

Transportation Policy Committee Meeting

NIRPC Auditorium

February 9, 2010

MINUTES

Members Present

Don Abraham – INDOT-LaPorte, Jose Bustos – East Chicago Public Transit, Ken Dallmeyer – Regional Bus Authority, Stan Dobosz – Chairman, Town of Griffith & NIRPC Commissioner, Stan Dostatni – City of Hammond, Angie Fegaras – INDOT-LaPorte, Craig Hendrix – City of Portage, Bruce Lindner – PCACS, Mike McPhillips – INDOT-LaPorte, Christopher Meyers – City of Gary, AJ Monroe – SEH, Inc., Joyce Newland – FHWA (via conference phone), Mark O'Dell – Town of Chesterton, 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, Roger Sims – Indiana High Speed Rail, Claudia Taylor – Opportunity Enterprises, Bob Thompson – Porter County Plan Commission

Guests

Mike Bartholomew – Post-Tribune, Robert Earnshaw – Times Media Company, Glen Campbell – American Structurepoint, Jake Dammarell – Butler Fairman & Siefert, Jim Harmening – Robinson Engineering, Michael Holowaty – INDOT Central (via conference phone), Mike Jabo – DLZ, Ernest Jones – J&A Consulting, Peter Kohut – Butler, Fairman & Siefert, A J Monroe – SEH, Inc., Christopher Murphy – American Structurepoint, Chris Reynolds – Reith Riley, Stu Summers – City of Valparaiso, Tim Werner – McDonough Associates

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. Following self-introductions, the minutes of the January 12 meeting were approved on a motion by Shawn Pettit and a second by John Pugh. The tentative schedule of 2010 TPC meeting dates was provided to the committee. Bill Brown noted that the November and December meeting are generally combined into December. John Swanson announced the membership changes to the NIRPC Executive Board as well as the six new commissioners. Kingsbury's seat is still vacant from the passing of Fred Ritter. Steve Strains announced program management responsibilities delegated to Bill Brown for the long-range plan, Eman Ibrahim for the Unified Planning Work Program, and Gary Evers for the TIP.

2. Planning

2040 Comprehensive Regional Plan. Summary notes from the January meeting of the Comprehensive Regional Plan Steering Committee were provided to the committee. The synthesis report of the information gathered from the workshops and the survey results from the two open houses will help develop alternative scenarios. Outreach efforts will be the main topic at the next Steering Committee meeting on February 25 at 9:00 a.m.

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Bill Brown reported that the 2040 plan process must cover Transportation Plan requirements as prescribed by the FHWA and FTA. He listed the requirements such as long range and short range strategies, include the latest population, land use, travel forecasts, identification of single occupancy vehicle projects by the congestion management process and other requirements. It was decided that a subcommittee consisting of members from the TPC would be formed to ensure the Comprehensive Plan contained all the necessary requirements.

- Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Call for Projects. John Swanson stated the Northwest Indiana Economic Development District, Inc. has been formed by NIRPC and the Northwest Indiana Forum to meet requirements for eligibility for funding through the federal Economic Development Agency. The first call for projects to be considered in the three-county region has been made, with a deadline of February 12, 2010 at 4:30 p.m for economic development project proposals. A Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) is required to qualify for Economic Development Administration (EDA) assistance. There is a 50% match requirement except for disaster recovery projects. Contact Don Kolibowski at 219-763-6303 for more information.
- Congestion Management Subcommittee. Congestion Management Subcommittee meeting notes were provided to the committee. The meeting will be held immediately after the TPC to discuss transit performance measures and to begin the update of the Intelligent Transportation System Architecture. Bill added that the ITS architecture is a set of information exchanges and data flows for coordinating signal timing, response to incidents, etc. The update will identify projects and data flows appropriate to the region.
- Surface Transportation Reauthorization Update. Steve Strains reported that the next federal surface transportation reauthorization is overdue. NIRPC is preparing a series of one page legislative information sheets which describe the particular issues, such as putting public transportation on a par with highway funding. Other items include an interagency partnership for sustainable communities, a pending Jobs for Main Street bill for additional "stimulus" funding, and strengthening freight transportation in the region. The MPO process should be applied to new small urban areas. Indiana is still a "donor" state, contributing more than it receives in federal transportation funds. ARRA funding came at a good time and hopefully the Jobs for Main Street will be enacted and also help in the short term. Shawn Pettit added that local maintenance has been impacted by a reduction in State motor vehicle highway money. He said that roads are in deplorable condition and fuel consumption is down about 30%. Additional funding sources are being sought. At the state level, IACT is aware of the funding situation and will get it on the agenda next year.
- Complete Streets Policy. Mitch Barloga provided fact sheets from the National Complete Streets Program to the committee. Complete Streets, which has been adopted by 120 jurisdictions throughout the United States, is designed to accommodate safe access for pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders. It had been presented to the TPC in recent meetings, and a different policy is proposed, one that is similar to the Mid-Ohio MPO. Mitch called for support of a resolution to implement a regional complete streets program for transportation projects. After discussion centering on wording of the resolution (such as "shall") and issues in the guidelines such as additional right-of-way acquisition and whether that would unduly delay projects, and possible additional project costs to implement complete streets features, a motion was made by Chris Meyers and supported by John Pugh to table action on the resolution pending further discussion of the policy and guidelines by a stakeholder subcommittee or task force to be formed by members of the TPC and Ped Pedal

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& Paddle; motion carried.

