

Transportation Policy Committee Meeting

NIRPC Auditorium

December 9, 2014

MINUTES

Members Present

Stan Dobosz, Art Biciunas, Claudia Taylor, Don Parker, Tom MacLennan, Tyler Kent, Bob Thompson, Bruce Spires, Mark O'Dell, Bruce Lindner, David Wright, Dave Decker, Jeff Huet, Joe Crnkovich, Mary Jane Thomas, Joe Simonetto, Phil Gralik, Tom VanderWoude and Nick Minnich.

Guests

Ismail Attallah, Ken Martin, Rebecca "Sis" Williams, Craig Hendrix, Julia Surber, Keith Benman, Jake Dammarell, Ron Wiedeman, Brad Minnick and Pete Kohut.

NIRPC Staff

Steve Strains, Belinda Petroskey, Sarah Geinosky, Stephen Sostaric, Scott Weber, Eman Ibrahim, Gabrielle Biciunas, Mitch Barloga and Mary Thorne.

1. Call to Order, Opening and Announcements

- a) Vice-Chairman Stan Dobosz called the meeting to order at 9:10 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 Dave Decker and a second by Phil Gralik, the minutes of the November 12 meeting were approved as submitted.

2. Presentation

Eman Ibrahim gave a presentation on a new implementation program, the Regional Corridor Study. Of the 14 interchanges on 80/84, only 6 are regionally connected to US 30 or US 41. The stakeholder group worked to identify missing regionally significant segments between major highways and local arterials which would improve congestion, safety, and travel times. 23 segments were identified: 13 in Lake County, 7 in Porter County and 3 in La Porte County. Criteria are being developed to assist in project selection. A short CMAP video was shown, highlighting how community cooperation can help with better corridor planning. The timeline was also shown, with recommendation to the Commission to be made in May. Dave Decker said a study is beginning on a four-lane bypass in La Porte due to the Kingsbury intermodal facility. Scott Weber is assisting La Porte County with this.

3. Planning

- a) 2040 CRP Update – Mitch Barloga reported that an updated timeline will be presented next month and the update is on target for May approval.
- b) 2040 CRP Plan Update Draft Public Comment Summary Report – Stephen Sostaric said the report is in the packet and also on the website, and was previously emailed.
- c) Project Solicitation – Scott Weber said the solicitation is for INDOT and transit operator capacity expansion projects which are needed to run the air quality conformity analysis. A task force will meet next month to evaluate projects. The deadline has been extended to the first week in January. Steve Strains commented

that the projects being submitted are in line with the CRP. Long-range transportation projects are mostly in the TIP.

- d) ITS Architecture – Scott Weber said he spoke with FHWA and they are pleased with NIRPC’s progress and wants a formal adoption at the January Commission meeting. It will be posted on the website in time for a January TPC recommendation to the Commission.
- e) Functional Classification System – Sarah Geinosky reported that there are still several communities they have not met with. Contact Sarah or Scott if your community has not yet met with them.
- f) Bikes on Trains – Jack Eskin reported that the presentation from the consultant has been pushed back. They will conduct a site visit to the New Jersey Transit system, which is comparable to NICTD. They will have a draft case summary report and will also inventory NICTD stock, timetables, etc. A public meeting will be held in March and a bike ridership survey will be done to determine user and travel patterns. The study will be completed in late June.

