

Minutes
Twin Cities Area Transportation Study
Policy Committee Meeting
 April 18, 2011
 10:30 A.M.
 Southwest Michigan Regional Airport

POLICY MEMBERS PRESENT:	Tim Fenderbosch, St. Joseph Charter Township Robert Judd, City of St. Joseph Erin Kercheval, MDOT Coloma TSC Ray Lenze, MDOT Planning Debra Panozzo, Berrien County Commission Bill Purvis, TCATA Lee Scherwitz, SW Michigan Regional Airport Bruno Trapikas, Village of Shoreham Jim Soteriou, Royalton Township Dick Stauffer, Lincoln Charter Township Rachael Tupica, Federal Highway Administration (ex officio)
POLICY MEMBERS ABSENT:	Aaron Anthony, City of Bridgman Mickey Bennett, Sodus Township Bill Brown, Northwest Indiana Regional Planning Commission (ex officio) John Egelhaaf, SWMPC Carolyn Fowler, Benton Charter Township John Gast, Lake Charter Township Jason Latham, MDOT Regional Planning Stewart McKenzie, Federal Transit Administration (ex officio) Larry Merritt, Berrien County Road Commission Representative, Cornerstone Alliance Darwin Watson, City of Benton Harbor Kevin Wordelman, Berrien County Planning Commission
SWMPC STAFF PRESENT:	Anna Rahtz Trevor Thomas
OTHERS PRESENT:	Ron Griffin, St. Joseph Charter Township

1. CALL TO ORDER:

- Chairman Judd called the meeting to order at 10:38 A.M.

2. MINUTES:

- *A motion was made by Stauffer, seconded by Scherwitz, to approve the minutes of the February 28, 2011 Policy Committee meeting, with the correction that Bob Judd was absent. Motion approved unanimously.*

3. STAFF REPORT:

- **Transportation and Environment Workshop – Update**
 - Thomas stated that 50 people had attended the workshop at Andrews University, and had learned about how transportation projects can be coordinated with watershed planning to try to prevent problems like flooding deteriorating the pavement or runoff from the pavement impacting the water quality. He mentioned that the presentations from the workshop are available on the SWMPC website (www.swmpc.org/trans_water.asp).
- **Upcoming Workshops**
 - Rahtz encouraged those present to attend upcoming workshops that may be beneficial:
 - Designing bicycle-friendly communities – April 20th, Portage IN
 - Complete Streets workshop – May 3rd, Benton Harbor MSU Extension office

- Rahtz noted that the SWMPC/WMTGA trails workshop series has been cancelled due to lack of attendance.
- Rahtz announced that the Berrien County Transit Consolidation Feasibility Study will kick off with the consultant on June 1, 2011 at Michigan Works!.
- It was inquired as to the cost of the Complete Streets workshop, and Judd responded that the email listed the cost as \$55.

4. OLD BUSINESS:

- **Walk and Roll Update**

- Rahtz reminded the committee that the public hearings are scheduled for the week of May 16 through 20. The dates are as follows:
 - May 16th, 1:00pm – 4:00pm, Lincoln Township Hall
 - May 17th, 4:00pm – 7:00pm, St. Joseph Public Library
 - May 18th, 4:00pm – 7:00pm, Michigan Works! Benton Harbor
 - May 19th, 4:00pm – 7:00pm, Bridgman Public Library
- Rahtz noted that the next Walk & Roll subcommittee meeting will be held at Abonmarche on Wednesday May 4th to go over the final presentation materials for the public input meetings.
- Thomas asked the committee members for revisions on the data that he had sent out for the road segments for the Walk and Roll plan. He noted that any existing data sets that the agencies already have would save the SWMPC staff in trying to estimate the information from aerial photos, such as the width of lanes, width of shoulders, and condition of sidewalks, etc.
- Panozzo inquired about the format of the public meetings, and Rahtz responded that they will be open house style.
- Judd asked how the members could assist with the public meetings, and Rahtz responded that they could attend and help answer the public's questions.
- Stauffer inquired about the sample Bike to Work Week resolutions, and Rahtz noted that they were available on the meeting web page, but that she could also email it out. Judd added that the City Commission in St. Joseph is going to be reviewing the resolution.

