

## **Transportation Policy Committee Meeting**

East Chicago Marina, East Chicago, IN

July 10, 2012

### MINUTES

#### **Members Present**

Art Biciunas, Marsha Blansett, Joseph Crnkovich, Stan Dobosz, Jeff Huet, Denarie Kane, Carl Lisek, Sergio Mendoza, Richard Morrisroe, Mark O'Dell, Stu Summers, Bruce Spires, David Wright

#### **Guests**

Keith Benman, Michelle Bollinger, Glen Campbell, Janet Cypra, Jake Dammarell, Ken Dallmeyer, Matt Deitchley, Gary Dreischerf, Matt Keiser, John Kennedy, Pete Kohut, Leslie Phemister, Jezreel Rodriguez, Lisa Shrader, Erik Wolverton

#### **NIRPC Staff**

Adeyemi Adeleke, Mitch Barloga, Gabrielle Biciunas, Bill Brown, Gary Evers, Kevin Garcia, Sarah Geinosky, Allen Hammond, Eman Ibrahim, Belinda Petroskey, Stephen Sostaric, Steve Strains, John Swanson, Mary Thorne, Tom VanderWoude

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

- Chairman Stan Dobosz, NIRPC Commissioner and Griffith Town Councilman, called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance and self-introductions.
- The INDOT voluntary participation survey was available on the table.
- Joe Crnkovich motioned to approve the minutes of the June 12 meeting; seconded by Art Biciunas. Motion carried.

**2. Presentation** – John Swanson gave an update on the Transportation Reauthorization, MAP-21 (Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century), which was passed in June and goes through the end of September 2014. Most highway programs are reauthorized. There are no Transportation Enhancement funds, only Transportation Allowance of 2% of total funding which may include trails but it's up to the state. CMAQ survived. Transit money still comes out of the fuel tax which saw no increase. Earmarks are gone as are JARC and New Freedom. Rail implications are being studied. Information from The Legislative Services Group's *Transportation Weekly* was provided.

**3. Presentation** – Richard Morrisroe presented on development activity in East Chicago, beginning with a brief history of the revenue sharing for a free bus system. The water works has been relocated to the other side of Cline Avenue. Development of the 10 acres is being researched. Housing is a problem, with 80% rental housing and only 20% owner-occupied homes. BP's investment also includes a part of Hammond and East Chicago. Safety Kleen has a \$20 million development. Buckeye Pipeline and Conaco plants are integrating some of their products which will bring jobs. St. Catherine Hospital is working with Arcelor-Mittal, FAA and INDOT to expand their land to improve access for a heliport.

#### **4. Planning**

- ADA Transition Plans – Allen Hammond advised LPAs to be on-time and on track with their plans. There are seven steps to the process:
  - Designate an ADA coordinator - 100% complete.
  - Provide public notice about ADA requirements - .

Transportation Policy Committee Meeting  
July 10, 2012  
Minutes

- Establish a grievance procedure – 100% complete.
- Develop design standards and specification details – 100% complete.
- Assign personnel from within your communities to go out and physically do the transition plan. This should be done immediately. We will send a survey for information as to where you are in your self-evaluation, which we will share with FHWA.
- Approving a schedule and budget to implement your transition plan which will continue yearly.
- Monitor your progress in completing your plan.
- Be sure to send your completed plan to FHWA.

LPAs will remain eligible for federal funding once this is completed. The deadline for reports is December 31, 2012.

- 2040 CRP Implementation – Eman Ibrahim reported that the next meeting of the *Pathway to 2040* Implementation Committee is Thursday, July 12th at 9 a.m. at NIRPC. The meeting will feature a transit presentation, report on the results of our meetings with urban core communities and the implementation matrix. Two projects will kick off tomorrow: Livable Centers Initiative and Creating Livable Centers, a funding program to allocate funding from STP, TE and CMAQ, each requiring a 20% local match. Criteria will be developed within nine months and then available for use by communities. The Land Use Committee will oversee the two programs.
- Urban Area Boundary – Kevin Garcia reported we are on track to developing methodology to smooth out the boundary by September. He will present the graphics at the Land Use Committee tomorrow morning.
- ITS Architecture – Kevin Garcia reported that the stakeholder workshop will be held in September with assistance from FHWA.
- Congestion Management Process – Stephen Sostaric reported on supply and demand strategies to address congestion such as traffic signal synchronization, metering ramps, center turn lanes, promoting alternate transportation, telecommuting, and managing growth in land use. These can result in triple convergence, which could be avoided by using congestion pricing and road space management. An update on data collection was illustrated through mapping of the routes.
- Public Involvement Plan Update – Steve Strains reported that three of four task force meetings were held, two of which were webinars. The fourth will be to provide comments and approval by the task force. The plan will then go out for public comment and then to the NIRPC board for adoption at their September or October meeting.
- US12 Arcelor-Mittal Workgroup – Bill Brown reported that INDOT is working on cost estimates and a conceptual design of building a new bridge at the east entrance to the Arcelor-Mittal plant. The next meeting date has not yet been set. Signal adjustments were also made by INDOT and Arcelor-Mittal has also made some improvements including the addition of a new weigh station.
- NWI Rail Vision Workgroup – Tom VanderWoude reported that a joint meeting was held with the Northwest Indiana Forum and Northwest Indiana Economic Development District on June 14 with representatives from the railroads to discuss ways to work together to contract rail related development in the region.
- Air Quality Conformity Update – Bill reported that the EPA designated Lake and Porter as non-attainment of the new ozone standard. We will continue the conformity process. We are working with INDOT to develop emissions budgets for future TIP and 2040 Plan Amendments that have capacity changes. INDOT and FHWA have encouraged the MPOs to work together to have a single process to develop emissions factors. The consultation group will meet and we

will have a 15% safety margin which will be added for contingency purposes. IDEM wants to redesignate Lake and Porter back into maintenance because we are attaining standards.

