

**Wilmington Urban Area
Technical Coordinating Committee
Meeting Notes for March 12, 2003 (Corrected Version)**

Members Present:

Bill Bennett, NC State Ports
Dexter Hayes, Director, New Hanover County Planning
Albert Eby, WTA
Andrea Surratt, Town of Wrightsville Beach
Penny Tysinger, CFCOG
Mark Tinkler, Senior Transportation Planner, City of Wilmington
Lawless Bean, TDM Coordinator, City of Wilmington
Darrell Hensdale, NCDOT Statewide Planning
Jane Daughtridge, Planning & Development, Carolina Beach
Joe Blair, Construction Engineering, NCDOT

Others Present:

Don Eggert, Cape Fear RPO
Mike Rutkowski, Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc
Scott Czechlewski, Public Information Division, City of Wilmington
Vic Bain, Middle Sound Loop Neighborhood Bike Committee
Richard Harris, Middle Sound Loop Neighborhood Bike Committee
Wilfred Nixon, Ken Weeden & Assoc.

1. Call to Order:

Chairman Mark Tinkler called the meeting to order at 10:10am.

2. Approval Of Minutes:

No corrections were noted for the minutes from the February 12th meeting. The motion to approve the minutes was made by Mr. Darrell Hensdale and Mr. Bill Bennett seconded the motion. It was unanimously approved.

3. Old Business:

a. MOU Submitted to NCDOT:

The MOU was submitted to the state with the required original signatures from all the municipalities.

b. FY'04 PWP submitted to NCDOT:

The PWP was approved with the exception of the College and Oleander Minimum Footprint Conceptual Design consultant project. Mr. Lanny Wilson recommended that we see if this project can be handled through the NCDOT staff before funds were spent. A follow-up meeting was held with Mr. Troy Peoples, State Traffic Engineer, Lynn Hill, Director of Pre-Construction, Allen Pope, and Lanny Wilson on Thursday March 6th.

c. TAC action on resolutions at Feb 27th meeting

The resolution to add the chairs of the WTA and the NHTS as non-voting members of the TAC was passed.

Mr. Don Eggert asked if the TCC had a representative from NHTS. Mr. Tinkler said yes, Deborah Houston, Manager of NHTS has been invited but she was unable to attend this meeting. Mr.

Tinkler said perhaps we need official action to formalize acceptance of an NHTS staff member as a representative to this group. Mr. Tinkler asked if anyone would like to make a motion to formally add a representative to the TCC from NHTS. Ms. Tysinger made the motion and Mr. Eby seconded. The vote carried unanimously.

Mr. Tinkler passed out copies of two other resolutions that were passed at the TAC meeting. The I-74 resolution was to encourage the use of US74 and upgrading to I-74 and tie it into the bypass in Brunswick County rather than the planned approach to take it through Green Swamp to Myrtle Beach. The second resolution was to request that the newly formed Turnpike Authority undertake the Southern Bridge Feasibility Study and include it in the first set of projects.

Mr. Tinkler reviewed the discussions by the TAC on the TIP. He explained that the TAC members approved funding for the purchase of two trolleys for downtown Wilmington. That moved the purchase of the trolleys from unfunded project in 2009 to the funded projects for 2004.

Three other resolutions were deferred to the next meeting. With the issue of adding any unfunded projects to the TIP, Commissioner Sue and Mayor Willis made the point that they would not support any additional unfunded project requests being added to the TIP before the current unfunded projects were prioritized by the MPO. They felt like projects they had requested in the past were being postponed as additional new projects were added to the unfunded list. TAC members requested that a work session be held on the 27th of the month to prioritize them and he would like to get input on process recommendations for addition of items.

The three resolutions tabled were:

1. The addition of the Transit Maintenance Administrative and Transfer Facility for TIP funded projects and congressional earmarking
2. The support for the Ports project for congressional earmarking
3. The traffic signal replacement unfunded project

These items will be carried over to the March 27th meeting of the TAC.

The TAC also requested the MPO write a letter thanking Representative Mike McIntire for the funding he was able to obtain for the ferry system upgrade for Fort Fisher and Southport Ferry. The ground breaking for that will be April 15th.

