



TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Minutes of March 28, 2007
2:00 p.m., Greensboro, NC
Blue Room
(County Commissioner's Briefing Room)
Old Guilford County Courthouse

TAC MEMBERS PRESENT

Sandy Carmany	<i>TAC Chair</i>	Doug Galyon	<i>NCDOT</i>
Keith Holliday	<i>Mayor, City of Greensboro</i>	Kirk Perkins	<i>Guilford County Board of Commissioners</i>
T. Dianne Bellamy-Small	<i>Greensboro City Council</i>		
Mike Winstead	<i>Guilford County Board of Commissioners</i>		

ATTENDANCE

Tyler Meyer	<i>GDOT / MPO</i>	Jim Westmoreland	<i>TCC Chair</i>
Craig McKinney	<i>GDOT / MPO</i>	Mike Mills	<i>NCDOT</i>
Peter Ohlms	<i>GDOT / MPO</i>	John Hunsinger	<i>NCDOT</i>
Peggy Holland	<i>GDOT / MPO</i>	Donald Arant	<i>City of Greensboro Engineering</i>
Lydia McIntyre	<i>GDOT / MPO</i>	Edgar Phillips	<i>Town of Pleasant Garden</i>

Sandy Carmany called the meeting to order at 2:07 p.m.

Action Items

I. Approve Minutes of February 21, 2007

Kirk Perkins moved for approval of the minutes. Keith Holliday seconded the motion. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the February 21, 2007 meeting.

Planning for the transportation future

2. Amend 2006-2007 Unified Planning Work Program

Tyler Meyer noted that the amendment was a relatively straightforward action that was necessary to ensure that unspent funds in the current fiscal year's Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) could be spent in future years. The amendment shifts such funds into unobligated balance. It also shifts funds between task codes, which are organized by basic work types, to improve tracking of line-item expenditures as requested by NCDOT. Meyer advised that future UPWPs would have their work types tracked in this way.

Keith Holliday moved to approve the UPWP amendment. Kirk Perkins seconded the motion. The Committee voted unanimously to amend the 2006-2007 Unified Planning Work Program as presented.

3. Reports, Concerns, and Discussion from MPO Area Towns - None

4. Citizen Comments

Sandy Carmany noted that a resident had contacted her with concerns about the plans for McConnell Road, specifically related to an S-curve in the road. The resident may attend a future TAC meeting to make public comments.

Business / Potential Action Items

1. Draft 2007-2013 MTIP Update

Lydia McIntyre presented an update on the Final Draft Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP), which was put out for a final public review period on March 1. An addendum sent out March 21 reflects significant additional changes to highway and transit projects.

Significant highway changes include the project descriptions for I-4715 (Milling and Resurfacing of I-40/I-85 Business) and I-4907 (Milling and Resurfacing of I-40/I-85). The extents were modified for each project. McIntyre advised that these changes would not affect the completed Conformity Report. Meyer stated that the TIP project description would be checked against the actual project limits and corrected if necessary.

Doug Galyon asked Mike Mills for a clarification. Mills advised that I-4907 had already been let to a contractor, and I-4715 would be let in July. Mills also advised of projects east of the region. He noted that numerous interstate maintenance projects would occur over the summer, with mostly night work and some weekends. Mills discussed potential alternate routes and noted that he would forward information about these major projects.

Keith Holliday inquired whether I-4715 could be delayed until the completion of the southern section of the Urban Loop in order to provide an alternate route. Mills advised that NCDOT was planning to coordinate its construction and contracting accordingly.

Holliday inquired about replacement of a bridge on I-40 at I-85 Business. Mills advised that the bridge would be replaced in 2008-09, but that bridge replacement funds are for replacement with a facility of the same size. Mills advised that engineers would look at the situation to revise the traffic pattern. Holliday asked why a bigger bridge would not be constructed, and Mills reiterated that bridge replacement funds only cover replacement, not expansion. Holliday noted that the bottleneck situation was dangerous. Mills advised that engineers would study it.

McIntyre advised that significant transit changes in the MTIP reflect a shift in funding to cover operational needs and core capital needs. Two additional capital projects for bus purchases were added to reflect 2005 and 2006 funds that had not been made available. Due to the release of funding apportionments for the Section 5307 formula funding program, the costs were modified for other existing projects.

McIntyre noted that the MTIP process was drawing to a close, with the final steps of compiling public comments, revising the MTIP, and TAC approval to occur in April. The March 8 public meeting attracted a substantial group of residents and interested parties with various concerns.

2. BiPed Implementation Update

Peggy Holland presented highlights of the implementation efforts related to the adopted Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Greenway Master Plan, including bike lanes, edgelines, bike routes, a bike map, shared-use paths, bike parking, and sidewalks.

