

French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization
Minutes
Transportation Advisory Committee
A-B Technical Community College, Haynes Conference Center
June 21, 2007

TAC Voting Members:

Carl Bartlett, Town of Black Mountain; Henry Foy, Town of Waynesville; Bryan Freeborn, City of Asheville; Charles Grimes, Town of Biltmore Forest; Eddie Henderson, Town of Fletcher; Jon Laughter, City of Hendersonville; Keith Maddox, Town of Laurel Park; James Mashburn, Town of Clyde; Brownie Newman, City of Asheville; Nathan Ramsey, Buncombe County; Letta Jean Taylor, Town of Montreat; Jerry Vehaun, Town of Woodfin; Jim Wert, Town of Flat Rock. Alan Thornburg, NC Board of Transportation;

Staff and Agency Attendees:

Dan Baechtold, MPO Coordinator; Ralph Cannady, NCDOT-Div.14; Ivo Dernev, NCDOT-Transportation Planning Branch; Greg Shuler, NCDOT-Div. 13; Sarah Smith, NCDOT-Transportation Planning Branch; Jill Stark, FHWA; Kathy Molin, TDM Coordinator; John Mitchell, Asheville Chamber of Commerce;

Other Attendees:

Sandra Mueller

The meeting was called to order at 12:20 p.m. by Vice-Chair Letta Jean Taylor. She welcomed everyone and asked for self-introductions.

Approval of Minutes

Ms. Taylor asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the April 19th meeting. Dan Baechtold asked for a change in addressing the design group from AIA to Asheville Design Center. Mr. Laughter made the motion that the minutes of April meeting be passed (with correction). Mr. Freeborn seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Resolution adopting the 2007-2013 MTIP

The TAC adopted the MTIP on a motion at the last meeting which should have been done by resolution. This item is for adoption of the resolution. The resolution was brought to motion by Mr. Wert and seconded by Mr. Newman. The motion was passed unanimously.

Adoption of the 2009-2015 Priority Needs List

Dan Baechtold reviewed the schedule of this process. He referred to a handout from NCDOT which outlines how and when the draft TIP becomes final document. Three items on the distributed handout were up for discussion: 1) Recommendation to fund project U-2801A (Sweeten Creek Road US25A widening) ahead of project U-3301 (Leicester Highway NC63 widening), 2) Recommendation to remove project I-4409

(Black Mountain/Blue Ridge Road Interchange), 3) MPO intent to program STP-DA funds on locally developed and managed projects.

Discussion followed and the TAC decided that the Sweeten Creek/Leicester Highway issue will be continued in later discussions. Ms. Taylor asked for a motion to adopt the PNL, with the understanding that further discussion will continue regarding the aforementioned item. The other two items and all other changes to the PNL were approved. Mr. Vehaun motioned the adoption of the 2009-2015 PNL and Mr. Grimes seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

TIP Priority Needs Discussion with NCDOT

Mr. Baechtold announced the NCDOT representatives from Raleigh are willing to come to the area to discuss priorities for the 2009-2015 TIP.

SPECIAL UPDATES

Mr. Baechtold announced the Comprehensive Transportation Plan will be completed by Don Bryson's firm Martin Alexiou Bryson. It is scheduled for completion in September. Meetings in three counties are scheduled and MPO staff will update the committees as the process develops.

The Asheville Design Center indicated they would like to come back to the TAC. Mr. Grimes and Mr. Newman spoke favorably of having NCDOT in review the design to see if it is feasible and workable.

The Land of Sky Regional Council (LOSRC) is applying for a Federal Highway Administration grant to study environmental conservation issues in the region. They are asking for a letter of support from the MPO. Ms. Taylor asked if there were any objections to such a letter of support. No negative voice was heard.

Mr. Baechtold mentioned the Congestion Management Plan will need to be addressed in the near future.

FWHA will be conducting a review of the MPO to ensure compliance with federal regulations in the near future.

Mr. Freeborn asked when the Asheville Bicycle Plan would be finalized. Mr. Baechtold said the next public meeting would be just before Bele Chere in late July. The plan will be finalized in the Fall.

REGULAR UPDATES

Greg Shuler (Div. 13) mentioned some upcoming staff training in the area. He then gave updates to active projects.

Ralph Cannady (Div 14) said he was available to answer specific questions.

Kathy Molin updated the MPO on the TDM Program. July 26th there will be a net conference relating to Safe Rides to school. A commuter website will be up by July 1st called BlueRidgeCommute.com. She is negotiating with Ingles Markets about Park and Ride parking areas, where people can park their cars and ride the bus into town. There is also a program underway in recognizing employers who offer commuter benefits. Further discussion followed about Safe Routes to School program

Sara Smith, NCDOT Planning Branch introduced Ivo Denerv as the new NCDOT MPO coordinator.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Sandra Mueller commented on Sweeten Creek congestion and how important it is to consider its growing problems with traffic.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:27 p.m.