



WILMINGTON URBAN AREA Metropolitan Planning Organization

P.O. Box 1810
Wilmington, North Carolina 28402
910 341 3258 910 341 7801 FAX

Citizen Advisory Committee (D/B/A Cape Fear Commutes 2035 Committee) March 17, 2010 Minutes

Members in attendance:

Howard Capps
Eric Coffey
Scott Cromartie
Al Freimark
Dorsey Jones
Howard Loving, Co-chair
John Melia
Steve Stanton
Stuart Smith
Ryan Rhodenhiser
Donald Sellers

Members not in attendance:

Paul Martinez
Mike Roberts, Co-chair

Others in attendance:

Than Austin, Martin Alexiou Bryson
Mike Kozlosky, WMPO Staff
Bill McDow, WMPO Staff
Joshuah Mello, WMPO Staff
Anthony Prinz, WMPO Staff
Jill Stark, FHWA
Shane York, NCDOT

The committee began reviewing the draft *Cape Fear Commutes 2035 Transportation Plan*. The following comments were generated as the committee reviewed the plan.

- Smith: Towns need to incorporate transportation plans into land use plans.
Stanton: WMPO acts as a coalition.
Freimark: Point out [this relationship to the WMPO] at each meeting.
Smith: Brunswick County and Pender County → extend WMPO boundary
Cromartie: Regional Transportation Commission should be three counties.
Smith: Towns need to consider land use impacts on the transport system.
Loving: [The plan should] present implementation needs to [the] boards.
Cromartie: What about the Cape Fear Skyway?
Smith: [Plan] needs to clarify projects with and without skyway.
Stuart: Fix survey numbers to be consistent.
Coffey: Business school guy... never get down to sources and uses, [the intended audience] needs to know where money goes. Add charts, and tables with projected revenues and expenses.
Cromartie: Add unmet needs to the plan.
Capps: Add survey data tables, building roads → [emphasized more Austin] other modes. Alphabetize modes instead.
Stanton: Balanced costs and expenses.
Austin: Do you mean charts and tables?
Mello: I do not know if the plan now shows this.
Coffey: This has to be crystal clear...for new funding sources you have to change the law.
Capps: They [municipalities] have the ¼ cent [sales] tax option now.
Austin: We took that [chart on funding sources] out; do want a full list of unfunded projects.
Cromartie: I thought we had that.
Cromartie: I think it's important to show there are 40 more congestion mitigation roadway projects that are not funded.

Smith: If the need is there, let people know and politically responsible people will fund it.

Capps: In regards to readability, I did not see results of public input. Readability [of plan] did not have vision about what document is about, [emphasis is now on] building roads not public participation.

Loving: Are public comments included.

Mello: [Discussed need for inclusion of public comments]

Loving: Vision [of plan methodology] here would be good.

Capps: Public transportation may be [prioritized] if public participation is included.

Mello: Alphabetize [modes] roads [should] not [be] assumed [as priority].

Kozlosky: [General comment] I read it [plan] as a very heavy public transportation plan. If we want to make it more transit [make change]. [Leaders tendency is to] like to build roads. Now [agencies/NCDOT] have 84% roads to 16% other modes focus, [changing priorities] needs to be 80% roads to 20%, the extra 6% [makes] a big difference [in funding].

Loving: The future is other modes [of transportation].

Discussion of placement of Vision Statement

Melia: Could the plans vision be superimposed on cover.

Capps: Not the page 6, [vision] statement, what we are trying to do is [based] upon the [CFC Survey question] \$100 Survey- if you had \$100 we want to spend it on...

Melia: Loving could do an executive summary.

Capps: That's what I am talking about.

Mello: How about an opening statement [or cover letter].

Freimark: We are looking at the results, and roads are a means to an end.

Melia: And this is the end.

Capps: So how can we expand use of BRT (bus rapid transit)?

Mello: [Clarified location of item in plan], 4th bullet [of this section] covers this. [Section was read for clarification].

Loving: [Going back to] Capps's statement, our [process] going back two years ago, [public] input was important.

Mello: [Explained how opening vision statement could be used]

Capps: I think document should open with letter or paragraph opening, [that explains]. What was the basis for this plan? How we came to arrive at this point?

