

Transportation Policy Committee Meeting

NIRPC Auditorium

May 13, 2014

MINUTES

Members Present

Stan Dobosz, Roosevelt Allen, Jr. Joe Simonetto, Dave Decker, Tom McLennan, Art Biciunas, Mark O'Dell, Kevin Crawford, Claudia Taylor, David Wright, Bruce Spires, Art Biciunas, Tyler Kent, Francisco Rosado, Jr., Jezreel Rodriguez, Mary Jane Thomas, Tyler Kent, Jeff Huet, Bruce Lindner, Joe Crnkovich, Christopher Meyers, Phil Gralik, Mike Yacullo and Jerry Halperin via conference phone.

Guests

Christopher Murphy, Jim Nowacki, Jennifer Alander, Lori Reno, Skyler York, Jim Ton, Ryan Marovich, Rebecca Williams, Chris Reynolds, James Snyder, Garry Seeley, Craig Hendrix, Ron Wiedeman, Michael Jabo, Chris Moore, Glen Campbell, Rudy Velasco and Rob Earnshaw.

NIRPC Staff

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

1. Call to Order, Opening and Announcements

- a) Vice Chairman Stan Dobosz called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance and self-introductions.
- b) The INDOT voluntary participation survey was available on the table.
- c) On a motion by Bruce Lindner and a second by Joe Simonetto, the minutes of the April 8 meeting were approved as submitted.
- d) Public Comment –
 - Jim Nowacki announced that the Regional Development Authority (RDA) changed their meetings to the same day as the NIRPC Commission meetings. He asked that NIRPC contact the RDA and ask them to consider changing it back, so that people, including NIRPC staff could have the opportunity to attend both meetings.
 - Jim Nowacki commented on a pending sale of 125 acres of land by Majestic Casino to Carmeuse Lime & Stone. The land will likely remain part of the city's industrial corridor and there is discussion about moving the mountain of pet coke from Chicago to the Carmeuse site in Gary which could create 100 jobs. This is not beneficial to the quality of life of the people of Gary. Stan Dobosz suggested to Jim Nowacki that he also bring his comment before NIRPC's Environmental Management Policy Committee.
 - Garry Seeley, Chairman of the Indiana Damage Prevention Council Northern Chapter, said they are seeking municipalities, designers, engineers, and others who are interested in joining their steering committee to provide input to improve the 811 locator service design ticket. See him after the meeting for further information.

2. Presentation

Mitch Barloga reported on the newly released US Census Bureau American Community Survey Bike to Work report for 2008-2012. While bicycle commuting increased 60% over all, only 0.6% of all commuters does so by bicycle. 86.2% commute by car, truck or van; 5% by public transportation; 4.3% work from home; 2.8% walk; 1.2% use "other" means.

For more information go to <http://www.census.gov/hhes/commuting/files/2014/acs-25.pdf>.

3. Planning

- a) Planning Agreement Update – Steve Strains reported that the last agreement between NIRPC, INDOT and the public transit operators was signed in 2008 and that MAP-21 is the impetus to revise the planning agreement which defines the goals and objectives of each entity. Currently, an issue of discussion is a clearer definition of financial capacity in answer to Federal Transit Administration requirements. David Wright commented that several transit operators including GPTC and NICTD are comfortable with the language from the state to demonstrate financial capacity in a five-year plan. But there seems to be a desire to go beyond what the state is requesting. Steve Strains added that NIRPC's chief accountant suggested that the operators provide annual audits to NIRPC which the operators feel is too much information. David Wright asked Steve Strains to research whether other Metropolitan Planning Organizations have signed their agreements and see what they are comfortable with.
- b) 2040 CRP and TIP Update – Mitch Barloga referred to a handout which describes the tentative schedule for the update to the 2040 Plan which must be completed by June 2015. Staff preparations will be made this summer, followed by a public comment period in August, a call for new capacity expansion and regionally significant projects by October to be reviewed in November. From December to March, we will discuss conformity and any updates, go back out for public comment in March, and the revised document will go to the TPC and NIRPC Board in May.
- c) Transportation Alternatives Program – Mitch Barloga said the applications are due in the NIRPC office by 4:00 p.m. Friday, May 16. Applicants are required to be present the following week for application review. Bike and ped application review will be in one session and Safe Routes to Schools application review will be in a second session.

4. Programming

- a) Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) – Steven Sostaric reported that staff did a resubmission of projects from last year due to changes in INDOT requirements. One project category is low cost high impact systemic projects. Two Lake and Porter urbanized area projects have been submitted to INDOT with six more to be submitted to INDOT as soon as staff receives the revised applications. Three LaPorte County projects have been submitted. The second project category is high crash location projects. Four Lake and Porter County Urbanized Area projects have been submitted. A solicitation for new HSIP projects will be done later this year.
- b) FY 2015-2016 Unified Planning Work Program – Eman Ibrahim overviewed some new planning tasks based on requirements from MAP-21 and the Federal Highway Administration for planning emphasis areas for the next phase of the ADA Transition Plan, an update of the Functional Classification System and Pavement Management System. The Federal Transit Administration planning emphasis areas are for Title VI Environmental Justice, Capital Improvement Planning and Transit and Livable and Sustainable Communities. A new program for MAP-21, Performance-based Planning, will be handled by Gabrielle Biciunas. On a motion by Joe Crnkovich and a second by Joe Simonetto, the Committee voted to recommend the FY 2015-2016 UPWP to the Board for adoption.
- c) Gary Evers described Amendment #18 to the FY 2014-2017 Transportation Improvement Program which includes exempt INDOT projects and phases in Portage, Burns Harbor, Michigan City, LaPorte County and Lake County and Lowell. On a motion by Joe Simonetto and a second by Mary Jane Thomas, the

committee recommended FY 2014-2017 Transportation Improvement Program Amendment #18 to the NIRPC Board for approval.