- **Citizen representation on TwinCATS**

- Rahtz explained that at the Technical Advisory Committee in February, the committee had asked for more information on how other MPOs use citizen advisory committees or citizen representatives, in response to Rahtz' suggestion to use citizen representatives on the MPO committees. She passed out a handout with research she had compiled. She explained the difference between a citizen advisory committee and a citizen representative, and noted that there are four existing committees within the TwinCATS area that basically already operate as transportation citizen advisory committees. She suggested including a representative of each committee as a non-voting member of the TwinCATS committees and asking them to give a report at each TwinCATS meetings on what their group is discussing or working on.
- She noted that the Technical Advisory Committee was planning to think more about it and make a motion at the June meeting.
- Judd noted that the City of St. Joseph has an ad hoc Parks Advisory Board that has provided helpful advice but does not have decision-making power.
- Judd and Stauffer noted that their boards have the public comment section at the beginning of the meeting rather than the end, and they would support changing that, as suggested in Rahtz' handout.
- Panozzo inquired as to whether Rahtz was suggesting these changes for both the TAC and Policy Committee. She responded that in the research most of the MPOs had used citizen representatives on the Policy Committee, since that's where the decisions are being made. Panozzo noted that that seemed to be a better fit. It was added that citizen representatives on the Technical Advisory Committee could assist with more project-specific topics.
- Judd and Panozzo noted that it makes sense to link in with existing groups rather than starting a

new general transportation advisory committee and trying to get people to show up to the meetings.

- It was asked how the Road Commission uses gathers citizen input, and Berndt responded that it is very site-specific or project-specific.
- Fenderbosch and Panozzo suggested waiting until the June meeting to make a motion, after hearing what the Technical Advisory Committee decides to do.

- **Rail letters**

- Rahtz passed out two draft letters that staff are working on in coordination with the Westrain Coalition. She noted that each agency on Westrain is seeking board approval for signing off on the letters. She stated that the Technical Advisory Committee had already approved the letters, and they would also be brought before the full SWMPC board the next day.
- She passed out the first letter, which is to MDOT in response to their draft statewide rail plan, which shows the realignment of the Pere Marquette Amtrak line through Kalamazoo. It documents the communications with MDOT regarding the realignment, emphasizes the importance of the St. Joseph and Bangor Pere Marquette stops, and urges MDOT to reopen the alternatives study of the Pere Marquette line using intensive stakeholder engagement.
- Judd reminded the committee that MDOT had given a verbal commitment to reopen the alternatives study, but that it would be good to get something in writing.
- *Motion by Scherwitz, seconded by Purvis, to approve signing the letter. Motion approved unanimously.*
- Rahtz passed out the second letter, which is to Congressman Upton and other legislators emphasizing the importance of investing in rail and public transit for economic development.
- *Motion by Scherwitz, seconded by Panozzo, to approve signing the letter. Motion approved unanimously.*