Kozlosky: If it was a letter [from the co-chairs or committee to be included], TAC would need to approve letter and sign off on it.

Loving: Does it need to be a letter?

Freimark: What if we put the vision statement [from page 6] on the cover page, then add letter [at beginning of report]?

Cromartie: Why does it need to be a signed letter?

Discussion and consensus was reached that CAC did not want a signed letter by TAC; there intent was to explain purpose and methodology of report and process in an opening statement, not signed TAC letter.

Capps: Is the [funding method for non-federally-funded projects] ¼ cent sales tax [passed by the legislature]?

Mello: This was the intermodal bill.

Kozlosky: There is a ½ cent sales tax for six “urban” counties and a ¼ cent sales tax for 94 other counties. We [counties in the WMPO] are part of the 94 counties that have the ¼ cent sales tax option.

Loving: Are there other comments to plan?

Discussion of 2020 and 2035 congestion maps

Mello: [Explained components of the maps.]

Loving: Is that correct that this is the only park and ride in the box.

Mello: That is correct, [one at the Wave Station]; there is also one at Monkey Junction. Park and ride lots are usually located outside the urban area. We recommend consolidating the [facility] at Snow’s Cut.

Stanton: The park and ride lot at Carolina Beach, is that general?

Mello: That would be general. It is also a good place to get off the water trolley.

Melia: [Question about] Hampstead park and ride lot.

Capps: In [the] right hand corner [of the map] park and ride lot at NC 210.

Freimark: In Pender County, [where is a park and ride lot proposed]

Mello: At Surf City at the Lowes served by the T06 route.

Melia: Are we going to change Topsail Island?

Mello: Yes.

Discussion regarding including projects in plan text versus plan appendix

Cromartie: I would like to have all the projects here instead of the appendix.

Mello: We talked about having a bar chart [graphical] with funded and unfunded.

Cromartie: [question was stated as a hypothetical example] Do you want projects indicated or 53 projects not funded.

Austin: Typically LRTPs are thicker Austin this.

Rhodenhiser: It is better to be long Austin unclear.

Stark: The Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP) is for all the projects that are not constrained. If we had unlimited funds, [it would include these]. We can not fund it [unfunded project] however these other project would be included if we had the funds available.

Melia: My concern is that opens the door for politics [campaigning to add or remove items from the list].

Stark: There is that risk.

Melia: Then put it in the appendix, if we have to do the greatest public good, [our goal], we recommend this.

Loving: We said for two years that we would not neglect any project so we can put it in.

Smith: You can not get the plan without the appendix.

Rhodenhiser: If we have appendix, we have to have a listing in a [the interior] paragraph of the report that refers to them.

Cromartie: In order for us to get to where we need to get, we have to have the public participation [for funding], bond issues, sales taxes, etc [to fund the projects]. We must help them get there with federal dollars [also].

Freimark: Can this be in the vision statement, [its] part of the value equation [public funding plus federal funding pays for the projects]?

Cromartie: Key to that is the Regional Transportation Commission.

Mello: In regard to bond funding [the] table does not make this clear on funding source.

Austin: Have two columns funds needed and funding source.

Discussion of overcapacity roadways in 2020 and 2035 that are improved by recommended projects

York: Here is what you have done [with inclusion of the projects].
Loving: What do you mean by you?
Austin: The projects you have included.
Loving: [Map] defined TIP projects [also] that is not us [CFC2035 plan].
Austin: What we have is TIP and CFC projects.
York: Four projects on the map [2020 Network] that are fiscally-constrained 1) St. Nicholas Road extension, 2) Head Road extension, 3) Hurst Drive extension, 4) Dogwood Lane extension [improve flow and network capacity]
Mello: [Explained location and scope of projects on 2020 network map].
York: There are many more on the 2035 Network [map] including 1) flyovers, 2) Castle Hayne Road widening, 3) Independence Boulevard extension, 4) Isabel Holmes Bridge interchange, 5) Market Street at Martin Luther King, Jr. Parkway flyovers, 6) North 23rd Street widening, 7) Randall Parkway extension, 8) Front Street widening, 9) Extending South Kerr Avenue from Wrightsville Avenue to Oleander Drive [makes use of 43rd Street], and 10) Wilshire Boulevard extension.
Austin: What is not shown is Cape Fear Skyway, [he committed] to have that tomorrow.
York: One of my other tasks [is] to come up with Levels of Service (LOS) results.
Mello: He can give us total delay, [under a] build and no build [scenario]. So we can see what our projects will contribute.
Kozlosky: [Regarding the plan expectation for future LOS] I would like to incorporate a LOS level D, the old plan had a LOS level E. I recommend we have a goal with the plan for LOS.
York: We could put all the projects that do not make the list in the CTP.
Mello: That would be a map.
Stanton: Who would see it?
Kozlosky: This is to serve as a background for the CTP.
York: Your input is perfect for the CTP.
Austin: When you go to update this plan five years from now, this document will be in the CTP.

