

**Meeting Minutes**  
**Wilmington Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization**  
**Transportation Advisory Committee**  
**Date: May 29, 2013**

**Members Present:**

Laura Padgett, Chair, City of Wilmington  
Dean Lambeth, Town of Kure Beach  
Pat Batleman, Town of Leland  
Bill Sisson, Town of Wrightsville Beach  
Steve Shuttleworth, Town of Carolina Beach  
Frank Williams, Brunswick County  
Eulis Willis, Town of Navassa  
Woody White, New Hanover County  
David Williams, Pender County  
Jonathan Barfield, Cape Fear Public Transportation Authority

**Staff Present:**

Mike Kozlosky, Executive Director  
Tara Murphy, Associate Transportation Planner  
Suraiya Rashid, Associate Transportation Planner

**1. Call to Order**

Ms. Padgett called the meeting to order at 4:05pm.

**2. Ethics Statement**

Ms. Padgett read the conflict of interest statement and asked if members had any conflicts of interest with respect to the matters on the meeting agenda. There were no conflicts of interest reported.

**3. Approval of Minutes**

The minutes for April 24<sup>th</sup> were approved unanimously.

**4. Public Comment Period**

Ms. Joyce Nunes addressed members regarding the upcoming causeway improvements by NCDOT. She asked if she could receive an update on the time frame for the causeway project. Ms. Padgett noted that the information is included in the printed update from the Department and asked Ms. Fussell to provide information to her.

Mr. Andy Koeppel addressed members regarding the request from the Ports Authority to support their development of a North-South Internal Road Corridor. Mr. Koeppel told members he believes this will have a positive effect on truck traffic coming and going from the Ports and he supports the project.

**5. Presentation** (Move to later on the agenda)

**a. Governor's 25-Year Infrastructure Plan, Nick Tennyson, NCDOT**

## **6. Old Business**

No items

## **7. New Business**

### **a. Resolution amending the Congestion Management Process Network Map to include Village Road from US 17/74/76 to Old Fayetteville Road**

Mr. Kozlosky told members the Town of Leland requested that the Congestion Management Process Network Map include Village Road from US 17/74/76 to Old Fayetteville Road. The Steering Committee reviewed the proposed addition and supported the request.

Mr. Sisson made the motion to adopt the resolution to amend the Congestion Management Process Network Map to include Village Road from US 17/74/76 to Old Fayetteville Road. Mr. Williams seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

### **b. Resolution adopting the Congestion Management Process Corridor Types**

Ms. Rashid told members the next step in the Congestion Management Process is to identify corridor types. By recognizing the primary nature of the activity along the corridor, specific solutions can be identified to help mitigate congestion on that corridor.

Ms. Padgett said that because US Highway 17 is a critical corridor for freight movement, and it should be included on the freight corridor map. Mr. Frank Williams told members he would like to recommend including the spur of NC 133 that goes south toward Southport be included in the tourist map.

Mr. Barfield made a motion to adopt the Congestion Management Process Corridor Types with the addition of US Highway 17 to the north as a freight corridor and NC 133 added to the tourist corridors. Mr. Sisson seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

### **c. Resolution requesting NCDOT and WMPO exchange STIP Project R-4063, widening Village Road Phase II (SR 1472 from SR 1435 South Navassa Road) to SR 1438 (Lanvale Road) and replace it with project U-3337, constructing a new interchange at Old Fayetteville Road access to US 74**

Ms. Batleman told members that based on the Town of Leland's current growth and the need for congestion mitigation in the Town, they are requesting to exchange the prioritization of the widening Village Road Phase II for the constructing a new interchange at Old Fayetteville Road to US 74. Both projects are currently unfunded.

Mr. Barfield made a motion to adopt the resolution requesting NCDOT and WMPO exchange STIP Project R-4063, widening Village Road Phase II (SR 1472 from SR 1435 South Navassa Road) to SR 1438 (Lanvale Road) and replace it with project U-3337, constructing a new interchange at Old Fayetteville Road access to US 74. Mr. Sisson seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

### **d. Resolution supporting the development of a North-South Internal Road Corridor at the Port of Wilmington**

Mr. Kozlosky told members the North Carolina Ports Authority is work to identify and develop an internal roadway that would look at the relocation of the North Gate and intersect with N. Front

Street. The USDOT announced availability of Tiger Grant funding for transportation infrastructure investments and the Ports Authority is requesting for support for their application to develop this internal roadway network.

