

## **Transportation Policy Committee Meeting**

NIRPC Auditorium

March 9, 2010

DRAFT MINUTES

### **Members Present**

Roosevelt Allen, Jr. – Lake County Commissioner & NIRPC Commissioner, Rick Anderson – Town of Winfield, Art Biciunas – Public Member, Janet Bright – Chicago Metropolitan Area for Planning, Joe Crnkovich – NICTD, Ken Dallmeyer – Regional Bus Authority, Stan Dobosz – Chairman, Town of Griffith & NIRPC Commissioner, Stan Dostatni – City of Hammond, Craig Hendrix – City of Portage, Bruce Lindner – PCACS, Ron Lombard – Town of Trail Creek, NIRPC Commissioner, James Mandon – Town of Munster, Sandy Martinez – East Chicago Public Transit, Christopher Meyers – City of Gary, Mark O'Dell – Town of Chesterton, Sandy O'Brien – Duneland Sierra Club, Shawn Pettit – Town of Merrillville & NIRPC Commissioner, Craig Phillips – City of Valparaiso, John Pugh – City of Michigan City, Mary Jane Thomas – City of LaPorte, Bob Thompson – Porter County Plan Commission, Olga Velazquez – Mayor, City of Portage & NIRPC Commissioner, Richard Wotkun – Railroad Retired, David Wright – Gary Public Transit Corporation (GPTC)

### **Guests**

Mike Bartholomew – Post-Tribune, Keith Benman – The Times, Rick Boehm – McDonough Associates, Glen Campbell – American Structurepoint, Clay Cates – GPTC, Jake Dammarell – Butler Fairman & Siefert, Bernie Doyle – Town of Chesterton, Peter Faberbock – REL, Sandy Ford – City of Portage, Darcie Gabrisko – Strand Associates, Jim Harmening – Robinson Engineering, Craig Hendrix – City of Portage, Rich Hudson – Bonar Group, Ernest Jones – J&A Consulting, Paul Knueppel – SEH, Inc., Tim Morgan – LaPorte County Parks, Christopher Murphy – American Structurepoint, Don Parker – C<sup>4</sup>, Lisa Seltzer – Bonar Group, Peggy Sierzputowski – Lake County Highway Department, Mike Strang – Bonar Group, 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 9:05 a.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance and self-introductions. The minutes of the February 9 meeting were approved as submitted on a motion by John Pugh and a second by Ron Lombard.

#### **2. Planning**

- 2040 Comprehensive Regional Plan. Summary notes from the February meeting of the Comprehensive Regional Plan Steering Committee were provided to the committee. Gabrielle Biciunas said the focus of the plan is currently on outreach discussions, meetings and presentations throughout the region. Staff is in the early stages of developing scenarios and will be trained in the next three days in the use of CommunityViz software which will be used in scenario development. The next Steering Committee meeting will be held on March 25 at 9:00 a.m.

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- Draft Goals and Objectives for the CRP. Tom VanderWoude briefly reviewed the draft goals and objectives and asked that any comments be submitted to him prior to the March 25 Steering Committee meeting. At that time, the committee will be asked to recommend them for adoption by the NIRPC board at their April meeting.
- INDOT 5% Report Summarization. Bill Brown highlighted the crash locations in the three-county area, which were provided to the committee in the full report at a previous meeting. Staff is looking at the state crash database using GIS for a more comprehensive regional summary for a five year period. Through a competitive process, Federal Highway Safety Improvement Program funds are available for safety improvements to these intersections. The 5% Report uses data from the last three years and projects may have already been completed at some locations.
- Congestion Management Subcommittee. February's Congestion Management Subcommittee meeting notes were provided to the committee. The committee adopted most of the performance measures and will meet briefly today to do an ITS overview and to begin discussion on two Environmental Justice-related performance measures and review the survey results. A webinar with FHWA will be held on March 22 at 12:30 p.m. Contact Ryan for more information.
- Complete Streets Policy. Mitch Barloga reported that a task force revised the guidelines and language in the NIRPC policy resolution in two meetings. Craig Phillips said the group came to a workable solution adding that the biggest change is that it will not be based on a scoring system but rather "compliance." A stakeholder subcommittee will be formed to determine what constitutes compliance and what happens if a project is non-compliant. Craig Phillips moved to recommend the resolution and guidelines as presented to the NIRPC board for adoption and David Wright seconded; motion carried unanimously.
- Status Report on the Illiana Expressway. John Swanson provided a brief background and history of the current Illiana legislation at the General Assembly hearings. The bill calls for a public-private partnership to be formed to build it and authorizes the project to extend west from the originally studied I-57 terminus to I-55 in Illinois near Joliet which will require an extension agreement. Also added was an economic impact statement to be formed early on and go out for review and public comment. Other recommendations are to review qualifications of a proposed vendor or concessionaire and the need for a process for INDOT and the concessionaire to work with the communities affected by the Illiana. It requires full environmental NEPA analysis and also requires Illinois to enact comparable legislation. There is support on the Illinois side and consensus is that this is a logical next step in moving toward the Illiana. A map was provided showing the three possible corridors studied.
- Cline Avenue Coalition Recommendations. Chris Murphy of American Structurepoint reported on a letter submitted to INDOT in late February by the Mayors of East Chicago, Whiting, Hammond and Gary and the Lakeshore Chamber of Commerce on behalf of the Cline Avenue Coalition. It detailed the short and long term improvements the group felt were needed to reopen traffic over the Indiana Harbor Canal. The Cline Avenue Coalition is comprised of about 24 stakeholders from industry, regional associations and the four communities immediately impacted by the closure of Cline Avenue. The approximately two dozen short-term improvements include resurfacing, signalization and lighting improvements as well as maintenance and technical support for various alternate route points along the Cline Avenue closure as outlined in the letter. Approximately 30,000 vehicles have been rerouted to the

