

Transportation Policy Committee Meeting

NIRPC Auditorium
September 12, 2012

MINUTES

Members Present

Stan Dobosz, Nancy Adams, John Bayler, Jerry Halperin, Stu Summers, Richard Wotkun, Bruce Lindner, Jeff Huet, Art Biciunas, Mark O'Dell, Claudia Taylor, Jezreel Rodriguez, Joe Crnkovich, Mary Jane Thomas, Shawn Pettit, David Wright, Don Parker.

Guests

Keith Benman, Peter Kohut, Jake Dammarell, Matt Deitchley, Mike Jabo, Dave Henkel, Daryl Williams – Dotsun, Debbie Scurlock, Vanessa Rutledge, Marcia Blansett, Craig Hendrix, Glen Campbell, Michele Bollinger, Matt Keiser, Jim Harmening, Janet Cypra, Bruce Spires

NIRPC Staff

Gabrielle Biciunas, Bill Brown, Gary Evers, Kevin Garcia, Sarah Geinosky, Allen Hammond, Eman Ibrahim, Belinda Petroskey, Stephen Sostaric, Steve Strains, Mary Thorne

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. A moment of silence was observed in remembrance of 9/11/01.
- The INDOT voluntary participation survey was available on the table.
- Bruce Lindner motioned to approve the minutes of the June 12 meeting; seconded by Mary Jane Thomas. Motion carried.

2. Presentation – Dave Henkel, RW Armstrong, and Ryan Olsen, Indiana Toll Road presented the results of a one year study that produced three alternatives for the Mile Marker 21 Indiana Toll Road at Borman Interchange. These ramps have a higher rate of accidents than the state average. The first alternative, at a cost of \$6.8 million, would eliminate the westbound Toll Road to Borman ramp. The second alternative, at a cost of \$13.9 million, would replace that ramp and the entrance ramp to the Toll Road lanes with a cloverleaf ramp. The third alternative, at a cost of \$8.2 million, would shut down all the ramps, eliminating any connection between the two roads. A public comment period will take place toward the end of the year and construction could begin as early as 2014. Concerns included moving the ramps to the east or west, which was not a part of the study and a comment that closing the westbound toll road ramp could cut off traffic to the West Beach and Miller areas. Toll road motorists coming from the east would be able to only exit at Portage or the Interstate 65 exit near downtown.

3. Congestion Management Process – Stephen Sostaric introduced Talking Points under the Congestion Management sub-category of the Transportation section of the NIRPC website. This will inform about the various possible congestion management tools which will be discussed at each TPC meeting. The FTA/FHWA has suggested we seriously consider congestion pricing as an option to manage congestion. Potential locations for congestion pricing would include toll roads, new proposed Cline Avenue toll bridge, HOT (high occupancy toll) lanes, parking pricing and truck only congestion pricing. CMAP included this in their 2040 plan and cited a couple of examples of roads which would be good for this. A reward for drivers was also suggested, like discounted tolls for carpooling. Next steps include a full listing of all alternatives from USDOT.

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Next month we will look at how we think of congestion pricing. Mobility vs. accessibility will be a Talking Point and the committee was encouraged to review it for discussion at a future meeting.

4. Planning

- ADA Transition Plans – Allen Hammond reported that 85% of the communities with over 50 employees have a transition plan. A monthly survey will be sent out in October to December on the status of plans. The MPO council members at their meeting last month were told by FHWA that LPAs with less than 50 employees must also have a transition plan. Allen will send information to the LPAs as it becomes available. Jerry Halperin will send the information to Allen.
- 2040 CRP Implementation –
 - Eman Ibrahim discussed Creating Livable Centers and the Livable Centers Initiatives, two projects included in the UPWP. Most of the livable centers come close to downtown areas. Beginning next month, NIRPC staff will take a checklist out to each community.
 - NIRPC will release an RFP next week to produce a short video for the 2040 Plan.
- NIRPC will Urban Area Boundary – Kevin Garcia reported that workshops were held to help smooth the census bureau boundaries. Staff will meet with communities along the edges to determine where future development may occur. A revision of the functional classification system is still in progress.
- ITS Architecture – Kevin Garcia discussed developing a half-day workshop with INDOT to educate stakeholders that have Intelligent Transportation System elements in the region and updating the database through the use of online services. ITS related data will need to be put on the NIRPC website and agreements are needed between agencies sharing information.
- Public Involvement Plan Update – Steve Strains reported that the plan update will be ready for recommendation by TPC at the next meeting, and then out for public comment and back to the NIRPC board in December for adoption. Hubert added that NIRPC is using many tools such as social media to help people be engaged.
- US12 Arcelor-Mittal Workgroup – Bill Brown reported that a meeting took place in August between NIRPC and INDOT about a new bridge over the railway crossing. Discussion continues. The working group will reconvene once we have something more definitive to review.
- Rail Vision Working Group – Bill reported that the draft report looks at all 15 locations for potential grade separations. The group requested staff to talk with the technical staffs of the agencies responsible for these crossings, cities, towns and INDOT to get an idea of the complexity and doability of grade separations at these locations. We will continue to work with Purdue-Calumet students and possibly expand their work from last year.
- Air Quality Conformity Update – Bill reported that INDOT, IDEM and NIRPC have been working together to develop motor vehicle emission budgets that will be the limits in the State Implementation Plan for Air Quality. The next step is to get Interagency Consultation Group together to discuss a margin of safety.

