



**POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING
SUMMARY MINUTES
May 16, 2014 - 12:00 p.m. (NOON)
Manchester Meadows Conference Room**

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Danny Funderburk; Brian Carnes; Doug Echols; Britt Blackwell; Kathy Pender; Bill Harris; George Sheppard; Ann Williamson; Ralph Norman; and Michael Johnson

ADMINISTRATIVE/TECHNICAL/MANAGEMENT STAFF PRESENT:

Greg Shaw (SCDOT); Vic Edwards (SCDOT); Robby Moody (CRCOG); Joy Shealy (SCDOT); Kevin Bronson (Rock Hill); Diane Lackey (SCDOT); Ryan Blancke (York County); Bill Meyer (Rock Hill); Steve Willis (Lancaster County); Penelope Karagounis (Lancaster County); Phil Leazer (York County); David Vebaun (Rock Hill); Allison Love (York County); Elizabeth Harris (CIN); Jimmy Bagley (Rock Hill); Jessica Hekter (FHWA); William Long (RFATS); and David Hooper (RFATS)

CITIZENS/VISITORS PRESENT: Frank Myers (CAC); Jim Van Blarcom (CAC); Luther Dasher (CAC); Amy Massey (Kimley-Horn); Mike Fry (CAMPCO); John Delfausse (Indian Land); Jennifer Stalford (Tega Cay); Larry Huntley (Fort Mill); David Parker (York County); and Brynne Fisher (Fort Mill)

1. CALL TO ORDER:

a. Welcome – Chairman Blackwell called the meeting to order at 12:15 P.M. and welcomed all in attendance.

b. Citizen Comment Period – Dr. Blackwell asked if there were any citizen comments. Ms. Fisher briefly outlined her concerns about the functional capacity of the road network in Tega Cay and Fort Mill; in particular, Ms. Fisher shared her assessment that every major road in the area needs one additional lane in each direction as well as supporting improvements to turning lane capacity. As a point of reference, Ms. Fisher noted May 8th as a “watershed event” in illustrating the challenges endured daily by drivers, especially during the morning and evening peak periods. Ms. Fisher then noted as a contributing factor that there are too many new housing units going in for the current roads to accommodate. Lastly, Ms. Fisher said that projects scheduled for completion in 10 to 15 years are not good enough – that something needs to be done now.

2. REVIEW/APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Dr. Blackwell asked if there were any changes, deletions, or comments to the minutes of the March 28, 2014 meeting. Hearing no comments, Mr. Funderburk made a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Echols seconded and the minutes were unanimously approved.

3. REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS:

- a. **SC 160 / Coltharp Road Area Follow-up** – Mr. Hooper reviewed the history of the Coltharp Road / I-77 interchange area as a part of the larger East-West Connector Project that was identified during the update to the 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan. Mr. Hooper then briefly reviewed recent discussions of the Technical Team and some initial feedback received from FHWA regarding the evaluation process and supporting data associated with new interchange requests. Mr. Hooper then highlighted one of eight critical evaluation points regarding existing interchanges and the local road network – and the functional capacity of these facilities.

Ms. Hekter then expanded on this point by noting that FHWA considers two critical questions regarding new interchange requests: 1) can existing interchanges adequately satisfy area travel demand; and 2) are there any operational improvements (i.e., improving traffic control, modifying ramp terminals and intersections, adding turning bays or lengthening storage, etc.), that can be implemented short of a new interchange. Additionally, Ms. Hekter noted the importance of connector roads in strengthening the efficiency of area travel movement. In short, Ms. Hekter noted that the supporting data must demonstrate that the existing interchanges will fail unless a new connection point to the interstate is incorporated to manage existing and projected area travel demand.

Recognizing the sharp increase in area population and traffic congestion, Dr. Blackwell asked a clarifying question about the basis for a wider study as a part of the assessment process for a new interchange. Mr. Johnson then spoke about the current demand level as well as assumptions about projected growth – and reemphasized the necessity for making supporting infrastructure improvements. In response, Ms. Hekter noted the development that is coming into the area and how that is taken into consideration during the evaluation process.

Mr. Sheppard then asked a clarifying question regarding the proposed study area and expected outcomes. Mr. Sheppard then offered direct examples of the intensity of traffic congestion on Gold Hill Road – and how this is impairing network functionality as well as the attractiveness of the area from an economic development and quality of life perspective. Further discussion then followed with the understanding that a sub-area collector road study will be incorporated into the FY 14-15 UPWP and scheduled for implementation.

