

Meeting Minutes

Wilmington Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization Transportation Advisory Committee

Date: September 28, 2005

Members Present:

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

Staff Present:

Mike Kozlosky, Senior Transportation Planner

1. Call to Order

Mr. Wilson called the meeting to order at 4:05 PM.

2. Approval of Minutes for the June 29th Meeting

Mr. Doetsch made the motion to approve the minutes and Ms. Padgett seconded it. The motion carried unanimously.

3. Public Comment Period

Mr. Wilson thanked everyone for attending the meeting and asked if anyone would like to make any comments to the group.

Mr. Conrad Lowman told members he represents residents who live on Stephens Church Road. He has a petition from the residents along with photos showing examples of the problems they are encountering. The residents are requesting safe access to US 17. Mr. Lowman said the present "superstreet" design does not allow safe access for vehicles onto and off of Stephens Church Road. They are concerned because a business will be locating to Stephens Church Road. Mr. Wilson told Mr. Lowman's that DOT is aware that there is a problem with making turns onto Stephens Church Road. It is a design issue and it will need to be dealt with. Mr. Wilson said Shell Brick Company, in anticipating locating there, is aware that they will be required to pay for some of the improvements necessary to accommodate traffic along Stephens Church Road. It is a process that is being worked out and there will be future meetings to address citizen concerns and thanked Mr. Lowman for his input.

The next speaker, Mr. Ricky Meeks, told members here would like to discuss traffic along Military Cutoff Road. He has a concern regarding the pedestrian traffic along the road. He told members when crossing the road in the area of The Forum and the Northeast Library, traffic is getting ridiculous and a sidewalk is badly needed. Ms. Padgett told him sidewalks are a part of the widening efforts and they will be coming.

4. Old Business

Mr. Kozlosky told members there were no items of old business.

5. Project Updates

a. Expansion of the MPO Planning Area Boundary

Mr. Kozlosky told members at the August 1st Pender County Board of Commissioners meeting, the board voted for approval of the MPO boundary expansion to encompass the area of Hampstead. The Commissioners also requested that the MPO consider extending boundary to take in the Rocky Point area. Mr. Kozlosky told members he would like to get direction from this committee. Ms. Padgett asked him to get current census numbers and growth projections for the current MPO boundary, the Brunswick County addition and the Hampstead additions for comparison at the next meeting.

b. Leland Area Collector Street Plan

Mr. Kozlosky told members the second public meeting was held last night. It was a very successful meeting with about 25 people in attendance. The plan will provide the needed insight into what can be done to provide connectivity for the Town of Leland, the Town of Navassa and portions of the NC 133 area. Mr. Sue told members he is concerned because NC 133 is a major collector street. Mr. Wilson suggested that the TAC request funding for a feasibility study to upgrade the NC 133. Mr. Kozlosky told members the collector street plan should be ready to present to the committee by the end of the year.

c. Superstreet Design for US 17 North (R-2405)

Mr. Kozlosky told members there was a public meeting at Westland Church. The Department of Transportation is currently considering the comments and they will respond in writing regarding the comments from the meeting.

Mr. Kopp said he would like to ask about the traffic signal upgrade and the connection to the superstreet design. Don't we need to lay the fiber optics to get the control system up Market Street all the way? Mr. Wilson said if it is done now as part of the loop project, it is not charged against us for equity formula purposes and we get this money up on top, that is why it would be foolish not to go ahead and signalize those u-turns because later on the staff at the division will have to come back and figure a way to fund it and it is just too expensive. Mr. Wilson asked Mr. Kozlosky to write a letter to the DOT suggesting the signals be upgraded.

d. Turnpike Authority and Cape Fear Skyway

Mr. Wilson told members they will be meeting with the new executive director of the Turnpike Authority, Mr. David Joyner tomorrow. He will be discussing some issues that the City has with Independence Boulevard. Mr. Wilson said since the last meeting, the Turnpike Authority set a date for the four projects selected to go under construction. It is a real aggressive schedule and they feel confident that if everyone works together, the schedule could be met. The key will be the public accepting the design for the bridge. He told members it will require a lot of public input and the MPO should lead the efforts for community input. Mr. Kopp said he has a copy of a resolution to be presented to the New Hanover Commissioners at the next meeting to pledge support and assistance to the North Carolina Turnpike Authority for the project. Mr. Wilson said it is important for the City of Wilmington, as well as the Town of Leland to support the project because it will forever define the skyline.

Mr. Kozlosky told members he has a resolution for consideration by the TAC to pledge full support and assistance to the North Carolina Turnpike Authority for the Cape Fear Skyway Project. Mr.

Sue made the motion to approve the resolution and Ms. Padgett seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Mr. Cameron Moore, Planning Director for the Town of Leland asked Mr. Kozlosky when information will be made available to the general public. His staff is consistently receiving requests for information from citizens about the project. Mr. Kozlosky said they have the preliminary functional design study for the corridor alignment that was done last year by RK&K. It could be used to help answer any questions.

e. NCDOT Project Update

Mr. Wilson told member the Martin Luther King Parkway opening ceremony is tentative scheduled for October 11th at 11:00 at the Chamber of Commerce.

6. New Business

a. 2006-2012 Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP)

Mr. Kozlosky told members in accordance to the MPO's Public Policy, they placed advertisements in areas newspapers to request public comments regarding the MTIP and they received no comments on the document. After adoption the MTIP will be forwarded to the FHWA to meet the Oct. 1st deadline. Mr. Sue made the motion to adopt the 2006-2012 Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program. Ms. Padgett seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

b. 2007-2013 TIP Project Prioritization

Mr. Kozlosky distributed copies of the recommended Top 10 transportation project prioritization list and the Top 5 recommended bicycle projects. The lists were forwarded from the TCC and the Bicycle Advisory Committee (BAC). The recommended bicycle projects were adopted by the Bicycle Advisory Committee.

Following discussions on the projects and their prioritization, the committee agreed on the following order for the highway projects:

- Priority # 1: US 17 Wilmington Bypass (from US 421 to US 17)
- Priority # 2: Independence Boulevard Extension
- Priority # 3: Village Road Widening (2nd Portion)
- Priority # 4: Cape Fear Skyway
- Priority # 5: Military Cutoff Extension
- Priority # 6: Gordon Road Widening
- Priority # 7: Dow Road Widening
- Priority # 8: Kerr Avenue Widening
- Priority # 9: Traffic Signal Control System Upgrade
- Priority # 10: US 133 to US 17/74/NC 133 Interchange

Mr. Sue made the motion to approve the 2007-2013 TIP Top Ten Prioritization List and Mr. Doetsch seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

c. NC Turnpike Authority Membership

Mr. Wilson told members the NC Turnpike Authority is requesting that they become a non-voting member of the TAC. They are making the request because they feel until the Skyway project is completed, it is important to be a part of the MPO every step of the way. Ms. Padgett made to motion to include the NC Turnpike Authority as a non-voting member of the MPO. Ms. Carlyle seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

d. October Meeting Date Change

Mr. Kozlosky asked members if the next meeting could be rescheduled to November 16th. The date was agreed on by all members present.

7. Announcements

- a. NCDOT is holding a NC Thinking Ahead Forum on October 4th in Kenansville.
- b. Carolina Bays Parkway extension meeting on Oct 11th at the Jessie Mae Elementary School in Brunswick County.

Mr. Wilson told members with the increase in license fees, each division will be allocated additional funds (\$2 million) for economic development projects. If members have any good economic development projects, the Divisions will be working with the towns to utilize those funds.

8. Adjournment

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:53.

Respectfully submitted

Mike Kozlosky
Senior Transportation Planner
/pb