

## **Transportation Policy Committee Meeting**

NIRPC Auditorium

May 11, 2010

### MINUTES

#### **Members Present**

Don Abraham – INDOT-LaPorte District, Roosevelt Allen, Jr. – Lake County Commissioner & NIRPC Commissioner, Art Biciunas – Public Member, Joe Crnkovich – NICTD, Chris Curry – Gary/Chicago International Airport, Stan Dostatni – City of Hammond, Bruce Lindner – Porter County Aging & Community Services, Ron Lombard – Town of Trail Creek, NIRPC Commissioner, Joyce Newland – Federal Highway Administration (via conference phone), Mark O'Dell – Town of Chesterton, Shawn Pettit – Vice Chairman, Town of Merrillville & NIRPC Commissioner, Craig Phillips – City of Valparaiso, John Pugh – City of Michigan City, Jezreel Rodriguez – City of East Chicago, Robert Rybicki – Town of Dyer & NIRPC Commissioner, Mary Jane Thomas – City of LaPorte, Bob Thompson – Porter County Plan Commission, Olga Velazquez – Mayor, City of Portage & NIRPC Commissioner

#### **Guests**

A J Bytner – City of Hobart, Glen Campbell – American Structurepoint, Janet Cypra – Cypra & Associates, Bernie Doyle – Town of Chesterton, Kamyar Fattahi, TEC, Kurt Garner – KW Garner Consulting, Craig Hendrix – City of Portage, Dan Herring – H.W. Lochner, John Hudson – The Justin Group, Ernest Jones – J&A Consulting, Chelsea Kirk – Post-Tribune, Peter Kohut – Butler, Fairman & Siefert, Sandra Martinez – City of East Chicago, Jim Nowacki – Gary Citizen, Doug Olson – SEH, Ray Riddell – Porter County Engineer, Joyce Russell – The Times, Lisa Seltzer – Bonar Group, Lori Sloan – Gary/Chicago International Airport, Stu Summers – City of Valparaiso, Lenny Tochell – Clark-Dietz, Tim Werner – McDonough Associates

#### **NIRPC Staff**

Gabrielle Biciunas, Bill Brown, Gary Evers, Ryan Hicks, Bob Niezgodski, Ryan Sagar, Stephen Sostaric, Steve Strains, John Swanson and Mary Thorne

#### **1. Call to Order, Opening and Announcements**

Chairman Stan Dobosz called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance and self-introductions. The minutes of the April 13 meeting were approved as submitted on a motion by Shawn Pettit and a second by Ron Lombard.

#### **2. State Byway Designation**

Kurt Garner described the application for the designation of Old Lincoln Highway as a state historic byway, giving a brief history of the Old Lincoln Highway. The application for state byway designation was formerly presented in Indianapolis a few weeks ago. It will promote tourism throughout the north and mid-section of the three county NIRPC region. This would be the first Indiana scenic byway in the northern part of the state. There are currently no restrictions on bill boards. Interpretive signage would be allowed. Joyce Newland added that information will be sent to the MPOs along the highway. Meetings on impacts will be held. A corridor management plan will be developed which will address zoning and signage in the local communities and the committee will be made up of counties along the route. On a motion by Ron Lombard and a second by Craig Phillips, the committee unanimously approved the resolution of support for the Old Lincoln Highway State Byway designation.

### 3. National Discovery Trails Act of 2010

Mitch Barloga presented an overview of the American Discovery Trail. The trail segment totals 228 miles. The National Discovery Trails Act of 2010 designating the American Discovery Trail as a national discovery trail is supported by the National Park Service. On a motion by Shawn Pettit and a second by Olga Velazquez, the committee unanimously approved the resolution of support for the American Discovery Trail's designation as a National Discovery Trail.

### 4. Planning.

- Unified Planning Work Program. Eman Ibrahim presented the 2011-2012 UPWP, which is required under SAFETEA-LU. It includes four non-NIRPC planning tasks for Valparaiso Transit Service Marketing, Comprehensive Transportation, Land Use, and Economic development Plan for Porter County Airport area, Winfield Study of Improvements of 109<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Oak Street Extension in the Town of Schererville. Another new element is assurance that ADA transit plans are in place for local jurisdictions. A corrective action of Congestion Management Process and environmental justice and other recommendations are included in the program and issues identified by staff and the public through the planning for 2040. Tasks include data management and analysis, short and long range planning, outreach and public involvement, transit planning, NIRPC programs and NIRPC administration. The work program is on the NIRPC website for review and comment. Communities must comply with accessibility requirements like curb cuts. Each municipality must develop a schedule to make all sidewalks ADA accessible. This has been a requirement since 1990, but it is being stressed in light of lawsuits against several municipalities. STP Group 1 and Group 2 funds can be used as well as CBDG funds as a match.
- Cline Avenue Bridge. Bill Brown reported that on April 15, INDOT announced the bridge closure is permanent and improvements on Riley and Dickey Roads will be made. Roosevelt Allen commented on the negative impacts to the surrounding communities, adding that the Ameristar Casino just reported a 25% drop in revenue in one month. Other casinos have reported a drop in revenue as well. Stan Dostatni added that Hammond had no communication from INDOT whatsoever. Truck volumes are up and the rebuilding of the bridge was a desire expressed by all local communities. All the lakefront visioning plans are being threatened by not having a good access route to the Lake. When seeking out the Governor was brought up, John Swanson responded that the governor supported INDOT's decision.
- 2040 Comprehensive Regional Plan. Bill Brown reported that the Steering Committee meeting on May 27 at 9 AM will focus on the scenarios as they are being developed in GIS format using Community Viz software to demonstrate changes and assumptions. The four scenarios are current trends, local comprehensive plans, livable centers as identified in the cluster workshops and urban core regeneration. Bill will run the transportation network model and the results will go to the June Steering Committee meeting and then go out for review at a major public involvement process. The next step will be to determine the final preferred scenario which will be the focus for the comprehensive regional plan.
- Environmental Justice Workshops. Hubert Morgan reported on the workshops held in mid-April by NIRPC, FHWA and FTA. He read former President Clinton's 1994 Executive Order as well as the goals for each day's workshop. He discussed the USDOT's benefits and burdens analysis approach, indicators and measures which will be used in the planning process and the comprehensive regional plan. An environmental justice working group is being formed to assist NIRPC in measuring NIRPC's environmental justice progress. The first meeting will be Thursday, May 13. John Swanson commented that the turnout was very good

