

**Wilmington Urban Area
Technical Coordinating Committee
Meeting Notes for November 28, 2012**

Members Present:

Mike Kozlosky, City of Wilmington
Robert Waring, Town of Leland
Pat Walsh, Town of Belville
Karyn Crichton, New Hanover County
Shane York, NCDOT
Patrick Riddle, NCDOT
Adrienne Harrington, TDM Coordinator
Helen Bunch, Brunswick County
Ben Andrea, Pender County
Megan Matheny, WAVE Transit
Sean Ryan, Town of Navassa
Stephanie Ayers, NC State Ports Authority
Eryn Moller, Town of Wrightsville Beach
Nancy Avery, Town of Kure Beach

Others in Attendance

Jill Stark, FHWA
Joe Geigle, FHWA

1. Call to Order

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

2. Approval of Minutes

Mr. Riddle made a correction to Item 6a in the meeting minutes. He noted that the Administrative Modification to delay the right-of-way for construction of the round-about on NC 133/117/132 in Castle Hayne was due to environmental issues for an existing large pipe under the route, not the installation of a pipe. With that correction, the minutes from the October 17, 2012 meeting were approved unanimously.

3. Old Business

No items of old business.

4. New Business

a. Resolution adopting the Wilmington MPO Planning Area Boundary

Mr. Kozlosky told members at the TAC's direction, the MPO boundary expansion will include the area in Pender County bordered by NC 210. The boundary will also expand from where the current boundary stops at Sloop Point Road up to and will abut the Town of Surf City, but does not include the town. The expansion does not require amendments to the current Bylaws.

Ms. Avery made the motion to support the adoption of the Wilmington MPO Planning Area Boundary and forward to the TAC for consideration. Mr. Andrea seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

b. Resolution adopting amendments to the WMPO's Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee Bylaws

Ms. Rashid told members that the Bike/Ped Committee decided to restructure their focus and re-define their role as a committee. They wanted to change the committee's objectives to reflect a more regional perspective for the MPO. The amendments to the bylaws reflect those changes.

Ms. Harrington made the motion to support the adoption of the amendments to the WMPO's Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee Bylaws and forward to the TAC for consideration. Ms. Crichton seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

c. Resolution supporting the City of Wilmington's application for the 2013 Recreational Trails Program grant

Ms. Harrington told members the City of Wilmington is submitting a Recreational Trails Program grant application for the construction of a multi-use trail on Park Avenue between Empie Park and Audubon Boulevard. This will be part of the River to Sea Bikeway and provide a connection to the Gary Shell Cross City Trail. The total estimated cost of the project is \$302,200 and the City of Wilmington will be providing the local match. Ms. Harrington noted that the application is due by the end of January.

Ms. Avery made the motion to support the City of Wilmington's application for the 2013 Recreational Trails Program grant and forward to the TAC for consideration. Ms. Moller seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

d. Resolution commending the North Carolina General Assembly and the North Carolina Department of Transportation on developing and adopting a data-driven prioritization process for transportation improvement projects

Mr. Kozlosky told members that the resolution originated through the NC Association of Metropolitan Planning Organization. The resolution recognizes and commends the General Assembly and NCDOT for developing and adopting a data-driven prioritization process to select transportation projects.

Ms. Ayers made the motion support the resolution commending the North Carolina General Assembly and the North Carolina Department of Transportation on developing and adopting a data-driven prioritization process for transportation improvement projects and forward to the TAC for consideration. Ms. Bunch seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

e. Resolution requesting the North Carolina Department of Transportation /North Carolina Turnpike Authority complete the environmental document to determine the best transportation solution to cross the Cape Fear River

Mr. Kozlosky told members the resolution was drafted as a result of the workshop held by the TAC on November 26th. Information was presented to TAC members on the development of an improved crossing over the Cape Fear River. There was not a significant amount of new information presented because the environmental document process was stopped in 2010. At the workshop, Mr. Lewis, NCDOT Chief of Staff, asked TAC members if they support moving forward with the completion of an environmental document to determine the best solution linking New Hanover and Brunswick counties. TAC members requested that staff bring a resolution forward for consideration to request the Department move forward with the environmental document. The document will provide the data to determine that best solution.

Ms. Ayers made the motion to request the North Carolina Department of Transportation /North Carolina Turnpike Authority complete the environmental document to determine the best transportation solution to cross the Cape Fear River and forward to the TAC for consideration. Ms. Bunch seconded the motion.

Mr. Waring told members that there is concern by the Town of Leland as to the study area. They would like to see the study area opened up a little further south and to at least include that in environmental document so they can make sure all the possibilities are truly being considered. He told members he does not think there is an objection to pursuing the document, just the boundaries.

Ms. Bunch noted that the resolution does not contain anything that really defines study area. Mr. Kozlosky told members that the original area as currently set would be the study area in the existing study. Mr. Waring noted that unless we augment the area to widen the scope, it will carry on as before.

Mr. Kozlosky asked if the TCC members wanted to request that the study area be expanded to include that area to the south as part of the resolution. Ms. Ayers told members she did not want to change her motion to include a new study area because from a Port prospective, going further south is going to be problematic. She noted that the current study area as determined is adequate.