5. NEW BUSINESS:

- **TIP Amendments**

- City of Benton Harbor
 - Add in FY 2011, project named Klock Rd for reconstructing and widening Klock Rd with new curb and gutter from M-63 to North Shore Dr (.4mi) and constructing a new two-lane road from North Shore Dr to Paw Paw Ave (.51mi). State cost (EDA) is \$1,042,850, and local cost is \$338,443.
 - Add in FY 2011, project named Graham Ave for construction of a 2 lane roadway from existing Graham Ave dead end to intersection of Riverview Dr and Whitwam Dr. State cost (EDA) is \$671,483, and local cost is \$259,700.
 - Add in FY 2011, project named Graham Ave for new at-grade railroad crossing. State cost (EDA) is \$1,706,911.
 - *It was asked where the local match for the projects is coming from, and Rahtz responded that it is from Harbor Shores.*
 - *Judd asked if these projects would be completed by June 2012, and Rahtz responded that she wasn't sure but most likely they would, since they are 2011 projects.*
 - *Lee asked if the railroad crossing project is being coordinated with the CSX bridge replacement project, and Rahtz responded that she was fairly certain it would have to be coordinated with CSX by law, but did not know about the timing of the projects.*
 - *Judd noted that the City of St. Joseph had had discussion with CSX about possibly moving the bridge or reconfiguring it.*
 - *Motion by Panozzo, seconded by Stauffer, to approve the addition of the above three projects in the FY 2011-2014 Transportation Improvement Program. Motion approved unanimously.*
- MDOT
 - Add in FY 2011, the project named I-94 for bridge work on I-94 WB from I-196 to 0.4 miles east of M-140 and on I-94 EB from Hennessey Rd to 0.4 miles east of M-140. Early

- preliminary engineering. Federal cost (ST) is \$245,550, and state cost is \$54,450.
- Add in FY 2012, the project named I-94 for installation of dynamic message signs at Indiana State Line, I-196, and M-40 and a control system to operate them. Federal cost (HSIP) is \$668,250 and state cost is \$74,250.
 - *Several committee members asked about the function that the dynamic message signs would serve and whether they could be used for things like Amber Alerts. Kercheval responded that they would primarily be used for alerts related to traffic and weather. Lenze added that they would be connected through the statewide ITS (intelligent transportation systems) architecture so that they could also be used for Amber Alerts and other messages.*
 - *Scherwitz asked how the placement of the signs would be determined and noted that the sign near I-196 should be placed far enough back that someone has time to make a decision whether to enter onto I-196 before the ramp. Kercheval responded that MDOT would be convening a meeting with experts to go out on-site and determine the placement.*
 - *Motion by Scherwitz, seconded by Berndt, to recommend that the Policy Committee approve the addition of the above two projects in the FY 2011-2014 Transportation Improvement Program. Motion approved unanimously.*
 - Modify in FY 2011, project named CPM Road Trunkline GPA. Name modified to I-94 BL. Limits modified from Regionwide to "Glenlord Rd to Pearl St." Length modified to 4.77 miles. Primary work type modified from GPA to "Restore & Rehabilitate." Project description modified from CPM Road Trunkline to "Mill and one-course HMA overlay." Federal cost modified from \$1,542,873 (ST) to \$1,591,983 (ST), and state cost modified from \$342,127 to \$353,017.
 - Modify in FY 2011, project named I-94. Primary work type modified from GPA to "Bridge – Other." Federal cost modified from \$362,294 (BHI) to \$395,139 (BHI) and state cost modified from \$40,255 to \$43,904.
 - Modify in FY 2012, project named I-94 EB. Limits modified from "Sawyer (Exit 12) to Red Arrow Hwy (Exit 16)" to "Sawyer Rd to 0.5 miles north of Red Arrow Hwy." Length modified from 4.10 miles to 5.00 miles. Project description modified from "Mill and two course HMA overlay" to "Mill existing HMA and apply two course HMA resurfacing treatment. Widen outside shoulder to thirteen feet paved to maintain work zone traffic and meet FHWA guideline. Widen inside shoulder to ten feet wide to meet FHWA standard. Flatten median slope, replacement of all median culverts and shallow cross culverts, re-install cable median barrier, guardrail upgrade, freeway signing upgrade, and ROW fence replacement. ROW may be required to complete drainage upgrade." Federal cost modified from \$14,805,000 (IM) to \$15,165,000 (IM), and state cost modified from \$1,645,000 to \$1,685,000.
 - Modify in FY 2012, project named I-94. Limits modified from "EB and WB over Hickory Creek" to "EB and WB over Hickory Creek, 2.1 miles northeast of Stevensville." Primary work type modified from "Bridge restore & rehabilitate" to "Bridge – other." Project description modified from "Deep overlay, railing replacement" to "Concrete deep overlay, railing replacement, beam repair, full paint, approaches." Federal cost modified from \$1,244,452 to \$1,321,532, and state cost modified from \$138,274 to \$146,838.
 - Modify in FY 2012, project named I-94. Federal cost (BHI) modified from \$563,404 to \$597,916. State cost modified from \$62,600 to \$66,435.
 - Modify in FY 2012, project named I-94 for bridge work at Empire Rd, Carmody Rd, and County Line Rd. Federal cost modified from \$481,811 (IM) to \$511,520 (IM). State cost modified from \$53,535 to \$56,836.
 - TCATA (modification already processed in February)
 - Modify in FY 2011, project named Transit Vehicle Replacement. Modify project description from Replacing two buses to Replacing three buses. Federal cost (5307) modified from \$102,000 to \$154,000, and state cost modified from \$26,000 to \$38,000.

