

**Wilmington Urban Area
Technical Coordinating Committee
Meeting Notes for May 15, 2008**

Members Present:

Mike Kozlosky, City of Wilmington
Stephanie Ayers, NC Ports Authority
Albert Eby, WAVE Transit
Chris O'Keefe, New Hanover County
Patrick Riddle, NCDOT
Jill Stark, FHWA
Ken Vafier, Pender County
Don Bennett, City of Wilmington
Tim Owens, Town of Caroling Beach
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
Bill McDow, City of Wilmington
Sam Burgess, New Hanover County
Brian Geschickter, Attorney
Jim McFarland, Developer
Dean Satrape, Watertree Properties

1. Call to Order

Mr. Kozlosky called the meeting to order at 10:05 am.

2. Approval of Minutes

With the correction noted that Ms. Ayers name was misspelled on page three, the motion to approve the minutes for the March 12, 2008 meeting carried unanimously.

3. Presentation – NC Ports Authority

Ms. Ayers gave a presentation on the future North Carolina National Terminal that is being planned for Brunswick County.

6. Discussion Items

a. Modification to amend the Functional Classification map to change Brentwood Drive from a local street to collector street

Mr. Kozlosky told members there has been a request from Paramount Engineering to amend the functional classification map. He suggested moving that item ahead on the agenda. Mr. Eggert made the motion to move item 6-a ahead. Mr. O'Keefe seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

Mr. Kozlosky introduced Mr. Brian Geschickter, who is the attorney for the petitioner.

Mr. Geschickter told members they are requesting a modification to amend the functional classification map to change Brentwood Drive from a local street to a collector street. He said they have already gotten TRC approval to put in a 90-unit development at the end of Brentwood Drive that is going to be San Souci Drive. He anticipates having 30-units in by the end of this

year. According to the traffic count they received this morning, a one-day trip count on Brentwood Drive is 309 vehicles. They anticipated trip counts from the 30-units of the 90-unit development will add another 343 trips. San Souci will connect to Palmetto Drive, which under FHWA classification, you will have two roads connecting at Brentwood; it brings Brentwood Drive into the idea of being a collector road because it will connect two local roads to Castle Hayne as an arterial road. He said they feel this is not a future use, it's the impending use of the property, especially with the development having already been given TRC approval. The right-of-way for an existing street must be 50-feet; Brentwood Drive is at 80-feet already. It meets all the classifications to be a collector road. He told members Mr. McFarland is also planning on putting in 52-unit development on Brentwood Drive and that will add another 360 trips by the end of the year. We will have 1,000 trips on the road by the beginning of 2009, not 5 years down the road.

Mr. Mello told members staff went to Brentwood Drive to assess the area. There are roughly 30 homes on Brentwood Drive, with 30 driveways, which are about every 72 feet. The road is 2100 feet long and turns right and becomes Palmetto Drive. It is un-striped, on a 60-foot right-of-way, with 18 to 20 feet of pavement. It is primarily used to access abutting properties. Mr. Mello said Brentwood Drive currently does meet the local street classification. It is not functioning currently as a collector street. Mr. Mello stated that staff updates the functional classification map on a regular basis. There is not a precedent for reclassifying a roadway prior to development occurring. They considered an amendment to the functional classification map last year with the River to Sea Project, but it was denied.

Mr. Kozlosky told members there would be some implications if we change it from the Federal Highway Administration. Ms. Stark told members Federal Highway Administration looks at it as a network and also at current counts, not projected or future counts. If they reclassify the street, they are obligated to put funding towards this and take away from other projects already existing in need.

Mr. Kozlosky asked if the purpose for this request to reclassify the road is to enable the developers to increase the density within their development. Mr. McFarland said they are applying for a multi-family designation with 26 duplexes which has already been approved.

