

**Meeting Minutes**  
**Wilmington Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization**  
**Transportation Advisory Committee**  
**Date: August 29, 2012**

**Members Present:**

Laura Padgett, Chairman, City of Wilmington  
Joe Breault, Town of Belville  
Pat Batleman, Town of Leland  
Steve Shuttleworth, Town of Carolina Beach  
Bill Sisson, Town of Wrightsville Beach  
Jonathan Barfield, Cape Fear Public Transportation Authority  
Earl Sheridan, City of Wilmington  
George Brown, Pender County  
Brian Berger, New Hanover County

**Staff Present:**

Mike Kozlosky, Executive Director  
Tara Murphy, Associate Transportation Planner  
Suraiya Rashid, Associate Transportation Planner  
Bill McDow, Staff Engineer

**1. Call to Order**

Ms. Padgett called the meeting to order at 4:00 PM.

**2. Approval of Minutes:**

The minutes from the June 27, 2012 meeting were approved unanimously.

**3. Public Comment Period**

Mr. Andy Koeppel addressed members regarding the proposed MPO boundary expansion. He suggested that Surf City be given an observer status on the TAC Board. He also has concerns regarding the southern boundary expansion because there are no highway connections to those beach communities. He would also like to encourage members to give consideration to including the Boiling Springs Lake community.

**4. Presentations**

**a. Crossing over the Cape Fear River**

Mr. Bobby Lewis, Chief of Staff at NCDOT, gave a presentation on the options available to construct a new crossing over the Cape Fear River.

Following the presentation Ms. Padgett told Mr. Lewis that members of the TAC will need detailed information before they can make any recommendations for leading the project in one direction or another. Ms. Padgett noted that TAC members will need to have some idea of the total cost for each of the alternatives. That should include a gross estimate for all the parts and pieces needed to bring the project to completion. She told Mr. Lewis she would also like to see current information on the number of times the Cape Fear Memorial Bridge is opening to help the committee determine the type of bridge structure needed.

Mr. Shuttleworth commented that a workshop would also need to focus on revenue sources and how they could generate funding for the project. Mr. Shuttleworth suggested members submit questions to Mr. Kozlosky over the next two weeks for submittal to the Department prior to holding a workshop.

Mr. Shuttleworth made the motion for Mr. Kozlosky to schedule a workshop with NCDOT and members submit questions to him in the next 10 day. Ms. Batleman seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

## **5. Old Business**

### **a. Resolution Adopting the Agreement between the Wilmington MPO and the Lower Cape Fear Sustainable Communities Consortium**

Mr. Chris May, Director of the Cape Fear Council of Governments, told members the COG serves as the administrator for the \$1.2 million HUD grant for regional planning. Since the award of the grant, question and concerns have surfaced. He explained that the Consortium is a committee of appointed delegates that have no authority to approve anything. Nothing can be approved by the group or anyone in the group. They develop recommendations and initiatives which then come back to each of the boards, who may either approve or reject them. HUD, in their language in the scope of the grant, strongly recommends that the boards support these initiatives. At the same time, the initiatives are very vague in that they are suppose to be derived from meetings over a period of two years with the citizens in the community. What must be approved must be approved by the elected officials.

Mr. Shuttleworth noted that the steering committee members consist of City of Wilmington, New Hanover, Pender and Brunswick Counties, but it doesn't include any of the other smaller municipalities like Wrightsville Beach, Carolina Beach or Kure Beach. Mr. May said they were not excluded by design, that was just the original make up of the steering committee. There is an active initiative to try to include more municipalities.

Ms. Padgett told members this was a staff generated effort where the group of staff that are on the steering committee saw an opportunity to put the information together for the grant application. She suggested that if any municipalities that are not currently members are interested in joining the Consortium, they should take it to their board and request membership in the Consortium. Mr. Barfield reminded members that one of the requirements to be a member of the Consortium is that members contribute "in-kind" in terms of staff time and resources to be part of the initiative.

Mr. Barfield made the motion to approve the agreement between the Wilmington MPO and the Lower Cape Fear Sustainable Communities Consortium. Mr. Sheridan seconded the motion and it carried with 8 members voting in favor. Mr. Berger voted against the motion.

## **6. New Business**

### **a. Opening of a 30-day Public Comment Period for the STIP/MTIP Amendment**

Mr. Williams made the motion to open the 30-day public comment period for the STIP/MTIP Amendment. Mr. Sheridan seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

### **b. Resolution Adopting the STIP/MTIP Amendment**

Mr. Williams made the motion to adopt the STIP/MTIP Amendment. Mr. Sheridan seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

### **c. Resolution Adopting the Smoothed Urbanized Area Boundary**

Mr. Kozlosky told members on March 26<sup>th</sup> the US Census identified the Urbanized Areas and Urban Clusters. The Federal Highway Administration requires that the boundaries be smoothed to

eliminate any irregularities in the boundary and maintain logical control points. This is used for functional classification.

