

Transportation Policy Committee Meeting

NIRPC Auditorium

June 12, 2012

MINUTES

Members Present

John Bayler, Art Biciunas, Joe Crnkovich, Stan Dobosz, Jerry Halperin, Jeff Huet, Denarie Kane, Bruce Lindner, Mark O'Dell, Don Parker, John Parsons, Shawn Pettit, John Pugh, Stu Summers, Claudia Taylor, Jim Ton, Dwayne Williams, David Wright and Joy Schaad (via telephone)

Guests

Keith Benson, Marcia Blandsett, Michelle Bollinger, Glen Campbell, Janet Cypra, Matt Deitchley, Matt Keiser, Katie Lamon

NIRPC Staff

Mitch Barloga, Gabrielle Biciunas, , Bill Brown, Gary Evers, Kevin Garcia, Sarah Geinosky, La'Kisha Girder, Wenya Hou, Eman Ibrahim, Belinda Petroskey, Stephen Sostaric, Steve Strains, Mary Thorne, Tom Vander Woude

1. Call to Order, Opening and Announcements

- Chairman Stan Dobosz, NIRPC Commissioner and Griffith Town Councilman, called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance and self-introductions.
- The INDOT voluntary participation survey was available on the table.
- Shawn Pettit motioned to approve the minutes of the May 8th meeting; seconded by Don Parker. Motion carried.

- 2. Presentation** – John Parsons, Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District, presented on the Michigan City Realignment Study. NICTD applied for a TIGER grant in 2010 to conduct a study to determine a preferred alignment. A management oversight group was created to oversee the process which transitioned through a new mayor and city council. Two alternatives met the evaluation criteria: a northern alignment near City Hall and a southern alignment along the CSX railway. Mr. Parsons illustrated the pros and cons of each alternative. The next steps include conceptualizing a second lakefront access for the northern alignment. The consultant will illustrate using 3D visuals. A preferred alternative open house will be held and implementation plans will be developed. For more information, go to:

<http://emichigancity.com/cityhall/departments/planning/alternative-analysis/index.htm>

3. Planning

- 2040 CRP Implementation –
Outreach: Eman Ibrahim reported that outreach has begun to town councils and plan commissions. The first presentation was to the Town of Chesterton. The municipalities need to understand how to integrate local and regional visions. The next presentation will be to Dune Acres on June 19.
Implementation Matrix: Eman said the action items and responsible parties have been identified as well as best practices. Wenya Hou is helping to wrap up the matrix and it will be on the website soon. The next meeting of the *Pathway to 2040* Implementation Committee is Thursday, July 12 at 9 a.m. at NIRPC.
Urban Core Efforts: Tom VanderWoude reported that a subcommittee met a few months ago and we are now meeting individually with the urban core communities of Gary, Hammond, East Chicago and Michigan City. This week's meeting is with Michigan City to rank strategies.

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- Urban Area Boundary – Kevin Garcia illustrated the differences between an urban area (UA), urbanized area (UZA) and an urban cluster (UC). He reported that the urban boundaries provided by the Census Bureau are being smoothed out to determine the Adjusted Urbanized area boundaries which will then go to DOT and the Feds. It is important for application of conformity requirements and the availability of STP funding. Kevin described the process to the committee and a FAQ was also made available.
- ITS Architecture – Kevin Garcia reported that staff met to discuss ITS and prepare a stakeholder workshop in August or September with police, fire and freight to help with the architecture. Kevin presented a look at the categories in the database and explained how the architecture relates goals and objectives in the CRP to the national ITS architecture. More details will be presented at the next TPC meeting.
- Congestion Management Process – Stephen Sostaric reported that progress was made on data collection. We are currently experimenting with using taxi cabs to log data. We discussed congested areas of US 30 and the Illinois state line, Calumet Avenue and 45th Avenue in Munster. Other suggestions from the committee included Columbus drive and Indianapolis Boulevard. Alternatives to adding capacity expansion have been defined. A municipality needs to determine what is causing the congestion to determine a good alternative to help move traffic without adding capacity. Volunteer loggers are still needed. Contact Stephen if you would like to help.
- Public Involvement Plan Update – La’Kisha Girder said task force met yesterday and the plan is on track to be released for public review in July. The last meeting will be held the last week in June. The plan will be online for review. Contact La’Kisha with any suggestions. Outreach efforts include Facebook and we are looking at having webinars as a tool for more participation and information sharing. Other suggestions were for NIRPC’s website to be more sharable, and have the capability to link presentations and information to Facebook, Google Feed, etc.
- US12 Arcelor Mittal Workshop – Bill Brown reported that the group met June 4 to discuss input received from Porter County and INDOT on cost estimates to build a new road segment from the main entrance to the east entrance to the Arcelor-Mittal plant along a NIPSCO right of way. We are now looking at a grade separation of the East Entrance road. INDOT-LaPorte District has agreed to bring a rough design to the next meeting.
- Air Quality Conformity Update – Bill reported that while all air quality monitors are showing that the region is attaining air quality standards, the federal government has declared Lake and Porter counties in nonattainment for ozone pollution. The area also includes all of the Chicago area. Being in nonattainment can have implications on industrial plants which may generate emissions. The region had briefly been in attainment with U.S. Environmental Protection Agency standards on ozone pollution, but new tougher standards have kicked it back into nonattainment status. We are continuing with the conformity process and the congestion management process and utilizing ways to offset emissions through the use of ozone action days and other tools to ask people to take steps on their own to help reduce emissions.

