

Transportation Policy Committee Meeting

NIRPC Auditorium

January 12, 2010

MINUTES

Members Present

Don Abraham – INDOT-LaPorte, Roosevelt Allen – Lake County Commissioner & NIRPC Commissioner, Art Biciunas – Citizen, AJ Bytnar – City of Hobart, Joseph Crnkovich – NICTD, Stan Dobosz – Chairman, Town of Griffith & NIRPC Commissioner, Stan Dostatni – City of Hammond, Kamyar Fattahi – Traffic Engineer Consultants, Craig Hendrix – City of Portage, Paul Lewis – NWI Federation, Bruce Lindner – PCACS, Mike McPhillips – INDOT-LaPorte, Christopher Meyers – City of Gary, Leigh Morris – NWI Regional Development Authority and Indiana Toll Road, Joyce Newland – FHWA, , Holly Ostdick – CMAP, Shawn Pettit – Town of Merrillville & NIRPC Commissioner, Craig Phillips – City of Valparaiso, John Pugh – City of Michigan City, Robert Rybicki – Town of Dyer & NIRPC Commissioner, Claudia Taylor – Opportunity Enterprises, Bob Thompson – Porter County Plan Commission, David Werner – FTA-Chicago, David Wright – GPTC

Guests

Don Babcock – NIPSCO, Keith Benman – The Times, Glen Campbell – American Structurepoint, Angie Fegasas – INDOT-LaPorte, Sandy Ford – City of Portage, Darcie Gabrisko – Strand Associates, Jim Harmening – Robinson Engineering, Marjorie Hefner – Agriculture, Daniel Herring – Lochner, John Kennedy – American Structurepoint, Mike Klein – INDOT, Stephanie Kleiner – Post-Tribune, Peter Kohut – Butler, Fairman & Siefert, Bill Meeks – INDOT, A J Monroe – SEH, Inc., Chris Murphy – American Structurepoint, Sam Shapira – City of Gary, Erik Sprenne – Calumet Citizens (C4), Lisa Setzler – Bonar Group, Stu Summers – City of Valparaiso, Kelly Vicente-Mayoral – RW Armstrong, Tim Werner – McDonough Associates, Bob Zier – INDOT Chief of Staff

NIRPC Staff

Mitch Barloga, Gabrielle Biciunas, Bill Brown, Gary Evers, Ryan Hicks, Eman Ibrahim, Hubert Morgan, Belinda Petroskey, Lauren Rhein, Stephen Sostaric, Steve Strains, John Swanson, Mary Thorne, Tom Vander Woude

1. Call to Order, Opening and Announcements

Stan Dobosz called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m. The minutes of the December 8 meeting were approved on a motion by John Pugh and a second by Christopher Meyer.

2. Indiana Department of Transportation

- Cline Avenue Bridge. Bob Zier reported on the Cline Avenue Bridge issue. Governor Daniels inspected the bridge last week. URS has been monitoring the structure for some time, reporting to INDOT. In November, INDOT decided the best resolution due to the structural integrity of the 1.2 mile bridge was to close it immediately, diverting traffic onto local and state roads. Since then, about 300 more cracks have appeared in the structure. A public meeting was held last Saturday in East Chicago where traffic and neighborhood safety concerns were raised. Zier said the bridge over the canal needs to be built with a design to be determined. The Cline Avenue Bridge will come down and

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INDOT is looking to the communities to decide what should be built in its place. Any solution will take at least three years to complete. In the meantime, improvements will be made to roads on INDOT's system to accommodate diverted traffic. Gary Evers commended INDOT for acting so quickly to ensure the safety of the residents and vehicular traffic. A public meeting will be held on February 9 at East Chicago Central High School Auditorium at 1100 West Columbus Drive from 3:30 to 5:00 p.m. and from 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Comments may be submitted to the INDOT at Laportedistrictcommunications@indot.in.gov, or email Mike McPhillips at mmcphillips@indot.in.gov or Angie Fegaras at afegaras@indot.in.gov or via regular mail at 315 E. Boyd Blvd., LaPorte, IN 46350.

- Indiana's 5% Report. The report was made available to the committee and is also on the FHWA website. The report is on the worst crash locations in the state during a three year period measured by at least two fatal or serious injury crashes on both the state and local roads and intrersections. Of the 282 sites listed in the report, 55 are in the NIRPC three-county region. INDOT will discuss this report at the February TPC meeting.
- INDOT Letting List. Angie Fegaras provided the letting list for November through January to date.

3. Planning

- Summary notes from the December meeting of the Comprehensive Regional Plan Steering Committee were provided in the packet. A synthesis report of the information gathered at the workshops held in the fall is available on the NIRPC website. Two open houses will be held next week – at IUN on January 19 from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. and at NIRPC on January 20 from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. to review the results and gather comments which will help develop alternative scenarios. No registration is needed.
- Congestion Management Subcommittee meeting notes were included in the packet of information. The meeting will be held immediately after the TPC to discuss performance measures and possible corridors and techniques to collect drive time data.
- The Complete Streets draft policy was presented at the last meeting and Mitch Barloga reported the changes to the draft policy which is greatly revised from the version presented in December. After some discussion by the committee regarding criteria and funding requirements and some concerns expressed, Shawn Pettit made a motion to table the policy until the next meeting. John Pugh made a second and the policy was tabled to the next meeting.
- Mitch Barloga reported on the 2010 update of the 2005 Ped & Pedal Plan, which will be tweaked through five sub-committees to look at priority corridor routes; goals objectives and policies; implementation; financial strategies and best practices and issues. The timeline puts adoption of the updated plan by the NIRPC board at December 2010 to coincide with the adoption of the 2040 Comprehensive Regional Plan.

