

**Minutes of the Wilmington Urban Area
Transportation Advisory Committee
Date: March 27, 2003**

Members Present:

Harper Peterson, Chairman, Mayor, City of Wilmington
Lanny Wilson, Board of Transportation Member
Betty Medlin, Mayor, Kure Beach
Jane Gilbert, Council Member, Leland
Bill Sue, Brunswick County Commissioner
Dick Scott, Wilmington Transit Authority

Staff Present:

Mark Tinkler, Senior Transportation Planner, City of Wilmington
Lawless Bean, TDM Coordinator

Citizen Advisory Committee Members Present

Harold King, representing the Town of Wrightsville Beach
Sherman Davis, representing the Town of Navassa
Bob Sillars, representing the City of Wilmington

1. Call to Order:

Chairman Harper Peterson called the meeting to order at 5:00pm. Mayor Peterson welcomed the members of the CAC and said they will give a short presentation later in the meeting and he will make introductions then.

2. Approval Of Minutes:

No corrections were noted for the minutes from the February 27th meeting. Mr. Sue made the motion to approve the minutes and Mayor Peterson seconded it. The motion carried unanimously.

3. Old Business:

Mr. Tinkler updated the members on the progress regarding the addition of a representative of the CSX Railroad as non-voting member. Mr. Tinkler reported after researching the question, he found no legal reason why they could not be included if it is the pleasure of the members of the TAC.

8. Support for Congressional Earmarking for Port of Wilmington Internal Access Road and Front Street access improvements – “Harbor Freight Movement Project to Reduce Congestion – National Corridor Planning and Development Program”: (moved up)

Mayor Peterson said Mayor Medlin requested that item 8 be moved up on the agenda because she had a meeting conflict and would need to leave early.

Mr. Tinkler provided members with a revised resolution regarding the Ports request for Congressional Earmarking. Mr. Tinkler said the Port of Wilmington is requesting endorsement from the TAC in support of their seeking Congressional Earmarking for funding for Port improvements. Mr. Tinkler said Mr. Chris Mowrey with the Ports is here tonight if anyone had any questions regarding this resolution.

Mr. Mowrey said the Port Authority is encouraged in working with the DOT representative both in Raleigh and Washington. They have been very supportive of this project. He asked if anyone had questions. There were no questions.

Mayor Peterson moved the resolution and asked for a second and any further discussion. Mr. Sue seconded. There was no discussion. The motion was carried unanimously.

4. Public Comment:

Mayor Peterson asked if anyone in the audience wished to speak during the Public Comment period. There was no one in attendance that wished to make any comments.

5. Report from the Citizens Advisory Committee Chairman:

Mayor Peterson recognized Mr. Harold King with the Citizen Advisory Committee.

Mr. King introduced fellow members, Mr. Sherman Davis, and Mr. Bob Sillars. Mr. King presented a report from their March 20th meeting. The committee appointed interim officers. Co-chairs are Mr. Harold King and Ms. Kristi Tomey, with Ms. Sarah Brooks acting as Secretary. Members discussed concerns and observations relating to transportation at their meeting. They decided to meet monthly for the first few months in order to work on organization, mission statement, goals and the format for input to the TAC. Meetings will be held the third Monday of each month with the next meeting April 21st at 4pm.

Mayor Peterson encouraged everyone to attend the next meeting if possible. He also expressed his thanks to Mr. King for the report.

6. 2002-2008 Transportation Improvement Program TIP Amendment to include recent awarded Enhancement Projects

Mr. Tinkler said he was recently notified by Statewide Planning that not only would these need to be included in the draft 2004-2010 TIP, which they are, but since some funds maybe obligated for these projects before the beginning of the next Federal fiscal year, which is October 1st, we needed to amend the current TIP to include them as well so that as these projects move forward in a timely fashion, they will be able to get their funds before October 1st. It is a formality to include in this TIP as well as the one we are approving shortly.

Ms. Gilbert made the motion to approve the resolution. Ms. Medlin seconded the motion, there was no discussion. The resolution carried unanimously.

