. Because of this, we may be able to work within communities to use public health networks and community health improvement plans to make the state healthier.

She echoed the importance of working with DOT, regional planning commissions, and even as a larger New England region to accomplish these goals within Complete Streets. She believes that this is a matter of having a conversation with all of these organizations and simply having a shared goal. She stressed that DHHS will work within its capacity to support Complete Streets concepts and programs.

Rebecca Harris; Transport New Hampshire

Ms. Harris wanted to state that she is very encouraged with the conversation today. She has had conversations with Bill Watson at DOT as to how we can have better discussions with communities to take the initiative on these programs. There may be a lack of communication now because they may not be asking for help or know how to solve an issue. In other words, they may not realize that Complete Streets is a tool that can be used. In summary, better advertisement of this tool is a factor to consider for the committee.

Additionally, she stated that the philosophy at DOT is clearly becoming friendlier regarding Complete Streets due to leadership. She asked if there was a way for this to be encouraged in maintenance as well, when projects need further work in years down the road. Senator Birdsell stated that she is hoping to get more information from DRED regarding this issue.

The meeting closed at 2:59 PM.

Next Meeting(s): The next meetings will be October 13th at 2:00 PM in SH 103 and October 27th at 2:00 PM in SH 103.

Report Due: November 1, 2016

**Committee to Study, in Conjunction with Municipalities and the Department
of Transportation, the Feasibility of a Complete Streets Program.**

SB 364, Chapter Law 242:1, Laws of 2016

Regular Meeting Minutes

RE: SB 364 – Regular Meeting

MEETING DATE: October 13, 2016, 2:00 PM, SH 103

Members of the Committee Present: Senator Birdsell
Senator Feltes
Representative Milz
Representative Higgins
Representative McConkey

Members of the Committee Not Present: None

Others Present:

Nancy Vaughan, American Heart Association
Nate Miller, Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission
Representative John O'Connor
Mike Rollo, American Cancer Society
James Marshall, DOT
Timothy White, DES
Becky Ohler, DES
Tim Blagden, Bike-Walk Alliance of New Hampshire
James Marshall, DOT
Rebecca Harris, Transport NH
Marcella Bobinsky, DHHS

Meeting Discussion:

Senator Birdsell opened the meeting at 2:01 PM.

The committee voted to approve the minutes from its last meeting by a vote of 5-0 with minor language changes for clarity.

Senator Birdsell discussed the agenda for today's meeting and the organizations that would be presenting to the committee. These agencies and organizations include the Department of Environmental Services (DES), Tim Blagden of Bike-Walk Alliance of New Hampshire (BWANH), Nate Miller of the Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission (SNHPC), and Rebecca Harris of Transport New Hampshire.

Becky Ohler & Tim White; DES

DES explained why they are interested in Complete Streets. They submitted written testimony in the form of various charts.

Referencing the first chart, Ms. Ohler explained why the excessive use of vehicles can become a problem over time. Moving to the second chart she provided, the excessive use of vehicles leads to a significant rise in pollution. 33% of ground level ozone pollution comes from on-road vehicles. Ground level pollution becomes a respiratory issue for the elderly and the young especially. This is just one factor that can lead to asthma in different individuals. Small emissions from every vehicle being driven in New Hampshire daily do add up to a lot of pollution. A third chart shows the New Hampshire sources of greenhouse gas emissions in the state, with transportation leading at 38% of the total gas emissions. Emissions can be controlled if individuals choose to use their vehicle less. In a fourth chart, reducing emissions from the transportation sector shows how Complete Streets programs may come into play. In order to minimize transportation demand, the state could consider better land use, alternative transportation options, and changing the price of those alternative transportation options to make them as or more tempting than driving one's vehicle. Costs may also include mental or emotional cost, such as feeling safe.

Ms. Ohler spoke of her personal experience of living in Dover. In the process of turning downtown into a Complete Streets program, the town has redirected a lot of run-off into a soiled area to prevent the contaminated water from the roadway from running into the river. This has been extremely successful.