Discussion of projects that reduce congestion on roadways in 2035

York: The Cape Fear Skyway northern alignment will take volume from US 74-76. The first study did not take any traffic from US 74-76. Literally I-140 did not help at all.
York: On the second study, it did reduce traffic.
Mello: The model shows a diversionary standard for the Cape Fear Skyway [of 65,000 vehicles with skyway]. York will develop more maps, what we see here is less commuting [across bridges to Wilmington] due to job growth in Brunswick County.
Stanton: Where did we get \$7.00 and \$3.00 costs for use of skyway?
Kozlosky: The [proposed] tolls have not been finalized.

Mello: Should we go [discuss in detail] project by project.
Loving: Yes.
Melia: Can we put a footnote [in plan] to describe them?
Mello: Include project rank.
Coffey: We also need to put a window to show projects in progress [TIP projects].
Mello: Wilmington Bypass- "B" Section, \$203 Million, not under contract, and "A" Section went under contract in March 2010 for \$81 million. [Mello explained TIP projects and other projects that could be added to plan].
Mello: Options for committee regarding Patrick Avenue. "B" and "C" portion of project is funded, "A" portion is not funded. Complete "A" portion or leave it unfunded.
Melia: Would that section be overcapacity when "B" and "C" portions are completed?
Mello: Yes.
York: Part of the problem with section "A" is ROW acquisition.
Kozlosky: The real impact is two churches [may need to be purchased].
Melia: I want to know with price [reduction] discount, will we be able to do it? What do we have to give up to get it.
Mello: Austin can run the numbers.
Austin: There is some flexibility. Independence Boulevard is a loop-funded project (\$67m in the plan). We estimate that we have \$40m for project 055, we can split it up or take the next highest project [on the list] and move it up.
Mello: If we add section "A", I recommend we add it to project 029. Will \$40m cover it? What does a three-lane widening cost?
Mello: Austin re-look at Dow Road (calculations) as recent study changed scope. I do not think it will be a full \$23m. We will redefine the project.

Discussion of congestion mitigation roadway projects.

Stanton: What is the cause of the Hurst Drive extension volume?
Mello: Commuter traffic
York: And college students that live on South Kerr Avenue.
Cromartie: Head Road is a bridge. I thought a bridge was more expensive.
Mello: Austin will recheck the bridge costs for that project. Do we want to make C015 a four-lane facility instead of a three-lane facility?
Loving: How much will it cost?
Sellers: Four lanes will run cost up, that will be a very expensive section.
Mello: Do we want to improve [the project] or sacrifice other projects on the list?
Austin: Difference is \$1.7 million per mile [more].
Sellers: Right of way will be more.
Austin: Yes, right of way is not included.
Coffey: For project C100, can the state ports fund or contribute to the project?
Melia: They would probably be single biggest user/ beneficiary of project.
Capps: What about project at Eastwood Road and Military Cutoff Road, [corrected: Summer Walk project is at Oleander Drive and Greenville Avenue]? If private facilities, developers have to pay for infrastructure. Why not public [ports]?
Stark: In Fayetteville, Ft. Bragg [contributes] money.
Loving: [Is] it worth an asterisk [by project] for funding [seeking funding from port].

Melia: As they widen NC 87, the port at Southport will be more appealing than Savannah.

Kozlosky: It is an opportunity, but not likely.

Mello: Project is not solely a truck project; it scored high in other areas also.

Mello: [Project C] realignment

Coffey: This is different from the realignment of Pine Grove Drive?

Mello: That is W25 safety project [ranked on the safety list as] number two.

