

MECKLENBURG - UNION TECHNICAL COORDINATING COMMITTEE
Summary Meeting Minutes
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Government Center
Conference Room 267
May 7, 2009

Voting Members: Wayne Herron - Chairman (Monroe), Norm Steinman - alt for Danny Pleasant (CDOT), Bill Coxe -Vice-chair (Huntersville), Jim Keenan (E&PM), Ken Tippet (CDOT), Jonathan Wells - alt. for Debra Campbell (CMPC), Leslie Rhodes (LUESA), John Rose - alt. for John Muth (MTC/CATS), Louis Mitchell - alt. for Barry Moose (NCDOT-Division 10), Jamal Alavi (NCDOT-TPB), Lauren Blackburn (Davidson), Hemal Shah - alt. for Andrew Grant (Cornelius), Adam McLamb - alt. for Scott Kaufhold (Indian Trail), Ralph Messera (Matthews), Lee Bailey - via phone (Mint Hill), Kevin Icard (Pineville), Shannon Martel - alt. for Brian Matthews (Stallings), Jordan Cook (Weddington), Joshua Langen (Wesley Chapel), Amy Helms (Union County)

Staff: Stuart Basham (MUMPO), Robert Cook (MUMPO), Crissy Huffstickler (CMPC), Nick Polimeni (MUMPO), Sonja Sanders (CMPD), Tim Gibbs (CDOT), Andy Grzymiski (CDOT), Craig Thomas (Indian Trail), Lisa Stiwinter (Monroe), Jim Loyd (Monroe), Bjorn Hansen (Centralina COG), Jennifer Harris (NCTA) – via phone, Loretta Barren (FHWA), Yolanda Morris (FHWA)

Guests: Steve Blakley (Kimley-Horn), Carl Gibilaro (PBS&J), Adin McCann (HNTB), Todd Steiss (PB Americas), Eric Gorman (PB Americas), Jason Stoogenke (WSOC), Jamie Bauer (WSOC)

Mr. Herron opened the meeting at 10:00 AM.

1. Consideration of April 2009 Minutes

Presenter: Wayne Herron

Summary/Requested Action:

Mr. Herron asked for any changes to the April 2009 minutes. No changes were suggested. Bill Coxe made a motion to approve the April minutes as presented. Lauren Blackburn seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

2. JARC & New Freedom Project Selection

Presenter: Bjorn Hansen

Summary/Requested Action:

David McDonald, representing the Metropolitan Transit Commission and CATS, requested permission to be recused from this item. Jonathan Wells made a motion to recuse Mr. McDonald. Ms. Blackburn seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Bjorn Hansen of the Centralina Council of Governments (COG) introduced the Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC) and New Freedom projects and discussed how the federal funds available were proposed to be allocated. He started by explaining the COG's selection committee process, that the COG committee provided feedback to a TCC subcommittee consisting of Mr. Herron, Kevin Icard, Jonathan Wells and Tim Gibbs, and that the TCC would be the final recommendation body prior to City Council approving the allocation of funds. He also mentioned that all of the projects could go forward if not fully funded, so the selection process came down to determining what percentage of funds each project would receive.

Mr. Hansen then described the JARC projects as being related to getting people to work and briefly described the four projects that were submitted, three by CATS which are expansions of existing services (expansion of three different routes) and one by the Urban Ministry Center which is for the purchase of a new van (with a chair lift) and also for purchasing bus passes. Approximately \$804,500 was being sought for the four projects but only \$787,500 funds were available. Two projects received full funding-one CATS project and the Urban Ministry project. The remaining funds were split between the other two CATS projects.

Mr. Hansen then described that the New Freedom projects were targeted for people with disabilities and briefly described the two projects that were submitted, one by CATS for new Braille markers along three existing bus routes along with the purchase of several Integrated Navigation Systems, and one by the Council on Aging (COA) for the expansion of Mobility Management services, including the addition of a new position. These projects were also requesting more funds than were available (approximately \$508,700 requested versus \$361,500 available). An equitable formula was devised to award CATS a greater portion of the funds since the selection committee graded it higher during its selection process.