Holland noted that bicycle lanes had been installed on Florida Street and Spring Garden Street. The next bicycle lanes are expected to be added to Westridge Road in summer 2007 and Willoughby Boulevard in fall 2007. Edgelines have been installed along portions of Florida Street and Spring Garden Street where bicycle lanes were not possible. Resurfacing of Hobbs Road in summer 2007 provides an opportunity to add edgelines from Jefferson Road to Starmount Farms. Cornwallis Drive is scheduled to receive edgelines or bicycle lanes from one block short of Holden Road to one block short of Elm Street.

Keith Holliday requested clarification of edgelines. Holland advised that they are lines typically drawn seven feet from the curb; the space between the curb and the edgeline is available for on-street parking or bicycling if no vehicles are parked there. Holliday recalled that neighbors resisted when the City installed the double-yellow line down the middle of Cornwallis. Holland noted that things may have changed, with Cornwallis residents requesting traffic-calming initiatives. Edgelines tend to cause traffic to slow down by visually constricting the travel lanes. Holland clarified the difference between bicycle lanes, which feature special signage and markings, and edgelines, which allow on-street parking within the marked-off space.

T. Dianne Bellamy-Small inquired whether cars can park within bicycle lanes, and Holland responded that City ordinance prohibits parking in designated bicycle lanes. Committee members continued discussing the differences between bicycle lanes and edgelines and the need to educate residents. Tyler Meyer noted that existing demand for on-street parking is one of the considerations used when choosing between bicycle lane and edgeline designs. Holland noted that educational information is available on the City Web site and that cyclists may choose to ride in the regular vehicle travel lane, even if a bicycle lane or edgeline is provided. Westmoreland noted that his experience as a cyclist indicated that if bicycle lanes or edgelines are provided, cyclists will use them. In response to a question from Holliday, Holland advised that cycling on sidewalks in Greensboro is legal outside downtown, but it is never recommended. Bellamy-Small suggested creating an informational segment to run on Channel 13, and Holland responded that staff would investigate this option.

Holland advised that the City's old bicycle route signs had been removed in preparation for installation of a new bicycle route system. The new routes, numbered 3, 6, 9, 12, and 16, connect outlying areas of the City through the downtown area and are planned to extend outside the City in the future. The accompanying bicycle map is still under development; staff hopes for a May 2007 distribution of 25,000 copies. Holland presented an image of the map and described its key features.

Holland advised that the City's Parks & Recreation Department had been working to create more trails. Staff are planning to visit the site of the potential Gracewood Greenway. Other trails under development include the Price Park Trail, Bicentennial Greenway, and a piece of the Downtown Greenway on Greensboro College property, which is a finalist for a \$60,000 grant.

Bellamy-Small inquired where the Gracewood Greenway is, and Holland advised that it parallels Bryan Boulevard from Green Valley Road to Westridge Road.

Holland noted that the Battleground Rail-Trail, which includes an underpass at Cone Boulevard, is in progress, with construction and ribbon-cuttings expected in late 2007 or early 2008. Holliday requested clarification of the underpass at Cone Boulevard and inquired how much it would cost. Meyer responded that he would need to get the current cost estimate, but that it would exceed \$1 million, with the funding primarily from federal STP-DA funds, and that staff could return with exact costs. Holliday expressed concern over the cost of the facility. Jim Westmoreland advised that a quality trail system required this facility at this location. Meyer noted that the Committee had approved funding for the project. Holliday asked if an at-grade crossing had been considered. Meyer replied that the option was considered but ruled out, given traffic conditions and proximity to the Cone Boulevard/Battleground Avenue intersection. Bellamy-Small inquired whether the underpass was preferable to a pedestrian bridge, and Meyer responded that it was, due to topography.

Holland stated that staff had been analyzing existing bicycle parking and looking at new bicycle parking options. The City is asking for developers to install bicycle racks as part of multifamily and student housing developments. The revised Land Development Ordinance may include requirements for bicycle racks, with incentives for developers who construct bicycle lockers, showers, and changing rooms.

Bellamy-Small inquired whether parking decks have bicycle racks, and Holland responded that all public decks except one have bike racks. The other has nearby bicycle parking. The Depot has a rack that can accommodate multiple bikes, and bicycle lockers are being considered for long-term bicycle parking there. The Parks & Recreation Department will install a rack at the Farmers' Curb Market. Bigger parks and recreation centers also have bicycle racks. Holland noted that she hopes to map bike racks and make them available through an online mapping viewer.

Holland advised that the City let a new sidewalk contract in February 2007 with approximately 21,000 feet of new sidewalk along West Market, Friendly, Elam, Holden, Pisgah Church, Randleman, Huffine Mill, Stanley, and other streets, with the biggest being West Market at around 3,000 feet. Currently, sidewalk construction is progressing on Friendly Avenue just west of the Friendly widening project.