Mello: [Clarifying project details] What do we do with Shipyard? [Flyovers and Access Management is planned].

Coffey [?]: Is that priced in the \$140 million.

Austin: Yes, that is included.

Mello: And this is over and above work that is going on now.

Cromartie: [Would] project have a lot of service roads?

Unknown: How do you break out time periods [for implementing projects]?

Austin: The TIP [goes] to 2015, then two 10 year periods, [2015 to 2025, and 2025 to 2035].

Cromartie: You will tell us the time periods?

Austin: Yes.

Capps: What is difference between Parkways and Freeways, I do not think Freeways are attractive.

Melia: Why is [Independence Blvd] project not available for loop funding?

Kozlosky: It could be eligible, we will add it.

Discussion of Randall Extension [C 063] followed. After discussion project was left on list.

Coffey: A lot of land adjacent [to project] is underdeveloped. How do you mesh available land to project?

Mello: At the mall, you would do flyovers.

Melia: Why is project not available [for] loop funding?

Kozlosky: It could be eligible; [we] will add it.

Mello: The Skyway is loop funded as far as NCDOT analysis, as well as Blue Clay.

Coffey. [?]: [TIP project] Blue Clay Rd/ I-140[interchange project] has been pulled.

Mello: It has not been listed.

Kozlosky: The airport was the one that brought it forward.

Coffey: You can not get to the airport from I-140.

Mello: C-063- This is controversial- Randall Extension. It is state owned [by UNCW] and you can not condemn [ROW section] if state owned. And it is designated as conservation land.

Austin: There is a typo; it is 13 million not 67 million.

Mello: Hurst Road extension has not been funded.

Loving: We have to look at projects that are not popular. It [opinion of UNCW toward project] may change in time.

Melia: The piece with the wetlands and woodlands will not improve.

Sellers: All we have to do is make a request with the state [representatives] for the Right of Way, and if they say yes or no (OK).

Unknown [?]: If we leave it there, won't it automatically [drop] to the next item on the list if we do not build it.

Loving: Yes.

Freimark.: It's a bargaining chip.

Coffey: We need to see what project 59 improvements will make.
Mello: Project will serve as access to students on south [part of town].
Cromartie: It could add pressure to Hooker Road and [lead to] widening Hooker.
Prinz: It could also take pressure off Wooddale.
Mello: Does committee want to keep project in list?
Stuart: Make clear [that] City should not commit funds until UNCW commits funds.
Stark: To have UNCW support, we need to have our [WMPO] support. [She gave an example about NC State project on Hillsdale].

[Decision was made by consensus to keep project in the project list, and then discussion went to Kerr Avenue improvement project and Cape Fear River Way].

Cromartie: [Is it] part "A" of Kerr [Avenue].
Mello: Do we have cost of 4-lane divided?
Austin: Section "A" is around \$9 million.
Cromartie: If the state has "B" and "C" [funded for construction] we would be remiss to leave it out if it's only 9 million.
Melia: It's a lot cheaper than \$36 Million. So we combine [it] with [NCDOT] project.
Mello: No we add it to C-105.
Cromartie: That's been a need for years.
Mello: C-105 will be added and ranked with high value.
Mello: Where is Cape Fear River Way- Project- C-055? It was [around] \$200 million and about 15 miles long. It follows the Burnett Blvd alignment.
[Mello described the sections; make up and area serviced by the Northern and Southern portion of the proposed roadway, along with the impact of improvements to River Rd from Riverlights development and Skyway improvements.]

Mello: Do we want to fund Northern section, Independence to Front St, or [the] part from Newland [developer for Riverlights] to Snow's Cut?
Cromartie [?]: I think any part of Skyway makes sense. What will they develop from Skyway to port?
Melia: Cost wise is [it] more or less expensive [for] North versus South.
Coffey: I don't think you have broken it down by section.
Capps: I don't know if I have it [in draft plan].
Mello: Is it [the] committee's preference to look at sections [to construct the River Way].

[Committee agrees to look at constructing Cape Fear River Way in sections, Southern Section is priority 1 and Northern Section is priority 2].