7. 2004 – 2010 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

a. Support for Tip Funding and congressional earmarking for Regional Transit Maintenance/Administration/Transfer Facility

Mr. Tinkler said item a. is not directly/specifically affecting the TIP. This is another item that got lost in the discussions at the last meeting. Mr. Tinkler said he modified the resolution from last time; it is now just calling for support for congressional earmarking for the two major transit projects. The resolution is not specifically requesting that it be added or funded in the TIP but ultimately that would be desirable. The resolutions of support are being sent to congress to say the area will support receiving the earmark funds. These are transit funds; not funds that can used for highway projects. They are dedicated transit funds; this is just saying that if we can get the congressional earmark

that we support that. If they see there is MPO endorsement, it is always helpful. This resolution is general generic support for congressional earmarking.

Mr. Wilson made the motion to approve the resolution. Ms. Gilbert seconded the motion. With no further discussion the vote carried unanimously.

b. Adoption of Transit Element (Adopt remainder of TIP at April 24th TAC Meeting)

Mr. Tinkler said he is proposing that we pull this section off from the overall TIP so that we may follow-up with the non-transit elements that were brought up at the last meeting. However, this transit element needs to be approved tonight so that the Public Transportation Division of NCDOT can send this off to FTA with the state-wide package. Mr. Tinkler highlighted the fact that although the Trolleys and the Regional Transit Maintenance/Administration/Transfer Facility are on the unfunded table because the funds are not locked in yet. Regarding the Trolleys, we approved a resolution for that funding, but it is not official yet. One is the issue of the federal fiscal year, we have not got the earmarks yet so we cannot show them on the funded list but according to Public Transportation, they don't see any reason why it is not, it is just a matter of it's not official yet so official action to adopt it can't take place as a funded project.

Mayor Peterson made the motion to adopt the Transit Element of the TIP. Mr. Wilson seconded the motion. Mr. Sue said he had not yet had an opportunity to review the Transit Element tables distributed by Mr. Tinkler. Mayor Peterson gave members an opportunity to review the information provided before the vote. Mayor Peterson asked if there was any further discussion regarding the motion on the floor. With there being no further discussion, the vote passed unanimously.

Mr. Tinkler suggested to Mayor Peterson that perhaps we should carry forward the discussion from the last meeting regarding the TIP. Mr. Tinkler said he wanted to point out that the TIP update process is a two year process, with August and September being the time frame for addition of new projects. He proposes that we withdraw the Transit Signal Replacement item until that time and have discussions on the current balance of the TIP.

Mr. Wilson said there are going to be some additional changes between now and when we see it come out in June. The good news is an addition for June will be the College and Oleander Intersection Alternatives Study which will allow us to move forward with looking at the intersection from a long and short-term prospective. The current estimate for the cost of the interchange is \$170 million. Taking into consideration the amount budgeted to spend in all six counties is \$430 to \$440 million over the next seven years, to spend that much money on any one project is not going to set very well with all the other needs we have as a region. What NCDOT plans to do is to work very closely with the City to try to look at the different ideas to alleviate the situation such as traffic signals and additional turn lanes. It will be a long process but the funding is there to hire outside consultants to come in and see what can possibly be done. Mr. Wilson said he was excited about this addition to the Transportation Improvement Program. Mayor Peterson asked if this could be expanded to include any other intersections that are failing. Mr. Wilson told members State Traffic Engineer, Troy Peoples, said the solution to Oleander Drive will have an effect on intersections in the surrounding areas and so it will need to be a consideration in the study.

Mr. Tinkler asked Mr. Wilson if he knew when the TIP must be approved. Mr. Wilson said we could go ahead and approve what is here. The only thing he saw that was pressing is if there is a chance to obtain funding for Wilmington Transit Authority from the new program "Moving Ahead". Mr. Wilson said he and Mayor Peterson have had conversations about meeting to see

how pressing it is because of the number of pressing needs in Division 3 that are public transportation related. Mr. Wilson advised this is something that we need to move forward on because a lot of those decisions are being made right now. Mayor Peterson asked specifically if the Transit Maintenance/Administration/Transfer Facility was that important. Mr. Wilson explained what he was trying to say is that this "Moving Ahead" program is being viewed as an opportunity to stimulate the economy. We want to have projects out there ready to use within the next two years. If we can invest \$700 million, based on the formulas out there, it will mean a \$4 billion impact to the economy of the state. The \$700 million will also equate to about 30 thousand new jobs so it is important to stimulate the economy by having projects that are ready to go. Mr. Wilson said he feels that the Transit Maintenance/Administration/Transfer Facility is a good project, if we could somehow get some money to begin acquiring the property, we ought to do it. He further explained that it is an opportunity that we should not miss. Mr. Eby said DOT has placed the transit facilities project at the top of the state-wide list. Mr. Wilson said he is meeting with the Deputy Secretary in charge of the project next Tuesday and was request by him to bring the information pertaining to the project. He is putting together the list right now for public transportation.