Mr. Kozlosky told members this goes back to more of a land-use issue rather than a transportation issue. The county allows for increased density on collector streets as opposed to local streets. Mr. Kozlosky suggested that the county might rather consider amending their zoning code and subdivision ordinance. Therefore, one would not be making amendments to the functional classification system that impacts transportation and funding.

Mr. O'Keefe said that was a good point but it goes back to counties having to deal with the inability to construct road projects on their own; as well as the growing problems with the rural roads system. The county's zoning ordinance relies heavily on the functional classification that the MPO provides to limit density, to really limit use on roads that are not classified as collector or major/minor arterials. To change the ordinance to take that reference back to the functional map out of the ordinance would open up roads, like Brentwood, to higher density development right now. He told members that the impact may not be that great in an urban area, but in an area that really is rural right now, the difference in density goes from 2.5 units per acre to 10.2 units per acre. The multiplier effect of the impact is significant. County planning staff likes the process that is required for updating the classification. He told members it deserves a lot of conversation before we change the ordinance to take that reference out. It was well thought out when it was put in and there may be way to improve it. However, the functional classification map has a process for updating as does the text amendment for zoning ordinances. It's not supposed to be easy.

Mr. Kozlosky said the Federal Highway Administration looks at how the street functions today. With 309 vehicle trips, Brentwood does not function as a collector street today. It may function as a collector street in the future, and at that time then we can go back and reconsider the function.

Mr. O'Keefe asked what are we looking for today? Is the process to change the local classification map something we can do locally; or, do we want it to agree with FHWA? Mr. Kozlosky told members in order for us to change the local classification map, it would have to be approved by the state, and then Federal Highway. Ms. Stark said the issue must go through the TCC, and then to the TAC, then you need to go to the state. The state will draw up the proposal and then send it back down to the TCC, the TAC, and then to FHWA. Ms. Stark stated that just because corridors are labeled as future collector streets, it does not necessarily guarantee it will be approved as such. It must still go through the process.

Mr. Kozlosky said his recommendation is for the county to consider amending their zoning ordinance to analyze the impact these classifications or re-designation may have on the transportation network and possibly consider alternatives to move this process out of the MPO level and consider it at the county planning stage. Mr. O'Keefe said he would ask what would be the point to move the classification of the streets to a body that doesn't have any authority to control how the streets are built and maintained. Mr. Kozlosky said it's time to take the classification out of the ordinances and try to figure out another way to determine density. Mr. Kozlosky told members this is more of a land-use decision than it is a transportation decision. This decision should be made at the county level, as opposed to TAC level.

Mr. O'Keefe said what the county has chosen to do, by including the language in their zoning ordinance, is rely on this classification to help control density. With the ramifications about cost and maintenance, it appears that the state is trying to step back from taking over private streets. There are some well-publicized issues with maintaining secondary roads and the county needs to proceed very carefully. He said he understands the issue and they are going to hear it more and more because people want more density in areas where, in the past, it was not conceived that development was not going to happen.

Mr. Kozlosky said he would like to see the county go back and look at their subdivision and zoning ordinances prior to the TCC making any recommendation on this item. Mr. O'Keefe suggested that the county come back at the next meeting with a synopsis of how the functional classification is currently used in the county's zoning ordinance and exploring the impacts of the changes. Mr. Kozlosky agreed and made the motion to table the item until the next meeting and the county will bring back additional information. Mr. Vafier seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

4. **Old Business**

There were no items of old business.

5. **New Business**

a. **Municipal Agreement with NCDOT for the Market Street Corridor Plan**

Mr. Kozlosky told member on March 6th the Board of Transportation awarded the City of Wilmington and the Wilmington MPO \$275,000 to complete a corridor study on Market Street. The study will focus on ways to better integrate transportation and land use planning. The funds are being moved from the U-4902 project. It is the first time in the state that funds have been programmed in this manner. The focus will be recommendations for access management strategies, interconnectivity, improved development standards, as well as the development of

collector streets for improving mobility and safety along the Market Street corridor. The U-4902 funding is programmed for right-of-way acquisition in 2009 and construction in 2010.

Mr. Owens made the motion to endorse the agreement between the City of Wilmington, the MPO and NCDOT for the Market Street corridor plan and forward to the TAC for consideration. Mr. O'Keefe seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

b. Resolution requesting the General Assembly consider amending House Bill 1473 to permit a "sunset" clause and be project specific

Mr. Kozlosky told members this resolution is requesting the General Assembly to modify the budget or draft new legislation that will allow for the ¼-cent sales tax or .4% land transfer tax also allow that tax to "sunset"; as well as allow for the referendum to be project specific so the community will know what they are voting on when they go to the polls. There has been discussion at the county-level. The commissioners have said that they do support having the "sunset", as well as the legislation being project specific. Mr. O'Keefe said it will give us another tool to fund transportation projects or any projects that are specific and "sunset". Mr. Kozlosky said it could be any project; it could be anything from public education to transportation. It will allow the County Commissioner to identify what projects this referendum will go for and once the debt is paid off, you could "sunset" the tax.

Ms Ayers asked if this request is just saying if there was a sales tax, this will give you the tools that will allow it to be project specific and also allow the tax to "sunset". We are not making any recommendations about recommending a sales tax. Mr. Kozlosky agreed. Ms Ayers made the motion to endorse the request to the General Assembly to consider amending House Bill 1473 to allow a "sunset" clause and be project specific and forward it to the TAC for consideration. Mr. O'Keefe seconded the motion and it carried unanimously

c. Resolution requesting NCDOT consider Safe Routes to School funding for bicycle/pedestrian improvements at Independence Boulevard/Park Avenue

Mr. Mello told members staff has received repeated request from residents of Forest Hills for pedestrian amenities at Park Avenue and Independence Boulevard in order for them to walk or bicycle over to Empie Park and schools that are on the east side of Independence Boulevard. Staff visited the site to look at possible options for accommodating pedestrians. The engineering staff is currently working on an estimate for the proposed options for the project that include a short multi-use path and some pedestrian signal-heads at a marked crosswalk across Independence Boulevard. The resolution is asking NCDOT to consider partnering with the MPO in using their division Safe Routes to School (SRTS) funds. There are four (4) schools within two (2) miles and this is a key-intersection that connects several residential neighborhoods. The resolution is asking for support in asking DOT to use SRTS funding for the signalization portion of this project.

Ms. Ayers made the motion to endorse the resolution requesting NCDOT consider Safe Routes to School funding for bicycle/pedestrian improvements at Independence Boulevard/Park Avenue and forwarding to the TAC for consideration. Mr. Eby seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

7. Project Updates

a. Dow Road Widening and Extension

Mr. Kozlosky told member the purpose of this study is to gain support from the Department of Defense. The study will also identify the preferred alignment for the corridor, recognizing that if it does have to go through the DOT funding cycle, then we will have to go through the merger process. However, there is an opportunity for some type of local revenue source that could be

leveraged for this project and we feel it is important to begin the planning on the project. Staff held the kick-off meeting and plan to hold the first stake-holder meeting in June or July. The property owner list is being compiled for mailing the meeting notices.

b. Monkey Junction Collector Street Plan

Mr. Kozlosky told member staff went to the public with a map that identified the existing and future collector streets. It is hoped that the map will provide a guide as development occurs in southern New Hanover County. Staff has done the data collection and will work on the text for the plan as time becomes available. Staff anticipates the collector street plan to be ready for presentation to the county commissioners at the end of this year.

c. NCDOT Project Update

attached

8. Announcements

- a. **NC Public Transportation Meeting- June 2th- 4th**
- b. **NC SITE Mid-year Meeting- June 12th-13th**
- c. **Wilmington Bike/ Pedestrian Committee Meeting- June 12th**

9. Adjournment

With no further items, the meeting was adjourned at 11:45 am.