

Transportation Policy Committee Meeting

NIRPC Auditorium

April 10, 2012

MINUTES

Members Present

Joyce Newland (via conference phone), Roosevelt Allen, Art Biciunas, Joe Crnkovich, Jerry Halperin, Jeff Huet, Denarie Kane, Mark O'Dell, Holly Ostidick, Don Parker, Shawn Pettit, Jim Pinkerton, John Pugh, Claudia Taylor, Jim Ton, Richard Wotkun, David Wright

Guests

Des Bzcklis, Geof Benson, Marcia Blansett, Glen Campbell, Janet Cypra, Jake Dammarell, Robert Earnshaw, Jim Harmening, Craig Hendrix, Leslie Phemister, Lisa Shrader, Bruce Spires, Lenny Tochell, Rebecca L. Williams, Eric Wilson, Eric Wolverton

NIRPC Staff

Mitch Barloga, Bill Brown, Gary Evers, Kevin Garcia, Allen Hammond, Eman Ibrahim, Stephen Sostaric, Steve Strains, Mary Thorne, Tom Vander Woude

1. Call to Order, Opening and Announcements

- Chairman Stan Dobosz, NIRPC Commissioner and Griffith Town Councilman, called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance and self-introductions.
- The INDOT voluntary participation survey was available on the table.
- Jim Ton motioned to approve the minutes of the March 13 meeting; seconded by John Pugh. Motion carried.

2. Planning

- 2040 CRP Implementation – Eman Ibrahim reported that the next meeting of the Pathway to 2040 CRP Implementation Committee is April 18 at 9 a.m. Nancy Adams is chair. We are seeking funds to produce a video for the CRP for meetings, high school students, planners, city councils, etc. We will present a matrix of strategies, goals and objectives to determine who will accomplish the various strategies.
- ITS Architecture – Kevin Garcia reported that we have identified regional stakeholders and are will be reaching out to them shortly.
- Congestion Management Process – Stephen Sostaric reported that we are still collecting travel time data. We are working on ways to gather data, etc. The BlueTOAD system presented at last month's TPC meeting has a lending program to try it out. CMAP and IMPO are doing this. We are trying to make the collection more efficient and are working with INDOT to see what is available from the state. Capacity expansion projects need congestion data so if a community has a project, they should help us get the data to prove that there is a congestion problem to be addressed. We need Lake County data. See Stephen for the loggers. We need five runs in each direction for different times during the day. It could take two to three weeks to gather the data. Roosevelt Allen will contact the mayors to see if their employees could log the data on their trips throughout the day.

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- US12 Arcelor Mittal Workshop – Bill Brown reported that the group met March 23 to discuss two solutions: the ITS tie between grade crossing equipment and traffic signals, and a new road on NIPSCO right of way. The next meeting is set for this Friday to talk with INDOT LaPorte District.
- Railroad Vision Working Group – Tom Vander Woude reported that the group met on March 27 to discuss the 15 high-priority grade separations. We have recent traffic and train counts for the crossings and the Purdue Calumet students are working with the numbers for gate down times and impacts. The next meeting of the work group will be in May, coinciding with the students' presentation and will likely be at Purdue Calumet in Hammond.
- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Transition Plans – Allen Hammond reported that the past month many individuals gave feedback and asked what they can do to make their plans better. New construction projects must be designed with ADA requirements in place. Some alterations are on the streets and sidewalks. The Department of Justice will consider roadway resurfacing projects as well for curb cuts, warning signs, etc. There is a new warning device that adheres to concrete and asphalt called Instadome. You can save up to 75% of your labor costs and the product is made in the USA. Any alterations to existing facilities must meet minimum design standards unless it is technically infeasible to do so (as in San Francisco's streets). Cost is not a technical infeasibility but undue burden is a factor and has three requirements: (1) resources available for the program not the budget for the project, (2) claims must be proven and accompanied by a written statement signed by the head of a public entity, and (3) keep yourselves out of the courts. Next month, we will discuss maintaining accessibility and ADAG and PROAG Guidelines. Holly Ostdick answered a question that Illinois is also required to inform their localities of the ADA transition plan requirements. A comment was offered that in Lake County, undue burden doesn't seem to be a factor when explaining the lack of funding to the Department of Justice in trying to comply with their requirements.
- Air Quality Conformity Update – Bill reported that our region has been redesignated as a maintenance area, meeting all standards. There will be a designation as the USEPA begins to implement the 2008 standard for ozone which is a lower allowable (.075 ppm vs. .08 ppm) that we will once again be in non-attainment status. Part of the process is to convert the motor vehicle emissions budgets we currently have into budgets that are compatible with the new MOVES (Motor Vehicle Emissions Simulator) tool. We are in the process of doing some modeling for IDEM to produce these new emissions budgets. New vehicle fleet data makes it impossible to use the old budgets to conform when we make changes to our plan. The biggest change will be the Illiana. When we need to amend the plan to deal with that, or other added capacity projects, these budgets are critical to getting plan amendments through the conformity process in the future.

3. Programming

- Amendment 12 of the FY2012-2015 TIP – Gary Evers said the amendment is for added or new projects or phases to two construction projects for a bridge inspection in LaPorte County and the Singing Sands Lighthouse Trail in Michigan City. Jim Ton motioned to recommend Amendment 12 to the NIRPC commission for approval; seconded by John Pugh. Motion carried.