Mr. Tinkler said he just wanted to make sure we are taking action in the time frame in which DOT needs this approved. Because of the discussions at the last meetings, he wanted to make sure that concerns had been covered. Mayor Peterson said with the meeting he and Mr. Sue had in Raleigh shortly after the last TAC meeting, most of the concerns expressed during the last meeting of the TAC had been addressed. Mr. Wilson told Mr. Sue he was going to work with him on getting the Village Road project done.

Mr. Tinkler asked if it is then the pleasure of the TAC to leave the remainder of the TIP until the next meeting to see what transpires and address it again at the meeting on April 24th. General consensus was yes.

9. Presentation on Household Travel Survey:

Mr. Tinkler presented a slide program covering the objective, purpose and need for the surveys. He spoke about the upcoming Household Travel Survey, the External Cordon Travel Survey, and the Visitor Survey. He explained the process and covered some of the information expected to be obtained through the three segments of the study. He covered details from the Household Travel Survey and how participants will report their travel information. The surveys will collect valuable data needed for forecasting tools, as well as provide information on area travel patterns. We should have the results from the survey by July 18th.

10. External Cordon Travel Survey:

Mr. Tinkler explained that he and the review committee are in the process of examining the five sets of proposals received.

Mr. Tinkler gave a brief history of the funding process for the surveys. During the 2001-2002 PWP process, a budget of \$150,000 was set. He was not sure how the figures were generated and at the time, it was intended to cover 4 travel surveys. As it turned out, the estimate was just a fraction of funding needed to conduct these surveys. Last year they narrowed down to only conducting the Household Travel Survey and the External Cordon Travel Survey. They put out the RFP for the two projects last August. They received four proposals. There were none submitted that satisfactorily met the desired qualifications to conduct both surveys. However, they were very impressed with the proposal from NuStats for the Household Travel Survey, so the decision was made to separate the two out and hire NuStats for the Household Travel Survey only. The cost for this portion of the surveys was \$122,000. So for the External,

they decided to re-issue an RFP just for that component, get some more proposals, advertise more broadly, and go from there. Those were submitted March 6th. Five proposals were received.

There are two different ways to compile the needed information, the first is to direct travelers to a roadside survey area and ask three or four basic questions; the other technique is video license plate matching. This technique involves putting a camera up and capturing video tape over 12 hours. They process and match up with people leaving the other end of the county. Mr. Tinkler and the committee felt the proposal using a combination of both information capturing techniques presented by NuStats' team to be the best strategy to conduct the External Travel Survey. They will do a road side intercept for the interview with all sites but I-40. For I-40, video capture will be used to capture the license plates and co-ordinate information from DMV and send out mail-back surveys. The negotiated fee estimate is \$160,000.

Mayor Peterson asked where this money is going to come from. Our estimates in December were a figure of \$10,000 per site, and an understanding of total project cost at \$80,000. Mr. Tinkler explained that in December when this was discussed, we had general approval in theory to set aside additional funds in the amount of \$50,000. With the negotiated fee estimate for this project at \$160,000, NCDOT Statewide Planning agreed to contribute an additional \$30,000 in Statewide Planning and Research funds that would not be subject to local match. There was \$27,000 left in the original budget for this project. The funding needed to close the shortfall and be able to fund this \$160,000 contract would be \$103,000 in additional 2002-2003 Planning Work Program funds (\$53,000 more than verbally approved in December). The local match would be 20%, or \$20,600, divided proportionately among the members by population.

Mr. Wilson asked about the other proposals submitted for approval. Mr. Tinkler reviewed the process used in evaluating the other proposals received by the committee. Mr. Sue told members he would like to see a composite of proposed funding sources for the project before he is comfortable with voting on this item. Mr. Wilson said he too feels uncomfortable about taking action on this without seeing the dollar contributions each municipality are going to be responsible for. Mr. Tinkler informed members because of time constraints with the Household Survey scheduled to begin in the next few weeks; we needed to get the contract out for this portion of the study in order to have a complete picture for the model development.

