

## **Transportation Policy Committee Meeting**

NIRPC Auditorium  
December 11, 2012  
MINUTES

### **Members Present**

John Bayler, Art Biciunas, Joe Crnkovich, Teri Dixon, Stan Dobosz, Jerry Halperin, Jeff Huet, Tyler Kent, Bruce Lindner, Joyce Newland (via GoToMeeting), Mark O'Dell, Don Parker, Shawn Pettit, Craig Phillips, Deb Scurlock, Bob Thompson, Tom Vander Woude, David Wright

### **Guests**

Keith Benman (via GoToMeeting), Marcia Blansett, Michele Bolligner, Janet Cypra, Craig Hendrix, Elisa Hoekwater, Michael Jabo, Jim Pinkerton, Chris Reynolds, Bruce Spires, AJ Veloira, Ron Wiedeman, Jim Wiseman, Eric Wolverton

### **NIRPC Staff**

Mitch Barloga, Gabrielle Biciunas, Bill Brown, Jack Eskin, Gary Evers, Kevin Garcia, Sarah Geinosky, Stephen Sostaric, Steve Strains, John Swanson, 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.
- The INDOT voluntary participation survey was available on the table.
- Bruce Lindner motioned to approve the minutes of the November 13 meeting; seconded by Mark O'Dell. Motion carried.

2. Mitch Barloga presented on the Vale Park Road interchange in Valparaiso, which opened November 21, 2012. The total cost of the project was \$7.5 million which was \$4.5 million less than original INDOT design with a similar footprint. There is a multi-use trail with a 10' separated path on the "gateway" bridge which features stamped concrete and a backlit "Valparaiso". Vale Park Road will extend further west in the future.

3. **Congestion Management Process** – Stephen Sostaric said the Illiana and other expansion projects must go through NIRPC's congestion management process and meet the criteria, demonstrating that other alternatives were researched and that capacity expansion is the only viable solution. A brief discussion on other truck routes in Indiana included US-30, State Routes 10 and 14, Route 2 through Lowell, 45<sup>th</sup> Avenue in Munster, Highland and Griffith. CMAP, the northeast Illinois MPO must employ its own congestion management process on the Illinois side for the Illiana. The contact person at CMAP is Ross Patronsky. We can encourage carpooling, vanpooling, flexible work hours, etc. Chicago truck traffic is predicted to increase substantially. The input from the strategy papers survey is being researched.

#### **4. Planning**

- Urban Area Boundary – Kevin Garcia reported that no comments were received.
- Functional Classification Revision – Bill Brown reported that a list of revisions was made from the last meeting. Several needed traffic and dimension data. Traffic counts are being taken. East Chicago requested a functional classification change and information was included in the packet. The revisions should be completed to reflect our current transportation plan.

Transportation Policy Committee Meeting  
December 11, 2012  
Minutes

- ITS Architecture – Kevin Garcia provided a scope of work for the update of the 2005 plan and a stakeholder survey from the Indianapolis MPO which may be available online through Survey Monkey.
- NWI Rail Vision Working Group Update – Jack Eskin reported the group met last Friday. Jack will continue with the at-grade crossing report, the projected completion date is late January. Various stakeholder meetings will take place to determine which intersections can become actual projects. Yesterday, a meeting on the Arcelor-Mittal at grade crossing project was held. This project has been added to the other 15 already identified. Also on Friday, a meeting at Purdue Calumet was held with the engineering program for the at grade crossing study for SR 312 and Huish, the IHB and CN railroad intersection. Jack attended 2 meetings of the Transportation Distribution Logistics group, who are conducting an ongoing inventory of different rail sites which could be sources of economic development.
- Public Participation Plan – Steve Strains reported that NIRPC has received continued interest from stakeholder groups and has extended the comment period through February 15, 2013. The Plan is on the website.
- 2040 CRP Implementation – Gabrielle Biciunas reported that production of the CRP video is progressing with some good footage. It will be completed by the end of December and presented to TPC early next year. Staff continues to meet and present to communities and other groups. They are working with Crown Point staff on preliminary boundaries to their livable centers. The next Implementation Committee meeting is January 10 at 9 a.m. at NIRPC.
- ADA Transition Plans Status – Allen Hammond reported that all plans are due by December 31<sup>st</sup>.

## 5. Programming

- Quarterly Project Tracking – Gary Evers reported that staff has identified resources within our budget. Mitch Barloga, Amanda Pollard and Gary will make field visits the third week of January. Tracking system guidance will be posted on the NIRPC website this week as well as INDOT's and our own quarterly reporting forms. We will meet with local representatives for each construction project yearly. There are about 98 projects pre-letting and about 35 post-letting.
- FY 2014-2017 TIP Development – Gary Evers explained that due to changes, INDOT is requesting a month for their review process. We will have to do a skeletal TIP for a May 13 adoption with local projects amended into it. Solicitation will take place in July for new projects.

## 6. Indiana Department of Transportation

Jim Pinkerton reported that the contract to replace the Nine Span Bridge has been awarded. The SR 152 road project did get pushed to January. The demolition of Cline is on target to be completed by the end of the year. New construction will take 18 to 24 months. The letting for that will be handled by East Chicago.

## 7. Transit Operators Reports

- **NICTD** – Joe Crnkovich reported that November ridership is about the same as that of November 2011. With regard to the problems with the NATO conference in May, Mayor

Transportation Policy Committee Meeting  
December 11, 2012  
Minutes

Emmanuel mentioned extra dollars would be available from NATO; however, NICTD received no response to their request letter. Expenses related to the conference were about \$100,000. Catenary work east of Michigan City will continue next year. The ridership survey RFP deadline is tomorrow, and the survey will be done in March or April. Extra weekend trains will run over the holiday. Schedule information is on their website.

- **GPTC** – David Wright reported that November ridership was down slightly over October due to the Veterans Day and Thanksgiving holidays. Projects include ITS projects and a scheduling software update for ADA travel. The new dispatch center is expected to be open by the end of 2013. The bidding process has begun for acquisition of additional revenue vehicles through 100% CMAQ money.

**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 – Elisa Hoekwater of Macatawa Area Coordinating Council, the MPO of Holland Michigan, was welcomed.

Staff Announcements –

- Steve Strains thanked John Swanson for his service to NIRPC and announced the reception for John Swanson's retirement and Ty Warner's welcome will be held on January 18 from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. in the NIRPC Auditorium. John highlighted projects completed during his tenure and added that he looked forward to seeing the future changes of the region.
- Bill Brown invited the members to stay after the meeting for a brief video on a hover-car.
- Mitch Barloga announced that the Ped, Pedal & Paddle Committee will make a recommendation on Thursday from the four TAP workshops.

Upcoming Meetings:

- The Local Government Assistance Advisory Committee / Towns and Small Cities will meet at 9:00 a.m. November 28 at the Monastery in Cedar Lake
- The NIRPC Executive Board will meet 9:00 a.m. December 13
- Ped, Pedal and Paddle Committee will meet at 1:30 p.m. December 13 at NIRPC
- The Environmental Management Policy Committee will meet at 9:00 a.m. January 3 at NIRPC
- The Land Use Committee will meet in January T/B/D.
- The Full Commission/Executive Board will meet at 9:00 a.m. January 17

The next Transportation Policy Committee meeting will be at 9:00 a.m. Tuesday, January 8, 2013 at NIRPC.

Chairman Dobosz adjourned the meeting at 9:45 a.m.