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- Quarterly Project Tracking – Quarterly reports are due for the last quarter. We are exempting projects funded 100% with Demo dollars until July. We are in the 90% reporting range.
- TE Fund Allocation Policy – Mitch Barloga reported that last month the 3PC recommended a funding split of 75% to trails and 25% to other projects instead of 80/20 due to a potential influx of environmental based projects. There is no cycle right now. Jerry Halperin said that INDOT is looking at ways to keep current projects going to completion rather than fund new projects. Geof Benson added that the EMPC recommended a 60/40 split between trails and other types of TE projects. On a motion by Jim Ton and a second by Don Parker, the committee voted to table action on a TE allocation policy until the next funding round. Mitch added that Cornucopia will be held on April 26 at Lost Marsh in Hammond. Bruce Spires is the new 3PC co-chair.
- FY 2013-2014 UPWP – Eman Ibrahim reported that the new UPWP will include all planning work for the next two years. The table of contents was handed out. The draft UPWP will be on the website on Thursday for public comment. There is a total of 42 programs and only 15 staff. The categories include Data Management & Analysis, Short and Long Range Planning, etc. Non-NIRPC planning projects must be included and they are Valparaiso Transit Service Marketing, Porter County Airport Comprehensive Plan, Winfield Study and the Town of Schererville Oak Street Extension. Contact Eman with any projects to include. New categories include Administration of Federal Transportation Planning Grants, Creative Living Centers, Marquette Plan, South Shore Transit Oriented Development, and Lake Michigan Watershed Academy Program. A presentation will be given at the next TPC meeting.

4. INDOT –

- Lisa Shrader presented the letting list for February through May.
Jim Pinkerton –
- The Martin Luther King, Jr. Bridge demolition project continues with beam removal.
- U.S. 12 and 20 in Gary bids came in over the engineer's estimates twice. The project is being assessed and re-evaluated.
- The Cline Avenue demolition will start next week. Discussions are still being held with American Bridge.
- The Illiana project team met with the Town of Lowell. They will look at other alternative routes.
- Lisa Shrader will get graphics to Gary Evers for the project on SR-49 between Oak Hill Road and the new bridge over US-12 and NICTD.

5. Transit Operators Reports

- **NICTD** – Joe Crnkovich reported that ridership was up 2.2% over March 2011, 8% in off-peak and 28% over the weekend due to good weather and 5 1/2% overall over last year at this time, but still down from the 2008 peak. The bridge at 130th and Torrence will be finished by end of year. The work on the Grand Calumet Bridge will wait until next year. The punch list for the signal project is half done. Engineering RFP for projects at Trail Creek and Hudson Lake and the platform at Dune Park Station are due May 18.

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- **GPTC** – David Wright reported that using January as a benchmark, base ridership shows 21% increase in daily ridership, a lot in March. March ridership is 6% over February. The Broadway route eclipsed 20,000 per month. The Tri-State connection is being used more than before and is third highest use; the Burr Street route is the second highest. Outreach and marketing for the system continues and the system map should be out sometime this month.

6. Local and Regional Transportation Projects Update.

No reports.

7. Federal Highway Administration/Federal Transit Authority

No reports.

8. Planning Neighbors: Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning and Southwestern Michigan Commission

Holly Ostdick reported that CMAP received livable communities funding from HUD which will be used to develop local technical assistance. The call for projects will go out this summer. The implementation report is in poster form. The website highlights projects which support the Go to 2040 Implementation.

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

- Public Comment:
- Staff Announcements:
 - ❖ Tom VanderWoude announced the railroad grade crossing fund application from the INDOT Rail Office. This program is for other safety improvements for grants up to \$50,000 to local governments. Applications are through May 11. Apply through the Rail Office.
 - ❖ Geof Benson asked about a report from the RBA. Bill said the service will end July 1 and they are starting the requirements for shutting down. They provide service for Hammond, Highland and Munster and commuter bus service into the Loop. The first hearing was Thursday. The money is the problem. The mayors are meeting to discuss some assistance and they are meeting with the RDA. We have invested some CMAQ dollars into the RBA. Roosevelt Allen commented that the legislation for the General Assembly went to Senator Earlene Rogers but no action was taken in the last session. There was interest in the tax credit for low income people being used for transit which would benefit the low income people anyway.
- Upcoming Meetings:
 - ❖ LPA Project Development Certification Training – 9:00 a.m. April 12 in LaPorte at the Civic Auditorium
 - ❖ Pathway to 2040 - Comprehensive Regional Plan Implementation Committee – 9:00 a.m. April 18
 - ❖ NIRPC Full Commission – Thursday, April 19 at 9:00 a.m.
 - ❖ Partners for Clean Air/IDEM on April 26 at IBEW Hall in Merrillville
 - ❖ Environmental Management Policy Committee – 9:00 a.m. May 3

10. Next Transportation Policy Committee Meeting

The next Transportation Policy Committee meeting will be at 9:00 a.m. Tuesday, May 8, 2012. Chairman Dobosz adjourned the meeting at 10:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Mary Thorne
NIRPC Planning Secretary
4/13/12