

French Broad River MPO Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting

May 5, 2014

Minutes

Attendance

John Franklin-Western North Carolina Alliance
(by phone)

Carrier Turner-Safe Routes to School National
Partnership (by phone)

Amy Knisley-Warren Wilson

Andrea Leslie-Interested Citizen

Bruce Emory-Asheville Design Center/Asheville
MMTC

Andrew Bells-Friends and Neighbors of the
Swannanoa

O'Neal Shelton-Madison County Chamber of
Commerce/TDA

Marcia Bromberg-Friends of Connect
Buncombe/Asheville MMTC

Rachel Larson-WECAN Chair

Ted Figura-EWANA Board

Julie Mayfield-WNCA

Non-Voting/Staff

Paul Black, FBRMPO

Josh King, FBRMPO/LOSRPO

Vicki Eastland, FBRMPO

Lyuba Zuyeva, FBRMPO

Introductions

Paul Black started the meeting with a round of introductions.

Public Comments

No public comments

Consent Agenda

No Consent Agenda items today.

Business

A. Introduction to Metropolitan Planning Organizations

Paul Black provided an overview of the MPOs history and the French Broad River MPO planning region.

Paul Black included an overview of the work tasks and committee structure.

Next Paul Black provided an overview of the MPO planning partners—FHWA and Federal Transit Administration, as well as various branches of NCDOT and NC Board of Transportation. NC Divisions are “local implementers” and have been created in the 1930s. Division 13 and Division 14 overlap with the FBRMPO boundary. Divisions are involved in construction, where the MPO is also involved with funding decisions and in maintenance projects where the MPOs generally are not involved.

Paul Black next provided an overview of the FBRMPO Work program—board support, for example, takes up about 10-20% of staff time for various committees. Public Outreach and public input meetings is one of important areas.

Paul Black-the bulk of the work happens at the staff-level committee, TCC. They pass the recommendations onto the MPO Board.

Paul Black provided a quick overview of the MPO budget categories break-outs in the current budget. “Surveillance of inventory data” includes keeping track of current data—this will be folded into the Long Range Transportation Plan work categories in the future.

Paul Black-MPO will be updating the state-required Comprehensive Transportation Plan at the same time as the federally-required Metropolitan Transportation Plan (formerly LRTP). There is no fiscal constraint for the CTP but there is a NEPA “problem statement” requirement. Paul Black provided some additional information about the Congestion Management Plan which was required and is included as part of MTP/LRTP update.

Brief discussion about why the vision, goals and objectives in the current LRTP (MTP) do not match up with the projects moving forward. This discussion is to be continued.

Next Paul Black provided a brief overview of SPOT Prioritization process to add projects into the TIP/STIP. NCDOT data-driven process is combined with MPOs and RPOs local input, and also is matched with available funds for constructability by the NCDOT Programming Unit. The MPOs and RPOs across the state currently have no say in how the statewide pot of money (approximately 40% of all the funding) is allocated to projects like interstates. Discussion about whether interstate projects could be funded out of the Regional Impact funds. Paul Black-yes, statewide projects can cascade down to a regional fund level but that would mean that other regional projects are negatively impacted.

Breaking down the STIP/TIP timeline: years 6-10 are not actually funded, they are in the pipeline. First five years are funded projects. Discussion about what are the types of projects considered “highway” and how different types of projects (bike ped, transit) are disadvantaged in the current SPOT Prioritization process. Question about funding a complete streets project. If there is a vehicle benefit project that includes some bike ped improvements, those can be funded with possibly a local share for sidewalk costs. With urbanizing areas, in the counties it is difficult to add sidewalks even though the need is there. For example, an issue in Emma area.

Paul Black-once a project is funded in the TIP/STIP, a project has to get through NEPA/Title VI requirements. It takes 7-12 projects to build a project after it’s funded. Funding outlook for the future is not very good. There are specific funding pots such as interstate maintenance, Transportation Alternatives, etc. Under MAP-21 some of the programs have been consolidated. Looking at historical spending trends, large urbanized areas have not been getting as much money per capita as some of the rural areas. Overall, transportation funding is expected to level off and drop due to a decrease in per-capita spending on gas (less driving, more energy efficient vehicles.) Motor Fuel tax is not keeping up and currently there is not the will to increase the gas tax or move to another means of taxation such as VMT. NC has a relatively high gas tax rate because there are no county roads—gas tax replaces some of the potential property taxes at the county and municipal level. At the federal level, the Highway Trust

Fund will likely go broke before December 2014. Federal gas tax has not increased since 1992. The purchasing power of dollar has been on the decline due to inflation.

