

## **Transportation Policy Committee Meeting**

NIRPC Auditorium

June 10, 2014

### **MINUTES**

#### **Members Present**

Jim Polarek, Stan Dobosz, John Bayler, Richard Murphy, Stan Dostatni, Tom McLennan, Art Biciunas, Mark O'Dell, Mitch Bishop, Claudia Taylor, David Wright, Bob Thompson, Craig Phillips, Phil Gralik, Art Biciunas, Tyler Kent, Francisco Rosado, Jr., Don Parker, Jezreel Rodriguez, Mary Jane Thomas, Tyler Kent, Jeff Huet, James Mandon, Bruce Lindner, Richard Ludlow, Joe Crnkovich, Phil Gralik, Mike Yacullo and Jerry Halperin via conference phone.

#### **Guests**

Nick Davis, AJ Monroe, Mark Gordish, Dennis Cobb, Jake Dammarell, Matt Kaiser, Matt Lemon, Ron Wiedeman, Jim Earl, Christopher Murphy, Jennifer Alander, Chris Reynolds, Sanjay Patel, Julia Surber, Chris Moore, Glen Campbell, Ryan Marovich, Keith Benman, Eric Wolverton.

#### **NIRPC Staff**

Steve Strains, Mitch Barloga, Mary Thorne, Gary Evers, Eman Ibrahim, Gabrielle Biciunas, Stephen Sostaric, Scott Weber, and Amanda Pollard.

#### **1. Call to Order, Opening and Announcements**

- a) Chairman Jim Polarek called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance and self-introductions.
- b) The INDOT voluntary participation survey was available on the table.
- c) The agenda will be corrected to reflect the minutes were from the May 13 meeting. On a motion by Joe Crnkovich and a second by Mary Jane Thomas, the minutes of the May meeting were approved as submitted.
- d) There were no public comments.

#### **2. Presentation**

AJ Monroe and Nick Davis presented on the US Highway 20 Corridor Plan which runs from County Line Road on the west to Salt Creek on the east and from the CSX Railroad line to the north and the abandoned Wabash Railroad right of way to the south. There has been a lot of outreach, work with stakeholders, workshops, and a study of past plans like the Portage Lakefront and both phases of the Marquette Plan. A market assessment was done. Specific intersection areas were examined. The old Don's Motel property was purchased and cleaned up. Improvements envisioned based on trends include right of way standard improvements, sustainability, buried utility lines, streetscaping, beautification, signage and key gateways, intersection enhancements, lighting, branding, trails and sidewalks, access management and infrastructure. While INDOT has a role in the plan, Portage is taking more of the lead.

Mitch Barloga said he would like to see more from all communities about progressive projects and matters in the region.

### 3. Planning

- a) 2040 CRP and TIP Update – Mitch Barloga said the update to the 2040 Plan must be completed by June 2015. An outline will be provided at the next meeting. There will be topic-focused outreach efforts.
- b) Quarterly Tracking – Amanda Pollard reported that there will be three meetings this calendar year. A schedule was provided. Contact Amanda with any scheduling problems.
- c) Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) – Scott Weber reported that the USDOT certification review issued a corrective action for NIRPC's ITS Architecture. Staff is meeting with the Traffic Management Center. Transit operators issued a survey in February, and 7 responses were received. Information will be compiled with an update at the October TPC meeting.

### 4. Programming

- a) Gary Evers reported on the State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2015 Spending Plan for the Michigan City urbanized area (UA) and the Chicago urbanized area (UA) constructed under INDOT's new business rules. A spreadsheet was provided. Each year's apportionment will be spent year-by-year.

For the Michigan City UA 2015, STP funds are zeroed out in 2015, HSIP has \$41,862 remaining, CMAQ is \$(715,320), Section 164 Penalty is \$68,894, and TAP is \$70,985 for a total of (\$361,499). We want to come up with a zero. INDOT does not yet have a policy for run-over.

For the Chicago UA 2015, carryover is \$22,056,386. We plan to use STP funds of (\$16,878,965) for a carryover balance of \$5,177,421. In 2016 we will have the allocated amount plus that \$5 million and we will probably begin delaying lettings. HSIP has \$637,350 remaining, CMAQ is zeroed out, Section 164 Penalty is \$615,108, TAP is (\$226,259) for a total of (\$15,852,766). Let Gary know if there are any changes or alterations. A sub-committee will probably be used to develop the list of projects for 2016. There are no federal guidelines as there are with the TIP.

- b) Gary Evers described Amendment #20 to the FY 2014-2017 Transportation Improvement Program to add one INDOT exempt project for SR 149 1.64 mile south of US Highway 20 culvert clean and repair to the TIP. On a motion by Don Parker and a second by David Wright, the committee recommended FY 2014-2017 Transportation Improvement Program Amendment #20 to the NIRPC Board for approval.
- c) Transportation Alternatives Program – Mitch Barloga described the multi-year ranking of projects for the Transportation Improvement Program (TAP) which were recommended to the TPC by the Ped, Pedal & Paddle Committee at their meeting on May 29. There is a total of \$29,647,865 in bike and ped projects, \$978,140 for four Safe Routes to Schools projects, one environmental project for \$234,105 and one historic project for \$90,000. Materials included the draft minutes from that committee meeting along with the ranking information.

