

Meeting Minutes

Wilmington Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization Transportation Advisory Committee

Date: September 25, 2013

Revised 10-30-13

Members Present:

Laura Padgett, Chair, City of Wilmington
Bill Sisson, Town of Wrightsville Beach
Steve Shuttleworth, Town of Carolina Beach
Frank Williams, Brunswick County
Earl Sheridan, City of Wilmington
Eulis Willis, Town of Navassa
Woody White, New Hanover County
Jon Tait, Town of Leland
Michael Lee, NC Board of Transportation

Staff Present:

Mike Kozlosky, Executive Director
Suraiya Rashid, Associate Transportation Planner

1. Call to Order

Ms. Padgett called the meeting to order at 4:02pm.

2. Conflict of Interest Reminder

Ms. Padgett asked if any members had a conflict of interest with any items on the meeting agenda. No members reported having a conflict of interest.

3. Approval of Minutes

The minutes for August 28th were approved unanimously.

4. Public Comment Period

Mr. Andy Koeppel addressed members regarding the resolution supporting an alternative access for the Love Grove neighborhood. Mr. Koeppel requested that staff identify the access routes that were studied in 2006 by the City of Wilmington during the discussion of Item 6a.

5. Presentations

a. Traffic Forecasting – Nora McCann, NCDOT

Ms. McCann, with NCDOT's Transportation Planning Branch gave a brief overview on Traffic Forecasting. She reviewed information on how traffic forecasts are created, what information is contained in the report and how the data collection can be used to support transportation projects.

b. Surface Transportation Program-Direct Attributable (STP-DA) and Transportation Alternatives Program-Direct Attributable (TAP-DA) 2014 Call for Projects – Suraiya Rashid

Ms. Rashid gave a presentation on the application process for submitting projects for the 2014 STP-DA and TAP-DA call for projects. She told members the call for projects was released on September 16th for FY 2014. She noted that staff will offer pre-application review option prior to the submittal deadline. The pre-application due date is October 15th

and the final submittal deadline is November 15th. Ms. Stark, with Federal Highway Administration reminded members that there must be some movement with the project within 3 years from the date funding is allocated.

6. New Business

a. Resolution supporting an alternate access for the Love Grove neighborhood

Dr. Sheridan told members this has been a concern for the Love Grove neighborhood going back to the 1940's. He noted that a study was done for Wilmington's City Council in 2006 and at that time no action was taken due to funding issues. The train derailment in June emphasized the public safety aspect and the importance of having a second access for the community. Dr. Sheridan noted that CSX, NCDOT and the City of Wilmington are now having discussions regarding finding a solution to the issue. As the regional transportation body, he said it was important to bring the need for a second access to the TAC for support.

Mr. Frank Williams told members he thought the TAC should support the resolution requesting the second access. He asked where access was considered into the neighborhood. Mr. Kozlosky told members that the alternatives included access from MLK Parkway, One Tree Hill Way, a private road that ran adjacent to the RA Jefferies, an overpass via King Street and others. He noted that the resolution does not support any alternatives; it is an acknowledgement that the TAC supports establishing another access to the Love Grove community.

Mr. White made a motion to adopt the resolution supporting an alternative access for the Love Grove neighborhood. Mr. Sisson seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

b. Resolution supporting the installation of bicycle lanes on Wrightsville Avenue from Greenville Avenue to Oleander Drive and re-allocating the funds from the Myrtle Grove resurfacing project.

Mr. Kozlosky told members that on July 12, 2013, Ms. Laura Blackburn, Director of the NC Department of Bicycle and Pedestrian Division advised the Divisions that all available existing funding must be committed and constructed by the end of 2015. NCDOT announced a call for projects that can partner with resurfacing projects and utilize the bike/ped improvement funds for installation of bicycle lanes. These projects must be constructed within the two years to qualify.

Mr. Kozlosky told members that the MPO identified several resurfacing projects to the Department for consideration. NCDOT had previously allocated funds to the Myrtle Grove Road resurfacing project for bike lanes. The Department conducted a field review of Myrtle Grove Road and several other facilities for consideration. They determined that the Myrtle Grove Road has numerous locations where the shoulder width is inadequate to accommodate the widening. It also includes some environmentally sensitive areas that could cause delays in the acquiring permits. The Department's review did not anticipate any delays to permitting for the Wrightsville Avenue project from Greenville Avenue to Oleander Drive. The project also falls within the timeline requirements.

