

**Wilmington Urban Area
Technical Coordinating Committee
Meeting Notes for January 12, 2011**

Members Present:

Mike Kozlosky, City of Wilmington
Sam Burgess, New Hanover County
Ken Vafier, Pender County
Albert Eby, Wave Transit
Shane York, NCDOT
Pat Walsh, Town of Belville
Athina Williams, Town of Belville
Helen Bunch, Brunswick County
Patrick Riddle, NCDOT
Don Eggert, Cape Fear RPO

Others Present:

Tara Murphy, City of Wilmington
Bill McDow, City of Wilmington

1. Call to Order

Mr. Kozlosky called the meeting to order at 10:06 am.

2. Approval of Minutes

The motion to approve the minutes for the December 1, 2010 meeting carried unanimously.

3. Old Business

No items

4. New Business

a. Resolution supporting corridor preservation for the Hampstead Bypass

Mr. Kozlosky told members that NCDOT is working on the environmental analysis for the Military Cutoff extension project and Hampstead Bypass. Military Cutoff extension is identified for funding in the draft STIP for right-of-way acquisition in 2014-2015 and construction in 2017, 2018 and 2019. The Hampstead Bypass is funded for right-of-way acquisition in 2017. The draft STIP has identified \$20 million for right-of-way for the Hampstead Bypass. We have to recognize that these funds will probably not purchase all the properties along the corridor, but it's a step in the right direction. Funding for the construction is outside of the STIP.

There were 13 route alternatives being evaluated. That number has been reduced down to six. The importance of the project is to get as far north on US 17 as possible and avoiding the Holly Shelter Game Lands. The PUD for the Bayberry has been approved and other developments in the area are moving forward. This is a strategic highway corridor that needs to be preserved and protected, Mr. Kozlosky suggested that a corridor preservation map be considered from the Wilmington Bypass to US 17 in Pender County. The Pender County Board of Commissioners adopted a resolution on January 4th encouraging the MPO to follow the procedures authorized in state statutes to preserve and protect the Hampstead Bypass. The Pender County Board of Commissioners suggested that the MPO to file the map because it is a regional project that includes New Hanover and Pender counties.

Mr. Kozlosky told members the Department will be holding a public input meeting in April. They plan to have the draft EIS completed by winter and the preferred alternative selected by summer. Mr. Kozlosky stated that his concern is that if we wait, developers could start to build because we are seeing a lot of planned growth in the Hampstead area. Mr. Vafier told members that

discussions with the developers for the Caisson Drive project, they seem to feel very certain that the market is there and have indicated that they are ready to move forward. He asked if the MPO will come back to adopt another resolution supporting the filing of a map after a specific corridor has been chosen.

Mr. Kozlosky said we know that the U-alignment would have more impacts to businesses along the US 17 corridor. It would also have an impact to the historic Poplar Grove site. The EH-alignment would have wetland and stream impacts, but would be the preferred alternative. Mr. Kozlosky stated that indications pointed to the EH-alternative being the preferred corridor but the current resolution is to support corridor preservation only. Mr. Vafier asked if we feel confident that the EH-alignment is going to be the selected corridor, should we include it in the language for the resolution? Mr. Kozlosky said if this is the wishes of the committee, we will need to update the resolution.

Mr. Riddle made the motion to support the resolution to preserve the corridor and include the EH-corridor as the preferred alignment and forward to the TAC for consideration. Mr. Burgess seconded the motion. The resolution with the amended language recommending the EH-corridor passed unanimously.

b. Resolution support the re-appointment of the Citizen Advisory Committee

Mr. Kozlosky told members the current members of the Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) have expressed the desire to continue working on transportation issues for the MPO. He said staff will be working on a creating a strategic business plan for the MPO and the CAC could be very helpful in the development of the plan. They could also work with Mr. York on the Comprehensive Transportation Plan.

Mr. Riddle said this has been a very effective group who worked well together on the long-range plan. Mr. Kozlosky agreed. Mr. Burgess asked if these members are willing to serve. Mr. Riddle pointed out that if the current member cannot serve, someone else could be appointed by the TAC member.

Mr. Riddle made the motion to support the re-appointment of the Citizen Advisory Committee and forward to the TAC for consideration. Mr. Burgess seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

c. Election of Officers

Mr. Eby made the motion to nominate Mr. Kozlosky for Chair and Mr. Bennett for Vice-Chair of the TCC. Mr. Eggert seconded the motion. Ms. Bunch made the motion to close the nominations. Mr. Kozlosky and Mr. Bennett were elected unanimously.