Senator Feltes asked if there were any specific recommendations that the Committee should consider adding to a final report. If not, are there specific concepts that are more important than others? Ms. Ohler stated that she knows that there are issues in requiring such programs, compared to encouraging it. She is also aware that this can be quite expensive. Ms. Ohler stated that, from an environmental standpoint, Complete Streets is very important. From an economic standpoint, it is also what the millennial generation is looking for in being able to move around without a car. Alternative transportation options or walkability within communities and being close to places of employment are ideal. Ms. Ohler, however, was at a loss as to whether or not something specific should be required. She stated that DOT has done a great job listening to communities and what they want. Conveniently, communities are asking for these things. Mr. White added that a lot of good work has been done at the local level. He suggested using local communities as an example for a statewide policy, should the Committee wish to move forward in that way.

Senator Feltes asked if there were any suggestions on how to create incentives for communities. Ms. Ohler stated that in some areas of DOT, there is leeway in prioritizing projects. She stated that the state should be using the funds available to give a preference to those projects that are truly serving the transportation communities, not just vehicle drivers. This should be expanded to include the transportation needs of all.

Tim Blagden; BWANH

Mr. Blagden submitted written testimony on behalf of BWANH. In this testimony, the BWANH believes that there are several compelling reasons for the state to adopt a Complete Streets policy for the design and management of the state's transportation network.

Mr. Blagden stated that Complete Streets policies support aging in place, better health by creating streets that encourage walking and bicycling, attracting millennials who desire transportation options, increase property values, increase tourism, and promote economic growth.

He added that the state's transportation network is not limited to vehicles. Many people travel by bike and on foot in many parts of the state.

Considering whether or not our transportation is safe is a factor that influences our choice in mode of transportation. Creating a statewide standard for state-owned routes is necessary if New Hampshire is going to develop a network that people will use to reach destinations using their own power. Creating a network that is statewide is important because it will provide uniformity between towns when going from place to place.

In summary, BWANH recommends that the state adopt a Complete Streets policy so that DOT has the direction to produce more projects whose design encourages walking, biking, and transit as modes of travel.

Senator Feltes asked how the state could specifically write a policy. Mr. Blagden stated that, from the last hearing, there was questioning of whether or not there needed to be a statewide policy. In his opinion, there is need for a statewide policy. He said that many states have legislation, which the Committee has seen. Generally, the language is relatively universal among all the states. Mr. Blagden stated that a mandate to develop and adopt this kind of policy from the legislature is vital.

Representative McConkey stated that he has great interest in connectivity between various communities regarding the roads and paths on which many travel. Representative McConkey asked if there was a suggested road/path width that would be a good statewide recommendation. Mr. Blagden stated that if you consider all factors of the infrastructure, you can establish how an adult will react to a road when using it and whether or not it is safe to use. Nashua has recently extended this analysis to a pedestrian level of traffic stress. This makes sense because as traffic

volume and speed increases, those people on the sides of roads walking or biking want more space.

Representative Higgins asked how many states have passed a Complete Streets policy. Mr. Blagden stated that 30 states and 900 municipalities have adopted such policies.

Nate Miller; SNHPC

Mr. Miller is a transportation planner with the SNHPC. He has experience working with municipalities in urban and rural settings by providing technical assistance requests from communities.

The majority of requests he receives from communities can be divided into three categories: highway safety, structurally-deficient bridges or roads, and Complete Streets policies. There are many requests from communities as to how to make their streets Complete Streets friendly, meaning for bicycle, walking and transit accommodations. The desire to have Complete Streets runs across all communities of New Hampshire. SNHPC is currently working in many communities to overcome barriers that will allow towns to adopt policies that are more accommodating to other types of commuters. This can include bus infrastructure, rail trail infrastructure, sidewalks, and the like.