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various arterials of Indianapolis Boulevard, U.S. Highway 20, and Calumet Avenue/U.S. 41. The first priority is to reestablish the link over the canal accounting for the potential for shipping in the canal, especially if the Army Corps of Engineers dredges that part of the canal. Factors cited included safety, inconvenience to lakefront users and loss of revenue. Areas of concern included the East Chicago Marina, industrial areas, school zones, multi-use access paths following the railroad corridor and entries into the marina and Buffington Harbor in Gary and a reconfiguration change at the Toll Road and Cline Avenue gateway areas. INDOT held public hearings and meetings with the four mayors and have initiated a traffic study for both current and future needs to be completed in May or June with a determination expected in July. John Swanson suggested that NIRPC consider endorsement of the mayors' February 28<sup>th</sup> letter in support of the Cline Avenue Coalition's recommendations to INDOT on the Cline Avenue bridge closing. Stan Dostatni moved, Shawn Pettit seconded to support the Coalition's recommendations and the motion was carried unanimously by the committee.

- High Speed Rail. The High Speed Rail Association presented the TPC with a draft resolution for a central route of Chicago to Lafayette to Indianapolis to Cincinnati last month. The staff made a few changes to the format to fit with NIRPC's policies and the new draft was presented to the committee. Richard Wotkun made a motion to recommend the resolution to the NIRPC board for adoption. Jim Mandon seconded it and the committee voted unanimously to recommend the resolution.
- Transit Operators' Update. Belinda Petroskey reported that the human services operators supplying client-oriented transit met to create a prioritized list of 5310 grant applications. The priority applicants included ArcBridges for four vehicles; Regional Mental Health Center for two new truck-passenger vans and 1 eight-passenger van; Opportunity Enterprises for a mini-van; Swanson Center in LaPorte County for two vehicles.

### 3. Programming

- American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) Final Expenditures. Gary Evers reported that \$56 million was invested in the three county area, subject to update.
- Jobs for Main Street. Gary reported that the same amount of "ARRA" funding for projects should be forthcoming for \$100,000 minimum per project. Project solicitation is fairly quick with March 15 the deadline for submission to NIRPC to go to the NIRPC board on March 18, out for public comment in April and TIP adoption to follow. A transit operators meeting will be held immediately after the TPC meeting today.
- Highway Trust Fund and Reauthorization. Gary said SAFETEA-LU is extended through the end of 2010. The issue is gas and motor fuel tax and their future inadequacy to support the amount needed to keep our highway and transit infrastructure up to date. Funding alternatives have been examined and one suggestion in Congress is for a tax on vehicle miles traveled.
- FY2009-2013 TIP Amendments. Gary presented the projects in Amendment 15 for bike rack requests, new projects and funding changes for non-ARRA funds. On a motion by Shawn Pettit and a second by Bruce Lindner, the committee voted unanimously to recommend Amendment 15 to the NIRPC board for adoption into the TIP.

Gary presented the projects in Amendment 16 deleting all existing INDOT non-ARRA projects and adding several exempt and non-exempt INDOT projects to go out for public comment and

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interagency consultation group (ICG) review. On a motion by Ron Lombard and a second by Bruce Lindner, the committee voted unanimously to recommend Amendment 16 as presented to go out for public comment and ICG review.