Loving: Can we get the consensus of committee?
Capps: Does staff get a sense we can break [project up] by sections?
Mello: If Newland project on River Road installs it and subgrade is put down by Newland, we could build [widened roadway] later.
Loving: Can we get more information and report back?
Kozlosky: Question when will we develop answer?
Mello: We will get answer and [communicate to committee] send it Friday by email.

[Discussion of Project C-075 College Road upgrade from MLK to I-40]

- Mello: Wilmington prefers the full interchange at Kings Grant.
- Coffey: First step is keep 4-lane divided to save money.
- Mello: We have nothing allocated to this.
- Loving: Where is it in 2035? [2035 network map, project is listed as RED - over capacity]
- Freimark: Is there anything wrong with saying “Will DOT take action on project if it is not on local plan?”
- Kozlosky: They can but Division 3 has it as a priority.
- Prinz: Did Allen Pope [Div. 3 Engineer] prioritize it in SPOT [safety program]?
- Kozlosky: Yes.
- Stark: We could leave it out and let DOT plan it. If DOT superseded over plan, we would have to amend plan [to include the project after DOT action] and take out other projects in 2035 plan. Is that DOT plan to build it?
- Kozlosky: Their strategy is to do the interim [interim plan to go to 6 lanes built first, then build roadway to interstate standards later].
- Stanton: That does leap-frog us.
- Capps: Why didn’t [DOT] transportation planners plan this?
- Mello: DOT opted for Echelons- I would like to have [it] built in sections.
- Kozlosky: I would recommend the interim solution.
- Stark: If there was a strong desire from Wilmington not to have it, you have that as an option.
- Kozlosky: If we know DOT is interested in it, then I think it’s in our best interest to consider it so we do not have to come back in 2 years and amend the plan [2035 plan].
- Coffey: Looks like a lot of dirt to do this function, [too big a footprint for interchange].
- Mello: [?] I recommend that we try to find the money interim and [have the] appendix shows the project as a future Freeway.
- Capps: Is this widening without the interchange?
- Mello: [He explained interim project proposed by DOT].
- Freimark: And our options remain open.
- Coffey: We have made no provisions for the two subdivisions at Kings Drive to get across College Road.
- Melia: Are they land locked?
- Capps: That’s part of the problem, if we have pedestrians on one side of it, we need a pedestrian bridge to cross it.
- Sellers: It would be a good place for bikes also.
- Mello: If we have the money left over, [the project scope] widen North College Road to 6-lanes, divided with bridge at [Kings Drive], with a sidewalk [on bridge] for pedestrians and bikes.
- Mello: We will have a road classification map to describe road classification [comment to Austin and committee].

[Discussion of Safety and Quality of Life Projects]

- Mello: We took committee suggestion and ranked the projects and evaluated ugliness factor [for proposed project location]. There will be no juggling of them, just a cutoff when funding was exhausted.
- Loving: [Asked for clarification of how to list them in plan]

Mello: We added the top 10 [by category] on page 9 and 10 under plan.
Loving: It was not in the email.
Mello: Not based on comments, the top 10 was added in tables.
Loving: The first draft of the bike section was a little weak.
Mello: [Explained proposed changes to plan, describing which portions will be "on-road", on 3 lane sections of particular roadways]
Loving: On the pedestrian facilities, will we have a break out?
Mello: Only City of Wilmington has an adopted plan, so we did not want to leave out other communities.
Austin: We noted there are pedestrian improvements, [such as] crossings and bike paths, etc.
Cromartie: [?] Will these also indicate how we pay for them [i.e., who pays the roundabouts, etc]?
Austin: We will add a column for it.
Loving: We need to be consistent. Quality project # 3, why is that number 1[on quality project list].
Mello: It had a lot of factors [that lead to its high score].
Loving: It got a lot of play [response] in the survey.
Mello: It has power lines...no landscaping.
Melia: Big ugly factor.
Mello: Yeah.
Mello: [Project at Pine Grove Dr and College Rd] It was our top 2 priority project [in this category].
Prinz: We could possibly retime signal [and make other improvements].
Stanton: [?] Pull W-26 it is combined with [our] project.
Loving: When projects are roundabouts [what is the main] benefit?
Prinz: [?] The biggest safety benefit is no conflict points.
Freimark: Use a case study.
Ryan: W-16 Salisbury St [project] jurisdiction is wrong, [Brunswick, not New Hanover County].
Stuart: W-06 should be Navassa.
Mello: W-26 will be deleted, so move the money available [to other projects] under safety improvements.
Freimark: [My constituents ask] What will this list mean to me and When will I see it [project completion]?
Loving: We say it will be funded at this period of time.
Freimark: Our audience wants it tomorrow. What is in front of my nose and when will I see it.
Capps: When we have \$1.16 million for congestion mitigation, will you designate when they will be funded?
Austin: After TIP, you have 2 (two) ten year periods.
Freimark: Each project will be designated?
Mello: Yes, in the period it will be funded.