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with 65 and 50 people attending on Friday and Saturday respectively. Representatives from USDOT and INDOT were in attendance. A \$25,000 grant by the Donnelley Foundation was awarded to NIRPC to assist in greater outreach efforts.

- Congestion Management Process. The sub-committee met prior to today's TPC and will continue after the TPC meeting. Ryan Hicks presented the performance measures at the first meeting segment this morning. The draft is being reviewed. The five data loggers came in and data can be collected, compiled and the available data includes various types of data. Stakeholder attendance at the subcommittee meetings is very important for congestion management for the TIP. Four alternatives for capacity expansion must be considered: travel demand management, transportation systems management, ITS management, public transit and growth management and finally added capacity as a last resort.
- Complete Streets. Mitch Barloga reported that the resolution will be out to the Board at their meeting next week.

#### **5. Programming**

- Gary Evers reported on a new form for the 2009-2013 TIP administrative modifications.
- The 2011-2015 TIP adoption is being extended from July to August 2010. INDOT projects in the new TIP are already in the existing TIP. No new Group 1 or 2 STP or CMAQ projects. New projects are expected in transit in Lake and Porter Counties. The target date is adoption at the August board meeting. Bill added a conformity consultation meeting is being scheduled to determine the need for a new analysis for this TIP. Once the CRP is adopted, this TIP will lapse. Adoption of CRP is expected end of 2010 and the CMP process must be in the new CRP. When there is general signoff on the new plan, a new TIP process will be needed.
- An emergency administrative modification to the TIP to restructure projects on SR 53 was done on 93<sup>rd</sup> through 109<sup>th</sup> and 93<sup>rd</sup> south to US 31. If the transit operators need to start anything it must be done immediately.
- ARRA 2 Jobs bill: There has been no movement in Congress and it seems this bill may be dead. Communities will be able to reapply if the stimulus funding returns, but must not incur any new engineering expenses.

#### **6. Indiana Department of Transportation Update**

Bill Brown reported that INDOT provided information on their new organizational structure. The letting lists were provided as well.

#### **7. Regional Bus Authority**

Bill reported they have some commuter service to downtown Chicago from western Lake County. They are working on some new regional routes.

#### **8. Local and Regional Transportation Projects Update**

- Gary/Chicago International Airport. Chris Curry presented the Gary Airport's new strategic business plan which gives five primary and 22 secondary recommendations which will help affirm the vision of the Airport as a third major airport to become a viable aviation asset. The plan shows the recommendations, next steps, background and findings and provides more information in the appendix.
- NICTD. Joe Crnkovich reported that a study of the Clark Road station has been done and gives both short and long term recommendations. April ridership was up 1% over last year. The off peak weekend was up 5% but the week day was down 3%. The first weekend outage

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due to the catenary project will leave no service between Gary Metro and South Bend. More outages will take place in August. Joe provided a pamphlet showing planned outages.

**9. Federal Highway Administration/Federal Transit Authority**

No report was given.

**10. Northeast Illinois**

No report was given.

**11. Other Business, Public Comment and Upcoming Meetings at NIRPC**

- Staff Announcements: Steve Strains announced three new staff: Kevin Garcia, Data Resource Planner; summer interns Bob Niezgodski and Ryan Sagar.
- INDOT's comments on NIRPC's UPWP are due end of this week. USDOT comments are due May 28.
- Upcoming Meetings
  - ⇒ Congestion Management Subcommittee - 11:00 a.m. Tuesday, May 11.
  - ⇒ Land Use Committee – 10:00 a.m. Wednesday, May 12.
  - ⇒ The NIRPC Executive Board – 9:00 a.m. Thursday, May 20.
  - ⇒ Comprehensive Regional Plan Steering Committee – 9:00 a.m. Thursday, May 27.
  - ⇒ Ped, Pedal & Paddle Committee (3PC) – 1:30 p.m. Thursday, May 27.
  - ⇒ Environmental Management Policy Committee – 9:00 a.m. Thursday, June 3.

The next Transportation Policy Committee meeting will be at NIRPC at 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday, June 8 at 9:00 a.m.

The meeting adjourned at 11:10 a.m.