Mr. Sisson made the motion to adopt the smoothed Urbanized Area boundary. Mr. Berger seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

**d. Resolution Supporting Twin-Trailers in New Hanover County on US 17 (John J. Burney Freeway) between US 17 Business (Market Street and I-40; US 17 (also I-140) (John J. Burney Freeway) between I-40 and US 421 (Francis Peter Fensel Highway); US 17 (also US 421) (Francis Peter Fensel Highway) between I-140/US17 (John J. Burney Freeway) and US 74/NC 133; US 17 (Also US 74, US 421 and NC 133) between US 74/NC 133 and Brunswick County Line; in Brunswick County on US 17 (also (US 74 and NC 133) between the New Hanover County Line and US 74/76 (Andrew Jackson Highway)**

Mr. Williams made the motion to support twin-trailers in New Hanover County on US 17 (John J. Burney Freeway) between US 17 Business (Market Street and I-40; US 17 (also I-140) (John J. Burney Freeway) between I-40 and US 421 (Francis Peter Fensel Highway); US 17 (also US 421) (Francis Peter Fensel Highway) between I-140/US17 (John J. Burney Freeway) and US 74/NC 133; US 17 (Also US 74, US 421 and NC 133) between US 74/NC 133 and Brunswick County Line; in Brunswick County on US 17 (also (US 74 and NC 133) between the New Hanover County Line and US 74/76 (Andrew Jackson Highway). Mr. Berger seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

**e. Resolution Opposing Twin-Trailers on Market Street between Military Cutoff Road and the Wilmington Bypass and Requesting NCDOT Conduct Additional Public Hearings for Input on this Designation**

Mr. Kozlosky told members that NCDOT is in the process of designating US 17 Business (Market Street) between Military Cutoff Road and the Wilmington Bypass for the use of twin-trailers. NCDOT has requested comments on this designation by September 6<sup>th</sup>. Traffic counts on this section of Market Street range between 34,000 to 50,000. The Market Street Corridor Study acknowledges that the crash analysis on this section of the corridor had twice the crash rate of similar facilities in North Carolina. Based on those factors, staff would recommend that the TAC oppose the use of twin trailers on this section of roadway. Mr. Kozlosky noted that if two government entities oppose this resolution, then NCDOT would be required to conduct additional public hearings on the item.

Mr. Berger made the motion to oppose twin-trailers on Market Street between Military Cutoff Road and the Wilmington Bypass and request NCDOT conduct additional public hearings for input on this designation. Mr. Williams seconded the motion. The motion carried with 8 members voting in favor and Mr. Shuttleworth voted in opposition.

**f. Resolution Supporting the Application of Airlie Road for a Scenic Byway Designation**

Mr. Sisson made the motion to support the application of Airlie Road for a Scenic Byway Designation. Ms. Batleman seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

**8. Updates (moved ahead)**

Project updates for the Wilmington MPO/City of Wilmington and NCDOT are included in the agenda packet.

Mr. Eby provided an update to members on activities of the Cape Fear Public Transportation Authority. He told members that thanks to Ms. Padgett efforts, Amtrak has proposed to have a through-way bus service from Wilmington to Wilson. There were some concerns about where to pick-up passengers in Wilmington and they were able to work out a deal with Amtrak. Most likely they will be utilizing Forden Station for passenger pick-up and drop-off.

Mr. Eby said he would also like to express his appreciation to NCDOT for working with Cape Fear Public Transportation Authority to fund the new maintenance facility.

## **9. Announcements**

### **7. Discussion**

#### **a. Wilmington MPO Boundary Expansion**

Mr. Kozlosky told members the decision regarding the boundary expansion must be made by the end of the calendar year at the latest. Federal Highway Administration must certify our boundary by March 26, 2013 and a MOU must be adopted by all the communities that desire to be part of the MPO. Staff sent letters to Surf City and Topsail Beach. The Topsail Beach Town Council invited staff to attend their Council meeting on September 19<sup>th</sup>. Staff has not yet received a response back from Surf City. Mr. William noted that he will contact the Mayor of Surf City.

