

**Wilmington Urban Area
Technical Coordinating Committee
Meeting Notes for March 12, 2008**

Members Present:

Mike Kozlosky, City of Wilmington
Stephanie Ayers, NC Ports Authority
Albert Eby, WAVE Transit
Chris O'Keefe, New Hanover County
Julie Wilsey, ILM Airport
Patrick Riddle, NCDOT
Michael Zehner, Town of Belville
Don Eggert, Cape Fear RPO
Shane York, NCDOT
Travis Barnes, City of Wilmington

Others Present:

Anthony Prinz, City of Wilmington
Joshuah Mello, City of Wilmington
Whitney Prease, ILM Airport
Sam Burgess, New Hanover County
Brian Bergeler, Greenways Inc.
Chuck Flink, Greenways Inc.

1. Call to Order

Mr. Mello called the meeting to order at 10:04 am.

2. Approval of Minutes

With the correction noting that Mr. Eggert was in attendance at the February meeting, the motion to approve the minutes for the February 13, 2008 meeting carried unanimously.

3. Old Business

There were no items of old business.

4. New Business

a. Resolution adopting the Cape Fear Historic Byway Corridor Management Plan

Mr. Mello introduced Mr. Brian Bergeler and Chuck Flink, with Greenways Inc. who gave a presentation on the recommendations for the Cape Fear Historic Byway Corridor Management Plan. Following the presentation, Mr. Eggert made the motion to recommend adoption of the corridor management plan and forward to the TAC for consideration. Mr. O'Keefe seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

b. Resolution supporting the efforts to secure byway grant funding for S. 3rd Street

Mr. Mello told members staff is submitting an application in the amount of \$800,000 to Federal Highway Administration to make streetscape improvements to the South 3rd Street corridor. The grant is due Friday and the resolutions will go before the TAC at their next meeting. The NCDOT agreed to accept the resolutions after that meeting. Mr. O'Keefe made a motion to approve the resolution in support of efforts to secure grant funding for the S. 3rd Street streetscape improvements. Mr. Eggert seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

c. Resolution adopting the Blue Clay Road Bicycle Corridor Plan

Mr. Flink told members this corridor plan is an effort in finding a suitable route and alignment to connect bicyclist from the downtown area to Holly Shelter Road. The goal was to come up with the most suitable alignment to build an on-road/off-road trail. The corridor will likely be part of the East Coast Greenway.

Mr. Bergeler presented the alternative routes examined in determining the preferred alignment for the corridor. Mr. Flink said the resolution is asking for the adoption of this plan as a commitment to the fact that this project will go forward and the details of the construction will be worked out with each phase.

Ms. Ayers asked about overall cost. Mr. Bergeler said the rough-cost estimate for the whole project could be about \$3.5 million.

Mr. Eggert asked if the bicycle committee looked at the plan. Mr. Mello said they were intricately involved.

Ms. Wilsey told members the only challenge with the sewer easement is that as a land owner, the airport authority was told that the sewer easement can be built on. The Airport Authority can still lease it and they can build their own parking lots on it. The fair compensation for that easement is 30% because they are saying they are not going to lock it up for anything else. When you go back and put this public bike path on that easement, some of those land owners are going to say that is not what they were told originally. That needs to be clarified with the county, and the water/sewer district because it is inconsistent with what the property owners were told.

With no other discussion, Mr. O'Keefe made the motion to support the resolution adopting the Blue Clay Road Bicycle Corridor Plan. Mr. Zehner seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

d. Resolution amending the Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) to include one at-large member

Mr. Kozlosky told members Mayor Montgomery from Kure Beach requested the item be placed on the agenda. The resolution is to amend the CAC membership to include one at large member, to be appointed by the TAC. Mr. Kozlosky told members he would suggest that the appointment come from the Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee because it is a recommending body to the TCC and TAC. Mr. O'Keefe made the motion to approve the amendment and that the representative be from the Bike/Ped Committee. Mr. Eggert seconded the motion and it carried in a unanimous vote.

e. Resolution amending the 2007-08 Unified Planning Work Program

Mr. Kozlosky told member staff has until March 31st to amend the Planning Work Program (PWP) for the current fiscal year. Staff is proposing to reduce expenditures in the travel time studies forecast of the data to the horizon year, forecast of future travel plans, financial planning and special studies line items. Staff recommends increasing expenditure of funds in the dwelling unit and population changes, mapping, travel model updates, bicycle and pedestrian planning, collector street planning, public involvement and management/operations line items. Staff proposes to make those modifications because of projected overruns in those line items and in order to balance the PWP. Ms. Ayers made the motion to amend the 2007-2008 Unified Planning Work Program and forward to the TAC for consideration. Mr. O'Keefe seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

f. Adoption of the 2008-09 Unified Planning Work Program

Mr. Kozlosky told members this PWP provided for the expenditure of PL Funds in the amount of \$432,000. It also proposed the expenditure of total funds for the Wilmington MPO in the amount of \$541,200. Staff proposes to include funding for the Wrightsville Beach Bicycle Plan (cost sharing with the Town of Wrightsville Beach), funding for the completion of a northern New Hanover County collector street plan, and funding for the Dow Road widening and extension corridor study. The funding requests also include funding for the update of the Long Range Transportation Plan and continue performing traffic counts for the entire Wilmington MPO region. Mr. Kozlosky told members that included in the PWP are two resolutions (one to adopt the PWP, and the second is to certify that we are completing our transportation planning in a continuing, cooperative and comprehensive manner as required by federal legislation). Mr. O'Keefe made the motion to adopt the 2008-2009 Unified Planning Work Program, as well as the resolution that identifies that the Wilmington MPO is performing the transportation planning in a continuing, cooperative and comprehensive manner and the forward both resolutions to the TAC for consideration. Ms. Ayers seconded the motion and it carried in a unanimous vote.