## 5. Programming

- Quarterly Project Tracking – Reports for all LPAs' projects, bike and ped included. We will send a notice out with the current INDOT form. All projects let since 2004 will need to show contact information, change orders, etc. for INDOT. Audra Butts from the LPA section of INDOT made the request for information. There are 267 projects. We will draft a change order policy for the next meeting for action by the September Executive Board meeting.
- TIP Amendment #16 for FY 2012-2015 is for 10 INDOT construction projects throughout the region and local construction projects for the communities of Lake Station, Crown Point and Porter. On a motion by David Wright and a second by Stu Summers, the committee voted to recommend TIP Amendment #16 to the NIRPC board.
- Eman reported on the UPWP for 2013-2014. Activities and projects included budget information for NIRPC projects and non-NIRPC projects.

## 6. Indiana Department of Transportation

- Lisa Shrader reported on the letting list for July and August.
- Matt Deitchley reported that the demolition on Cline Avenue continues and the work is on schedule.
- Matt reported on the Illiana. The Tier 1 environmental study looking at alternate routes is finished. The public meeting dates are August 1 at Lowell Middle School at 5 p.m. and July 31 in Illinois. The EIS draft is on the website at Illianacorridor.org.

## 7. Transit Operators Reports

- **Transit** – Belinda Petroskey reported that there may be an emergency TIP amendment done before the next TPC meeting regarding the loss of RBA service. We are trying to continue to provide transit to the elderly and disabled in North Township using CMAQ and ARRA money in a partnership with East Chicago Transit, Gary Public Transportation Corp, North Township and Triple A Express. They provided complimentary paratransit service for the RBA. The RDA will provide 20% local match for CMAQ funds. Service is still available and some riders have a choice of service for complimentary paratransit service at 3/4 mile on either side of the fixed route services. St. John Township is covered by South Lake County Community Service. Triple A provides service for North Township in Whiting, Highland, Munster and South Hammond. It is hoped to be a three-year demo program which will eventually go township wide to the general public. The complimentary paratransit service currently is only for the elderly and disabled. John Swanson complimented the transit operators in Lake County for coming together. The 700 complimentary paratransit riders do not have many alternatives. We hope to convene the operators in the next week or so. The call center is still operating. More effort is needed in Lake County. Ken Dallmeyer added that RBA's operations ceased because there is no permanent local funding available. The contracts with the RDA and Hammond ended June 30; no imminent help was available. RBA service was top quality; ridership was 30,000 per month with 8,000 reduced fare riders. Express service to Chicago closed. GPTC and East Chicago Transit are obligated to operate paratransit service and are now required to provide the service whether or not they have funding. East Chicago Transit is required to pull down money from general funds and they are laying off several employees. The long term outlook for transit is very grim. The region needs to make it work and should start out of this committee. Lake County Council meetings show that local funding is low and service cuts are being implemented.

Transportation Policy Committee Meeting  
July 10, 2012  
Minutes

There is a major reduction in money going for transit service and there will not be a new tax in Lake County.

- **NICTD** – Joe Crnkovich reported that ridership was down 5% in June over the previous year. The Taste of Chicago is shortened this year. Ridership is up 1% overall from last year. There were some problems due to the heat wave but no wiring problems. Speed was reduced to 50 MPH east of Michigan City due to old wiring. The TIGER grant did not come through. Platform engineering work is underway. Signal system work is almost finished. The Michigan City study is ongoing with the north alternative being preferred. An open house will be held in mid-August to discuss the Michigan City work.
- **GPTC** – David Wright reported that ridership figures for June will be available next month. Additional service was provided for the SouthShore Air Show. With the closing of Dan Rabin Plaza, Pace and GPTC will use Morton Court west of VanTil's. Changes are being made to accommodate the extra ADA service. GPTC is obligated by law to service those within a 3/4 mile radius of routes.

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

Bill Brown reported that the Indiana Toll Road requested some modeling assistance for the Broman Toll Road interchange to rebuild it, eliminate the I-80 Westbound movement through the interchange, or eliminate the interchange all together.

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

John Swanson is expecting a letter approving our recertification.

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

No reports.

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

- Upcoming Meetings:
    - Land Use Committee – 10:00 a.m. July 11
    - Pathway to 2040 Implementation Committee – 9:00 a.m. July 12
    - Full Commission/Executive Board – 9:00 a.m. July 19
    - Ped, Pedal & Paddle Committee – 1:30 p.m. July 26
    - Environmental Management Policy Committee – 9:00 a.m. August 2
- The Local Government Assistance Committee will not meet on July 25<sup>th</sup>. The next meeting will be September 26.

**10. Next Transportation Policy Committee Meeting**

The next Transportation Policy Committee meeting will be at 9:00 a.m. Tuesday, August 14, 2012 at NIRPC.

Chairman Dobosz adjourned the meeting at 10:45 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Mary Thorne  
NIRPC Planning Secretary  
July 16, 2012