The Transportation Alternatives Program is a federally-funded program for bicycle and pedestrian improvements based on a match with local financing. A quarter of the municipalities in New Hampshire (56) have come forward with such projects showing their matching commitment in funds. This shows an astounding level of support throughout the state. Municipalities being willing to match their funds is ultimately a business decision. If public transportation access is convenient, affordable and efficient, people will choose to use public transportation. The alternative is everyone driving their own vehicle and the state spends millions of dollars in adding expansions to their roads.

The population is aging across the state and transit will become more important because of this in the future. If people are not able to get from point A to point B when they no longer have a driver's license, the alternatives are extremely expensive and burdensome.

Communities are trying to attract young professionals who want good jobs, broadband access, social opportunities, and the ability to live, work, and play in the same area. Without a bicycle, pedestrian or transit infrastructure, this becomes impossible. Communities are making this infrastructure happen as a means to attract young professionals. Additionally, it is a large bonus for property values to have land or homes next to bicycle, pedestrian, or transit infrastructure.

Mr. Miller stated that the state can help in encouraging a Complete Streets policy by leading by example. DOT has done a good job, but there is more work to be done on a proactive level rather than a reactive level. Many state agencies or planning commissions spend time trying to figure out how to retrofit a road to work better instead of building it better in the first place. DOT has

engineering expertise that would allow for systemic change throughout the state. Mr. Miller passed out a publication from New Hampshire DOT from 1990 that shows the minimum geometric guidelines for local roads and streets. Some form of this can be found in almost every community's subdivision regulations in the state. The state knows much more now about how to create a conducive Complete Streets policy than it did in 1990. Thanks to many forms of guidance, the state can think about context-sensitive solutions to design infrastructure for an area that will work best for it and its members. In taking what the state knows now about context-sensitive solutions, the state should revamp their approach with DOT to provide updated guidance to communities that they can then incorporate into their subdivision regulations, similar to the original document from 1990. This will allow systemic change throughout the state.

Senator Feltes summarized that updated guidance of his handout and better promotion throughout the state by leading by example are a few suggestions for recommendations. He asked if there were some sort of pilot funding provided by the state as an incentive, how should this be structured, what should it be focused on, and how much money would be necessary. Mr. Miller stated that in order to be effective, the state would want to make their dollars go as far as possible. He would suggest a higher level of local match. The Transportation Alternative Program requires 20 cents on the dollar from locals. This program has a lot of red tape associated with it. Given the level of interest in this program, a state program would not have the same red tape to deal with. We are seeing communities willing to overmatch more than the required 20 percent in order to make their applications more competitive. A state program could look at a higher level of match, but he is unsure as to what this level should be. In terms of the right amount of funding, Mr. Miller stated that he would leave that to the legislature to recommend. However, he stated that the level of demand for these programs significantly outweighs the funds that are available.

Rebecca Harris; Transport New Hampshire

Ms. Harris began her testimony with a short story about how individuals choose to purchase a car based on their needs during commuting. This choice depends on priorities and outcomes that one desires. However, one cannot make a good choice without clear information.

Ms. Harris stated that she is thrilled that DOT is helping local communities. Transport NH would like to see a more formal statewide policy that includes Complete Streets elements based on what the community would like to accomplish. Complete Street tools should be made available at the beginning of every project that a town may be starting. The needs and desires of the community should be documented and preserved as the project moves forward. The desired outcome would become a formal part of the process so that everyone involved knows what the community's goals are. Transport NH would support either a DOT initiative to draft a policy or legislative directive that requires such a policy to be drafted.

Senator Feltes summarized that Transport NH would like to see some sort of a more formal communication from the local levels and a statewide Complete Streets policy. He asked if Ms. Harris had any idea as to how to prioritize projects or any thoughts on a pilot program. She stated

that this time period is too short to craft a policy and that more time is needed to work with DOT to accomplish this. Such a committee or commission would be better to take the time necessary to create a really good policy, rather than for a policy to be rushed through. Senator Feltes stated, therefore, that a recommendation would be to form a commission. Ms. Harris stated that she was getting the sense that this study committee is to determine whether or not a Complete Streets policy is necessary for the state, not necessarily to craft that policy. In order to craft a good policy, the Committee could recommend that: 1) a Complete Streets policy be introduced as legislation and a sponsor could work with stakeholders; 2) the process take a little more time to work on such a policy either directly with a set of legislators or directly with DOT; or 3) that the Committee recommends to work through a different committee or commission body. There are already a few committees of expertise on this area and one could bring in other stakeholders on health or economic development to supplement this group. In summary, the Committee could work with a sponsor, work with DOT, or work with a legislative commission.