4. Programming

- a) Gary Evers described Amendment #28 to the FY 2014-2017 Transportation Improvement Program for 10 small INDOT projects. On a motion by Joe Simonetto and a second by Don Parker, the Transportation Policy Committee recommended Amendment #28 to the NIRPC Board for adoption.
- b) Gary Evers described Amendment #29 to the FY 2014-2017 Transportation Improvement Program for local projects for Griffith, Highland, Crown Point and Michigan City. These are the last of the 2013-2014 projects and the funds are zeroed out through 2014. Mark O’Dell questioned the amount of funding for right of way for the signage project in Griffith. Gary Evers will double check the figures. On a motion by Mark O’Dell and a second by Don Parker, the Transportation Policy Committee recommended Amendment #26 to the NIRPC Board for adoption, subject to an answer on the Griffith signage project ROW. Gary Evers said new projects are needed. The deadline is February 13, 2015.
- c) Belinda Petroskey announced that Hobart and Portage have requested FTA funds for feasibility studies for public transit. These studies will further the 2040 cause for regional transit through congestion reduction and improved connectivity. The 30-day comment period begins tomorrow through January 9, 2015. The report on public participation will come back to this committee on January 13 for recommendation to the Full Commission at its meeting on January 15. Steve Strains commented that these projects are milestones for these two communities to consider and hopefully follow through.
- d) With regard to spending, Gary Evers said between now and June of 2015, the Chicago urbanized area funding apportionment was \$17.8 million. We are at \$14.9 million already issued in purchase orders and we are running out of money. If communities have a construction project set for 2015, please consider delaying the project. Merrillville’s Mississippi Street project was let but came in at \$1 million federal greater than what was set aside originally. As it stands now, we will be \$1.8 million short and projects will be pushed back. In La Porte, one-third of funds have been expended, so they are okay. Any change orders using federal funds must be approved by NIRPC or they will be blocked and you will be responsible for 100% local match.

5. Indiana Department of Transportation

Ken Martin reported on the lettings for November 2014 through February 2015. He reported that Contract B-34726, Des 1296317, SR 53 bridge deck overlay over Turkey Creek is moved from 02/04/15 to 03/04/15 due to additional design time needed to address open road changes.

6. Transit Operators Reports

- a) **LaPorte Transit** – Tom MacLennan reported that there have been substantial ridership gains of 5% from 2012-2013. November ridership increased to 11.5%. Revenues are up over \$100,000 for the first time in years and projections are that this year we will beat that by another 11%. The Cities of La Porte and Michigan City and

Purdue North Central will start the Triangle service next month through CMAQ funding with local match by the City of La Porte, LaPorte County, Michigan City and Purdue North Central.

- b) **GPTC** – David Wright reported that the Lake Shore Connection between Gary, Hammond and East Chicago start this Monday with added hourly service during AM and PM peaks and will increase the number of connections to PACE and the Lake Shore South Connection. Schedules will be posted on line tomorrow. The Broadway Corridor Open House was November 17 and the presentation is on the livablebroadwayproject.com website along with the survey. Linking to that survey page is encouraged. New route maps will be provided in January. November ridership was low due to having only 19 regular service days.
- c) **NICTD** – Joe Crnkovich reported that ridership was down in November 2% over November 2013, but weekend ridership was up 2.6%. Ridership is still down for the year due to the bad winter. Extra trains will run every Saturday through December 20. December schedule information is on the website. The North Point Road Bridge project is finished. The Calumet Bridge work west of the East Chicago station is finished. Catenary work is ongoing, and will be completed in about 5 years. Discussion continues on a high level platform in Gary. The West Lake study is continuing and on time and should be completed this time next year.
- d) **Opportunity Enterprises** – Claudia Taylor said drivers are still needed and two new vehicles are coming in this month.
- e) **Porter County Aging and Community Services** – Bruce Lindner said demand response service is provided in Porter County and goes three miles into Lake County to SR 51. About 1800 rides are provided monthly using seven buses a week. Two new replacement buses were received in October. Service runs from 6:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

7. **Regional Transportation Partners** – 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) **Announcements** – None.
- b) **Public Comments** – None.
- c) **Upcoming Meetings** –The schedule for both NIRPC committee meetings and the remaining 2040 CRP update public comment meetings was provided in the materials. The Executive Board will meet on Thursday, December 11 at 9 a.m. The *Pathway to 2040* Committee will meet on January 8 at 9:00 a.m.

The next Transportation Policy Committee meeting will be at 9:00 a.m. Tuesday, January 13, at NIRPC.

On a motion by Joe Simonetto and a second by Don Parker, Stan Dobosz adjourned the meeting at 10:20 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.

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