

Meeting Minutes
Wilmington Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization
Transportation Advisory Committee
Date: January 28, 2009

Members Present:

Jonathan Barfield, Cape Fear Public Transportation Authority
Bill Sue, Brunswick County
Tommy Wallace, Town of Leland
Mac Montgomery, Town of Kure Beach
Jason Thompson, New Hanover County
Bill Saffo, City of Wilmington
Bill Blair, Town of Wrightsville Beach
Mike Ballard, Town of Navassa
Lanny Wilson, Chairman, NCBOT

Staff Present:

Mike Kozlosky, Executive Director
Anthony Prinz, Transportation Planner
Joshuah Mello, Transportation Planner

Others Present:

Joe Blair

1. Call to Order

Mr. Wilson called the meeting to order at 4:00 PM.

2. Approval of Minutes

With the correction of adding Mr. Ballard's name to the member's in attendance the motion to approve the minutes for the December 17th meeting carried unanimously.

3. Public Comment Period

Mr. Andy Koeppel told members he would like to request that the TAC pass a resolution supporting the restoration of the Castle Hayne-Wallace Rail Line. He feels a resolution will give special emphasis to the restoration. Mr. Saffo asked if the TAC had already passed a resolution supporting the restoration of the Castle Hayne-Wallace Rail Line. Mr. Kozlosky told members the TAC passed the resolution last year in support of the restoration. Mr. Koeppel pointed out that there is new administration in Raleigh right now and they may not be aware of the resolution. Mr. Kozlosky told member he will send a copy of that resolution to the new Secretary of Transportation in Raleigh.

4. Presentation –

a. Recognition Award

Ms. Wilson and Mr. Kozlosky presented a certificate of appreciation to Mr. Joe Blair for his years of dedicated service to the NCDOT and the Wilmington Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization on the behalf of the Transportation Advisory Committee.

5. Old Business

None

6. New Business

a. Resolution supporting the Castle Hayne Small Area Plan

Mr. O'Keefe gave a presentation on the Castle Hayne Small Area Plan. He told members the New Hanover County Commissioners endorsed the plan at their December meeting. Following the presentation, Mr. Barfield made the motion to support the Castle Hayne Small Area Plan. Mr. Thompson seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

b. Resolution supporting the 21st Century Transportation Committee recommendations to the NC General Assembly

Mr. Kozlosky told members the final report was released from the 21st Century Transportation Committee on December 10th. The recommendations in the report identify ways to generate additional revenue and also include some policy recommendations to improve transportation infrastructure in the state from a level-of-service "D" to a level-of-service "B". Mr. Thompson told members he disagrees with the recommendation regarding the vehicle-miles-traveled fees. Mr. Sue said he agreed with Mr. Thompson and his concern is how you are going to get people just passing through the state that are using our roads. Mr. Wilson said the idea behind the recommendations was to give the legislature a menu of options and allow them to pick which options they felt would best be met with citizen approval. Mr. Saffo made to motion to support the recommendations from the 21st Century Transportation Committee. Mr. Wallace seconded the motion. The motion carried 8 to 1 with Mr. Thompson opposing.

c. Resolution of Support for the West Pender Rail Trail

Mr. Mello told members staff has been working with the East Coast Greenway Alliance, Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, the Pender County Planning Department and some local residents to preserve the abandoned railroad corridor that runs parallel to US 421 from the USS North Carolina north to Fayetteville. They are investigating the feasibility of a greenway to connect the Moore's Creek Battlefield with the USS North Carolina. Mr. Thompson made the motion to support the development of the West Pender Rail Trail. Mr. Ballard seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

d. Resolution of Support for Bicycle Lanes on North 23rd Street and Wrightsville Avenue

Mr. Mello told members NCDOT staff put together a resurfacing package for certain roadways in New Hanover County in December 2008. The City and WMPO staff would like to see bicycle lanes on North 23rd Street, between Princess Place Drive and Market Street, and Wrightsville Avenue, between Military Cutoff Road and Eastwood Road. The resolution is asking the NCDOT local division office to work cooperatively with NCDOT Division of Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation and the City of Wilmington to identify funding and amend the resurfacing package to include continuous bicycle lanes on these two roadways. There will be a minimal amount of pavement required for the bicycle lane; it would just require amending the pavement marking plan. Mr. Thompson made the motion to support the request for bicycle lanes on North 23rd Street and Wrightsville Avenue. Mr. Barfield seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

e. Resolution supporting New Hanover County's Grant application for a Safe Routes to School Grant for Ogden Elementary

Mr. Thompson made the motion to support New Hanover County's application for a Safe Route to School Grant for Ogden Elementary School. Mr. Sue seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

f. Election of Officers

Mr. Sue nominated Mr. Wilson for Chair and Ms. Padgett for Vice-chair. Mr. Barfield seconded the nomination and the vote was unanimous.