Mr. Kozlosky told members he received invitations to speak with the Mayors and Town Managers in the towns located in the southern boundary expansion area. He has not yet received any formal request from the entities in that area; however, they are holding discussions on the possibility of joining our MPO. Because those areas are outside of our Urbanized Area boundary, the MPO will not receive any additional funds to conduct transportation planning in that area.

Mr. Shuttleworth asked if there had been previous discussions regarding receiving rural planning funds to contribute to the Wilmington MPO. Mr. Kozlosky told members we would not receive any rural planning funds. However, the Transportation Management Area designation will allow us to receive direct attributable funds that can be used for planning or construction. Mr. Kozlosky noted that once the MPO receives these monies, the funds can either be used to conduct transportation planning or used for construction. Mr. Shuttleworth asked if the funds could be used for a combination of both planning and construction and when the funds would be available. Mr. Kozlosky told the members that funding could be used for both construction and planning, and the funding will be available in October of this year. Mr. Kozlosky noted that he would suggest we use a combination. He told members that given staff work-load, he would like to discuss the possibility of using some of the funds to hire additional staff.

Mr. Shuttleworth asked how much additional work would be involved, from a planning prospective if those municipalities were to be included in the WMPO. Mr. Kozlosky explained that there will be more area to cover, participation in additional meetings, assistance in development review and also development of grant applications.

Mr. Shuttleworth asked if the TAC would have the ability to come back at a later date to consider adding additional areas into the WMPO boundary if we elected not to include the southern areas right now. Mr. Kozlosky said the board could consider expanding its boundary in that area at any time if the communities desire. Mr. Shuttleworth said it made sense looking south toward Southport because we have been talking more about water transportation issues.

Ms. Padgett told members we do have an option to wait to take in these areas if they desire at a later date as we get more information on exactly what transportation patterns are down the road. She suggested that Mr. Kozlosky come back to the Board at the October meeting with letters from any towns requesting to be members of the MPO. She would also like to know what their populations are; and, using the current criteria, what dollars would come to the table that could contribute to hiring an additional staff person to help with the workload. She would also like to see points of a MOU that would be based on population with weighted voting.

Mr. Shuttleworth told members he felt that the only reason we have had discussions regarding expansion to the south is because of the concerns with Myrtle Beach's desire to expand in those areas. He said he does not believe that will happen and he is comfortable moving with Option 3. Ms. Padgett noted that at the first meeting she attended that there was some interest in becoming part of our MPO, rather than Myrtle Beaches' MPO.

Mr. Sisson told members that he too is leaning toward Option 3 if we change anything. The rest seems to be far enough in the future so that it can be addressed at that time if necessary. Ms. Batleman told members she agreed. Mr. Kozlosky told members that staff would like to have additional discussion with Surf City and Topsail Beach. In order to expand the boundary to include them, it requires that their board initiate and approve the expansion of the MPO boundary to include them.

Mr. Sheridan suggested that staff bring a resolution to the meeting in October to adopt the Option 3 boundary.

**b. Wilmington MPO Transportation Management Designation**

Mr. Kozlosky told members that as of July 18<sup>th</sup>, we were designated as a Transportation Management Area. That designation will involve additional requirements for the MPO. A representative from the Federal Highway Administration will be making a presentation at the September meeting regarding the Congestion Management Process.

Mr. Kozlosky noted that once the MPO receives TMA funding in October of this year, the Board will have two options available regarding how to use the funding. The TAC can receive the funds and give them to NCDOT; the Department would then manage the projects. Or, the board could receive these dollars, disperse the money as they desire and then the MPO or local government entity would have to manage the projects.

Mr. Kozlosky suggested that staff develop a prioritization process that could be used to prioritize projects being considered in disbursement of the funds. He noted that both Raleigh and Winston-Salem have both developed processes and he felt that that would be the most transparent way to disperse those funds. He said he would also like to bring back a proposal to expand the staffing of the MPO. Mr. Shuttleworth said he felt that the TAC should see how staff feels it is best served to allocate the funds for additional staff. Ms. Padgett agreed that a prioritization process is needed to address funding priorities.

**c. MAP-21 Transportation Authorization Bill**

Ms. Padgett told members MAP-21 is the new federal transportation bill that was passed in July. She suggested the item be brought back to the September or October meeting so that the TAC members could learn about changes that have occurred with the new Bill.

**10. Adjournment**

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:10 PM

Respectfully submitted  
Mike Kozlosky  
Executive Director  
Wilmington Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization

**THE ABOVE MINUTES ARE NOT A VERBATIM RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS.  
THE ENTIRE PROCEEDINGS ARE RECORDED ON A COMPACT DISC AS PART OF THIS RECORD.**