Mr. Sisson made the motion to adopt the resolution supporting the development of a North-South Internal Road Corridor at the Port of Wilmington. Ms. Batleman seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

**e. Resolution supporting the allocation of STP-DA funds to the selected 2013 projects**

Mr. Kozlosky gave a presentation on the project submittals for STP-DA funds and recommendations from the Project Selection Committee and TAC. He noted that the City of Wilmington submitted four projects, the Town of Leland submitted four projects, the Town of Carolina Beach submitted two projects and the Town of Navassa submitted one project for consideration. Using the evaluation criteria adopted by the TAC, all projects were ranked by score. Mr. Kozlosky reviewed four options for funding the submitted projects based on the scoring system used by the selection committee. He told members that funding option #4 offered the opportunity to look at funding projects geographically. That option would fund a project in each of the municipalities that applied for funds. He noted that the TCC recommended funding option #3, which was based solely on the established scoring criteria.

Mr. Sisson told members he is not comfortable funding any project that receives a low score in relation to possible points available. He told members he would like to see a project receive at least 50% of the total points available in order to qualify for the money. Ms. Padgett noted that this is a learning process and we can make necessary changes to the scoring process next year.

Mr. White asked if UNCW is participating in the funding process for the pedestrian bridge. He noted that he heard tremendous push-back on the project. He asked Mr. Kozlosky to elaborate on the project's feasibility. Mr. Kozlosky told members staff had met with UNCW and they indicated an interest in the project. They also indicated that they own land that could have value that could be leveraged against any type of funding that would be needed for the project. This would allow the continuation of the dialogue and discussions with the university. It could also give the opportunity to look to the NCDOT for high-hazard funds. In conversations with the Regional Traffic Engineer staff, they identified the possibility of about \$1.7 million that could be provided toward that project. He noted that by funding the NEPA/Design phase, it would allow the project to continue down the process and allows the time to identify future funding.

Mr. Kozlosky told members that projects funded with the STP-DA funding have to be under construction within 10 years and the federal funds must be expended within three years. If that project doesn't go under construction within that timeframe, the City of Wilmington would be liable for the repayment of those funds.

Mr. White told members the reason he asked the question is there is scrutiny at high levels about UNCW's decision to expand across the road when they have hundreds of acres in the back of their campus.

Ms. Padgett told members one of the issues when the Wilmington City Council approved the request to support the application for funding was the serious safety concern. Their concern is for students trying to get to class from the other side of the road and dangers involved when they cross South College Road.

Mr. Shuttleworth stated if the \$320,000 is to be set aside to do planning and design work and once you get the plans, where is the grant money coming from and is the City committed to matching that? Mr. Kozlosky said that the City is committed to matching up to \$600,000. Mr. Shuttleworth asked where's the City at in getting the \$3 million to build a pedestrian bridge. Mr. Kozlosky said the NEPA and design work would start that process and would provide the building block to start to try to secure funding.

Mr. White asked if it is appropriate for the TAC to take that first step as opposed to the University. Ms. Padgett told members this is the kind of thing that the STP-DA funds are intended for. It's a source that we have local control over and like most projects, locally directed money will bring other money to the table.

Mr. Shuttleworth stated that the pedestrian bridge project is the only project that is for design work; every other project is for construction. It seems to him that what we're doing is specking a bunch of design money to see if the City can go out and find the grant money to build the bridge. He said he is concerned that we may approve spending \$320,000 with no game plan to get to the finish line. Ms. Padgett reminded members that the City has committed \$600,000 as a local match.

Mr. White asked if we can ask the Department if they have any comments regarding the project. Mr. Michael Lee who sits on the NC Board of Transportation told members when he first heard of the project, he was very supportive; however, when he called UNCW they were not supportive of the project. He said when talking with the Chancellor, he said they would consider donating a site for the landing of the bridge. Mr. Lee noted that his concern is that UNCW is not supportive this project, then why are we spending \$320,000 to get the ball rolling. He said he has great concern about the potentially dangerous conditions that exist for students trying to cross to the University. Something needs to be done and UNCW needs to take part in it.

Ms. Padgett told members she has not heard from anyone that doesn't want the project to go forward; in fact she has had comments to the opposite. She suggested that the TAC move forward on the remainder of the projects and leave the decision on pedestrian bridge to the next meeting. That will allow the remaining projects to move forward. If we decide that the pedestrian bridge isn't a project we want to fund, then we can reallocate that money.