5. Programming

- Quarterly Project Tracking Part III – Gary Evers reported that the proposed revisions to the Quarterly Tracking System were provided in response to a request by the MPO Council and INDOT to adopt a change order policy. The system is similar to what was done in the past, dividing federal aid construction projects into two tiers. Gary reviewed the proposed revisions which were made available in a handout. These consist of post-letting adjustments with notification to INDOT and the LPA, a post-letting financial status report, construction site field visits and required notifications to NIRPC by the LPA. A spreadsheet which reports to the LPA Council and then INDOT the status of every open contract. Gary will forward the form to the LPAs for projects let since the beginning of last year. There are still some LPAs which are not submitting their pre-letting report.
- FY 2012-2015 TIP Amendment #18 for Highways – Gary described the six INDOT projects, a project for Valparaiso and one for East Chicago. On a motion by Stu Summers and a second by Shawn Pettit, Amendment #18 was recommended for action by the NIRPC Board.
- Gary reported that under MAP-21, obligations of CMAQ funds after September 15 will need the local share of 20%. INDOT requires that at least one claim be processed on or prior to March 15, 2013, on all Purchase Orders for CMAQ projects with a federal participation rate greater than 80%. Crown Point, New Chicago, Portage, Merrillville and Munster all have construction projects in the TIP that have a local share of less than 20% and should request that NIRPC make the necessary funding and other changes. No additional funds may be obligated to alternative fuel purchase projects. Alternative fuel infrastructure projects remain CMAQ-eligible.
- FY 2012-2015 TIP Amendment #19 for Transit – Belinda Petroskey described the amendment which deletes 12 FTA Section 5307 projects for the Regional Bus Authority (RBA) and 2 CMAQ projects for the RBA. On a motion by Stu Summers and a second by Don Parker, Amendment #19 was recommended for action by the NIRPC Board. Steve Strains noted that \$12 million in transit projects will be deleted.

6. Indiana Department of Transportation

- Matt Deitchley reported on the lettings for August through November.
- The Cline Avenue demolition continues and completion is on schedule for end of the year.
- The comment period for the Illiana corridor study ended in August. Comments from the Tier 1 EIS have been compiled and a Federal Record of Decision is anticipated in 2013. Don Parker said the SouthShore Trails members are looking for specifications and provisions for non-motorized users in the Cline Avenue bridge replacement. Matt will get details to Don.

7. Transit Operators Reports

NICTD – Joe Crnkovich reported that on August ridership dropped from August 2011, but is still up 1/2 of 1%. Weekend ridership is up 6% over last year. The Ford City bridge over Torrence was rolled into place one day sooner than scheduled. Preparation for track work is being done. A weekend rail replacement near Rolling Prairie was started. The catenary

phase 3 is being done in spite of not receiving the TIGER III grant.

GPTC – David Wright reported that structure changes made to certain routes will result in a 1% decrease in total revenue miles. August ridership is 17% higher than in 2011. The Broadway corridor is seeing about 23,000 rides per month. Enhanced transportation for the Broadway corridor is in the 2040 plan and in GPTC's work program and they have received federal funding in the TIP. The next step is to look at scoping transportation analysis and study the route going south of 93rd Avenue in Crown Point and looking to find non-FTA revenue source to match the funds from the TIP study. Their final ARRA project is digital signage improvements at the Metro Center and the Village Shopping Center in Black Oak. An RFP will be done within the next month or two with the technology up by year end.

8. Local and Regional Transportation Projects Update.

No reports.

9. Federal Highway Administration/Federal Transit Authority

No reports.

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

No reports.

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

Other Business:

- Richard Wotkun reported that CSX proposed rerouting 25 trains over the CN route, saving CSX \$2 million annually, but adding to already lengthy rail times.
- Steve Strains announced that Tom Vander Woude resigned from NIRPC and will be working with South Suburban Mayors and Managers. His position is being advertised until September 21 and will be open until filled.
- Upcoming Meetings:
 - Public Scoping Meeting for the Chicago-Detroit/Pontiac Passenger Rail Corridor Program – 4 p.m. September 13 (Michigan City's City Hall)
 - Land Use Committee – 10:00 a.m. September 19
 - Executive Board – 9:00 a.m. September 20
 - Local Government Assistance/Towns and Smaller Cities – 9:00 a.m. September 26 at Festival Park Community Center, Hobart
 - Ped, Pedal and Paddle Committee – 1:30 p.m. September 27
 - Environmental Management Policy Committee – 9:00 a.m. October 4

12. Next Transportation Policy Committee Meeting

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

Chairman Dobosz adjourned the meeting at 11:10 a.m.