

Meeting Minutes
Wilmington Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization
Transportation Advisory Committee
Date: May 30, 2007

Members Present:

Lanny Wilson, Chairman, NC Board of Transportation
Mike Ballard, Town of Navassa
Catherine Brunjes, Town of Wrightsville Beach
Alan Gilbert, Town of Carolina Beach
Laura Padgett, City of Wilmington
Nancy Pritchett, Cape Fear Public Transit Authority
Bill Saffo, City of Wilmington
Bill Sue, Brunswick County
Chuck Thurlow, Town of Belville

Staff Present:

Mike Kozlosky, Senior Planner
Joshuah Mello, Associate Planner
Anthony Prinz, Associate Planner
Lawless Bean, TDM Coordinator
Jim Flechtner, Traffic Engineering

Others Present

Lethia Hankins, Wilmington City Council
Allen Pope, NCDOT
Pate Butler, NCDOT
Travis Marshall, NCDOT
Shane York, NCDOT
Eulis Willis, Town of Navassa

1. Call to Order

Mr. Wilson called the meeting to order at 4:02 PM.

2. Approval of Minutes

Mr. Ballard made the motion to approve the minutes from the April 25th meetings and Mr. Gilbert seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

3. Public Comment Period

Mr. Wilson said because most of the public present are here regarding the 6th Avenue/Wooster Street intersection, he suggested moving the item forward on the agenda.

Mr. Wilson recognized Ms. Lethia Hankins, Wilmington City Council member for her comments.

Ms. Hankins told members when she first learned about the situation at 6th and Wooster, she discussed it with Dr. Sheridan. Several citizens have contacted her regarding the barricade installed by NCDOT. She told members she is concerned because this was done without the knowledge or the sanction of the people mostly involved. She asked the members of the TAC how and why did this come about? The citizens living in the area are entitled to an explanation and some kind of warning of what is going to be done. She told members she can understand the concern for safety, but she has a deep concern on the way this has been handled.

Mr. Wilson asked Mr. Allen Pope, Division Engineer, along with Ms. Pate Butler, who is the Regional Traffic Engineer with NCDOT to explain the process used for the installation of the safety improvements to the 6th/Wooster Street intersection.

Mr. Pope stated that this project encompasses two intersections. It includes 6th Street as well as 8th Street safety improvements. Both were identified in the Department of Transportation database for having extremely high accident rates. Every year DOT gets funding designated to help take care of accident-prone intersections. This funding is used throughout the division to handle this type of situation. There are many examples of safety improvements that have been made in the area. This fund and these types of safety improvements have not been given any type of public notice in the past. The department has now recognized that this is not the best process and from this point, anytime his division has a safety improvement or any change to an access, they will hold workshops. That workshop will identify the improvements NCDOT wants to make and take public comment regarding what needs to be done into consideration. Mr. Pope asked Ms. Butler to explain why the improvements were necessary and what measures are taken to correct those types of accident problems.

Ms. Butler told members that part of her job is to investigate Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) locations. DOT developed this program to identify and track crashes on a state-wide basis. Once the program identifies places that have patterns of repeat crashes, it is investigated for possible improvement. 6th Street and 8th Street both showed up on the most recent HSIP list for needed improvements. These intersections were identified with high numbers of angle-type collisions, which is the worst and usually most severe type of collision. A total of 41 crashes were reported at the intersection of 8th Street and Wooster and 6th Street and Wooster Street had 45 crashes within the 5-year study period. That is considered a severe pattern. Most of these crashes were angle type crashes that could be corrected with the addition of safety improvements. The Dura-curb that has been installed at the 6th street intersection is a temporary solution and will eventually be replaced with a concrete island. Restricting these thru-movements will eliminate these crashes. DOT realized the installation of the Dura-curb would impact 6th Street so they used the thru-movements that were restricted on 6th Street and transferred them to 8th Street as justification to install the new signal at the 8th Street and Wooster Street intersection. This will provide safer access across Wooster Street.

One of the citizens present told members she lives on 7th Street and there have been a marked difference in the speed of traffic, as well as the amount of traffic using 7th Street in the past couple weeks.

Mr. Wilson asked if the Dawson/Wooster Corridor and the connecting city streets could be considered for a doing an area study similar to the one done for River Road. Mr. Pope said DOT will be glad to look at both Wooster and Dawson Streets as a corridor from 3rd Street up to 16th and 17th Streets.