Ms. Batleman made a motion to accept funding option # 4 with the exception of project #1. Ms. Batleman said she would really like to see Navassa receive funding for their projects and pedestrian bridge project has had enough concern about it and it needs to be thoroughly resolved so everyone is comfortable with it that it come off right now and it can always go on again next year. Mr. Frank Williams seconded the motion.

Mr. White noted for purposes of discussion, if one were to offer a substitute motion that included the Navassa Main Street widening and the Park Avenue. That in effect would take the College Road pedestrian bridge off the map.

Mr. David Williams told members he wouldn't vote for the pedestrian bridge today; but a project that ranks this high should get a reprieve until next month. He said he just does not understand how UNCW would not back this project. He said he would like to see something in writing in response to why they would not support this project.

Ms. Padgett said there is a lack of information and she would like to see that we pick 4 to 5 projects that we want to go ahead and move forward with, than to eliminate or make a decision at this point without adequate information.

Mr. Shuttleworth told members he agreed with Mr. David Williams in that he couldn't support the pedestrian project today but staff should be given some time to contact the University and obtain addition information on how the City of Wilmington will fund a \$3 million project. He would not like to walk away from the project forever.

Mr. Sisson told members he would like to hear from more of the "players" on the project before he feels comfortable saying anything about it. He noted that he also has problems with funding the Wrightsville Avenue/Greenville Avenue intersection improvements just because it received such a low percentage of the available points for intersection improvement projects.

Ms. Padgett told members that it is her request that we leave it with Ms. Batleman's motion and clarify it by saying to not permanently remove the number 1 project. We can come back with the project and if we don't use it for the pedestrian walkway over College Road, the funds could be used at that time for Park Avenue. Ms. Batleman noted that she thinks once all the questions are ironed out, the South College overpass could happen, but for this particular exercise today, it is better to put that one off and get the rest of the projects done. She said she would like to amend her motion to include Old Fayetteville Road multi-use path, Heide Trask Drawbridge walkway, Island Greenway/Harper Avenue bike lanes, Main Street widening for bike lanes, Wrightsville Avenue/Greenville Avenue intersection improvements and the Park Avenue multi-use path, Phase II. Mr. Frank Williams seconded the amended motion. Mr. Sisson asked if the pedestrian bridge is still in the mix. Ms. Batleman said no, not this year.

Ms. Padgett made a substitute motion that the TAC approve projects, #2, #3, # 4, # 7 and the Wrightsville Avenue/Greenville Avenue intersection improvements, all from funding option # 4. She noted that she is temporarily dropping out the Park Avenue multi-use path project as mentioned in Ms. Batleman's earlier motion. Mr. Shuttleworth seconded the motion. Mr. Shuttleworth told members that would leave the ability for the South College Road pedestrian bridge to come back if staff can find support for the project by next month's meeting; if not, we can substitute the Park Avenue project.

With no further discussion, the Ms. Padgett's substitute motion carried unanimously.

**f. Resolution adopting the STIP/MTIP Amendments (April)**

Mr. Shuttleworth made the motion to adopt the STIP/MTIP amendments. Mr. Sisson seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

**g. Opening of 30-day Public Comment Period for the STIP/MTIP Amendments (May)**

Mr. Shuttleworth made the motion to open the 30-day Public Comment Period for the STIP/MTIP amendments. Mr. Sisson seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

**5. Presentation**

**a. Governor's 25-Year Infrastructure Plan, Nick Tennyson, NCDOT**

Mr. Nick Tennyson, NCDOT Chief Deputy for Support, gave a presentation on the status of the new Strategic Plan for Infrastructure for the State of North Carolina. He told members that Governor McCrory's "strategic mobility formula" was designed to enable the North Carolina Department of Transportation to use existing funds more efficiently to significantly increase projects that would better connect economic regions. The transportation funding plan will help accelerate investment in the state's infrastructure and generate economic growth.

**8. Discussion**

**a. Amendment to the Wilmington MPO Bylaws to allow more than one voting member from appropriate municipalities based on population**

Ms. Padgett told members that there has been a request to consider weighted-voting for the TAC. She suggested asking Staff to compile a report regarding the weighted-representation in the committee with the report being an instrument toward an amendment to the MPO By-laws and Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). She said that because this would be the first significant change to the MOU and to the by-laws, it merits serious discussion. She suggested requesting that staff provide comprehensive information before moving forward on a decision.

