

Draft Minutes
Wilmington Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization
Transportation Advisory Committee
Date: January 26, 2005

Members Present:

Lanny Wilson, Board of Transportation, Chair
Catherine Brunjes, Town of Wrightsville Beach
Lynette Carlisle, Town of Leland
Gary Doetsch, Town of Carolina Beach
Elly Lister, Council Member, Town of Belville
Laura Padgett, Council Member, City of Wilmington
Bill Kopp, Commissioner, New Hanover County
Jim Quinn, Council Member, City of Wilmington
Eulis Willis, Mayor, Town of Navassa

Staff Present:

Jonathan David, Associate Transportation Planner
Mike Kozlosky, Associate Transportation Planner
Lawless Bean, TDM Coordinator

1. Call to Order

Mr. Wilson called the meeting to order at 4:05 PM. Mr. Wilson welcomed Commissioner Bill Kopp from New Hanover County and Ms. Kitty Brunjes, representing Wrightsville Beach to today's TAC meeting.

2. Approval of Minutes for the December 15th Meeting

Mr. Doetsch made the motion to approve the December 15th meeting minutes. Ms. Lister seconded the motion, and the vote carried unanimously.

3. Public Comment

Mr. Wilson thanked everyone for attending today's meeting and asked that they take this opportunity to introduce themselves. After the introductions, Mr. Wilson asked if anyone would like to make any comments to the group. There was no one present who wished to speak.

4. Old Business

a. TIP Update Cycle (2006-2012 Draft TIP review, 2007-2013 input)

Mr. Kozlosky told members staff has been notified that the draft TIP will be released in February.

Mr. Wilson said there has been a lot in the news regarding the TIP since the last TAC meeting. There are some adjustments being considered by the Board of Transportation. There will be an increase in the amount of funds coming to Division 3 over the next six years.

Mr. Allen Pope told members the most significant change with the TIP cycle's time period is that there would only be a one year comment period. For the 2007-2013 TIP, it will be approved in June of 2006.

Mr. Wilson said the reason they are doing that is so they can shift the TIP so that it comes out on odd number years rather than even. They are currently soliciting projects through the MPO that may be added to the TIP that will come out in February or March.

b. Adoption of Meeting Schedule

Mr. Wilson asked members if they have any suggested changes that need to be made to the proposed meeting schedule. Mr. Kozlosky told members he had sent out a request regarding the schedule and he received some feed back for possible conflicts.

With this feedback in mind, Mr. Wilson proposed the following meeting date changes:

TAC (Wednesdays, 4:00pm):

1/26/05	6/29
2/24*	8/31
3/30	9/28
4/27** (5PM)	10/26
5/25	12/12*** (Monday)

* Meeting date was changed from 2/23

** Meeting time was changed from 4PM to 5PM

*** Meeting date was changed from 12/14

Members agreed to the changes. Mr. Doetsch moved approval of the 2005 calendar and Ms. Carlyle seconded the motion. With no further discussion the motion carried unanimously. Mr. Wilson asked Mr. Kozlosky to send out the newly adopted calendar to everyone.

5. Project Updates

a. NC133 and US17 Area Collector Street Plan

Mr. Kozlosky told members they held two design charretts in Belville. Additionally, Kimley-Horn, the consultant, and the MPO held stake-holder interviews with surrounding property owners. They were also looking at the physical environment. They anticipate having the draft collector street plan ready by mid-February.

b. College Road/Oleander Drive Study

Mr. Wilson told members that study group saw several alternatives from the consultant.

Ms. Padgett said of the possible solutions presented to the study group, she felt that Parkway Drive was the most reasonable alternative. It would create a triangle between College and Oleander and provide a ramp that could be used as part of an overpass if needed in the future. It will take all left turns away and have minimal disruption to traffic while being changed.

Mr. Pope told members the consultant is anticipating on holding public meetings in March.

Mr. Wilson told members if this project can be done without involving an environmental impact statement or an environmental assessment, the project could occur in a short period of time. Because the project is on the MPO's list of the top 10 priorities, with the additional funds coming down here, we could anticipate it being added to the TIP. We could actually see this happening sooner rather than later if the environmental work is not significant.

c. I-140 Bypass

Mr. Wilson told members there had been a lot of community discussion regarding the I-140 bypass and its impact on the Spring Hill community. There was a recent merger team meeting in Raleigh last week. Mr. Wilson said Mayor Willis and Mr. Doetsch also attended the meeting. He asked Mr. Doetsch if he would like to update everyone on what transpired.

Mr. Doetsch told members he felt the merger team heard and understood the concerns of the Spring Hill community. The one issue that needs to be dealt with is the National Heritage

Wetlands Habitat. The alternative the community and the majority of the merger team liked did dissect that habitat. The DOT and other agencies will work together to see if they can resolve these issues.

Mayor Willis told members he had received an e-mail today from DOT stating DOT was going to endorse that particular route. They are in the process of setting up a meeting to address the issues surrounding the habitat site. Mayor Willis told everyone the community members are very happy with this choice.

d. House Interim Committee on Expanding Rail Service

Ms. Padgett updated members on the meeting that was held January 11th in Raleigh. The committee was basically taking testimony from various organizations and people. Both former governors, Governor Martin and Governor Hunt, spoke strongly in favor of the state proceeding with its plans and hopes for rail service. It was clear that if you look at the states around the southeast, North Carolina is certainly the state where the most is happening with rail. There was also a speaker from Amtrak. They talked about how the Carolinian to New York was the most profitable route. There was some discussion on the route from Raleigh to Charlotte being profitable and has good ridership. There was also a good deal of discussion about the need for access to Wilmington's Port and points north.

