

Citizens Advisory Committee
6th Floor Conference Room, 320 Chestnut Street
Wednesday, June 20, 2018
Meeting Minutes

Members Present:

Laura Padgett, Chair, City of Wilmington
John Cawthorne, Vice Chair, Town of Kure
Beach
Web Bostic, New Hanover County
Sallie Rochelle, Pender County
Patrick Boykin, Town of Carolina Beach
Harold King, Town of Wrightsville Beach
Stuart Smith, Town of Belville
Brayton Willis, Town of Leland
Valorie Hatten, Town of Navassa
Vanessa Lacer, Cape Fear Public
Transportation Authority

Others Present:

Nazia Sarder, NCDOT
Mike Kozlosky, Executive Director, WMPO
Abigail Lorenzo, Senior Transportation
Planner, WMPO
Michael Madsen, GIS Analyst, WMPO
Fred Royal, Project Engineer, WMPO

1. Call to Order

Ms. Padgett called the meeting to order at 2:03 p.m. She acknowledged that Ms. Lorenzo is the new staff liaison to the Citizens Advisory Committee.

2. Approval of Minutes – May 9, 2018

Ms. Rochelle made a motion to approve the minutes of May 9, 2018, seconded by Mr. Cawthorne, and the motion carried unanimously.

3. Presentation – Emerging Technologies (Sign and Signals) – Fred Royal, WMPO

Mr. Royal gave a presentation on Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS), the fourth and last in the series on emerging technologies. He noted that this technology meters and monitors water, and sewer, energy use, and transportation systems in smart cities.

Mr. Royal stated that goals of ITS include enhancing/optimizing existing systems; reducing/managing congestion and delays; providing routing and signal preemption for emergency services; increasing pedestrian and bicycle safety; and responding to incidents that impact roadway capacity in real-time. He provided some day-to-day examples including monitoring intersections, and prioritizing and preempting traffic signals. He pointed out that this technology assists engineers in decision-making tasks by analyzing the system for traffic flow, safety and efficiency, and CO₂ emissions.

Mr. Royal stated that the Wilmington Fire Department plans to install about 27 signal preemption devices at intersections and on fire trucks. He pointed out that other emergency vehicles such as ambulances are without these devices, and would benefit from them.

Mr. Royal stated that ITS relies upon Ethernet, fiber optic or wireless connectivity. However, most of the traffic signals in Wilmington use standard electrical wiring. He commented that retrofitting existing signals would be a relatively inexpensive priority upgrade that would provide faster

transmittal of information with greater reliability, robustness, and ease of repair. He pointed out that ITS also offers more efficient analytical capability than traditional methods.

In response to an inquiry by Ms. Lacer, Mr. Royal stated that classic pedestrian (crossing) heads operate on a timer; whereas the newer models use radar.

Mr. Royal stated that the current Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) describes signal efficiencies and synchronizing systems, which ITS provides, and that one of the goals of the City of Wilmington is to use Intelligent Transportation Systems. He gave examples of a fish eye camera and software that collects analytical data. He added that DOT is currently testing a four-quadrant, gated radar railroad crossing pilot program. He summarized that ITS provides safety and emergency features, reduced CO₂ emissions, traffic efficiencies to lower congestion and delays, and assistive technology that will require connectivity and software enhancements.

Mr. Willis expressed concerns regarding system integration. Mr. Royal responded that the technology should be able to communicate via data link; however, there are many avenues to address compatibility, such as inter-local agreements between agencies and jurisdictions, and contracts with software vendors.

In regard to concerns expressed by Mr. Willis regarding the rate of technological change, Mr. Kozlosky stated that the last system update in Wilmington was in 2010 or 2011 from a DOS-based system. He noted that the lifecycle of the technology has been 10 to 15 years.

Ms. Padgett pointed out that this will be an important consideration for the 2045 Plan.

A question/answer and discussion period was held. Mr. Kozlosky clarified that the county and state have an agreement with the City of Wilmington to manage some signals outside city limits.

4. Cape Fear Moving Forward 2045 Public Outreach Update

Ms. Lorenzo reminded the Committee that public outreach will continue through July 31st.

Mr. Madsen stated that 1,150 surveys have been completed to date, more than double last month's results. He reported that the answers have remained similar to last month, and include the following:

- The majority of respondents currently drive a car to work/school;
- In the future, most respondents prefer to drive less and use other transportation modes more;
- Safety remains the first travel priority;
- More cost effective transportation topped funding priorities; and
- Bike/pedestrian safety efforts was the primary focus for investment.

Mr. Madsen reported that development impact fees dramatically outpaced other revenue sources. He added that the 18-29 age demographic for respondents increased from 6% to 10% thanks to outreach at farmers' markets. He noted that race and income demographics remained the same – predominantly Caucasian with an annual income of greater than \$100,000 (although 214 or 19% and 242 or 22% respondents respectively declined to respond).