Ms. Batleman made a motion to ask staff to bring information back to the TAC with a range of options regarding weighted-representation within 90-days. Mr. Frank Williams seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

**b. Strategic Mobility Formula**

Ms. Padgett told members that the MPO staff has reviewed House Bill 817 which is the Governors' strategic mobility formula. Mr. Kozlosky said that the local delegation requested feedback on the bill and he asked for consensus from members to submit staff's findings to the delegation for consideration as this bill moves through the Senate. The members agreed that staff should submit the feedback presented to the local delegation.

**c. Crossing over the Cape Fear River Potential Alignments – Brunswick County**

Mr. Kozlosky told members that following discussion at the last meeting Mr. David Hollis, Town Manager for the Town of Leland met with URS. Mr. Kozlosky said staff is asking for consensus that we would request that URS study the red and green alignments on page 39 and 40 of the packet. The green alignment represents what was submitted by the Town of Leland and the red is more of a straightened out alignment to cross the river.

Ms. Batleman told members that they identified an area which is part of that expanded study area and they are requesting that URS come up with a route that makes sense. Mr. Kozlosky noted that he thought staff had an agreement that we were going to present a recommendation that could be supported by the town. Mr. Hollis told members the alignment in the packet is a general idea of what the Town was looking at. He talked with the MPO staff and URS about having some flexibility in that corridor. What the Town has looked at since then is some way to move it to try to ensure the alignment could become a reality. NCDOT suggested that any movement down US Highway 17 would require improvements to US Highway 17. In trying to minimize that, they looked at some possibilities of moving the terminus farther north. He told members the Town of Leland would like to see flexibility. They would like to have the flexibility to be able to move the alignment to wherever the engineers say this is the best path that causes the least amount of impact.

Ms. JoAnna Rocco, Environmental Planner with URS Corporation told members in order to expand the study area, they actually have to go back to the agencies in two weeks. They must get approval from them to expand the study area and look at a reasonable range of alternatives within that study area. She noted that Mr. Hollis had asked that the engineers do a "best-fit" scenario. She told members that the red and green alternatives on the maps in the packet were actually done by engineers at URS. They are based upon the resolution brought to them by the Town of Leland. It followed the path that they requested in their resolution and the lines were drawn by their engineers to avoid impacts with power lines and they are conceptual-alignments. Ms. Padgett reminded members that any corridor under review is going to have a thousand feet for consideration of environmental issues so that they can get the best spot for the road.

Ms. Fussell told members the red line on the map was drawn parallel with the request from the Town of Leland to miss the power lines and made it more viable option to study. Mr. Hollis stated that the Town thinks there are more options there to study then just the one they may have indicated. Ms. Fussell said the reason this is on the agenda is that Leland wants to suggest a route. The Department responded that if they suggested a route, we will study it with the same 1000-foot corridor as the other alternatives.

Mr. Frank Williams made a motion to table this to the next meeting and encourage the Town of Leland and URS to meet again. Ms. Susan Westberry with URS told members the agreement on the purpose and need and the agreement on the project study area will be discussed at the Concurrence Point 1 meeting on June 13<sup>th</sup>.

Ms. Padgett told members that the MPO has already asked to expand the study area to the blue line. But we asked for it to be expanded with a specific route put on the map in an effort not to start this project from day-1. This committee needs to work together for a regional solution to issues and this is a valuable regional road.

Mr. Sisson told members that the red line in the expanded study area has fulfilled 99% of the criteria that we laid out which did not exist prior to the TAC request. Mr. Frank Williams reminded members that he had made a motion to table the item. Ms. Padgett said we don't have a motion on the floor, we don't have an item on the floor, we have already made a decision to include that

route and the expanded area. The purpose of the discussion is to say have we changed our minds and do we want to redirect NCDOT with the consequences that has?

Mr. Sisson told members what he is hearing is that the red alternative is equally as competitive as any of the other alternatives that were selected prior to the expansion of the study area and this will allow the process to continue moving forward. Mr. Sisson told members he did not hear a second to Mr. Frank Williams's motion so he would like to make a motion to say that we want to tell URS and NCDOT to go ahead with the study of the red line and to incorporate that particular alignment within the expanded study area as we have already requested. Mr. David Williams seconded the motion and it carried in a 5 to 2 vote, with Mr. Frank Williams and Ms. Batleman voting no.

## **9. Updates**

### **a. Crossing over the Cape Fear River Work Group**

Mr. Padgett told she will forward the minutes from the last work group meeting to members.

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

## **10. Announcements**

## **11. Adjournment**

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:35 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.**