The last item from the TAC meeting is regarding Brunswick County projects, Mayor Willis from Navassa suggested adding transit service from Wilmington to Leland and Navassa and back. A meeting is planned for the 18th with Ms. Mirriam Perry, Deputy Secretary Gene Conti, Mr. Albert Eby, Ms. Lawless Bean, and Mr. Lanny Wilson to plan the route. Mr. Wilson was confident that funding could be found for this project. Mr. Tinkler said Brunswick County Transit System had been invited to the meeting. Mr. Hayes expressed his concern that we have already made the commitment to extend service outside city limits to the unincorporated county areas. That had been the focus of group efforts and planning efforts to date. Mr. Eby said Mr. Wilson wanted to see the transit system try the route into Brunswick County to service Leland and Navassa.

5. Cape Fear Regional Household Survey Presentation: (moved forward)

Mr. Tinkler reviewed the upcoming Regional Household Survey process for the benefit of the visitors attending the meeting. He also mentioned the External Cordon Travel survey and the Visitor survey that are being conducted in the region along with the Household Travel survey.

Mr. Michael Rutkowski with Kimley-Horn and Associates was introduced by Mr. Tinkler. Mr. Rutkowski explained that Kimley-Horn has been hired to handle the public outreach campaign for the household survey itself. He presented a slide program covering the objective, purpose and need for the survey.

6. Presentation by Middle Sound Loop Road neighborhood representative regarding their multi-use path project efforts (moved forward)

Mr. Tinkler introduced Mr. Vic Bane, who represents the neighborhood group trying to get a bike lane installed around Middle Sound Road. Mr. Bane explained he is here today because the County will begin installation of the sewer project around the 5 mile loop in the very near future. After the county completes the project, the NCDOT will follow with the widening of the road. The members of the bike committee would like to "piggy-back" the addition of bicycle lanes onto the project while the roads are being widened and repaved. They submitted a resolution at the last meeting of the New Hanover County Commissioners and it was approved. They met with the Bicycle Advisory Committee with the same resolution and they too approved it. Mr. Tinkler was at that meeting and invited them to make the same presentation to the TCC. They are trying to get support from all agencies and committees for the resolution. They also have a meeting on March 17th with Mr. Lanny Wilson to talk about contingency funding to see if this can be done. Because of the short time frame, they need to get the contract amended sometime mid-June, before the beginning of the road project in September. There has been an average of 19 accidents per year on that 5 and ½ mile stretch of road and they feel this resolution will give the citizens an opportunity to walk and bike safely in their neighborhood. Mr. Bane passed out a copy of the resolution that Mr. Tinkler drafted. His group is requesting that the TCC recommend it for passage at the next TAC meeting.

Mr. Tinkler asked if the group would like to entertain the motion to endorse the resolution to add bike lanes. Ms. Daughtridge asked about funding for the project. Mr. Tinkler said that this is road reconstruction and not a TIP project and that Mr. Blair could explain. Mr. Blair said this construction funding is coming from secondary road construction funds and it has nothing to do with the TIP. With that information, Ms. Daughtridge said she would like to make the motion to forward this resolution to the TAC. Mr. Hayes seconded the motion and the vote carried unanimously.

4. Results of MTIP Review Session on March 6th

Mr. Tinkler asked members for their thoughts on how the TAC might discuss the prioritization of the unfunded projects. Mr. Tinkler said the point he wanted to make clear to the TAC, if they make these recommendations, is that they consider making them on an interim basis. The ranking only applies until we evaluate all projects again with the new long-range plan update. They have asked for a workshop to prioritize projects on March 27th. Mr. Hayes asked if in the past this had been done on a yearly basis. Mr. Tinkler said that projects would be reviewed this fall when we regularly prioritize projects for TIP development. Mr. Hayes agreed that with the scheduled ranking of projects being only 6 to 8 months from now, perhaps we may be sending mixed messages to the state when make priority changes every 3 or 4 months. Mr. Tinkler passed out the copies of the resolution that was tabled at the February TAC meeting. He clarified that the resolution for the Ports had been rewritten. They were only requesting support for congressional earmarking, not a TIP project. Mr. Tinkler suggested that perhaps the best approach to adopting the TIP may be to drop the inclusion of the Traffic Signal System from the unfunded projects and see if this could be adopted as is.