Another citizen told the group that this barricade affects more people than just the residents of 6th Street. She is here to present the Department of Transportation with a petition with close to 600 signatures of people that travel through the city and they are appalled at a barricade being placed at 6th Street. This decision to do this was made without informing residents and if there are any alternatives to barricade.

Ms. Butler assured everyone that her staff did look at other alternatives and the Dura-curb was found to be the best solution to address the situation.

Mr. Wilson said he would like suggest a motion that the Department of Transportation partner with the MPO to come up with an area plan that looks at all of Dawson and Wooster Streets. As part of that, they will go to the public to ask for input in coming up with an area plan that looks at all the intersections and can identify other safety improvements needed. The study will allow the community to have input and the concerns could be address. We would also know what the impact the decisions to put the median at 6th Street and Wooster is having on the immediate surrounding streets. Ms. Padgett seconded the motion.

Ms. Hankins asked how long it will take to begin the work on the area corridor study to address those intersections adjoining Wooster Street. Mr. Wilson said the MPO staff will have to meet to scope the small area plan and will come back to the next meeting with a schedule.

Another member of the audience told members that businesses on 6th Street are being adversely affected by restricting access and the barrier needs to be removed.

Ms. Padgett stated that we all have agreed that there was a wrong done in putting the barricade out without notification. The Department of Transportation has done their job to try to create the safety improvement. They should have realized it was going to impact people on 6th Street more than they did, but if we try to make a decision here today whether those improvements should be left up or not, all we are doing is potentially having two wrongs to try to make it right. If we can hold this item briefly and allow some planning to be done, then we can get the community input and look at what all is out there. We can present something that makes sense and avoid a possible serious accident at that location.

Mr. Pope asked if a steering committee of 3 or 4 people representing the community could be selected for preliminary meetings to develop the scope and outcome of the plan. Once the plan is developed, then open the meetings to the general public for input.

Mr. Wilson assured the group that their concerns will be addressed. Staff and DOT will first need to determine if the plan will be done in-house or be handled by a consultant. There are issues that must be coordinated before we can give a firm date today.

Mr. Wilson restated his motion asking the Department of Transportation to partner with the MPO to do an area plan for the area between 3rd Street and 10th Street along Dawson and Wooster Streets and include community input. Ms. Padgett seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

4. Old Business

a. Consideration of US 17 Business Corridor Study

Mr. Kozlosky reminded members of the presentation on the US-17 Business Corridor Study at the meeting last month. He requested that this Board to accept that Corridor Study. Ms. Padgett made the motion to accept the corridor study and Ms. Brunjes seconded the motion. The vote carried unanimously.

5. New Business

a. Coastal Pender Collector Corridor Study

Mr. Mello told members the Coastal Pender Collector Corridor Study was started in May of 2006. The plan was done to provide a collector street network in order to have the infrastructure in place to handle the traffic from future development. The area of Pender County has been experiencing extreme amount of growth. Safety issues are also an issue with high numbers of crashes along US 17. The draft plan was crafted and a public meeting was held at Topsail High School in February of 2007. The plan was adopted by Pender County Board of Commissioners on May 21st.

Ms. Padgett made the motion to adopt the Coastal Pender Collector Street Plan. Ms. Brunjes seconded the motion and the vote carried unanimously.

b. 2007-13 Metropolitan and Statewide Transportation Improvement Program

Mr. Kozlosky told members as part of the process for the adoption of the MTIP and the STIP, there is a required 30-day public comment period as well as the MPO has to endorse the MTIP and STIP before it can actually be approved. No public comment was received during that 30-day period. The MTIP does include the Randall Parkway widening project as well as the reduction in funding from the Market Street access management project.

Mr. Sue made the motion to adopt the Wilmington Urban Area Metropolitan and Statewide Transportation Improvements Program for FY 2007-2013. Ms. Padgett seconded the motion and the vote carried unanimously.

c. MPO Transportation Model

Mr. Kozlosky told members the transportation model is complete. The model will not only aid in the Cape Fear Skyway Project traffic and revenue forecast, but also enable staff to do traffic projections for all projects within the MPO. The information will also be helpful with the update of the Long Range Transportation Plan and the Comprehensive Transportation Plan.

Mr. Marshall gave a brief overview on the data collected and answered questions from the Board.

Mr. Kozlosky told member the Department of Transportation is requesting endorsement of the model as it is displayed today so they can proceed with the traffic forecasting for the projects in this urban area.