Mr. Wilson reminded members of the upcoming Freight Mobility Forum in Charlotte. He asked Mr. Kozlosky if he would e-mail that information about the meeting to members.

Mr. Wilson told members that the Joint Transportation Oversight Committee of the Legislature met on Friday and approved a resolution that was introduced by Rep. McComas concerning the Cape Fear Skyway Bridge. That resolution requires NCDOT, in conjunction with the State Treasurer, to develop a plan where we can optimize the future trust fund monies or loop moneies and use that money to pay down the debts service or the underlying principal of bonds. That information is due back to the chairman in both the House and the Senate on April 15th. There are two projects that are impacted, the Cape Fear Skyway and the Garden Parkway, which are both loop fund eligible projects under the Highway Trust Fund.

6. New Business

a. Resolution Concerning South Carolina I-73 Summit

Mr. Kozlosky told members there will be a transportation summit on February 10th and 11th in Myrtle Beach, SC to discuss the I-73 corridor. Because the upcoming summit does not include discussions on the I-74 and I-20 corridors, we feel it is important to let everyone know that we cannot support an event that does not include discussions on all three projects. This attached resolution was adopted by the Wilmington City Council at their last meeting and staff has asked TCC members to take the resolution to their local boards to gather support. Because of the importance of these corridors, Mr. Kozlosky told members he is requesting the TAC consider this resolution in support of including all three projects in the discussions at the transportation summit.

Mr. Wilson told members that he spoke with Dean Mitchell with Congressman Mike McIntyre's office today by phone. The Congressman had a meeting today with the Congressman from South Carolina to discuss his, as well as the Governor and Secretary Tippet's concerns regarding the upcoming summit.

With no further discussion, Ms. Padgett moved the motion and Mr. Doetsch seconded it. The motion carried unanimously.

b. Multi-modal Transportation Center Site Evaluation

Mr. David told members the consultant (The Louis Burger Group) made their presentation of findings for the Multi-modal Transportation Center last night. Mr. David said the consultants looked at the two previous studies in preparing for this site evaluation report. It was determined that the preferred site would be within the downtown core area. They evaluated six sites and the sites were weighted using 12 different criteria. City staff is reviewing the document and will make its recommendation to the Wilmington City Council.

Mr. Wilson told members that he heard last night that the condemnation proceedings have begun on site three by the Cape Fear Community College. Ms. Padgett said she had heard the same information. Mr. Wilson said he contacted the City Manager to if he was aware of that. He told Mr. Wilson he was not, but would check into it and call him back.

The City Council will vote on site selection on February 15th. They will have the public hearing at that time.

Mr. Wilson suggested that at the next meeting, the TAC should have a resolution of support for the site selection by the City.

c. Long Range Transportation Plan – Opening of 30 day Public Comment Period

Mr. David told everyone the plan is complete and being distributed. There will be 4 public meetings throughout the MPO area for the plan to receive citizen feedback. Mr. David told members if they have any comments regarding the plan to please contact him.

Mr. Kozlosky requested that the TAC open the public comment period for the Long Range Transportation Plan today by means of an official motion by the members. Mr. Wilson called for a motion. Mr. Doetsch moved to open the 30-day Public Comment Period. Ms. Padgett seconded the motion. With no further discussion, the motion carried unanimously.

d. Phase II of the Enhancement Project in Leland

Ms. Carlisle told members they have started phase II of the project and would like it to coincide with the widening of Village Road. They would like to add street trees, street lights and possibly some stamped paving to give 2000 foot corridor a more aesthetically pleasing look along Village Road. They would also like to close some of the open ditches along the corridor. They hope to get this done without delaying the project.

Mr. Wilson told members he has seen the landscape plans and it will certainly be beautiful.

Mr. Allen Pope told Ms. Carlisle that they should get an official request and plans to DOT as soon as possible.

7. Announcements

a. Multi-modal Transportation Center Alternatives Presentation – Jan 25th

Previously discussed.

b. Military cutoff Extension Request for Proposals – January 25th

Mr. Kozlosky told members the City has issued the Request For Qualifications to survey the Military Cutoff Extension from Market Street to the Wilmington Bypass.

Mr. Wilson said DOT is working with the City on the preservation of this corridor. They are concerned because a developer has come within the last week with interest in obtaining driveway permits. This process needs to move along as quickly as possible.

Mr. Wilson said he had another thing he would like to mention. DOT has some concern regarding some of the rather large "big-box" retailers that are looking at locating between Porters Neck Road and Military Sound Loop Road and the impact that it will have on the road. One of the proposed locations involves a retail establishment in excess of 265,000 feet. It will have a tremendous impact with the additional congestion and additional stop-lights having to be added.

Mr. Wilson told members he and DOT are aware that they are receiving calls regarding the removal of the traffic light at Hawthorn and Oleander. The light is no longer warranted and DOT is working on solutions for the area residents. The issue is that the stop-light is creating accidents that can be prevented by removing the stop-light. They will be carrying a couple options to the City for their input and support.

8. Adjournment

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:13.

Respectfully submitted

Mike Kozlosky
Associate Transportation Planner
/pb