- b. **MAP-21 Transit Representative on the Policy Committee** - Mr. Hooper briefly reviewed the requirement of MAP-21 (Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century), that all Metropolitan Planning Organizations classified as a Transportation Management Area or TMA (as RFATS is), are required to have a transit representative on their Policy Committee no later than October 1, 2014.

Mr. Hooper then briefly provided background information on notable changes contained in MAP-21; in particular, the increasing emphasis placed on performance management and achieving an outcome based approach to transportation decision-making. With this in mind, Mr. Hooper noted that roads, bridges, congestion reduction, safety, and freight movement (which are all extremely important), frequently draw the majority of planning attention and resources – but that MAP-21 seeks to raise the visibility and important role that transit plays in a multi-modal transportation system by specifically incorporating it into the performance management framework contained in MAP-21.

Mr. Hooper then briefly revisited some of the key points of the federal guidance that were discussed at the March meeting. In particular, it was noted that a “specifically designated” transit representative must serve on MPO Policy Boards by October 1, 2014; that the transit representative must come from a provider or administrator of public transportation; and lastly, that the representative must be a direct recipient of urbanized area transit funding. Given these qualifying conditions, Mr. Hooper stated that two municipalities would satisfy this requirement within the RFATS Study Area: the City of Charlotte (CATS 82X) and the City of Rock Hill (York County Access and CATS 82X).

Following up on a Policy Committee request that the City of Rock Hill put forward a recommendation for meeting this requirement – Mr. Echols stated that the City of Rock Hill would like to recommend that Jim Reno serve in this capacity. Dr. Blackwell then asked about the expected role of this position; in particular, whether it is envisioned that this person would principally serve as a transit advocate; or rather, is expected to bring notable technical knowledge to this role.

Discussion then followed regarding the specific expectations of the transit representative as well as the particular knowledge / skill set this individual should bring to the planning process. Ms. Lackey then re-emphasized the important role of having a transit representative on the Policy Committee, and how this is expected to strengthen the evaluation of multi-modal choices in the planning and decision-making process.

Mr. Sheppard then asked about whether there had been any coordination / outreach with the City of Charlotte. In response, Mr. Hooper noted that the prior meeting represented the initial discussion on this topic; and therefore, no outreach had yet been taken. In considering a former member rejoining the board in this capacity, Mr. Funderburk then asked whether it is to be expected that a shift in focus would properly occur from a broader evaluation of the transportation planning process and prior decisions, to a transit centered approach.

Notwithstanding the benefits to be realized by having a transit representative on the Policy Committee, discussion occurred regarding the impact of adding another member to the board. With this in mind, the Policy Committee requested more information on the range of options for meeting this requirement that would maintain the current board membership at 12 and / or possibly consider a reduction in total membership.

4. PROPOSED POLICY COMMITTEE ACTION ITEMS:

- a. CRAFT Memorandum of Agreement** – Ms. Love said that CRAFT was organized in 1999 to enhance communication among all the jurisdictions in the Charlotte region. The update to the memorandum of agreement includes the expansion of the Gaston MPO and the termination of the Lake Norman RPO as well as the incorporation of the Catawba Regional COG as formal member. Dr. Blackwell asked for a motion. Mr. G. Sheppard made a motion to approve the updated CRAFT memorandum of agreement; Mr. Johnson seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.
- b. FY 14-15 Unified Planning Work Program – Consider preliminary approval of draft UPWP for FY 14-15** – Mr. Hooper highlighted major tasks to be undertaken in the next fiscal year; specifically, continued implementation of the 2035 MTP, small area studies at priority intersections, initiation of the Coltharp subarea collector study, the TAP / CMAQ programs as well as ongoing work with the regional model team. Mr.

Hooper asked for preliminary approval of the draft UPWP and authorization for a 30-day public comment period. Dr. Blackwell then asked for a motion. Mr. G. Sheppard made a motion to grant preliminary approval of the UPWP and initiation of a 30-day public comment period. Mr. Johnson seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

5. OTHER BUSINESS:

- a. Administrative Report** – Mr. Hooper briefly noted that the TAP / CMAQ subcommittee met to discuss this year’s applications – which included one TAP application for supplemental funding on an existing project, and three CMAQ applications (two existing projects; one new proposal). Mr. Hooper then noted that the subcommittee has requested more information on the new proposal from York County Natural Gas – which will be provided at the June 27th meeting. Lastly, it was noted that staff from YCNGA will be available to answer any questions.

- b. Next Regular Meeting** – Dr. Blackwell announced that the next regular meeting will be held on Friday, June 27, 2014 at the Manchester Meadows Conference Room.

6. ADJOURNMENT:

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:26 P.M.