

METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Indian River County (IRC) Metropolitan Planning Organization Citizens Advisory Committee (MPOCAC) was held at 2:00 p.m. on Tuesday, February 6, 2007, in the First Floor Conference Room "A", County Administration Building, 1840 25th Street, Vero Beach, Florida.

Present were Chairman Juliana Young; Richard Woodard, Walter Wright, Roger Sherwood, and Robert Johnson, IRC Appointees; Charles Vogt, City of Vero Beach Appointee; Robert Bowman, Town of Indian River Shores Appointee; Clarence Korke, City of Fellsmere Appointee; Donald Wright, City of Sebastian Appointee; William Lundy Parden, Transportation Disadvantaged Appointee; Deryl Seemayer, City of Sebastian Appointee; and Freddie Woolfork, Minority Appointee.

Absent were Michael Durwin, School Board Appointee; and Jack Phillips, City of Vero Beach Appointee (unexcused).

Also present were IRC staff: Phil Matson, Staff Director; Sharon Schalm, Staff Assistant III, MPO; and Misty L. Pursel, Interim Staff Assistant IV. Others present: Karen Deigl, IRC Council of Aging Executive Director; Vic DeMattia, Chris Murphy and Herb Whittall, Interested Citizens.

Call to Order

Chairman Young called the meeting to order, at which time it was determined a quorum was present.

Annual Election of Officers

ON MOTION by Mr. Johnson, SECONDED by Mr. Bowman, the members voted unanimously (11-0) to reelect Julie Young Chairman of the MPO Citizens Advisory Committee for 2007.

ON MOTION by Mr. Woodard, SECONDED by Mr. Bowman, the members voted unanimously (11-0) to reelect Robert Johnson Vice Chairman of the MPO Citizens Advisory Committee for 2007.

Approval of Minutes

Chairman Young asked if there were any additions or corrections to the minutes of the December 12, 2006 Joint TAC/CAC Meeting. There were none.

ON MOTION by Vice Chairman Johnson, SECONDED by Mr. Bowman, the members voted unanimously (11-0) to approve the minutes of the Joint TAC/CAC meeting of December 12, 2006 as presented.

Consideration of Amendments to 2006/07 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

Mr. Phil Matson, MPO Director, conveyed the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) requested MPO to review the three amendments due to the magnitude. He shared some reasons on why the costs were so high, and noted FDOT had indicated they were able to bring the addition of lanes and reconstructing Interstate 95 under budget and were withdrawing the request to amend the budget by that amount.

Mr. Matson reported one of the remaining two TIP amendments were State Road 60 resurfacing 21st Avenue to Mockingbird Road. The cost to provide access infiltration increased the cost of the project.

Mr. Matson further reported the last amendment was the Interstate 95 Intelligent Transportation Systems improvement which included electronic toll collection on the B-line expressway and turnpike, fiber optic network lines running inside the road with in-pavement detectors so when traffic came to a stop, for whatever reason, it registered on a computer at all the fire and emergency response departments to send someone. He relayed FDOT had indicated the cost overruns were due to mobilization on information and fiber optic consultants, along with material cost increases.

Chairman Young inquired whether the freeway management system project could be done simultaneously with the improvement project to the same stretch of road. Mr. Matson advised the timing was not changed but the cost was changed on both projects.

Vice Chairman Johnson asked if signage would be installed at State Road 60, west of Interstate 95.

Mr. Matson responded most likely there would be signage, anywhere there was a Strategic Intermodal System signage was present. He advised he would confirm with FDOT.

Chairman Young requested what was the magnitude of the costs.

Mr. Matson responded the table indicated approximately \$11 million, with an added \$5 million. He further mentioned FDOT had set aside money anticipating cost overruns when budgeting projects 5 and 10 years in advance.

ON MOTION by Mr. Woodard, SECONDED by Vice Chairman Johnson, the members voted unanimously (11-0) to recommend the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) approve the two amendments to the adopted Fiscal Year 2006/07 through 2010/2011 Traffic Improvement Program.

Consideration of Central Indian River County Greenways Plan – Draft Final Report

Mr. Matson presented a PowerPoint presentation of the Central Indian River County Greenways Plan, a copy of which is on file in the County Commission Office. He summarized the Greenways Plan was under development to enhance multi-modal transportation, connect urban and rural areas, and increase recreation and conservation opportunities in Vero Beach and Central Indian River County.

Mr. Matson outlined three alternative greenway concepts in which the preferred alternative was referred to as the Connected Network, which included linkages to most of the area's natural and public assets, including causeways, beaches, and canals.

Mr. Matson mentioned the criteria included transportation benefits; quality of life benefits; connectivity between major attractions; the ability to accommodate multiple modes of transportation; agency support; cost; and constructability.

ON MOTION by Vice Chairman Johnson, SECONDED by Mr. Durwin, to recommend the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) approve the draft Central Indian River County Greenways Plan with special attention to Priorities 1, 2 and 3.

UNDER DISCUSSION Mr. Woodard inquired regarding the waterways, who
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owned the property. Mr. Matson answer it was virtually privately owned by independent water control districts.

Chairman Young stated the independent water control districts were largely controlled by the groups involved with taking care of them.

Mr. Matson acknowledged there would be a hard fight getting any use out of the canals; however, he had confidence in the approach of the proposal.

Chairman Young commented if the airport loop was constructed to some degree on the City of Vero Beach property and provided an image to the water control districts of how it would look and what the usership would include, it would assist with a positive approach. She stated the liability issue was huge.

