

**Wilmington Urban Area  
Technical Coordinating Committee  
Meeting Notes for December 1, 2010**

**Members Present:**

Mike Kozlosky, City of Wilmington  
Sam Burgess, New Hanover County  
Ken Vafier, Pender County  
Albert Eby, Wave Transit  
Shane York, NCDOT  
Katie Hite, NCDOT  
Stephanie Ayers, NCSPA  
Pat Walsh, Town of Belville  
Patrick Riddle, NCDOT  
Allen Pope, NCDOT  
Tim Owens, Town of Carolina Beach  
Don Bennett, City of Wilmington  
Don Eggert, Cape Fear RPO

**Others Present:**

Tara Murphy, City of Wilmington  
Bill McDow, City of Wilmington  
Nicole Bennett, Mulkey Engineers  
Paddy Jordan, Mulkey Engineers  
Andrew Topp, Martin/Alexei/Bryson  
Rob Hanson, NCDOT

**1. Call to Order**

Mr. Kozlosky called the meeting to order at 10:03 am.

**2. Approval of Minutes**

The motion to approve the minutes for the October 13, 2010 meeting carried unanimously.

**3. Presentation**

**a. Kerr Avenue/Market Street Intersection Improvements**

Mr. Kozlosky told members the intersection improvements concept for the Kerr Avenue intersection was developed through the Market Street Corridor Study. The Department of Transportation developed a conventional intersection design for the Kerr Avenue widening project in 2008. The Kerr Avenue project had approximately 28 approach lanes at the intersection of Kerr Avenue and Market Street. Consultants who were hired for the Market Street Corridor Study decided to look at using quadrants at the intersection at Kerr Avenue and Market Street. They were able to identify an opportunity to remove the left turns from Kerr Avenue onto Market Street and reassign them using Cinema Drive and a new facility that would be constructed to connect McClelland Drive over to Market Street. The changes will add about \$9.5 million to the project if the quadrant design is chosen.

Ms. Nicole Bennett, Project Manager from Mulkey Engineers told members they had the approved environmental document for the conventional widening alternative complete in May of 2008. The Market Street Corridor Study began right about at the time when NCDOT was wrapping up the Kerr Avenue planning study. She said they were asked to delay holding public hearings until the Market Street study was completed. As a result of that coordination, the quadrant intersection alternative came to life. She said they reopened their planning studies and they are doing an addendum to the environmental document for the quadrant intersection design and compare it to the conventional intersection design from 2008. The project is divided into two sections. Section-B is primarily

widening the portion that starts just south of Randal Parkway and goes to New Center Drive. Section-C is from New Center Drive to just north of Allendale Drive which is the interchange area. The presentation today focuses on the B-section.

Mr. Andrew Topp, with Martin/Alexei/Bryson, told members the 2-quadrant approach will offer more benefits by allowing travelers to bypass the “bottle-neck” by turning left before the Kerr/Market intersection. It improves the phasing at the center intersection and also reduces the traffic volumes. The only difference between the alternatives is the level of service at the center intersection. The conventional widening will get to about 2028-2029 before it reaches an “E” level of service at the intersection and by 2035 it will reach an “F”. With the quadrant option, the intersection is able to get out to 2040 before it starts to break down. It will buy an acceptable level of service for a longer period of time.

Ms. Bennett told members the quadrant intersection option offers less widening at the key-intersection and less pavement for pedestrians and cyclists to cross. The impacts for the quadrant widening have three more residential relocations and an additional commercial relocation than the conventional widening. The total cost for the conventional widening is \$55 million and the quadrant widening is \$64 million. The breakdown of the \$9.5 million increase is primarily in right-of-way costs. The next steps are to select the recommended alternative and complete the environmental document. NCDOT plans to have a workshop in the spring to present the recommended alternative and get citizen feedback. They will go to final-design after the preferred alternative is selected and begin acquiring right-of-way in 2012 with construction beginning in 2014 for the B-section.

Ms. Ayers asked if the cost estimate included the money needed should the Army Corps of Engineers force mitigations for the drainage ditched in the quadrant approach. If so, how high could the cost be? Ms. Bennett said if they consider it as a stream, then it would be figured by linear foot impact and would not significantly impact the total cost.

Mr. Kozlosky told members the Market Street Corridor Study’s market analysis looked to see where growth was expected and identified nodes and locations where growth could survive. One of the locations identified as part of the planning effort was Market Street and Kerr Avenue. We’ve seen some redevelopment already. The quadrant design will help with the transition and make the area more pedestrian friendly by condensing the intersection. Mr. Kozlosky said we have to make the decision on what is best for the region and take a hard look at the STIP to find funding for the additional \$9.5 million.

Ms. Ayers suggested that Mr. Kozlosky create a list of projects for consideration in pulling funds to make up the shortfall. It would also be helpful if the committee had a list of prioritized projects and how much funding was associated with each project so the committee could see possible candidates.

Mr. Kozlosky said the only project that could possibly be considered to pull funds from is the Market Street median project (U-4902) from Colonial Drive out to Porters Neck. It’s funded in 2012 and 2017 and it would fit in with the schedule for this project.