Bellamy-Small inquired about the status of sidewalks along Bessemer Avenue, and Holland responded that property acquisition was delayed. Bellamy-Small inquired about Lee Street west of Florida Street, and Holland responded that most of it lacks curb and gutter. Although the City has a new design detail for sidewalk without curb and gutter, the topography of this location may preclude the use of this design. Sidewalk at this location requires a roadway improvement project to add curb and gutter. Holland advised that a list of current sidewalk projects is available on the MPO Web site.

3. Project Updates

Craig McKinney advised that NCDOT had developed a Public Hearing Map for the U-2412 project (High Point Road widening). NCDOT is working on finding a date to hold a public meeting in the vicinity of the project. The meeting will allow participants to look at impacts to the cemetery and church properties along the project, to examine design changes and options at the Adams Farm

shopping center and Mackay Road, and to submit comments. The meeting announcement and related materials will be posted on the MPO Web site when available.

Keith Holliday inquired about the new interchange with the Urban Loop at High Point Road. Doug Galyon and McKinney responded that the interchange is included in the High Point Road project. Current plans and programs indicate that by 2013, direct access will exist from I-40 to High Point Road. Holliday noted that the 7-year time period without access would upset citizens and inquired if some sort of a short-term ramp could be constructed. Galyon responded that the Groometown Road project, which will be complete within a year, will provide the interim connection between High Point Road and the Urban Loop. Signs will be placed on that route in order to direct traffic. Holliday discussed the need to provide access to a golf course for a tournament, and Galyon noted that the access at Groometown provided direct access to that facility.

T. Dianne Bellamy-Small inquired about a project that led to complaints from some residents. Doug Galyon responded that NCDOT was addressing the issue. Holliday inquired whether the High Point Road project could be sped up, and staff responded that it was moving as fast as it could at this point.

4. MPO Strategic Reports

Tyler Meyer advised that the 2007 North Carolina MPO Conference will be held at the Marriott in downtown Greensboro October 24-26. MPO staff will work with others to develop session content and work on logistics.

Lydia McIntyre presented an update on the TAC Quality Survey, part of GDOT's Quality Initiative. Generally, most comments were positive, and McIntyre advised that staff would take the information shared in the survey under advisement.

Keith Holliday inquired about moving the meetings to the chambers of the City Council or County Commissioners in order to televise the meetings, noting that the general public has very little understanding of how the transportation planning process works. Sandy Carmany and T. Dianne Bellamy-Small noted that one of the City Council's budgetary cuts had been to reduce televised meeting costs, and that other meetings were likely more important to televise. Doug Galyon observed that none of the four MPO boards on which he serves have televised meetings.

Holliday suggested creating a video version of the quarterly project update to air on Channel 13 in order to educate residents and help them to appreciate the kind of money necessary for transportation improvements. Mike Winstead inquired what the viewership is of Channel 13, and other committee members advised that viewership is relatively high and increasing. Bellamy-Small agreed with the idea of providing project updates and other educational efforts via Channel 13. Jim Westmoreland advised that staff would consider this feedback.

Bellamy-Small inquired about funding levels for Guilford County's paratransit services. Westmoreland advised that staff were still investigating options for coordination with NCDOT, PART, and the County.

Other Items

I. Board Member Report

Doug Galyon announced that staff had been able to reach a compromise with affected businesses along the R-2611 project (West Market Street widening). T. Dianne Bellamy-Small inquired

what message local officials should send to the legislature, and Galyon advised that the best message is to urge legislators to protect transportation funding.

2. Regional Transportation News

Sandy Carmany advised that the Randolph County Commissioners authorized PART to impose a \$1 per vehicle registration fee. Doug Galyon noted that Carmany had done a fantastic job on the PART Board, as evidenced by the continuing spread of participation in PART to outlying counties.

T. Dianne Bellamy-Small inquired if a scheduling problem on the PART route to the Dell plant had been resolved. Carmany noted that shifts had been made to provide more effective shuttle service in the Kernersville area.

3. Other Items - None

4. Wrap-Up

Tyler Meyer advised that the April meeting would be held, with key action items expected. T. Dianne Bellamy-Small noted that she would not be able to attend.

Bellamy-Small inquired about congestion during the morning rush hour at the I-40/U.S. 29 interchange. Jim Westmoreland advised that there was very little that could be done, given the current design of the interchange. Bellamy-Small suggested placing "Congestion Ahead" signage before that location to warn motorists traveling at full speed, and John Hunsinger advised that there is a variable message board in that area and that he would pass the suggestion on to NCDOT staff.

The TAC was adjourned at 3:25 p.m.