Mr. Madsen stated that the number of comments on the public input map more than doubled in one month from 165 to 388; and the number of hits nearly doubled from 549 to 1,046. He noted that the number of votes on comments has more than tripled (nearly quadrupling) from 594 to

2,205. The number of comments on the roadway mode surpassed bike/pedestrian, which was in the lead in May. However, the number of votes on comments for bike/pedestrian increased to 1,025, which is consistent with the survey for the importance of a wide variety of transportation options and concerns regarding bike/pedestrian safety when it comes to investment.

Mr. Madsen stated that 43% of comments were for roadway and 39% were for bike/pedestrian. As for votes on comments, bike/pedestrian has the largest share at 51%, followed by roadway at 29%. He displayed a timeline of item views per day, gave an overview of some of the top comments for each of the transportation modes, and distributed to members samples of a beverage cozy promoting the plan that had been circulated at farmers' markets.

Mr. Madsen stated that June events will include manning a table for four hours at New Hanover County Regional Medical Center, Mayfaire or Independence Mall, Spanish church masses, and exploring other opportunities at community events throughout the region. He assured members that there is plenty of time for additional public input before the survey closes at the end of July.

Ms. Lorenzo stated that staff is working to identify further outreach opportunities with major employers in the area including Corning, PPD, GE, Alchami, UNCW, and Cape Fear Community College. She noted that Corning sent out a survey link to all of its employees yesterday.

In response to an inquiry by Ms. Padgett, Ms. Lorenzo stated that staff is working on another blast to go out to the City's general e-mail list this week and another at the beginning of July, following the success of the one at the beginning of May. She noted that staff has been conservative with the frequency of e-mails in order to avoid misidentification as spam.

Ms. Lacer suggested inserting the survey with utility bills to reach a broader demographic. Ms. Lorenzo responded that staff abandoned a strategy to partner with multiple utility services due to a lack of response from the Cape Fear Public Utility Authority.

Mr. Madsen stated that staff researched and presented Census data identifying environmental justice areas earlier in the process. He noted that 12 to 15 community churches and centers in lower income areas have been contacted that distributed information to members.

Ms. Padgett expressed appreciation to staff for their efforts. She also expressed some disappointment regarding the number of results compared to the last plan that reached about 4,000 respondents.

Ms. Padgett suggested posting signs next to computer terminals in public libraries to reach those of lower income without internet access at home. Mr. Madsen responded that staff distributed posters to all libraries in the region.

Ms. Lorenzo stated that placards have been placed in all of Wave's buses, with a couple wrapping the outside of buses. She added that a few billboards are also running. She invited additional suggestions and reminded members that a month and a half are left until the survey is closed.

Mr. Willis inquired about a newspaper challenge. Ms. Lorenzo responded that staff will look into running an ad. She noted that press releases were sent to the newspapers, and that another is scheduled to go out in July.

Ms. Padgett suggested a contest giveaway in the newspaper to entice participation.

Mr. Willis expressed concerns regarding the complexity of the draft point assignment. He suggested that messages need to be quick and simple.

Other suggestions for outreach included the weekly Saturday event at Maides Park, revisiting the Senior Resource Center for staff to gather additional surveys on electronic tablets, a Facebook live video spot such as the City's, a presence at the Employment Security Commission, the VA Clinic and the Social Security Office, and use of the message board at the DMV.

Mr. Bostic expressed concerns regarding the impact of regional bicycling organizations. A question/ answer and discussion period was held.

In response to an inquiry by Mr. Willis, Ms. Lorenzo stated that WECT-TV3 gave her a 15-minute interview in May. She also noted that the news media outlets have been very receptive in covering the regional meetings.

Ms. Padgett suggested contacting Spectrum Cable since that is what many people see first when they turn on the TV.

In response to concerns regarding the data by Ms. Lacer, Ms. Lorenzo reminded the Committee that the survey is only one element in the process of developing the plan, and that subject matter experts will guide the work of the modal subcommittees.

5. Project Submittals

Ms. Lorenzo stated that the modal subcommittees will develop goals, objectives and scoring criteria for projects over the next six to eight months. She noted that staff is in the process of compiling preliminary project lists for each transportation mode from the following sources:

1. MPO adopted plans including the MTP;
2. Public outreach (input map and transportation survey); and
3. Project submittal forms from MPO member jurisdictions.

Ms. Lorenzo stated that the project submittal form has been included in the agenda packet for informational purposes. She noted that prior to scoring, staff will assure that all projects for consideration are on a form as a tool for the consultant to provide cost estimates of each.

In response to an inquiry by Mr. Cawthorne, Ms. Lorenzo stated that planning staff of the MPO member jurisdictions and transportation partners (towns, the city, counties, the port and the airport) will submit forms with projects for consideration.