Mayor Peterson suggested perhaps a special meeting for this item would be the best solution. Mr. Tinkler said this would give him the opportunity to put figures on paper for members for their review. With that, Ms. Gilbert made the motion to have a special meeting to consider the funding for the External Cordon Travel Survey. The motion was seconded by Mayor Peterson. The vote to approve the motion was unanimous. The special meeting date was set for Tuesday, April 8th at 5pm in the First Floor Conference Room in City Hall.

11. Middle Sound Loop bicycle lanes – Presentation and Resolution:

Mr. Wilson informed Chairman Peterson that he will have to abstain from any voting on resolution regarding Middle Sound Loop Road because he owns property there. With this abstention, Mayor Peterson informed members we no longer had a quorum so any action on this resolution would have to be postponed.

Mr. Richard Harris gave a brief presentation regarding the proposed bicycle lane. Vote for the resolution to endorse the construction of the bicycle lanes was continued until the April 24th meeting.

12. Spring Transportation Summit / Kickoff for Long Range Transportation Plan delayed 6-8 weeks – need to set new date:

Mayor Peterson explained to members that NCDOT requested we postponed the Transportation Summit due to conflicts with an event at the Ports on infrastructure and economic development. Mr. Tinkler suggested we go ahead and set the new date for the summit because of efforts underway to promote the event. Mr. Tinkler suggested Wednesday, July 23rd. Mayor Peterson moved that we change the date to July 23rd and Mr. Wilson seconded the motion. There was no discussion and the vote passed unanimously.

13. Project Updates:

Mr. Tinkler told members he had nothing new to add for project updates. Previous discussions had already covered these items.

14. New Business:

Mr. Tinkler mentioned the handout for "NC Moving Ahead". He passed around hard copies to members for their review. Mr. Wilson made the motion that we pass a resolution supporting the program. We do not have a lot of projects in the area that will use trust funds. When the program was created, the funds were designated for certain roads. This will actually be taking money from other parts of the State and bringing it to the southeastern North Carolina. Mr. Wilson reassured members this program will not result in any delays in projects on the TIP. Mayor Peterson seconded the motion to endorse the program. With no further discussion, the vote carried unanimously.

Mr. Tinkler, referring to the handout regarding Bicycle Pedestrian Issues, asked that members review the information prior to the next meeting. The TAC could then decide if they would like to pass a resolution to support this program. The NC Association of MPO's passed a resolution as a follow-up to the resolution passed 2 years ago by the Board of Transportation saying that Bicycle Pedestrian modes of transportation are an integral part of the transportation system and should be part of all projects.

Mr. Tinkler said he had one more brief item that had been brought to his attention by one of the TAC members. He wanted to bring meeting attendance to the attention of members and ask for suggestions on how to address attendance problems. Mr. Sue suggested we send a letter to each of the governing bodies that appoint to this board and ask that they appoint an alternate with full voting privileges. The general consensus of members present was that an alternate member be selected if the current appointee is not able to attend and members should notify Mr. Tinkler if they will be unable to attend. Mayor Peterson asked Mr. Tinkler if he would send a notice to the TAC Membership. Ms. Gilbert asked if we have anything in the bylaws regarding voting privileges for alternates. Mr. Sue suggested if necessary we amend the bylaws to allow alternates to have voting privileges. Mayor Peterson said we could consider that action at the next meeting after we receive input from everyone.

Mr. Howard Loving asked if he could mention an item. He wanted to let the record show that the Chamber of Commerce submitted letters of support for Congressional Earmarking projects as requested by Mr. Tinkler. Letters were sent to Congressman McIntyre, and both Senators. Mayor Peterson thanked him for his support. Ms. Gilbert said she will be glad to request the Chamber from Leland also send letters of endorsement. Mr. Loving said he will be glad to forward copies of the letters sent from Wilmington's Chamber to Ms. Gilbert.

Mr. Sherman Davis was recognized by Mayor Peterson. He asked if Mayor Willis should open a dialogue with CSX regarding appointment as non-voting membership to this committee. Mayor Peterson asked Mr. Tinkler to add this item to the letter he was going to be sending to all members of the TAC regarding meeting attendance so that it could be addressed at the special meeting.

15. Adjournment:

There being no further business, Mr. Sue moved to adjourn and Mayor Peterson seconded the motion, with that, the meeting adjourned at 6:38

Respectfully submitted

Mark Tinkler
TAC Secretary

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