- d) Gary Evers described the local public agency projects in Amendment #19 to the FY 2014-2017 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for Crown Point, Porter County, LaPorte County, Cedar Lake and Lake Station. On a motion by Joe Simonetto and a second by Mary Jane Thomas, the committee recommended FY 2014-2017 Transportation Improvement Program Amendment #19 to the NIRPC Board for approval.
- e) Amanda Pollard announced that two more rounds of meetings will take place, with the first being held in August.
- f) Gary Evers described the Federal Funds Exchange Program where counties and municipalities may exchange allocated Surface Transportation Program (STP) funds to INDOT for state funds at a rate of \$1 federal funds traded for \$0.75 state funds and the policy recommendations to complete the transaction. A Local Public Agency (LPA) can get their project done faster and cheaper because some federal requirements will not have to be met. Most of the savings will be in preliminary engineering and right-of-way. Three pilot projects were selected to date. On a motion by Joe Simonetto and a seconded by Mary Jane Thomas, the committee recommended the Federal Funds Exchange Program to the NIRPC Board for approval.
- g) Gary Evers announced several funding changes for INDOT and highway project production schedules. The state fiscal year of July through June will be used. NIRPC will do a four-year TIP, but will use an 8-10 year production schedule. Projects will be displayed in the TIP to the extent that the TIP is fiscally constrained. Funds must be spent in the year of apportionment with no carryover and this must be in place by FY 2018. Funds can be transferred between urbanized areas. Projects over a two-year apportionment are not fundable. There will be nine lettings per year, July through March. Project funds will be reserved in a specific state fiscal year. Funds not obligated will delay a project. NIRPC will reallocate reserve funds to another LPA, if possible or those funds will be removed. Gary described the letting schedule placement process, including attending quarterly tracking meetings which will ensure project completion. NIRPC will meet with INDOT to map out the 2015 obligations. Numbers will be reported to the TPC next month.
- h) Gary Evers said there is a need for oversight of the local federal aid funding program. The TAP program application submissions end Friday. Upcoming opportunities include STP Group II, Lake and Porter CMAQ, La Porte CMAQ, and HSIP for both urbanized areas. There will be no new fund obligations for La Porte until 2017 which begins in July 2016 with Lake and Porter a year later, in state FY 2018. There will be no STP I projects for the time being. We are looking to a pavement management system plan with possible maintenance plans as was done under ARRA. STP I projects are fully booked until about 2024.

5. Indiana Department of Transportation

- a) Chris Reynolds described the lettings for April, May and July. There are no lettings in June. Two projects from July are moving to August. Contract R-34601 for the Calumet Trail from Mineral Springs Road to SR 49 and Contract RS-35937 for the Marquette Greenway on Sheffield, 129th to the Toll Road.
- b) INDOT's 2018 call closed yesterday. Meetings will be scheduled with applicants in the next week or two. For FY 2015 (July 2014 through March 2015), there is an opportunity to change the letting dates through May; see Chris after the meeting, if needed.

6. Transit Operators Reports

- a) **NICTD** – Joe Crnkovich reported that April ridership was up 2% over April of 2013. Weekend ridership was up over 10%. The overhead wire replacement from Michigan City one mile east caused a 4-day outage last week. Five miles of overhead wires are being installed, causing four more outages from South Bend to the Carroll Avenue station, with the next over the June 16 weekend. The Michigan City reroute

study is complete. The plan is done for Michigan City but some rail replacement needs to take place at 10th and 11th Streets. The painting work over the Grand Calumet Bridge west of the East Chicago station will be done by August. The bridge in Hudson Lake and some of the old rail will be replaced in October. In answer to a question about the Clark Road, Broadway and Lake Street stations by Jim Nowacki, Joe Crnkovich said NICTD wants to build a high level platform station in Gary, but it can't be done at the present site of the downtown Gary station due to the restrictions of the bridge in Gary. Moving the platform off the bridge could cost in the hundreds of millions of dollars. NICTD would be working with the City of Gary but as yet, no decisions have been made and as of now, the status quo shall continue.

- b) **GPTC** – David Wright said April ridership was down 2% but ridership will increase with better weather. The Lake Shore service in Hammond will begin May 27. A conversion with Purdue University Calumet campus is being held regarding extra stops. Schedules should be on the website this week. Solicitation for Livable Broadway project ended on May 9. Eight packages were delivered for evaluation and board approval is expected in June or July. Go to 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:

- Eman Ibrahim asked for reports of any non-NIRPC planning projects to be put in the UPWP.
- David Wright announced that GPTC and the other transit operators have chosen August 7 as Transit Day for the Lake County Fair. Details will follow.

b) Staff Announcements:

- Mitch Barloga announced that NIRPC has switched to Constant Contact for email announcements. Do not unsubscribe or you will not receive any announcements.
- In response to a question from Francisco Rosado, Jack Eskin responded that the solar power committee staff person is Kathy Luther.

- c) The meeting schedule was provided in the materials. The Executive Board/Full Commission will meet on Thursday, May 15 at 9:00 a.m. at NIRPC. The Ped, Pedal & Paddle Committee will meet Thursday, May 23 at 1:30 p.m. at NIRPC. The Local Government Assistance Committee will meet on Friday, May 30 at 9:00 a.m. at NIRPC. The Environmental Management Policy Committee will meet on June 5 at 9:00 a.m. at NIRPC.

The next Transportation Policy Committee meeting will be at 9:00 a.m. Tuesday, June 10 at NIRPC.

Stan Dobosz adjourned the meeting at 10:30 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. 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.