- Pending Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) Projects. Gary said INDOT reviewed the five projects submitted in 2008, and said that more information is required, which will need to be re-endorsed by NIRPC. INDOT did not have a "system" in place when the projects were initially submitted. They need to be resubmitted to NIRPC by March 22, and then will be sent to INDOT.
- Federal Transit Administration Fund Apportionment. Gary said staff proposes to extend all 2006-2009 letters of understanding with the Northeast Illinois Regional Transportation Authority through Federal FY2010.
- FY2011-2015 TIP Schedule. Gary said the new TIP schedule will be on the NIRPC website. There will be no HSIP solicitation as funds are booked through 2013. INDOT is rewriting the state SIP. The only solicitation is for transit for 5307; JARC and New Freedom will be discussed on March 19. CMAQ list will be firmed up next month for release for 60-day ICG review and for modeling as needed. The goal is to have a final TIP before the NIRPC board at their July 15 meeting. Two selection systems will be presented to the TPC for Lake and Porter and for LaPorte County with a solicitation to follow and due dates in mid-June. Stakeholder meetings will be held July 13-22 to look at projects and a July 26 deadline for eligibility determination. Cost effective programs reducing a lot of emissions are desired and we are working with our CMS sub-committee.
- FY 2009-2010 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Amendment. Steve Strains said all federally funded planning projects must be in the UPWP. Four more planning activities are requested to be added to the current UPWP. A draft resolution and summary of planning procedures and objectives were in the agenda. The Porter County Airport project is for a transportation, land use and economic development plan for that general area of the County. Other planning studies include Schererville's Oak Street extension, and Winfield's 109<sup>th</sup> Avenue Improvement Study. In addition, there is the carry-over of Valparaiso's V-Line and ChicagoDash marketing project. Gary Evers added that Valparaiso wants the additional funding to promote their commuter service, with the goal of it being self-sufficient. On a motion by Bruce Lindner and a second by Art Biciunas, the committee voted, with one nay, to recommend the amendment to the FY2010 UPWP to the NIRPC board for adoption.

#### **4. Presentation – Census 2010**

Steve Strains announced that Lauren Rhein will retire from NIRPC at the end of March and commended her for her dedicated service since 1970. Lauren gave a presentation on Census 2010, reporting that people have begun receiving letters this week announcing the census which is a 10 question, 10 minute process. 130 million households will receive census forms. Participating in the census will insure political representation, and impacting the allocation of about \$400 billion nationally in federal funding. An average of \$1240 per capita in grant funding can be lost for communities or counties under-reporting to the census. She showed data for 2008 from the American Community Survey. Population estimates for the three counties together increased 3.4% with Porter County growing by 10.5%. There is an increase in households containing non-family members as well as an increase in percentage of children per household. The minority population of the county has increased by about 3% regionally. Residential permits have

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decreased from about 5,000 in 2005 to about 1,000 in 2008. Go to [www.census.gov/acs\\_or\\_www.census.indiana.edu](http://www.census.gov/acs_or_www.census.indiana.edu) for more information.

**5. Indiana Department of Transportation**

The lettings for ARRA and regular transportation projects were provided, though INDOT staff was not present to answer questions.

**6. Local and Regional Transportation Update**

- NICTD. Joe Crnkovich reported that on-time performance and ridership are improving. The improvements and signalization and wiring work have resumed. Therefore, weekend only outages will resume summer through fall where work is taking place.
- Regional Bus Authority. Ken Dallmeyer reported that the RBA has assumed responsibility for Hammond Transit and a plan for improved service will be out for public comment, including at a meeting at the Purdue Calumet Conference Center on March 25 at 1:00 p.m.

**7. Northeast Illinois**

Janet Bright reported that CMAP is close to completing its final 2040 plan. A final regional scenario has been approved and was made available in a pamphlet to the committee. The next step is writing the plan. The Illiana corridor is a major capital project in the plan. The final plan will be adopted in October.

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

- A regional planners' round table to be held at NIRPC on March 17 from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
- Upcoming Meetings
  - Congestion Management Subcommittee - 11:00 a.m. Tuesday, March 9.
  - The NIRPC Executive Board – 9:00 a.m. Thursday, March 18.
  - Congestion Management Webinar with FHWA – 12:30 p.m. Monday, March 22.
  - Comprehensive Regional Plan Steering Committee – 9:00 a.m. Thursday, March 25.
  - Ped, Pedal & Paddle Committee (3PC) – 1:30 p.m. Thursday, March 25.
  - Environmental Management Policy Committee – 9:00 a.m. Thursday, April 1.
  - Environmental Justice Workshop – April 16 (at NIRPC) and April 17 (at IUN).
  - ARRA Reporting Workshop – April 20 and 21.
  - Land Use Committee – 10:00 a.m. Wednesday, April 21.

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

The meeting adjourned at 11:10 a.m.