Mr. Sue made the motion to adopt a new Transportation Model for the Wilmington Urban Area. Ms. Padgett seconded the motion and the vote carried unanimously.

d. Support for a service road adjacent to US 74/76

Mr. Mello told members MPO staff and Brunswick County planning staff met with the developer of the property north of US 74/76 just west of the planned Wilmington Bypass to discuss access to the property. The developer is requesting staff to bring a resolution to the TAC to recommend service roads that will front the highway, with the main access on US 74/76 across from Malmo Loop Road so that he would have something to discuss with the adjacent developers in order to get these connections. This part of US 74/US 76 is identified in the Strategic Highway Corridor Plan as future Interstate-20, which will likely terminate at an interchange at I-140. These service roads would allow DOT to implement better access management controls along the future I-20. Staff feels that this is the best method to preserve the corridor for eventual upgrades to interstate standards.

Mr. Pope told members he is aware of the request. He recommended being very cautious with this recommendation. If you put a service road connecting to Malmo Loop Road, you are possibly looking at building an interchange. The Department of Transportation has not yet had an opportunity to consider any of the developments. The Department does not have a problem with the resolution being passed, but the question is what purpose does this resolution serve.

Mr. Sue told members the developer is in the process of development and if we don't do something now, he will go on and develop the property and forget the service road. This resolution will give him a planning tool so when he starts laying out what he is going to do, he has some basis for planning. Mr. Sue made the motion to support a service road parallel to US Highway 74/76 between Northwest Road and the Wilmington Bypass in Brunswick County.

Mr. Mello told members with this resolution, planning staff from Brunswick County's Planning Department will begin working with the developer to negotiate details for the planned development.

Mr. Wilson said the key issue is if they don't do something, and if all these 50,000 trips come out to US 74/76, you will never be able to bring the interstate.

Ms. Padgett said we are really just being asked to provide support for the service road.

Mr. Thurlow said at least this gives us an option to spread the traffic. Regardless of what happens, they are going to build the homes there. This is the only way we are going to preserve US 74/76 for the future I-20. Mr. Thurlow told member he will second the resolution as it is prepared.

Mr. Wilson said Brunswick County will control this development thru the PUD zoning district.

Mr. Pope said the resolution will not change the department's process.

Mr. Kozlosky told members we are only a recommending body to Brunswick County who will give final approval on the development.

Mr. Wilson called for the vote. The motion carried in a 6-3 vote with Ms. Brunjes, Ms. Padgett and Mr. Ballard voting against the resolution.

e. Discussion regarding the 6th Avenue/Wooster Street intersection

(See Public Comment section)

f. Discussion regarding the Brunswick Connector

Mr. Kozlosky told members Mayor Willis requested adding this item on the agenda.

Mr. Eby told members the Brunswick Connector operating cost is about \$130,000 annually, minus about \$15,000 in fares. This past year the City of Wilmington agreed to pay half the local match of \$70,000 and they agreed to pay 25% of the match up to \$35,000 in 2007. There will be a \$30,000 shortfall in 2008 in local funding and no source of funding has been identified to continue the initiative past July 1st.

Mayor Willis told members public funding coming to the MPO from Northern Brunswick County could be associated with the Connector so the shortfall will be addressed. Mayor Willis said the state provides funding to the MPO because of their representation in this area. The Brunswick Connector is the only real service they get out of this funding and he wants to know if those funds could be used for the Connector.

Mr. Thurlow asked if any municipalities have been asked to contribute to funding for the operating cost. Mr. Eby said no.

Mr. Wilson asked if this item could be addressed in 30 days to give him the opportunity to investigate if there is a possibility of funding from the state.

Mr. Eby said with the city's local match, they can operate through December 31st.

Mr. Gilbert asked if it would be reasonable that the communities serviced by the Connector have their boards discuss partial funding or put a resolution together and go to Brunswick

County as a board. Mr. Kozlosky told members he will contact the municipalities along the route to see if they would be willing to put some funding together.

g. 2006 Accident Report

Mr. Kozlosky distributed copies of the 2006 Accident Report to members. The new report includes an in-depth analysis of crashes for 2006 and the past 5-year period. Mayor Saffo asked staff to provide analysis of intersections that have the Safelights cameras in place. He would like to see if there is any difference in the rate of accidents after the cameras were installed. Mr. Kozlosky said they will get this information and bring it back to the next TAC Meeting.