Motion:

A motion was made by Kevin Icard to approve the recommendations as presented. Ralph Messera seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

3. I-485

Presenter: Bill Coxe

Summary/Requested Action:

Mr. Coxe reminded the TCC of Governor Perdue's February announcement that construction of the last segment of I-485 would begin before the end of the year. He also discussed the March MPO meeting where Secretary Conti urged the MPO to allocate \$20 million in economic stimulus funds to I-485, but the MPO declined to do so in light of the lack of an overall financing plan for I-485. The MPO's position was to spend the money on projects that were ready to be implemented and met the spirit of the American Recovery & Reinvestment Act (ARRA). Mr. Coxe then noted the MPO Vice-Chairman Anthony Foxx's recent letter to the MPO chairman requesting that the MPO reconsider its March action and shift the \$20 million to I-485, and further noted media speculation that an expected I-485 financing plan from NCDOT might recommend diverting funds from the Independence Boulevard widening or the I-85 widening in Cabarrus County.

Wayne Herron stated that, if MUMPO receives a proposed financing plan from the Governor before the next MPO meeting, he would call a special meeting to consider it as well as the use of the stimulus funds. He also stated that a distinction as to what is "shovel ready" needs to be made. Loretta Barron stated that ROW acquisition and planning and design is a legitimate use of stimulus funds. Mr. Messera stated a concern with the possibility of reconsidering the MPO's March action because there are time limits associated with the stimulus funds and any delays could jeopardize the funded projects. He also stated that, if the \$20 million were allocated to I-485, the funds would be for ROW acquisition and would go to the landowners, thereby having no true economic stimulus impact. Louis Mitchell assured the TCC that Division 10 staff was not halting or delaying progress on any stimulus projects.

Mr. Herron stated that the TCC would wait to see what NCDOT presents regarding a financing plan. If something is presented, the Wednesday staff meeting would be the venue to discuss it.

4. Fast Lanes Update

Presenter: Tim Gibbs

Summary/ FYI:

Mr. Gibbs gave a brief presentation on the findings of the Regional Technical Team. He noted that there were four significant “next steps:” incorporating study results into the LRTP; formal interagency partnering; corridor engineering and usage studies; discussion of policy and institutional questions. He stated that the information would be brought before the staff at the Wednesday staff meetings.

5. Monroe Connector / Bypass

a. Project Updates

Presenter: Jennifer Harris – via phone

Summary / FYI:

Ms. Harris stated that the draft EIS was signed and that a public comment period was open. All public comments must be received by June 15. She also noted that the NCTA is preparing for the open houses and public hearings scheduled for May 19 through May 21. An errata sheet for the EIS has been prepared and is posted on the NCTA’s website. This incorporates information that had either been mistakenly left off or was reported incorrectly in the draft. The Garden Parkway project was also discussed. The draft EIS for that project has been signed and the recommended alternative is #9.

b. DEIS & Alternative Recommendation Comment Development

Presenter: Robert Cook

Summary / FYI: Mr. Cook discussed that the TCC would prepare comments on the draft DEIS. It was decided that a meeting with the NCTA staff and consultants would take place on Tuesday, May 19 at Matthews Town Hall. The NCTA will provide an overview of the DEIS and will be able to answer questions. It was discussed that additional meetings could be necessary.

6. LRTP Title VI Analysis

Presenter: Robert Cook

Summary / FYI:

Mr. Cook reminded the TCC of the MPO’s obligation to complete an analysis of the LRTP’s impact on low-income and minority communities. He stated that Toni Tupponce of Tupponce Enterprises had been retained to conduct the analysis and that Sonja Sanders and Solomon Fortune of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Department staff would be assisting with the project. Mr. Cook stated that assistance from the TCC would be needed in the form of GIS information related primarily to bicycle and pedestrian plans, but also in the form of local road projects (Matthews, Huntersville and Charlotte). Also needed will be each community’s sidewalk policies.

7. Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned at 11:10 AM.