g. Resolution encouraging the North Carolina General Assembly to amend the General Statute 20-97 to permit counties to impose a vehicle tax and encouraging the New Hanover County Board of Commissioners to impose a \$5 county-wide registration fee for public transportation

Mr. Kozlosky told members this item was discussed at the TAC meeting in February. Members directed staff to bring a resolution forward in which we would look at suggesting the County impose a \$5.00 registration fee countywide for public transportation. After evaluating the general statutes, counties do not have the authority to impose this registration fee, only municipalities have this authority. Staff has prepared a resolution to encourage the general assembly to allow counties to impose this fee and then to support the New Hanover County Board of Commissioners in imposing the \$5.00 registration fee to be used for public transportation. The fee would generate about \$865,000 annually and provide an independent revenue source for the Cape Fear Public Transportation Authority.

Mr. Eby told members at the last Inter-modal committee meeting of the 21st Century Transportation Committee, there was draft legislation that came out which would provide a fund for funding grant agreements for rail projects in Charlotte, the Triangle and the Triad. That legislation also includes the ability for those three communities hold a referendum to impose a ½ cent sales tax for regional public transportation. Because of opposition to the legislation, the Department of Transportation is working on a counter-proposal that will open it up to anyone in the state. One of the suggestions from NCPTA is to look at a \$5.00 registration that could be imposed on either a county-wide or region-wide basis.

Ms. Wilsey told members she thinks it's ironic that a vehicle owner will pay a tax for public transportation. It is one group paying for somebody else's transportation. Mr. Eby said the theory behind imposing the registration fee is that automobiles are creating the congestion, environmental and pollution problems and those drivers should pay to solve some of the problems. Ms Avery said she doesn't think most people use public transportation in order to preserve the environment.

Mr. Eby made the motion to support the resolution and forward it to the TAC for consideration. Mr. Eggert seconded the motion. The motion carried by a 7 to 2 vote, with Ms Wilsey and Ms. Avery voting in opposition.

h. Resolution encouraging New Hanover County to hold a referendum for a ¼ cent sales tax for transportation infrastructure improvements

Mr. Kozlosky told members the TAC also directed staff to bring forward a resolution that would request New Hanover County hold a referendum for a ¼ cent sales tax for transportation infrastructure. Staff anticipates the tax will generate approximately \$8.35 million annually. This method has been utilized in York County, SC since 1999. The resolution includes a guarantee from NCDOT that there will be no disadvantage to New Hanover County. The City of Wilmington has this resolution on their agenda for March 18th. This resolution includes only Independence Boulevard extension and Dow Road widening and extension and a sunset. Mr. Eby made the motion to support the resolution encouraging New Hanover County to hold a referendum for a ¼ cent sales tax for transportation infrastructure improvements. Mr. O'Keefe seconded the motion and it carried in a unanimous vote.

5. Discussion Items

a. Long Range Transportation Plan and Citizen Advisory Committee

Mr. Mello told members the committee appointments have been made except Brunswick County. Staff will be contacting Commissioner Sue for that information. Mr. Mello said they should have the first meeting of the CAC the beginning of April.

b. Regional Transportation Authority

Mr. Kozlosky told members during discussion regarding the sales tax, the TAC requested information regarding the establishment of a regional Transportation Authority. Through research, staff has found that Tucson, Arizona has a very successful regional transportation authority that has been in existence since 2004. They impose a ½ cent excess tax to implement their program. Staff will be taking the information to the TAC at their next meeting.

6. Project Updates

a. Dow Road Widening and Extension

Mr. Kozlosky told member the contract with Wilbur Smith and Associates will go to the Wilmington City Council at their March 18th meeting. Staff plans to begin the project in April.

b. Monkey Junction Collector Street Plan

Mr. Prinz told member the first public informational meeting was held on February 28th at Bellamy Elementary School. Residents attending the meeting expressed support for the goals of the plan and offered suggestions for improvement to the plan. Mr. Prinz said the next step will be to take the input received and make the necessary changes to the plan.

c. Market Street Corridor Study

Mr. Kozlosky told members NCDOT approved funding in the amount of \$275,000 for the Wilmington Metropolitan Planning Organization, City of Wilmington, New Hanover County and North Carolina Department of Transportation to develop the Market Street Corridor Plan between Colonial Drive and the Pender County line. The Plan will develop and implement strategies that better integrate transportation and land use planning policies and principles. Staff is working on developing a scope for the study.

d. Safe Routes to School

Mr. Mello told members that on March 6th, the North Carolina Board of Transportation voted to award the City of Wilmington \$211,800 to fund a demonstration Safe Routes to School program at Bradley Creek Elementary School on Greenville Loop Road. This application was one of 14 submitted for the demonstration program and one of six selected statewide. This demonstration

program represents the first dispersal of federal Safe Routes to School funds in North Carolina, and is intended to serve as a guide for future grant cycles.

d. NCDOT Project Update

attached

7. Announcements

- a. **Wilmington Metropolitan Bike/Ped Committee meeting - March 13th**
- b. **Cape Fear Historic Byway Steering Committee meeting - March 18th**

8. Adjournment

With no further items, the meeting was adjourned at 11:53 am.