Mr. Willis expressed concerns regarding the objectivity of the scoring. Ms. Lorenzo stated that the modal subcommittees will begin meeting in July, with the exception of the Bike/Ped Committee, which met in June. She noted that the Citizens' Advisory Committee (CAC) will have an opportunity to review the goals, objectives and scoring criteria drafted by the modal subcommittees prior to their developing proposed projects lists.

Ms. Padgett reminded the Committee that the projects will also need to fit within the objectives of the state's plan, which is a data driven approach to determine funding. She noted that the elected boards will have an opportunity to review these project submittal forms, and encouraged members to contact planning staff of their respective jurisdictions. She clarified that the planning staff of member jurisdictions are responsible for submitting the forms (also available in electronic format) by July 31st.

Ms. Lorenzo pointed out that many projects are already on the radar of the various jurisdictions and planning partners. She noted that MPO staff is available to work with any staff needing assistance in completing the form at their request.

In response to an inquiry by Mr. Bostic, Ms. Lorenzo stated that both old and new projects will need to be submitted for consideration for inclusion in the 2045 Plan.

Mr. Smith expressed concerns regarding projects associated with new technologies. Ms. Padgett responded that new technologies may not come in the form of a project, which would be trans-jurisdictional; but as a general consideration for each of the modal subcommittees.

6. Modal Subcommittees

Ms. Lorenzo reminded the Committee that lists of modal subcommittee members have been included in the agenda packet. She noted that changes to the lists include the addition of Mr. Boykin to the Aviation Subcommittee; the removal of Ms. Rochelle from the Ferry Subcommittee at her request; and the replacement of Mr. Obrock with Mr. Willis on the Roadway Subcommittee.

Ms. Lorenzo stated that Mr. Allen Serkin, Cape Fear RPO, has volunteered to represent the interests of Southport on the Ferry Subcommittee, and to serve on any other subcommittees. She noted that he will also serve on the Freight/Rail Subcommittee. She added that Mr. Tom Goodwin, a pilot who represents a pilots' association, expressed an interest in serving as a general aviation representative. She noted that Ms. Padgett will be added to the Freight and Rail Subcommittee in the interest of the Rail Realignment Study.

Ms. Lorenzo stated that staff has been working for the past two months on filling the lists with members and only a few remain to be filled. She reiterated that the modal subcommittees will begin meeting in July with the exception of the Bike/Ped Committee, which began meeting in June. She added that dates of the July meetings have been included in the agenda packet; although a regular meeting schedule has yet to be determined. She noted that agenda packets will be sent a week in advance, and that a sample agenda has been include in today's CAC agenda packet.

In response to an inquiry by Mr. Cawthorne, Ms. Lorenzo stated that each of the modal subcommittees will elect a chair.

Ms. Padgett suggested that notice of modal subcommittee meetings be distributed two weeks in advance in consideration of summer schedules.

7. Additional Item(s)

Ms. Padgett stated that the next meeting of the Citizens Advisory Committee is scheduled for July 11th. She expressed concerns regarding meeting attendance and requested feedback from members on the current meeting day and time.

It was the consensus of the Committee to continue with the current schedule of meetings.

Ms. Padgett pointed out that the CAC may not need to meet monthly once the modal subcommittees begin. She expressed appreciation to members for their participation.

In response to an inquiry by Mr. Cawthorne, Ms. Padgett responded that presentations were made to governing boards by the MPO staff at the beginning of the plan. Mr. Kozlosky added that historically, some CAC members have had contact with governing and planning boards, and others have not.

Mr. Cawthorne proposed that staff provide presentation materials/information sheets to members to keep jurisdictions informed in order to maintain a consistency of message.

Mr. Kozlosky concurred and suggested that updates be provided following major milestones as opposed to any set timeframe.

Ms. Padgett reminded members that MPO staff interacts with planning staff of member jurisdictions, who expect this material, opportunity and input.

Mr. Cawthorne suggested that CAC members create a relationship with planning staff of their respective jurisdictions.

Ms. Padgett requested that the updates be in the form of a PowerPoint presentation.

In response to an inquiry by Mr. Kozlosky, Ms. Padgett stated that the MPO's presentation to elected boards of member jurisdictions has been their only exposure to the MTP so far. She commented that CAC members may need an opportunity for interaction with their respective elected bodies.

In response to an inquiry by Mr. Cawthorne, Mr. Kozlosky stated that the Town of Kure Beach is represented by Ms. Nancy Avery on the TCC, and Commissioner John Ellen on the MPO Board.

In response to an inquiry by Mr. Smith, Ms. Padgett stated that planning staff members are responsible for submitting project submittal forms, and for communicating with planning boards, committees or commissions.

8. Adjournment

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:24 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Abby Lorenzo
Senior Transportation Planner
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.**