Role of the Citizens Advisory Committee in the MTP/CTP Update

Paul Black-the Executive Committee for the MTP is expected to drive a lot of the conversations; the Citizens Advisory Committee will provide some feedback. There will probably also some modal-specific questions that this group would discuss. Julie Mayfield-will the CTP be updated prior to the MTP? Paul Black-not necessarily. Probably not many changes to the CTP but will need to add a pedestrian element. Another potential change would be removing some of the projects which are not really realistic to get funded. Additionally, MPO staff and committees have been doing a lot of work with tying complete streets cross-sections to the CTP—getting a push back from NCDOT on adding those to the official CTP document.

Question about whether the old CTP and LRTP (MTP) are available on the MPO website-yes, they are posted. Question about who is represented on the Executive Committee-a combination of MPO Board members and TCC/staff-level members.

Paul Black next provided an overview of current vision and goals from the 2035 LRTP. Paul Black explained how a regional public transportation system remains an identified goal but no movement on it-no local match available. Paul Black next reviewed the other goals step-by-step. Question re-were the goals in the order of priority? Carrie Turner-the old LRTP goals were not in order of priority, they were developed as part of a facilitated CMP Plan update and discussion.

Paul Black-suggestion that the MPO-prioritized projects and new goals should mesh. Ted Figura—possibly the projects might need to be parsed out into segments and portions to really match it up with goals and objectives. Paul Black-we are limited in final project design, it's up to PDEA.

Paul Black-we will come back to the vision and goals at a later meeting. For today, would like to pick Chair and Vice Chair. Julie Mayfield-would Chair and Vice-Chair be two of the four people delegated to the Executive Committee? To be decided.

Marcia Bromberg-how often does the Executive Committee meet? Paul Black –it will depend, probably three monthly meetings in September, October, November, then a break, then another few months. Final MTP/LRTP due in the fall of 2015, with a 45-day public input period required for draft. CTP has more flexibility in timelines but it makes sense to keep both on the same update loop.

Julie Mayfield-many projects have showed up on lists in the past that really should not have-not gone through the full public vetting.

Marcia Bromberg-nominated Julie Mayfield for Chair, Ted Figura-second. No other nominations. Marcia Bromberg-moved to close the nomination, Amy Knisley-second. Motion carried.

Julie Mayfield-nominated Don Kostelec for Vice-Chair. Marcia Bromberg-second. Motion carried.

Need two more delegates.

Bruce Emory-volunteer. O'Neal Shelton-second volunteer. Carrie Turner-volunteer. Paul Black-we could select an alternate or two. Amy Knisely-interested in serving as an alternate.

Paul Black-appreciate everyone participating on a tight timeline. The reason we picked May 9th is due to some free consulting offered by ITRE to help pick out performance measures that would match up with goals and objectives. Julie Mayfield-highlighted that the first meeting of the Executive Committee is this coming Friday from 1-4 PM. Who can come on Friday? Amy Knisely, Bruce Emory, Julie Mayfield. Carrie Turner-maybe. Julie Mayfield-will let Don Kostelec know.

Standing Meeting Preferences and Schedule

Carrie Turner-earlier in the day is better for me, prior to 3 PM. Paul Black-could consider early morning. Julie Mayfield-are there specific times that do not work for people. Andrea Leslie-would prefer early in the day or later in the day. Amy Knisley—also prefer early in the morning or after 3 PM. Julie Mayfield-if we had 8 AM meetings, could we get done in 1.5 hours. Mondays-Julie Mayfield-can not do Mondays.O'Neal Shelton-can not do first Tuesday—Chamber breakfast.Andrea Leslie-preference to not schedule meetings on Friday. MPO staff will send out follow-up survey to narrow the standing meeting day/time (8 AM on a Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday, which week).

Andrea Leslie-is there any “homework” prior to next meeting? Julie Mayfield-suggestion to look through the current LRTP 2035, especially the goals and the project list. Paul Black-suggestion to also look at the Congestion Management Plan. Julie Mayfield-transportation planning is complicated, don't hesitate to ask a question if you don't understand a term or a process.

Meeting adjourned.