Mr. Kozlosky asked if there was a substitute motion. Mr. Waring made the motion that the study area be expanded to consider a more southern area along the creek boundary south of Town Creek. Mr. Andrea asked how that would affect the time-line of the environmental study. Mr. Kozlosky told members it would delay the study because they would have to go back to evaluate the study area. Mr. Kozlosky called for a second to Mr. Waring's substitute motion. There was not a second to the motion.

Ms. Avery told members that some credence needs to be given to the area to the south because Leland has made it very clear they oppose this. They don't think it's good for their area. If we keep pushing it, there is just going to be more of the same. She said she thinks we are going to just stall if we don't say that consideration is to be given to areas further south.

Mr. Kozlosky told members as part of the motion, we could suggest that the TAC look at alternatives or approve the resolution as written with the request that areas to the south also be considered. Ms. Ayers said she would amend her original motion to say that.

Mr. Kozlosky suggested the revised resolution state "therefore, be it resolved that the Wilmington Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization's Transportation Advisory Committee requests the North Carolina Department of Transportation and North Carolina Turnpike Authority complete the environmental document to determine the best transportation solution to provide an improved crossing over the Cape Fear River and also consider areas to the south." Mr. Waring said he would second that.

Ms. Ayers asked if the addition of the language "also consider areas to the south." is potentially going to force the re-opening of the environmental study and if so, then she would retract her amendment to the motion. She said she is not opposed to considering every option as part of the

environmental document, but she is opposed to re-opening the environmental document and possibly delaying the study an additional two or three years.

Mr. Kozlosky suggested adopting the resolution as written and at the TAC meeting, staff indicates that there is a desire to look at alternatives to the south.

Ms. Crichton asked Mr. Waring why the Town of Leland is asking for the study area to be expanded to the south. Mr. Waring told members the impacts to the existing subdivisions has been perceived as negative by the town's board and the corridor will also divide the town's ability to grow naturally. Ms. Crichton asked how far to the south would the Town of Leland like to see the study area expanded. Mr. Waring said south of Town Creek and working back toward US 17

Ms. Ayers told members the problem with a more southern alignment is that it no longer meets the requirement to complete the loop around Wilmington. Mr. Kozlosky noted that if a bridge is brought that far south, it would not draw as much traffic. Ms. Ayers said one of the justifications for the project was to benefit the truck freight traffic coming into the Port. If you relocate the bridge too far to the south, it's no longer valuable to the freight traffic. Freight traffic will continue to move over the Cape Fear Memorial Bridge and you have negated much of the justification for the project.

Ms. Stark told members the merger group is still at merger point-one and she doesn't believe this will impact the study at this point. Mr. Kozlosky said if the resolution goes forward as written, he will inform the TAC that there was discussion regarding expanding the study area. Mr. Waring said he could agree with that if the TAC is made aware of the request to consider the expanding of the study area.

Mr. Kozlosky called for a vote on Ms. Ayers' original motion requesting that the North Carolina Department of Transportation/North Carolina Turnpike Authority complete the environmental document to determine the best transportation solution to cross the Cape Fear River and forward to the TAC for consideration. The motion carried with 13 members voting in favor. Ms. Avery voted against the motion.

f. Adoption of the 2013 Meeting Schedule

Mr. Riddle made to motion to adopt the 2013 TCC meeting schedule. Ms. Bunch seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

5. Discussion

a. Congestion Management Process

Ms. Rashid told members that staff has begun working on developing the Congestion Management Process. As part of that assessment, staff is compiling an inventory of the tools used by WMPO members for data analysis that may assist in measuring congestion. Mr. Kozlosky told members the MPO is required to adopt a Congestion Management Process by January of 2014.

Ms. Rashid asked if anyone would like to participate in a workgroup for developing the process. Ms. Ayers, Ms. Harrington, Mr. Riddle, Mr. Waring and Ms. Bunch volunteered to participate on the workgroup.

b. Plan to ease traffic during expansion/constriction of the Causeway

Mr. Kozlosky told members Ms. Batleman, the TAC representative from the Town of Leland and Mr. Eby will be making a presentation to the TAC regarding a plan to ease traffic during expansion/constriction of the Causeway.

c. 2040 Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (added)

Mr. Kozlosky told members the 2040 Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program must be updated by March of 2015.

Ms. Rashid gave a presentation on the proposed process for updating the *Cape Fear Commutes 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan*. She noted that the Long Range Transportation Plan has undergone a name change and is now referred to as the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). She reviewed the MTP plan requirements, feedback from FTA and FHWA on the Cape Fear Commutes Plan 2035 plan, the proposed roles for creating a 2040 plan and the proposed process for going forward with the creation of the 2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan. She told members there will be regular update so that members will have opportunities to comment on the process.

Mr. Kozlosky told members staff will likely call for volunteers to serve on the MTP modal subcommittees in January.

6. Updates

Project updates for the Wilmington MPO/City of Wilmington and NCDOT are included in the agenda packet. Ms. Matheny updated members on WAVE Transit activities.

7. Announcements

8. Adjournment

With no further items, the meeting was adjourned at 11:05 am.

**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.**