4. Programming

- Quarterly Project Tracking – Mitch Barloga reported that we are currently at 80% reporting. The Senate passed MAP 21 which is an extension of SAFETEA-LU. It is now in the house and they want more cuts to the bill. MAP 21 combines PE, SRTS, RTP programs, which have all been combined under “Additional Activities” (AA). AA was then broken down into TE and Bike and Ped and this is holding up the entire bill. A more detailed breakdown of the bill will be presented at the next Ped Pedal and Paddle Committee meeting on June 28.

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- Solicitation for LaPorte County CMAQ Projects – Gary said notices will go out tomorrow for \$4 million for transit, highways, bike and ped and other projects. EMPC will help with other projects. The deadline is July 9 to submit projects to INDOT for the required eligibility determination by July 25.
- Fund Balance Worksheets – Gary said there is a new tracking form for federal funds programmed into the TIP. A spreadsheet was provided for Lake, Porter and LaPorte counties. The Lake/Porter area has \$250,000 in CMAQ funds for projects and \$200-300,000 in HSIP. In LaPorte County, there are about \$200,000 in CMAQ funds. There are some issues with obligations, and we will work to get those fixed. This will be updated monthly and will be on the website. Jerry Halperin added that some funds were authorized in different categories. See Gary with any changes.
- Belinda Petroskey said Amendment 15 to the FY2012-2015 TIP for transit only includes new projects or phases under Sections 5309, 5307 for NICTD. Section 5409 project deletions at the bottom of the page were to fund the shop improvements and the rebuild of the 3 substations. On a motion by Shawn Pettit and a second by Jim Ton, the committee voted to recommend adoption of Amendment 15 to the TIP.

5. Indiana Department of Transportation

- Lisa Shrader reported on the letting list for May and July. There were no lettings in June.
- Matt Deitchley reported that repaving work will begin on both 4th and 5th avenues, and will include upgrading the traffic signals and replacing amenities such as curbs and sidewalks.
- Matt reported that the demolition on Cline Avenue continues and the work is on schedule.
- Matt reported on the Illiana. The Tier 1 environmental study looks at alternate routes. There will be a public meeting in July in Lowell.

6. Transit Operators Reports

- **NICTD** – Joe Crnkovich reported that ridership was down 4.5% in May due to the NATO summit. However, we were still up 2.7% for the year to date. On May 21, we lost over 9000 riders (\$35,000 in revenue) due to NATO. Security cost was \$55,000 and we are looking for reimbursement. The bridgework continues on 130th near Torrence. The Kensington junction work is complete. Bridge engineering contracts were awarded for the Trail Creek bridge and Hudson Lake and Dune Park station improvements.
- **RBA** – A ridership report was provided and Bill added that no permanent source of funding has been found and they are on schedule to shut service down after June 30.
- **GPTC** – David Wright reported that May ridership is up about 16% over January, at 59,529. June 21 is nationally-recognized *Dump the Pump Day*, encouraging people to use public transportation. GPTC will drop regularly priced fares to \$1 for fixed route systems from 5 a.m. to 10 p.m. The new transit system maps for all eight communities served by GPTC and new ads for the Bus It to the Ball Park are out. Banners are on our site. Steve Strains added that the Rabin Center will operate as a transit center until the end of the month. Pace advised us they will continue service to Hammond and will not stop at Rabin, but elsewhere in Hammond or nearby in Calumet City.

7. Local and Regional Transportation Projects Update.

No reports.

8. Federal Highway Administration/Federal Transit Authority

No reports.

9. Planning Neighbors: Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning and Southwestern Michigan Commission

No reports.

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10. Other Business, Public Comment and Upcoming Meetings at NIRPC

- Staff Announcements – Steve Strains:
 - Sarah Geinosky joined NIRPC as GIS Planner, replacing Matt Hay.
 - Wenya Hou is interning at NIRPC through the end of June
 - La’Kisha Girder’s tenure at NIRPC ends June 30
 - Former NIRPC member Thurman Ferree passed away on Saturday
 - Kathy Dubie has resigned effective at the end of this week after about 16 years of outstanding service to the agency.
- Upcoming Meetings:
 - NWI Rail VISION Workgroup – 1:00 p.m. June 18
 - Executive Board – 9:00 a.m. June 21
 - Ped, Pedal and Paddle Committee – 1:30 p.m. June 28
 - Land Use Committee – 10:00 a.m. July 11
 - Pathway to 2040 Implementation Committee – 9:00 a.m. July 12
 - Local Government Assistance Committee – 9:00 a.m. July 25 (location to be determined)
 - Environmental Management Policy Committee – 9:00 a.m. August 2

10. Next Transportation Policy Committee Meeting

The next Transportation Policy Committee meeting will be at 9:00 a.m. Tuesday, July 10, 2012.

Chairman Dobosz adjourned the meeting at 11:15 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Mary Thorne
NIRPC Planning Secretary
6/14/12