Mark O'Dell, Town of Chesterton, made a motion to send the TAP Program back to the 3PC due to the following apparent irregularities:

1. 3PC decided not to consider previously under-funded partial projects to make them whole as they have done in the past.
2. Additional unused TAP money suddenly became available at the 3PC meeting and a decision was made to not give that money to previously awarded projects.

3. Individual project max requests were set too high which basically restricted the amount of projects which could have been funded. Projects for Portage, Michigan City and LaPorte could have been funded.
4. Failed to set a limit on how many projects each community could submit. If there were a limit set, we could have picked up Munster.

Craig Phillips, City of Michigan City, seconded the motion. Discussion followed. Support of the motion was voiced by Phil Gralik, Richard Murphy, Stan Dostatni, Jeff Huet and Don Parker. On a vote of 16 to 7, the Transportation Policy Committee voted to send the Transportation Alternatives Program back to the Ped Pedal and Paddle Committee for further deliberations. Mitch Barloga noted that these are recommendations for programming only and not for application rankings. Those rankings are firm; no further adjustments will be made to the scoring. The next 3PC meeting will set forth new programming policy as dictated by the TPC, and from there projects re-programmed accordingly.

#### **5. Indiana Department of Transportation**

- a) Jennifer Allander described the lettings with some changes. For May, Des No. R-37477 has been awarded to Walsh & Kelly. For July, Des No. RS-35937 has been moved to an August 6, 2014 letting date. For August, Des No. R-32574 has moved to a March 4, 2015 letting date and Des No. R-34480 has moved to a July 2016 letting date.
- b) Jim Earl gave an update on the Illiana. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has raised concerns about how the expressway would affect endangered or threatened species as well as the impact on the Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie in Illinois. These concerns have delayed the federal record of decision needed to give the green light to the project to a July-to-September time frame. Many other moves needed to get the road built will also be delayed. INDOT now forecasts a late summer or fall of 2015 construction date. A utility and railroad forum will be held on June 24 in Lowell. A freight line is a component but is not a part of INDOT's project.

#### **6. Transit Operators Reports**

- a) **NICTD** – Joe Crnkovich reported that May ridership was down slightly over 1% over May of last year; however, on a per-day basis, weekday ridership was up 1% and weekend ridership was up 5%. The painting of the Grand Calumet Bridge will be completed at the end of the construction season. The second of five service outages from the catenary project between South Bend and Michigan City will be next Monday. The 20-year strategic plan is on NICTD's website. The draft EIS study work for the West Lake Corridor is underway with a final report by the end of next year. Contracts were awarded to replace old rail west of Hudson Lake. Contracts for electronics work were let to MJ Electric to rebuild the substation in Ogden Dunes. Bids were let for the entire PTC installation and are due July 11.
- b) **GPTC** – David Wright said April ridership was down 2% but consistent at 2% lower than April 2013. Phase 1 Lake Shore changes are in the second week. Lake Shore South ridership is low but increasing we will improve the reliability of the route. Issues with construction are being seen on Indianapolis Boulevard. Changes will be made on the routes and alignment. The GPTC Board recommended a consultant for the Broadway project out of eight proposals and a press release will be issued once the contract is signed. The Lake Shore system was part of two phase process. Funding for Lake Shore North is being sought to help with a \$71,000 deficit in operating costs. Go to [www.gptcbus.com](http://www.gptcbus.com) for more information.

#### **7. Local and Regional Transportation Projects – No reports were given.**

8. **Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration** – No reports were given.

9. **Planning Neighbors** – No reports were given.

10. **Other Business, Public Comment, Staff Announcements and Upcoming Meetings**

a) Other Business – None.

b) **Staff Announcements** – Steve Strains reported that a new proposed planning regulation from USDOT was released on June 2; comments are to be received by September 2. New emphasis is on rural transportation planning, scenario planning, and transit operator representation on the NIRPC Board. The feds have had some questions. Some members of NIRPC's board are from communities with public transportation. Can they represent public transportation on our Board or would it need to be a General Manager of a transit entity or someone else? Lastly, a more performance based planning effort with targets by USDOT. This will be key with how we deal with the state and public transportation. More information will be given as NIRPC receives it.

c) The meeting schedule was provided in the materials. The Executive Board/Full Commission will meet on Thursday, June 19 at 9:00 a.m. at NIRPC. The Ped, Pedal & Paddle Committee will meet Thursday, June 26 at 1:30 p.m. at NIRPC. The Local Government Assistance Committee will meet on Wednesday, July 31 at 9:00 a.m. at NIRPC. The Environmental Management Policy Committee will meet on August 7 at 9:00 a.m. at NIRPC.

The next Transportation Policy Committee meeting will be at 9:00 a.m. Tuesday, July 8 at NIRPC.

Jim Polarek adjourned the meeting at 10:40 a.m.

*A Digital MP3 of this meeting is filed. Contact Mary Thorne at the phone or email below should you wish to receive a copy of it.*

For requests for alternate formats, please contact Mary Thorne at NIRPC at (219) 763-6060 extension 131 or at [mthorne@nirpc.org](mailto:mthorne@nirpc.org). Individuals with hearing impairments may contact us through the Indiana Relay 711 service by calling 711 or (800) 743-3333. The Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission (NIRPC) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, marital status, familial status, parental status, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program.