5. Discussion

a. Local Project Prioritization

Mr. Kozlosky told members that staff is considering the development of a data driven process to take the politics out of project selection and prioritization. The Cape Fear Commutes 2035 Transportation Plan identified a scoring matrix for ranking projects that are identified in the plan. The criteria used for ranking projects are based on Congestion Mitigation, Quality of Life and Safety. Current highway projects in the STIP have not been through a ranking process. NCDOT has a scoring matrix in place for ranking their projects. Mr. Kozlosky suggested scoring Congestion Mitigation with 75%, Quality of Life receive 12.5% and Safety at 12.5% as one alternative. He also suggested that a weighting-factor could be applied to congestion mitigation so that those scores would out score the quality of life and safety. He told members he just wanted to open discussions and start a dialogue on the process. He told members he would like to take something to the TAC for consideration in March.

Mr. Riddle told members the Department determines if a project is a good project based on data driven sources such as congestion, pavement, and safety. Mr. Kozlosky told members he does not want this to be an overly-cumbersome process. Mr. Eggert said he agreed that the process needs to be as simple as possible and should include a "human factor". Mr. Kozlosky said the process also needs to include a score for the TAC's priority ranking.

Mr. Vafier suggested forming a sub-committee to begin the process. Members agreed that forming a sub-committee would be beneficial. Members of the committee are Mr. Eggert, Mr. Burgess, Ms. Bunch, Ms. Murphy, Mr. Vafier, Mr. Riddle and Mr. Kozlosky. Mr. Kozlosky said he will schedule the first sub-committee meeting and send invitations to the members next week.

b. Unified Planning Work Program Development

Mr. Kozlosky told member staff is beginning to develop the Planning Work Program for the upcoming fiscal year. The MPO has about \$100,000 in the budget to hire consultants to conduct studies. Staff has received two resolutions requesting studies; one is from the Town of Leland asking that we update their collector street plan. The other request was from the Town of Wrightsville Beach requesting that we conduct a comprehensive transportation plan for the town and to look at all modes of transportation. Mr. Kozlosky asked members to send any suggested planning study requests to him by the end of January.

c. Strategic Business Plan

Mr. Kozlosky told members staff would like to develop a strategic business plan for the MPO. It will be the first in the history of Wilmington MPO. With the help of the CAC, they will be using the goals, objectives and policies that were included in the *Cape Fear Commutes 2035 Transportation Plan*. The CAC will help determine the criteria that they will focus on for the implementation of the plan. Staff will present the business plan to the TCC for additional direction and input. It will then be presented to the TAC. Mr. Kozlosky said he hopes to have the Strategic Business Plan in place at the beginning of the fiscal year in July.

6. Updates

a. Wilmington MPO/City of Wilmington

Mr. Kozlosky updated members on projects within the City of Wilmington. He told members that NCDOT held a public workshop on the US 17/NC 210 Corridor Study in Pender County on December 16th. The attendance was not as good as expected which may have been due to the holiday. A website has been created for the study and the next step is to conduct stake-holder interviews in January with business owners, residents and other interested parties along the corridor. We are looking at a June competition time for the project. The next public workshop will be in March and a presentation will be made in June.

Mr. Kozlosky reminded members that the TAC has asked member jurisdictions to adopt a resolution of support for the *Cape Fear Commutes 2035 Transportation Plan* and the resolution supporting the acceleration of the Wilmington Bypass. He told members that Pender and New Hanover Counties have already adopted the resolutions and it will be going to the Wilmington City Council at their meeting in January.

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 26, 2010. After adoption by New Hanover County Commissioners and the Wilmington City Council, it will then come back to the TCC and TAC for approval.

b. Cape Fear Public Transportation Authority

Mr. Eby told members it will be about 6 to 8 weeks before they finish construction of the transfer facility due to the cold weather. He said they are also working on the operations center on Division Drive.

c. NCDOT Project Update

Mr. Riddle updated members on the projects for NCDOT.

Mr. Riddle told members there have been a lot of discussion regarding the left-overs for South College Road from US 421 (Carolina Beach Road) to US 117 (Shipyard Blvd.). Mr. Kozlosky said Representative McComas asked if the project is still moving forward when he saw him at a meeting. Mr. Riddle said yes but there has been a lot of discussion/attention regarding the cross-overs at Ace Hardware and Bentley Drive. No changes have been made to the scope so far.

Mr. Riddle told members the Department will be letting new resurfacing contracts for Brunswick, New Hanover and Pender County in the next month.

8. Announcements

9. Adjournment

With no further items, the meeting was adjourned at 11:06am