7. Discussion

a. Dow Road Corridor Plan

Mr. Kozlosky told members the previous study was looking at widening Dow Road from Snows Cut Bridge down to Fort Fisher. The Town of Kure beach did not support the extension of Dow Road to Fort Fisher, but did support the study of the existing facility as well as bicycle and pedestrian facilities improvements. The TAC directed staff to reduce the scope of the project to between Snows Cut Bridge and K Avenue.

Mr. Kozlosky told members that the Town of Carolina Beach is currently working with Wilbur Smith and Associates on a streetscape project. The initial cost of the study was \$90,000. By coordinating these two projects, staff was able to renegotiate the cost to \$37,500. Staff recommended the board take action to support the reduced scope of the corridor plan and continue working with Wilbur Smith and Associates.

Mr. Wilson told members he has personal interest along the corridor and would like to request that he be recused from the vote. Mr. Thompson made the motion to recuse Mr. Wilson. Mr. Sue seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

Mr. Thompson made the motion to move forward with continuing the contract with Wilbur Smith and Associates for the reduced scope for the Dow Road Corridor Plan. Mr. Saffo seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

b. Draft Walk Wilmington: Comprehensive Pedestrian Plan

Mr. Mello told members the City of Wilmington received a grant from NCDOT in the amount of \$39,000. The city contributed \$26,000 to complete a comprehensive pedestrian plan for the City of Wilmington. The draft plan is posted on the WMPO website and staff is taking comments. Following the comment period, staff will bring a final draft plan to the TAC in March for review and adoption.

c. Wrightsville Beach bicycle Facilities Study Alternatives

Mr. Mello told members the Town of Wrightsville Beach held a public meeting on January 12th to examine alternatives for a bicycle corridor from the drawbridge to Johnny Mercer's Pier, then turning north to the existing bicycle lane. 65 people attended the meeting. A survey was also available for the public to provide input on the project. Staff received over 400 survey responses. The majority of those preferred an on-road option which will be easier to construct and less expensive. Staff will refine the suggested alternatives routes and then come back to the public for feedback in a couple months.

8. Project Updates

a. Market Street Corridor Study

Mr. Kozlosky told members the Market Street Corridor study is moving forward. The first public meeting on the corridor study will take place on February 18th and 19th.

b. Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC)

Mr. Howard Loving, Co-chair for the committee updated members on the last meeting of the group. They are continuing to work on the Long Range Transportation Plan.

c. Bike/Pedestrian Committee

Mr. Mello told members the Bike/Ped committee is looking at bicycle routes near Ogden Elementary School in conjunction with the Safe Routes to School project.

d. NCDOT Project Update

attached

9. Announcements

- a. Bike/Pedestrian meeting – February 12th**
- b. Citizen Advisory Committee meeting- February 18th**
- c. National Multi-modal Transportation Steering Committee – Feb 12th and 13th**

Mr. Thompson told members he would like to request that the TAC work as a group to get the travesty that the Department of Transportation has done with the lowering the weights on our bridges turned around and get the limits back up. Mr. Sue stated that you have to fix the bridge first. Mr. Saffo said increasing the weight limits is hurting the bridges. Mr. Thompson said that is all up to debate and we need to be sure why those decisions were made. Mr. Wilson told members the Department of Transportation is going back to examine if there are certain types of repairs that can be made that will make it possible to allow for an increase in the weight limits. Mr. Thompson said he will be happy to sponsor a resolution if needed. Mr. Wilson suggested staff invite someone from the Department of Transportation to the next meeting to explain the new procedures and why there has been a reduction in weight limits on bridges all across the state.

Mr. Kozlosky told members he would like to make them aware of a letter received from the Brookside Gardens Home Owner Association. The development is located on Murrayville Road. The letter is to notify the TAC that they will be held liable and responsible for any injury, damage or possible death to the motoring public and the community residents should any such incident occur in the future. Mr. Kozlosky said they also sent a copy of the letter the Department of Transportation. Staff has been in communication with Mr. Pope, and Mr. Kozlosky said he anticipates that they will respond to the Home Owner Association (HOA). Mr. Kozlosky told members that there have been a few accidents in the past few weeks at that location and the HOA wants the Murrayville Corridor to be reviewed, especially in front of the entrance to the neighborhood.

10. Adjournment

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:01 pm

Respectfully submitted

Mike Kozlosky
Executive Director
Wilmington Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization