

Transportation Policy Committee Meeting

NIRPC Auditorium

May 8, 2012

MINUTES

Members Present

John Bayler, Art Biciunas, Tim Brown, AJ Bytnar, Joe Crnkovich, Jeff Huet, Sandy O'Brien, Mark O'Dell, Don Parker, John Pugh, Stu Summers, Claudia Taylor, Jim Ton, Dwayne Williams, David Wright

Guests

Geof Benson, Keith Benson, Glen Campbell, Craig Hendrix, Rich Hudson, Jake Dammarell, Mike Jabo, Christopher Meyers

NIRPC Staff

Mitch Barloga, Bill Brown, Gary Evers, Kevin Garcia, La'Kisha Girder, Eman Ibrahim, Belinda Petroskey, Stephen Sostaric, Steve Strains, John Swanson, 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 Don Parker. Motion carried.

2. Planning

- Trails Map Presentation – Mitch Barloga gave a presentation on the new Greenways & Blueways map for regional hiking, biking and water trails. 137,000 maps have been printed and should be delivered this week. Lake Michigan was designated a National Water Trail last year. There were 14 sponsors and safety tips are included. NIRPC will deliver the maps to libraries in all three counties. Municipalities are asked to pick up their own supply. A PDF is on our website and we are looking at a mobile app. The Dunes Kankakee trail route is not consistent with what was discussed at the public meetings.
- 2040 CRP Implementation – Eman Ibrahim reported that a discussion took place on the implementation matrix which relates goals and objectives to policies and strategies. We will prioritize projects for 5 and 10 years out. We will outreach to the municipalities, county councils, chambers, etc. beginning in Chesterton next month and we will schedule visits with each municipality in the three county area.
- ITS Architecture – Kevin Garcia reported that communications and technology will improve safety through installed electronic signs, signal timing and GPS. The architecture is a data base of the ITS throughout the region. We have identified a scope and stakeholders. We are now determining needs and services, and functional requirements. We will be updating and reviewing needs analysis and concept of use. We will then define interfaces. We are part of a larger corridor called the Gary-Chicago-Milwaukee Corridor for the interstates. With regard to crosswalk buttons and the flow of traffic, South Bend had to adjust theirs based on new guidelines. We will investigate as we talk to the locals.
- Congestion Management Process – Stephen Sostaric reported that we hope to be able to get some help in travel time data. There is discussion of a statewide partnership among the MPO's throughout the state. There will be a meeting among the MPOs along with a future MPO council

meeting. Pilot projects are being sought to track congestion in specific areas before, during and after project phases to monitor the problem areas. Bill responded to a question on lead time by saying that if a project's funding has not been allocated yet, it can be done. The project would still have to go through the congestion management process and then ITS architecture with Kevin Garcia. A comment was made that a shorter term project would be more worthwhile to track than a longer term one. Some routes are already mapped in the CRP. We've had no success in getting volunteers to use the data loggers. Classy Taxi service would be a possibility. Jeff Huet will contact them. Smart phone apps would have to support our needs. Other possibilities include BlueToad, Allsage and there is TomTom data specifically for MPO use but it is expensive. A bigger resource base would lessen the cost. FHWA does not allow the use of CMAQ money, so we need to look at other resources like PL, STP, etc. which requires a local match.

- Public Involvement Plan Update – La'Kisha Girder said the task force is set up to help us do our plan. Eight members attended the first meeting last week. We will hold two webinars and use Microsoft OneNote for info sharing. The last two meeting dates will be determined. The 45-day public comment period will be the third week of June. Belinda Petroskey has assisted with gathering information and updating the plan. Adoption is hoped by the October commission meeting.
- US12 Arcelor Mittal Workshop – Bill Brown reported that the group met March 23 and staff met with INDOT in April to update them. INDOT has agreed to participate, providing some cost estimates for a new road segment taking advantage of the grade separations. We received an estimate from Porter County and a higher estimate from INDOT on the cost of a bridge. We will try to meet within the next two weeks. NIPSCO will give an opinion on using their right of way.
- Railroad Vision Working Group – Tom Vander Woude reported that the group met yesterday at Purdue University Calumet's Center for Visualization to review the results of the student project for East Chicago. They are collecting data and will be making the design recommendations. They had a video with time lapse photography of traffic at the crossing. Dr. Rescott will present at the May 17 NIRPC board meeting. An analysis of the 15 grade separations will determine how long the gates are down for these crossings. We will then calculate the environmental and economic impacts on the region to identify the cumulative effects of these crossings. We will meet again before the end of the month and report on the results by the end of summer. The work of the students will be in an appendix.
- Air Quality Conformity Update – Bill reported that staff is working with INDOT and FHWA to determine motor vehicle emission budgets in Northwest Indiana for use in future air quality conformity. The modeling work is under way. EPA is moving to implement 2008 ozone standards. The Chicago-Northwest Indiana area is still under consideration including Jasper County. If the EPA does designate Lake, Porter and Jasper, we will need new strategies to attain the standards.

3. Programming

- Eman Ibrahim presented an overview of the changes in the new 2013-2014 work program. New program categories include Creating Livable Centers, Livable Centers Initiative, Transit Oriented Development Planning, Donnelly Green Infrastructure, and Lake Michigan Watershed Academy. The budgets are \$3,6125,795 for 2013 and \$3,891,372 for 2014. The UPWP is out for public comment ending May 14 and will go for action from the NIRPC board on May 17. On a motion by Don Parker and a second by Christopher Meyers, the committee voted to recommend adoption of the FY2013-2014 Unified Planning Work Program by the NIRPC Board.
- Quarterly Project Tracking – Gary Evers reminded the members that reports need to be turned in. He and Mitch Barloga will visit those communities who have not turned in their reports. The reporting form has been changed by INDOT and it's on their LPA web page. Information will be posted on the NIRPC website by the end of June.

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- Solicitation for LaPorte County CMAQ and HSIP Projects – Gary said the solicitation will be released on June 8 with a deadline of July 9. Four years of funding will be put out. We will solicit at 80/20 for CMAQ and 90/10 for HSIP. The effects of the new reauthorization will be discussed with those communities it would affect. Work with Marcia Blansett at the LaPorte District. This change will be effective July 5. The Lake and Porter County solicitation will be held next spring with a new TIP by June 2013.
- Gary said Amendment 13 to the 2012-2015 TIP adds 4 INDOT projects or phases, two local construction projects or phases for Hobart, and one each for Porter County CVB and Lake County CVB. On a motion by Jim Ton and a second by Stu Summers, the committee voted to approve Amendment 13 to the TIP.
- Belinda Petroskey said Amendment 14 to the TIP for transit only includes new projects or phases under Section 5310 for Parents and Friends, Inc., LaPorte Comp. Mental Health Council, the ARC of Northwest Indiana and Opportunity Enterprises to purchase vehicles and expansion of service. Section 5307 adding new projects or phases for North Township Dial-a-Ride, South Lake County Community Services, East Chicago Public Transit and GPTC for fuel reallocation. One GPTC project in the amount of \$300,000 should be deleted. Two deletions of 5307 for Opportunity Enterprises for the route match program maintenance will provide the funding for their fuel reallocation. On a motion by Tim Brown and a second by Don Parker, the committee voted to approve Amendment 14 to the TIP.

4. Transit Operators Reports

- **NICTD** – Joe Crnkovich reported that ridership was up 2% over April. Some rush hour trains got close to 100% of capacity. The catenary from Michigan City to South Bend has started, however NICTD still needs TIGER funding to complete the work. The bridge at 130th and Torrance is on schedule. The Michigan City study will be presented at the June TPC meeting.
- **RBA** – Tim Brown reported that the bus shelters inspections are being done. Service peaked at 30,800 last year. We have doubled ridership in Hammond, tripled on para transit and experienced a 50% increase in express bus service. All notices to contractors and employees have been sent out of the impending shut down on June 30. There is no prospect for any funding. A rally will be held on May 15 at the Lake County Council. All fixed route, Para transit and express service to Chicago will be eliminated. All service will be shut down because we cannot get local funding. There have been meetings with the mayors, county council, county commissioners and the RDA. We have a memorandum of understanding between the three mayors to try to do a joint effort to protect transit. 16 buses are leased, 5 purchased through NIRPC, 3 are 2003's, two are 2002s. The leased buses will go back to First Transit. The five purchased through NIRPC will return to NIRPC for disposal.
- **GPTC** – David Wright reported that there has been an increase in ridership. We have about 2 or 3 ITS projects to do SEA. The system map is in review. We service 11 schools, 5 bike trails and the C&O trail portion in Merrillville. We do not want to see a reduction in transit and we are looking at ways to keep transit going in western Lake County.
- Stu Summers said the bridge at 49 and Vale Park road is one of 10 most dangerous intersections. There are two lanes and a roundabout. Valparaiso gave INDOT \$180,000 for lighting, etc. The budget is \$7.2 million and should be completed by Thanksgiving.

5. Local and Regional Transportation Projects Update.

No reports.

6. Federal Highway Administration/Federal Transit Authority

John Swanson reported that he met with Bob Tally regarding the status of our recertification. They were awaiting our CRP and a letter has been drafted to NIRPC. A C&O trail project in Merrillville was stopped. Tally said to go ahead with the trail project.

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

No reports.

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

- Public Comment:
 - ❖ Geof Benson expressed his desire for the Lake County Mayors and Lake County Council to come up with a solution for the RBA.
 - ❖ Don Parker thanked Mitch Barloga and other staff for an excellent Cornucopia.
- Staff Announcements:
 - The ADA inventory and Transition Plan Guidance Letter from INDOT is available in the packet.
- Upcoming Meetings:
 - ❖ The Land Use Committee will meet May 9 at 10:00 a.m. Bob Thompson will present on the US 6 corridor study around the new hospital.
 - ❖ Green Infrastructure Workshop will be held on May 11 at 10:00 a.m.
 - ❖ NIRPC Executive Board will meet on Thursday, May 17 at 9:00 a.m.
 - ❖ The Local Government Assistance Committee will meet on May 23 at 9:00 a.m.
 - ❖ The Ped, Pedal and Paddle Committee will meet on May 25 at 1:30 p.m.
 - ❖ The Environmental Management Policy Committee will meet on June 7 at 9:00 a.m.

10. Next Transportation Policy Committee Meeting

The next Transportation Policy Committee meeting will be at 9:00 a.m. Tuesday, June 12, 2012.

Chairman Dobosz adjourned the meeting at 11:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Mary Thorne
NIRPC Planning Secretary
5/15/12