[Austin Further explained Funding Available versus Gap Funding]

Mello: T-03 may not require a new bus. [Change project capital costs]
Melia: T-02 [is that] draw bridge local?
Kozlosky: So transit projects include some sort of new revenue source? So toll authorities will have some sort of alternate revenue source.

Prinz: Gap will be created by 5307 funding [decreasing] with the next census. We assume exceeding 200,000 people [for the WMPO area for transit funding].

Kozlosky: Question to FHWA.

Stark: [She described a potential change in the law on funding threshold population]. If the threshold increasesin TMA from 200,000 to 500,000 in certain MPO areas, it could affect funding.

Capps: We have vehicle registration [funds] in city; it goes to the general fund.

Mello: All registrations go to the general fund; we could choose to use it on transportation.

Capps: The city must designate it if we chose to use if for transportation.

Mello: Funding in other municipalities should be local funds.

Loving: How do we designate how State ports affect plan?

Austin: The Freight element covers it.

Loving: We talked about all participating at TAC.

Kozlosky: [He gave comments on the TAC meeting and an overview on how a Facilitator would be used to help with meeting flow and organization] What does this group feel are the goals of the meeting?

Loving: We have this list of projects, I want to send entire list. Primary goals of the meeting will be to present draft plan to TAC and send entire list of projects

[Consensus was gained on sending the entire list to TAC]

Loving: My purpose was to prepare them with updates to TAC. Do they understand our purpose? Yes. Sadly some of our most [vocal] supportive members have been replaced by new members.

Kozlosky: It's important to give the entire list by mode. Can we give a matrix as separate cover? Can you give short [matrix] write-up of how we derived [the plan]? I would envision consensus projects [between] CAC and TAC.

Unknown: Goal is to educate the TAC.

Freimark: Is it important to have CAC attend to have a sense of ownership there and also to be supportive.

Loving: Supportive yes; did you say ownership? Important to have them recognize it, as guidance, effective guidance.

Mello: This is only the beginning.

Melia: Our goal is to have the TAC understand the methodology.

Stanton: Isn't this a concession that we see it as not being [the plan] off base or wrong?

Loving: I was talking with Dorsey [at break] and [question came up] What page is for Navassa? [Citizens will ask this question for their municipality] I hope the facilitator covers this.

Coffey: To call into question one project [in suspicion] calls into question the entire methodology [of plan].

Stuart: [?] Will TAC approve this plan?

Kozlosky: Yes.

Dorsey: If they give approval, will they change plan?

Kozlosky: They could.

Stuart: If we explain methodology they will support it.

Freimark: They can also attend [one of] our meetings [CAC].

Stanton: What will be presentation plan?

Loving: Presentation first then tables; hit high spots.
Kozlosky: Will the presentation be in PowerPoint?
Mello: Yes, [the] PowerPoint will cover the high points.
Loving: Go with each project [and] each table with the TAC.
Melia: Can we expect press at this meeting? Did you give updates to the press?
Loving: Yes. I did [give updates to press] I talked to Bob Gruber [editor].
Capps: Since I am doing [update] for WAVE Transit the day after [joint TAC/ CAC meeting] What will I discuss?
Mello: [I will give you] presentation, PowerPoint and talking points.
Stanton: Will we have an April meeting?
Mello: No meeting, we will see each other at the open houses.
Kozlosky: We want TAC support. Do you think this is a good idea? [regarding the facilitator]
Capps: How will this work? [process with facilitator]
Kozlosky: [Explained process for using facilitator and benefits for having them at meeting].
Loving: Situations change, [politicians, needs, etc].
Melia: This is a living document in three years we will update [plan] it may change, if the methodology is [sound] it will cover the changes.