7. Project Updates

a. Update on Blue Clay Road Bicycle Corridor Study

Mr. Kozlosky told members staff is working on the Blue Clay Road Bicycle Corridor Study. They are looking at alternatives along Blue Clay Road as well as other alternatives for a multiuse path adjacent to or in the vicinity of Blue Clay Road. Staff is planning on having a public meeting in July in which proposed alternatives will be presented to the community.

b. Cape Fear Historic Byway

Mr. Kozlosky told members staff received five proposals from engineering firms interested in completing the Cape Fear Historic Byway. They are in the process of evaluating those proposals and plan to endorse a contract to begin work on the project by July 1st.

c. Flossie Bryant Tract

Mr. Kozlosky told members this tract of land is traversed by the Cape Fear Skyway project. New Hanover County and the heirs to the property were involved in legation. The judgment has been passed down that the County is 2/3 owner of the property and the heirs are 1/3 owner. The property has been ordered to be sold. The county is looking to sale the property and possibly rezoning the property to a multi-family zoning district. Staff would like to receive direction from this board regarding filing the transportation official corridor map from the Madison Place Apartments tract to the Cape Fear River in order to preserve the corridor from development. There is no resolution included in the package but a motion providing direction to proceed in filing the corridor map would be sufficient. Mr. Saffo made the motion and Mr. Thurlow seconded the motion. The vote carried unanimously.

b. NCDOT Project Updates

(attached)

8. Announcements

9. Adjournment

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:18pm

Respectfully submitted

Mike Kozlosky
Senior Transportation Planner
/pb



STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

MICHAEL F. EASLEY
GOVERNOR

DIVISION OF HIGHWAYS

LYNDO TIPPETT
SECRETARY

April 25, 2007

TIP Projects:

1. **US 17 Wilmington Bypass: R-2405 A...** US 17 north of Wilmington, near Scotts Hill to I-40 contractor has recently opened the "Super-Street" section from Porter's Neck interchange to approximately 0.5 mile north of SR 1571 (Scott's Hill Road). We are still awaiting right of way for the completion of all the bulb-outs, for U-turn movements.

This opens the corridor from US 17 north of Wilmington to US 421 northwest of Wilmington.

2. **Military Cutoff (U-2734)**, constructing a multi-lane facility from US 17 (Market Street) to US 74 (Eastwood Drive). Traffic will be in the final pattern by July 2007.
Estimated Completion August/September 2007
3. **Military Cutoff Road Extension (U-4751) and Hampstead Bypass (R-3300)**: extending Military Cutoff Road from Market Street to the Wilmington Bypass, with an interchange at the Bypass. Also, from this interchange extend the multi-lane roadway to US 17 north of Hampstead. Right of way is scheduled for 2012.
4. **R-3601 US 17/74/76**: Widening across the "causeway", between Leland and Wilmington. Just beginning the planning process. We will move into the merger process afterwards and then to design. A scoping meeting will be held in the next couple of months. The TIP schedule has R/W for 2011 and Construction for 2012
5. **U-4902 A**: construct a concrete median island from SR 2649 (Martin Luther King Parkway) to SR 1272 (New Center Drive). Contract has been awarded to Kinston Contractors.
Estimated Contract Completion Date Spring 2007
6. **U-4902 B**: construct a concrete median island from SR 1402 (Porter's Neck Road) to Colonial Drive (non-system road). Project is in the planning process.
7. **B-0682**: Bridge to Sunset Beach over the intercoastal waterway. **Letting date 7/17/2007**
8. **R-2245**: Second bridge to Oak Island over the intercoastal waterway. **Letting date 5/15/2007**
9. **R-4063**: widen SR 1472 (Village Road) from SR 35 (South Navassa Road) to SR 1438 (Lanvale Road) to multi-lanes. Right of Way 2012 and Construction 2013.

NCMA Brunswick County:

- **NC 211** We will be widening & resurfacing NC 211 from the entrance of St. James to NC 133 (Doscher Cutoff). The work will consist of resurfacing and some widening at the intersection with the entrance to St. James. The current approximate cost of the project is \$3,610,000.00. **Work Complete**

NCMA Pender County:

- **NC 210** from US 17 to NC 50 (going to the beach) will be widen and resurfaced. Pipe replacement work has been completed. **Work Complete**
- **NC 133** from US 117 to NC 210 will be widen and resurfaced. State forces to place pipe in the lateral ditch at certain areas. Pipe replacement work has been completed. Project has been let and the availability date is February 7, 2005. **Work Complete**
- **US 421** from NC 210 to Sampson County Line, resurface. Project has been let and the availability date is February 7, 2005. **Work Complete**

Brunswick County Resurfacing Projects:

- **US 17** the Shallotte Bypass and ramps. The Contractor will not be allowed to work on the weekends. The Contractor is limited to night work from Monday to Thursday. The availability date is January 5, 2005 and the completion date is November 1, 2005.
Work complete
- **NC 133 Doshier Cutoff Road**, patch and resurface from NC 87 to NC 211.
Work complete
- **SR 1342 (Big Macedonia Road)** patching and resurfacing from NC 211 to SR 1343 (Little Macedonia Road).
Work complete
- **SR 1426 (Mt. Misery Road)** resurface from northwestern city limit to SR 1419 (Northwest Road). **Work complete on all these maps**
Also included in the same contract:
 - SR 1443 (Broadway Street)** widen and resurface from SR 1434 (Main Street) to SR 1435 (Navassa Road).
 - SR 1423 (Vernon Road)** resurface from SR 1426 (Mt. Misery Road) to SR 1422 (Blue Banks Loop).
 - SR 1190 (Oak Island Drive)** resurface from 46th Street to 65th Street.
- **NC 87 (Maco Road)** patch and resurface from 0.3 miles north of US 17 to 0.03 miles south of US 74/76. The patching and intermediate course are complete.
Also included in the same contract: (Completion Date 8/1/2007)
 - SR 1167 (Persimmon Road)** resurface from US 17 to NC 179.
 - SR 1120** (Sabbath Home Road) resurface from 0.06 miles northeast of NC 130 to SR 1122 (Varnamtown Road).
 - SR 1513** (Danford Road) patch and resurface from US 17 Business to east Bolivia City Limit.
 - SR 1245** (Maple Creek Road) patch and resurface from SR 1115 (Stone Chimney Road) to the end of state system.

New Hanover County:

- **NC 132** College Road from SR 1318 (Blue Clay Road) to the beginning of the divided highway. **Work complete**
- **Signing Project:** Division and Raleigh Signing are revisiting the signing for the Parkway and the Bypass. Authorization for funding has been approved. Sign structures are in design and we have ordered the signs. Let on August 8, 2006. Under construction Completion Summer 2007
- **US 74/NC 133:** installation of a signal "Mast Arm" pole on bridge #11 (Isabel Holmes Bridge) and connecting it to an existing signal system. **Letting May 8, 2007**

- **SR 1272 (New Center Drive):** widening the 4-lane portion of the roadway to 5-lanes. **Estimated completion date Summer 2007.**
- **US 421** mill and resurface from West Lake Shore Drive (non-system) to Greenfield Street (non-system).
Also included in the same contract: (Let Date 12/19/2006...Comp. Date 6/1/2007)
 - SR 2048 (Gordon Road)** resurface from SR 1175 (Kerr Ave.) to SR 2698 (Netherlands Drive).
 - SR 1411 (Wrightsville Ave.)** resurface from US 117 to West Huntington Road (non-system).
 - NC 210** mill patch from I-40 to 0.2 miles northwest of US 17. (Length 13.05 miles)
- **NC 132 (North College Road), SR 1322 (Murrayville Road), SR 1327 (Farley Street) and SR 1322 (Bavarian Drive):** roadway improvements for better flow of traffic. Public Workshop is scheduled for 4/17/2007. Work is scheduled to begin Summer 2007.

Pender County:

- **SR 1571 (Scott's Hill Loop Road)** widen and resurface from US 17 to US 17.
Work complete
- **NC 210** resurface from Bladen County line to SR 1101 (Point Caswell Road). Awarded to S. T. Wooten.
Revised Completion Date 5/15/2007
- These are in the same contract: **Letting April 10, 2007**
 - **SR 1561 (Sloop Point Road)** widen to install a 1.5' paved shoulders from US 17 to SR 1563 (Sloop Point Loop Road). Also, widen 1.5' on SR 1563 from SR 1561 to the change in pavement at the school.
 - **SR 1520 (Shaw Highway)** construct short overlays from NC 210 to the Wildlife Boating Access Road.
 - **SR 1332 (Penderlea Highway)** mill patch at various spots from SR 1400 (Highsmith Road) to SR 1345 (Cora's Grove Road).
 - **US 17** mill patching at various spots from SR 1565 (Country Club Drive) north to the divided section of US 17.
 - **NC 11** mill patching at various spots from US 117 toward SR 1001 (Willard Road).