4. Programming

- Gary Evers presented Amendment 14 to the 2009-2013 Transportation Improvement Plan for exempt INDOT highway projects, local and transit highway projects as well as administrative modification for non-ARRA projects which will go out for Intergovernmental Consultation Group review and approval by the NIRPC board. A Portage TE project for Iron Horse Phase II in the amount of \$97,000 will be added.
- On a motion by Christopher Meyers and a second by Craig Phillips, the committee voted to recommend the amendment as amended for review.
- Gary provided a status report of ARRA highway projects which highlighted those already let for Beverly Shores, Chesterton, Dyer, East Chicago, Gary, Hammond, Highland, Hobart, Lake County, Portage, Porter, Porter County and Schererville with final balances shown in their funding. Remaining funding will be applied to projects having a negative balance and then the Cline Avenue reconstruction project. Gary projected a zeroing out of funds. Discussion will be held with INDOT today on an Ogden Dunes project for cleanout of a ditch bordering National Parks Service property. February is the last month to let projects out of ARRA funding. Chris Meyer announced that a Gary project which has deteriorated and may be removed from the funding list.
- Gary announced the kickoff of the 2011-2015 TIP. Stakeholder meetings will convene in February through March to make any modifications. Dates and times will be announced later. The goal is to get the completed TIP to the NIRPC board in June or July.
- Under the CMAQ grant program for motor vehicles, a conference call was held with FHWA and INDOT and a two week review of procurement systems will take place shortly.
- INDOT has developed a new LPA process for highway projects. A similar process will be done at NIRPC to develop a quarterly process which will meet with INDOT's needs and requirements to better track projects. This will be completed in September or October.

5. Presentation – 2009 Planning Certification Review

David Werner presented a PowerPoint highlighting the 2009 certification review of the Transportation Planning process in Northwestern Indiana. The NIRPC planning process is certified subject to two corrective actions for its Congestion Management Process and the need for additional Environmental Justice analysis for the long-range plan. The environmental justice issue is due to concerns raised by stakeholders at the two public meetings held during the reviewing process last May. Two environmental justice workshops will be held with NIRPC staff and with the stakeholders on environmental justice requirements and its technical analysis in the planning process. FHWA and FTA also listed 12 recommendations: the update of the IMPO handbook by INDOT and the MPOs; cost elements need to be included with each category in NIRPC's UPWP; data-driven performance measures need to be adopted; re-examination of the 2% annual inflation rate for projects in the Transportation Plan; simplification of the financial plan; ITS architecture updating with the CMP implementation; more cooperative efforts between INDOT and NIRPC and other MPOs; refine certain elements of the TIP prioritization process, specifically the EJ factor; insure that the annual list of obligated projects is completed within a 90 day

period; strengthen internal controls for documentation; NIRPC-INDOT-MPO collaboration on Transportation Policy Committee Meeting procurement policies; NIRPC review of members program process for CMAQ vehicles and equipment. Brief discussion followed. Joyce Newland reported that NIRPC received commendations for the Ped & Pedal Plan as well as the Regional Wingspread Accord. She added that NIRPC is also completing procedures for the recommendations submitted by FHWA and FTA.

6. Local and Regional Transportation Update

NICTD – Joe Crnkovich reported that ridership is down 7% with a 1% drop during rush hour but it is up 3% on the weekends over last year's figures. Capital projects on catenary and signal systems will proceed as the weather warms.

7. Northeast Illinois

Holly Ostdick reported that regional scenarios are being approved for the Goto2040 Plan being prepared by CMAP. An April 2010 approval of capital projects is expected and May will hold for public comment with final approval of the CMAP 2040 Plan in October 2010.

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

- There were no announcements.
- Upcoming Meetings
 - * Congestion Management Subcommittee 11:00 a.m. Tuesday, January 12.
 - * The NIRPC Full Commission at 9:00 a.m. Thursday, January 21.
 - * Ped, Pedal & Paddle Committee (3PC) – 1:30 p.m. Thursday, January 28.
 - * Land Use Committee – 10:30 a.m. Wednesday, February 10.
 - * CRP Steering Committee – 9:00 a.m. Thursday, January 28.
 - * Comprehensive Regional Plan Open House – 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. at IUN on January 19.
 - * Comprehensive Regional Plan Open House – 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. at NIRPC on January 20

The next Transportation Policy Committee meeting will be at NIRPC at 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday, February 9, 2010. The meeting adjourned at 11:05 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Mary Thorne
Planning Secretary
Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission
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