- Environmental Justice. The certification review was done in May 2009 and a corrective action was environmental justice. At the same time, an independent case study was done in August 2009 to review the status of environmental justice in Northwest Indiana. Several people from FHWA, NIRPC and the EJ community were interviewed. Work still needs to be done. The FHWA has not moved forward with a determination. A training session on EJ will be held for both NIRPC staff and stakeholders on April 16 at NIRPC for planners and engineers and April 17 at IUN for stakeholders and interested parties on how to measure the benefits and burdens of plans. Ongoing challenges include worsening bus service, allocation of limited resources, sustaining relationships and linking process and product. The next steps include focusing on EJ in the 2040 Plan, building trust with community leaders, define the difference between public information and public engagement, increase community contribution capacity, highlighting the public's influence and improving quantitative analyses of impacts on minority and low-income communities.
- High Speed Rail Update. Roger Sims gave an update on the status of high speed rail. \$8 billion was authorized by ARRA with INDOT receiving \$71 million in performance improvement for existing passenger and freight trains between Porter Junction and the state line. The Midwest High Speed Rail Plan would have economic impacts in creating 4,540 jobs, increased household income, quality of life, environmental benefits and increased home values and tax revenues. The High Speed Rail Association is seeking NIRPC's support through a resolution for a central route of Chicago – Lafayette – Indianapolis - Cincinnati. A draft resolution was presented to the TPC and it will be studied by the staff.

3. Programming

- Potential Jobs for Main Street. Gary Evers reported that a conference call and meeting was held with INDOT. The same amount of "ARRA" funding for projects may be forthcoming for about \$42 million divided at \$17 million for highway, \$14 million for transit projects, \$3 million for highways in LaPorte County, \$2 million for transit in the LaPorte Urban Area and \$6 million for NICTD. There will be similar restrictions and INDOT is offering Employee in Responsible Charge training at Road School in March. Gary will need an identification of ERC staff. Funding turn around will be tighter than on the previous stimulus funding. The next meeting is February 23 at 9:00 a.m. to look at distribution mechanisms and get something to the NIRPC board at their March meeting and then out for 30-day public comment. More information will be available at the February 23 meeting.
- 2011-2015 TIP Kickoff. Gary Evers provided a schedule of stakeholder meeting dates.

4. Presentation – Indiana 2005 5% Report

Michael Holowaty, INDOT presented a PowerPoint via conference phone on the 2009 5% Report which is required under SAFETEA-LU. Every state is required to report on the safety of the state and local systems and what is viewed as the worst crash locations in the state. The locations (both state and local roads) identified in the report in the three-county region are identified in a graphic that was available for viewing. Traffic counts are necessary for determining crash rates. A hazardous analysis tool is used to determine the most severe crash sites in the state. INDOT then performs a more comprehensive investigation to make recommendations to the municipalities on road safety and makes maintenance and safety recommendations. About \$411 million was apportioned for local road safety projects. Eligible projects can be programmed

to use HSIP funds for PE, right of way and construction at 90% federal share, with a 10% local match. An open call for safety projects closes on February 25. It was also noted that 15% of railroad crashes occurred in Lake County; fatality rates are shifting to areas where gates are installed and people are driving around them. More information is available on the INDOT website.

5. Indiana Department of Transportation

- Cline Avenue Bridge Status. Angie Fegaras reported that a public meeting will be held today at the East Chicago Central High School at 3:30 and again at 6:30. NIRPC is one of 23 members of a coalition formed to help INDOT gather input from local governments and businesses. The coalition will meet on February 17 at Ameristar Casino in East Chicago to discuss the Cline Avenue Bridge closing. The staff drew attention to the need for environmental justice outreach efforts.
- Lettings. The lettings for ARRA and regular projects were provided.

6. Local and Regional Transportation Update

Regional Bus Authority. Ken Dallmeyer reported that a weekday commuter express bus service from Dyer at 213th Street and Calumet to Chicago has been started. The RBA took over Hammond Transit last month. Public comment sessions are being held with a public hearing being scheduled in March. The express bus is run by a different private operator. Fares are \$7.50 one way, with discounts for multi-ride tickets.

7. Northeast Illinois

Bill Brown provided an update on the activities at CMAP, including a Northeast Illinois Water Supply Demand Plan. They are receiving public comment on their new TIP; they are conducting a geothermal energy webinar on February 26 at 9:30 a.m. Regional scenarios and potential strategies are being prepared for their *Go to 2040* draft plan.

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

- Matt Hay announced that NIRPC is looking for sidewalk data on CAD drawings, GIS maps or drawings of walk and walk maps. Submit your data to Matt at mhay@nirpc.org.
- Upcoming Meetings
 - * Congestion Management Subcommittee 11:00 a.m. Tuesday, February 9.
 - * Land Use Committee meeting is moved to 10:00 a.m. Wednesday, February 17
 - * The NIRPC Executive Board at 9:00 a.m. Thursday, February 18.
 - * CRP Steering Committee – 9:00 a.m. Thursday, February 25
 - * Ped, Pedal & Paddle Committee (3PC) – 1:30 p.m. Thursday, February 25.

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

The meeting adjourned at 11:35 a.m.