Marcella Bobinsky, Department of Health and Human Services

Ms. Bobinsky asked the Committee if they were looking for a recommendation that is truly transitional for the state in favor of Complete Streets, or simply looking for language for a final report. She stated that she would like to begin working with individuals soon to come up with a policy. Senator Birdsell stated that she would like to speak with Committee members as to their current thoughts and would follow up at the next meeting.

Senator Birdsell closed the meeting by reminding individuals who will be testifying at the next meeting based on the Committee's current agenda. She added that Committee members need to begin thinking about what recommendations they would like to include in a final report.

The meeting closed at 2:59 PM.

Next Meeting(s): The next meeting will take place on October 27th at 2:00 PM in SH 103.

Report Due: November 1, 2016

**Committee to Study, in Conjunction with Municipalities and the Department
of Transportation, the Feasibility of a Complete Streets Program.**

SB 364, Chapter Law 242:1, Laws of 2016

Regular Meeting Minutes

RE: SB 364 – Regular Meeting

MEETING DATE: October 27, 2016, 2:00 PM, SH 103

Members of the Committee Present: Senator Birdsell
Senator Feltes
Representative Milz
Representative Higgins
Representative McConkey

Members of the Committee Not Present: None

Others Present:

Nancy Vaughan, American Heart Association
Representative John O'Connor
Mike Rollo, American Cancer Society
Representative O'Connor
James Marshall, DOT
Timothy White, DES
Tim Blagden, Bike-Walk Alliance of New Hampshire
James Marshall, DOT
Bill Cass, DOT
Rebecca Harris, Transport NH
Beth Richards
Doug McNutt, AARP

Meeting Discussion:

Senator Birdsell opened the meeting at 2:01 PM.

Senator Birdsell discussed the agenda for today's meeting and the organizations that would be presenting to the committee. These agencies and organizations include Beth Richards, Doug

McNutt from AARP, Nancy Vaughn (American Heart Association) with Mike Rollo (American Cancer Society), and Dave Juvet from the Business and Industry Association.

Beth Richards

Ms. Richards is a Concord resident. She worked for a number of years as the Director of Marketing and Business Development with the Safe Routes to Schools National Partnership. She was very active in this position on a variety of issues, including policy work regarding health.

Ms. Richards stressed the importance of a state-wide policy in order to help municipalities with effectiveness and efficiency in dollars that are coming from the federal government. Economic development and effectiveness with connectivity throughout the state only will come with a state-wide policy that is not optional. This is an important component in order to execute Complete Streets. States that have a state-wide policy typically have the best programs for Complete Streets.

Doug McNutt; AARP

Mr. McNutt stated that AARP's interest in Complete Streets Programs based on the group's aging interests within the state. To the extent that we can make communities pedestrian friendly as well, it is important to keep people in New Hampshire and allow them to lead the lives they want to lead.

It is important for communities to get the guidance that they need in order to implement these projects. He is aware that DOT does a lot of this work already. AARP would like to do everything in its power to contribute positively to this concept. They are currently working with the Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission on age-friendly communities. In summary, AARP supports Complete Streets Projects.

Senator Birdsell asked if the Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission was working with DOT on their current project. Mr. McNutt said that he was unsure. Age-friendly communities go beyond the reach of Complete Streets Programs.