- **2010 Census Data**

- Thomas gave a presentation of the change in population in the TwinCATS communities from the 2000 Census to 2010 Census.
- He added that the new American Fact Finder 2 is fairly easy to use to obtain and display the data, but the SWMPC office can also assist communities with their Census data needs.
- Panozzo asked if the percent change in the Hispanic population in TwinCATS communities was in line with the rest of the country, and Thomas noted that it was. He added that the race data should be taken with a grain of salt because participants can choose how to classify their race and Hispanic people choose to classify themselves in various categories.
- Tupica asked Thomas if he could foresee any possible changes in the MPO boundaries due to changes in the urbanized area, noting that the new urbanized area (UZA) boundaries will not be released until next spring. Thomas responded that due to the large increase in population in Royalton and Lincoln Townships, there could be a possibility of pulling in Baroda, but it is impossible to tell for sure.
- Judd noted that the Census data had shown that the City of St. Joseph has a higher proportion of second home owners than it did in 2000.

- **Transit Consolidation Feasibility study – consultant selection**

- Rahtz passed out a handout explaining the selection committee's process and reasoning behind choosing KFH to conduct the Berrien County Transit Consolidation Feasibility Study. She noted that the Technical Advisory Committee had approved it, and that she would like approval from the Policy Committee and the full SWMPC board as well before the contract would be signed with the consultant.
- Purvis and Stauffer noted that they had sat on the selection committee, and that KFH had stood out above the other consultants as highly qualified to do the study.
- *Motion by Scherwitz, seconded by Berndt, to approve the selection of KFH to conduct the Berrien County Transit Consolidation Feasibility Study. Motion approved unanimously.*

- **Unified Work Program development**

- Rahtz announced that SWMPC is beginning to develop the Unified Work Program, or schedule of planning tasks, for fiscal year 2012. The draft will be presented for approval by the committees at the June meeting. She reminded the committees to let her know as soon as possible if there is anything that she should include in the UWP.

6. PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Griffin noted that he would like to commend MDOT for using cutting-edge technology to distribute information to the public. He explained that he had received a brochure about the resurfacing project on Red Arrow Highway, and that the brochure had had a "quick access code," or barcode, on it that could be scanned with a smart phone and would automatically pull up a web page with more information. Rahtz noted that the SWMPC staff would look into doing that for some of their informational materials.

7. PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR:

- Stauffer stated that Lincoln Township residents had taken part in a roadway cleanup in partnership with MDOT the past weekend in the rain.
- Judd passed out drawings of the station renovation that Silver Beach Pizza is undertaking at the Amtrak station. He explained that it will involve closing off part of the roofed porch area. It will provide more dining space, more passenger waiting space, and passenger access to the restrooms.
- Several of the committee members asked what would happen with the amount of parking and Judd responded that it would stay exactly the same. In response to a comment about the need to expand the parking, Judd quoted Dan Burden that any popular place has a parking problem, and that there wouldn't be a good solution to it.

8. ADJOURNMENT: 11:30 A.M.

- *Motion by Fenderbosch, seconded by Stauffer, to adjourn. Motion approved unanimously.*
- Next meeting is **June 20, 2011 at 10:30 A.M.**