Regarding the Congressional Earmarking Program, Mr. Tinkler told members that Representative McIntire has to make a decision by the end of the week which projects he is going to sponsor. Discussions were being held to determine the projects for his sponsorship. Mr. Tinkler and Mr. Eby agreed that further discussions with Mr. Wilson are needed to let him know the importance of the Maintenance/Administration/Transfer Facility project and the location of funding sources for the project.

7. Transportation Summit Update:

All parties involved with the Transportation Summit have agreed to postpone the summit for 6 to 8 weeks due to conflicts with State events at the Ports and economic development. Mr. Tinkler said this postponement will be an opportunity to focus on our local planning issues and give more time to plan the event.

8. Report on NC Association of MPO's Quarterly Meeting in Greensboro, March 7th

Mr. Tinkler reported he did attend the meeting last Friday. He explained that at the meeting they approved two items, one is the NC AMPO position on reauthorization of TEA-21, and also they passed a resolution on bicycle-pedestrian facilities modeled after the CRAFT Resolution in Charlotte and in reference to the BOT resolution. The resolution states that bicycle-pedestrian facilities should be an integral part of every transportation project. Mr. Tinkler suggested members review the handouts from that meeting and let him know if they should take any action on either item.

Mr. Tinkler also distributed "The NC Moving Ahead" program information. He explained that \$700 million in bond money that had been allocated for trust fund projects, was going to be released for use in safety and local facility upgrades. \$18 million is being scheduled to be released next year and then \$22 million the year after that. He noted on the front page of the handout what it translates to in Division 3 money. It will be at the division level and they are still working on prioritization criteria. The projects all seem to be maintenance and upgrading type projects. Mr. Hensdale said a list of projects have been in existence for years. Mr. Tinkler suggested that perhaps Mr. Allen Pope could come and give a presentation to us as the program progresses.

10. Citizen Advisory Committee meets Thursday, March 20th: (moved forward)

A small reception was held for the CAC prior to the TAC meeting on the 27th. The CAC group will meet again next Thursday for their first organizational meeting. They will meet quarterly and report back to the TAC at their next meeting.

9. Project Updates:

a. Transit Merger and Master Plan

b. Wilmington Multi-modal Transportation Center

Proposals all came in for that additional study. Had five teams propose and got some good teams. The consultant selection committee consisted of the voting membership of the Steering Committee for the Multi-modal Study, which are the funding partners. They or their designee will be on the consultant selection committee. This is mostly a state funded project – 90% and the City at 10% so this is not technically a MPO project. Mr. Tinkler will keep everyone up to date as progress is made.

c. Household Travel Survey

Proceeding well and very happy with the consultant team lead by NuStats.

d. External Cordon Travel Survey

Received proposals. Pressed again on time crunch. Committee has been formed to evaluate the proposals. They started out with same group that looked at the household travel survey proposals last fall. Leta Huntsinger - NCDOT lead on the model development research group, Mike Bruff, Statewide Planning Branch Manager, and

Darrell Hensdale, serving as our Wilmington coordinator. Mr. Tinkler said he will try to enlist Roger Hawkins and Don Bennett to help with the proposal review. Mr. Tinkler said if anyone else would like to be involved, he has two more sets of proposals. This has to be approved for the TAC meeting on the 27th. This will require an amendment for this year's PWP. TAC gave support to this in principal last time but want to see actual numbers we get from the proposals. Funds for this project will use the balance of funds we had in the whole travel survey before we broke into the two parts as well as some additional unallocated money from previous Planning Work Program allotments. There is also some money from statewide planning – statewide funds. This work must be done prior to the end of the third week in May so we need to get the consultant selected immediately. Plus, PWP amendments are due by 1st week in April, which is the statewide planning deadline for amending the existing year's PWP.

11. New Business and Adjournment:

With there being no items of new business, Ms. Daughtridge made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Hensdale seconded the motion and the meeting was adjourned at 11:58am.