Mr. Pope told members to keep in mind that the Market Street project is 9-miles of median installation, new signal systems and right-of-way for the bulb-outs. There is only \$11 million programmed and that’s probably about a 1/10 of the funds needed for the project. He said their intent was to go as far possible until money runs out and as redevelopment comes, they would be working toward the same goal. There has never been enough money on the project.

Mr. Owens asked if the 20% cost difference worth the improvements and is it worth delaying another project.

Mr. Kozlosky said that was the crux of the question. He told members based on the conversations here today, he feels the quadrant approach is the best solution and this committee should suggest that we recommend moving money from the Market Street median project, recognizing that it's not sufficiently underfunded at this time. We should try to secure high-hazard mitigation funds in order to fund the Market Street project from a safety standpoint.

Mr. Eggert made the motion that the preferred alternative be the quadrant approach using money that is presently allocated for the Market Street plan (U-4902) and forward to the TAC for consideration. Ms. Ayers seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

**b. Wilmington Comprehensive Transportation Plan**

Mr. York told members the comprehensive transportation plan (CTP) picks up where the long-range transportation plan (LRTP) leaves off. The main difference is the LRTP is financially constrained. The CTP takes all the projects that didn't make the LRTP's list and adds them to the comprehensive transportation plan. The purpose of the CPT is to identify existing and future transportation deficiencies and generate information to guide future transportation decisions. The primary objectives are to reduce traffic congestion and improve safety. The CTP is developed cooperatively between NCDOT, the Wilmington MPO, and representatives from the counties and municipalities. Mr. York said thanks to the efforts of the MPO's Citizen Advisory Committee, most of the work to develop the CPT has been done and he anticipates a short turn-around to complete the CTP.

**4. Old Business**

No items

**5. New Business**

**a. Adoption of the 2011 meeting calendar**

Mr. Burgess made the motion to adopt the proposed 2011 meeting calendar and forward to the TAC for consideration. Mr. Eby seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

**b. Resolution adopting the 2011 Legislative Agenda**

Mr. Kozlosky told members the 2011 Legislative Agenda is very similar to the one prepared in 2010. He suggested adding language to the agenda in support of the NC Mobility Fund. The mobility fund was created in 2010 to look at projects of regional/statewide significance and includes all modes of transportation. Mr. Pope said the draft process and selection criteria will be presented to the Board of Transportation next week and it will become public. They will vote on it next month.

Mr. Eby made the motion to recommend adoption of the 2011 Legislative Agenda with the addition of language to supporting the NC Mobility Fund and recommend a fair distribution of funds based on the development of the selection criteria and selection process and forward to the TAC for consideration. Mr. Owens seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

**c. Resolution requesting NCDOT consider acceleration of the Wilmington Bypass (R-2633B)**

Mr. Kozlosky told members the bypass has been the top priority for the region for several years. It is currently identified in the draft STIP. The "A" section is funded through design/build. The "B" section is identified in three different phases. We would ask the Department to consider accelerating the loop-funding for the project through the use of mobility fund or the consideration of GARVEE Bonds.

Ms Ayers asked why the language about transparency was included in the resolution. Mr. Kozlosky said it was based on the Urban Loop Prioritization Process in which the Department prioritized the

10 urban loops in the state and the Wilmington Bypass ranked very high. Staff wanted to acknowledge that project ranking in the request to accelerate the project.

Mr. Burgess made the motion to encourage NCDOT to explore funding options to accelerate the Wilmington Bypass (R-2633B) and forward to the TAC for consideration. Ms. Ayers seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

**d. Resolution for the Cape Fear Public Transportation Authority seeking exemption from NCGS §95-98**

Mr. Eby requested to table the resolution. Mr. Pope made the motion to table and Mr. Owens seconded it. The motion carried unanimously.

**6. Updates**

**a. Wilmington MPO/City of Wilmington**

Mr. Kozlosky updated members on projects within the City of Wilmington. He told members Martin/Alexiou/Bryson is the consultant selected for the US 17/NC 210 Corridor Study. The kick-off meeting for the project was held earlier in the week. They are looking at access management by integrating transportation and land-use planning and also looking at mobility and safety. They are currently working to establish a steering committee and the first public meeting will be held December 16<sup>th</sup> at Topsail High School. The Department has already made some significant improvements with the reduction of speeds and also installing dura-curb at Washington Acres. The study will be a long-term vision for the US 17 and NC 210 corridor.

Mr. Kozlosky told members that the draft Market Street Corridor Study was presented to the City of Wilmington Planning Commissions and the New Hanover County Planning Board on October 6<sup>th</sup>. The next step will be to present the plan to the Wilmington City Council and the New Hanover County Commissioners for adoption. It will then come back to the TCC and TAC for approval.

**b. Cape Fear Public Transportation Authority**

Mr. Eby told members the design for the maintenance facility was “kicked-off” last month and it will take about 10 months to complete the design. They are wrapping up construction of the new transfer facility and it should be complete in 6 to 8 weeks. Next week they should have the new hybrid-buses on the streets.

**c. NCDOT Project Update**

Mr. Pope updated members on the projects for NCDOT.

**8. Announcements**

**9. Adjournment**

With no further items, the meeting was adjourned at 11:25am