Nancy Vaughn; American Heart Association

Mike Rollo; American Cancer Society

Ms. Vaughn spoke of the positive health impacts from policies like Complete Streets. The American Heart Association has a goal to help people live life free from heart diseases. They are very costly healthcare wise and are a high cause of death in the state. 80% of these diseases are preventable through lifestyle changes; including making people more active. She provided some statistics about regular adult activity and the positive results it can bring, as well as negative

results of not being active. In terms of children, New Hampshire has a large problem with overweight or obese children. Many of these individuals will grow up and go in to adulthood with health issues. Healthcare expenses due to obesity expenses are extremely high.

Ms. Vaughn stated that she would encourage Complete Streets Programs be implemented in the future. This could be consistent policy and guidelines for communities to do their work so that individuals can remain active.

Representative Higgins asked for a distinction between policies and projects. Ms. Vaughn stated that references for communities are helpful, but if they are not in policy, there is not the same emphasis on concerns that were originally addressed.

Senator Birdsell asked about the causes of obesity in youth. Ms. Vaughn stated that lack of physical activity and an unhealthy diet are large contributors.

Mr. Rollo of the American Cancer Society echoed Ms. Vaughn's testimony. He stated that physical inactivity and poor diet are second only to tobacco use as major causes of cancer in our society. On the contrary, increased physical activity can decrease the risk for many cancers. We support Complete Streets policies to help alleviate these risks.

Mr. Rollo added that cancer survivors are less likely to develop other kinds of cancer when they are physically active. Projects like Complete Streets contribute to allowing these individuals to be more active. The more options we can give individuals, the better we serve them.

Dave Juvet; BIA

Mr. Juvet stated that he did not have anything specific to add at this point but would be happy to entertain questions recognizing that they represent the business community throughout the state.

Representative Higgins asked if BIA had some experience collecting any information on economic activity regarding Complete Streets. Mr. Juvet stated that any observation that they have is anecdotal. From a retail and restaurant perspective, the Main Street Project in Concord seems to be a huge success.

The Committee moved onto discussing the findings in the draft final report prepared for the meeting. Representative Higgins stated that she was happy with the findings in the draft report, especially the updating of any relevant documents. Senator Birdsell echoed that the Department of Transportation is already working effectively on the local level in trying to implement these policies within the state. Massachusetts required such a policy as more of an educational

measure, as we learned. It is clear that New Hampshire is much more educated on the idea of Complete Streets.

Senator Birdsell added that in terms of recommendations, individuals will be looking at submitting legislation to authorize state funds. Senator Birdsell stated that she fully supports Complete Streets and wants to make it as easy as possible for communities to implement this.

Senator Feltes stated that on the second page of the draft report, the Committee recommends that DOT work with stakeholders to create more formalized criteria to help formalize Complete Streets project applications, create a guidebook, and update any out-of-date documents. The second recommendation goes to the overarching issue of the demand from municipalities. The Committee wants to help municipalities but does not want to make a mandate. Recommending a pilot amount of state funds will allow the state to evaluate the effectiveness of that before moving forward with an ongoing state appropriation. Recommending a pilot program seems to be the most reasonable approach.

Representative Milz referenced the details of the pilot program itself would be in legislation which is why many numerical details are missing from this recommendation. Senator Birdsell added that whoever brought in the legislation should likely work with DOT on this legislation. Rep. Milz added that the estimated return on investment from the grants may be hard to specify or measure. Ms. Richards stated that there are metrics that could be used for this. DOT added that they would have to check into this.

Rebecca Harris stated that there is a committee made up of planning commissions and DOT who are working on performance metrics. Strafford Regional Planning Commission is running this program.

Representative McConkey is not in favor of the clause asking for legislation to be submitted regarding state funds. He feels as though the money should be put into roads and bridges and repairs for those projects rather than a pilot program. Senator Birdsell stated that her intent is not to take these funds away from roads and bridges.

With no other questions or comments from the audience, Senator Birdsell stated that those could sign off on the report if they wished.

The meeting closed at 2:37 PM.

Next Meeting(s): N/A

Report Due: November 1, 2016