Mr. Frank Williams made a motion to support the installation of bicycle lanes on Wrightsville Avenue from Greenville Avenue to Oleander Drive and re-allocating the funds from the Myrtle Grove Road resurfacing project. Mr. Lee seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

c. Resolution adopting the Military Cutoff Trail as the selected TAP-DA Project for FY 2013

Mr. Kozlosky told members that three projects were submitted for TAP-DA funding. The first project was the Middle Sound Loop greenway with a total project cost of \$112,500. It scored a total of 46.75 points. Also submitted was the Military Cutoff Trail with a total project cost of \$297,435. It scored 83.75. The third project was the Pelican Drive/Salisbury Street bicycle improvements with a total project cost of \$143,439. It scored a total of 50 points. He said that based on the scoring criteria established by the TAC, staff recommends the Military Cutoff Road Multi-use Trail as the selected project for FY 2013.

Mr. Shuttleworth asked what can be done to increase the scoring for projects from the smaller jurisdictions. Mr. Kozlosky stated that the scores are based on the established criteria. Ms. Rashid told members that in looking at the three projects submitted for this year's funding, the Military Cutoff Road Multi-use Trail was a missing link between two constructed portions. She noted that staff plans to establish a sub-committee to review the criteria for scoring projects in 2015.

Mr. White asked if more citizens would be served if the Middle Sound Loop greenway and the Pelican Drive/Salisbury Street projects were combined. He noted that public benefit is the real fundamental criteria. Mr. Kozlosky said that the scoring was based on stand-alone projects. Mr. Sisson told members that the combining of projects could be helpful for future project submittals.

Mr. Shuttleworth told members that every time there has been any kind of review criteria, the Wilmington projects always rank higher. He asked what could the MPO do to help smaller municipalities submit projects for consideration. Ms. Rashid reminded members that a TCC subcommittee created the scoring criteria and they knew it would not be a perfect system the first time. Mr. Kozlosky told members it also comes back to local support due to the 20% local match. There are many Boards that are not willing to contribute the match. Ms. Rashid noted that the criteria was developed to take into consideration the number of citizens affected by a project. But, because Wilmington is a concentrated urban area, city projects will achieve the most public benefit and rise to the top in the scoring process.

Mr. White told members that he would like to adopt the one or a combination of projects that would affect more of the citizens in the County. He asked staff to give an opinion on how many people would be benefited by adopting the first or the last two projects. Mr. Kozlosky told members that in staff's opinion, the Military Cutoff Road Multi-use Trail project would affect the most citizens because of its close proximity to shopping, transit, schools and residential areas.

Mr. White made a motion to approve the resolution adopting the Military Cutoff Trail as the selected TAP-DA Project for FY 2013 because it affects more citizens. Mr. Lee seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

d. Resolution supporting the submission of Bicycle and Pedestrian Projects for Consideration by NCDOT in SPOT 3.0

Ms. Rashid told members under the Strategic Mobility Formula all modes of transportation will be competing for the same source of funds and all projects are required to be submitted through the TAC. She said in mid-2014 the TAC will have an opportunity to prioritize projects from each of the modes using a set of local input points. The list of MPO's Bicycle and Pedestrian Projects submitted for review was supported by the Bike/Ped Committee and the TCC. Ms. Rashid noted that the list is a modified version of the list that was submitted in Prioritization 2.0.

Mr. Frank Williams made a motion to adopt the resolution supporting the submission of Bicycle and Pedestrian Projects for consideration by NCDOT in SPOT 3.0. Mr. Sisson seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

e. Opening of the 30-day Public Comment Period for STIP/MTIP Amendments (September)

Mr. Lee made a motion to open the 30-day public comment period for STIP/MTIP amendments. Dr. Sheridan seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

7. Discussion

a. Strategic Mobility Formula

Mr. Kozlosky told members that staff will be bringing lists of roadway, aviation, and ferry projects to the TAC for consideration at the October meeting. Mr. Eby will bring WAVE's projects to the TAC for consideration. Mr. Kozlosky noted that the TAC members will begin the prioritization process in January of 2014. Methodology for prioritization must be approved and local input points assigned to the projects. He told members that key dates include submittal of projects between January 1st and January 31st. Methodology for prioritization must be submitted by April 30th. The assigning of local input points must be submitted between May 1st and July 31st so the Department can release the draft STIP for comment in December of 2014.

8. Updates

Mr. Kozlosky told member that the Merger Team met in Raleigh on September 18th. The alternatives were reviewed and the Merger Team decided to eliminate the alignment that had been proposed by the Town of Leland due to the additional travel time and environmental impacts. They agreed to also study an alignment that was developed by EPA that would come down US 421, across Eagle Island and tie into US 421/Carolina Beach Road.

Project updates for the Cape Fear River Work Group, the Wilmington MPO, CFPTA and NCDOT Division and Planning Branch are included in the agenda packet.

9. Announcements

10. Adjournment

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:16 PM

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