Mr. Matson thought a legislative fix was available for the liability issue.

Mr. Woolfork commented a lot of external communications had been presented to agencies; however, internal support had not been garnished, i.e. the City of Vero Beach Recreation Commission was not a part of the review process.

Mr. Matson advised a lot of the outreach had been driven by the City's recreation department. He also mentioned FDOT was financing the transportation plan. Mr. Matson said the farther away from the transportation function, and the more toward the recreational aspect a project was, the FDOT funding would be limited.

Chairman Young conferred although people living in this community see the plan as a great recreation resource, in reality, to obtain the funding it was necessary to be promoted as a transportation resource.

Discussion ensued regarding a bike path/walkway across the south bridge and possible proposals to review.

THE CHAIRMAN called the motion to vote and the members voted unanimously (11-0) in favor of the motion.

Consideration of Regional Long Range Transportation Plan – Project Prioritization Criteria

Mr. Matson referred to a handout entitled “Regional Project Prioritization Project Scoring Tool” by Renaissance Planning Group, a copy of which is on file in the County Commission Office. He summarized Indian River was awarded a \$3.7

million grant as the top regional priority aimed at enhancing the intersection of State Road 60 and 58th Avenue. Mr. Matson advised the consultant, Renaissance Planning Group, had provided more detailed criteria and referred to a survey on Page 1, with a heading "Adopted Regional Goals and Criteria – Short Form Preference Survey Results (December 2006)". He stated responses indicated the three counties were pretty much in agreement; however, the Indian River MPO Board scored matters differently from other agencies on the list.

Mr. Chris Murphy, interested citizen, questioned the zeros indicated for Martin County. Mr. Matson stated no one from the Martin County board responded to the survey.

Mr. Matson referred to the page with the heading, "Revised Project Scoring Tool (Criteria, Measures and Weights)" and provided the example where detail was lacking in Criteria 1.2 concerning bridges, bridge reconstruction or replacement. He explained a different scoring for bridges, to include breakdown for over a drainage ditch, or over an intercoastal waterway in order to decrease some of the subjectivity.

Chairman Young remarked there was always this problem on other things rated this way when, for instance, looking at schools always outranked other projects, so therefore certain projects never got done. She commented no matter what the system was, there were adherent problems with this type of ranking.

Mr. Matson agreed, however, opined to avoid having the criteria too open and project funding hijacked by the larger jurisdiction.

Chairman Young inquired if when using this system, whether rotational use of the funds were being considered. Mr. Matson answered in the negative, noting there was enough money for only one project, and the type of stop-gap set of criteria used was based mostly on capacity.

Vice Chairman Johnson offered a recommendation to use the same formula as the municipalities used for optional gas sales.

Mr. Matson answered the formula was based on population and miles traveled. Mr. Matson advised FDOT wanted the three counties to design a system showing the worst need within the three county area.

Mr. Matson conferred with Chairman Young and Vice Chairman Johnson regarding a rotational or formula allocation was the better way to go rather sharing the money among three counties and finding one project. He thought with sharing

the money there was potential Indian River County would not get any funding due to

worse conditions in the Martin and St. Lucie County areas.

Chairman Young reiterated what Mr. Matson was looking for from the Committee was recommendation for this matter to have the criteria re-evaluated.

Mr. Matson added to have this matter improved, it needed to be subjected to reviewing the criteria, streamlining it, and taking away subjectivity so IRC had a fair shot at the funds.

ON MOTION by Mr. Donald Wright, SECONDED by Mr. Seemayer, the members voted unanimously (11-0) to recommend the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) follow staff recommendation to review the regional prioritization criteria, regional public involvement plan, regional plan amendment process, provide the consultant with comments, and not recommend approval of the regional criteria until concerns were more appropriately addressed and criteria more specifically defined.

Discussion ensued regarding the county line traffic patterns to the north in the future.

Discussion of Aviation Boulevard Extension Citizens' Report

Mr. Matson introduced Vic Demattia, a retired aerospace engineer and concerned citizen, who had reviewed Kimley-Horn Associates' report and alignment studies. He interpreted how IRC could connect the Merrill P. Barber Bridge to possibly reduce costs of the assumptions in the studies and determine whether there was potential for moving forward.

Mr. Demattia gave a presentation, a copy of which is on file in the County Commission Office. He concluded several of the cost assumptions in the Kimley-Horn study could be re-evaluated and decreased with a four-way intersection at the Merrill P. Barber Bridge and Indian River Boulevard with the Aviation Extension curved northward around wetland areas. Mr. Demattia's report also involved a four-lane section constructed in an 80-foot right-of-way which violated widely-accepted engineering standards and county policies on lane width.

A lengthy discussion ensued regarding placement of a right hand lane exit off the bridge with an elevated loop; circling around to go south on Indian River Boulevard instead of making a left hand turn; intersecting routes with limited access and exiting from the proposed new highway including hospital access; possible

access from The Gator Group Partners plot and the industrial park by the City of Vero Beach annex.

Discussions were held regarding two possible options to accommodate growth by having a four-way intersection at Indian River Boulevard and the Merrill P. Barber Bridge and a four-way intersection at US 1, with the possibility of adding bridges in the future.

Mr. Matson summarized the question at present was whether there was any life in the round-about route and sufficient life to investigate the few things Mr. Demattia had identified and doing enough wells and wetlands studies to see exactly how much this would cost. He mentioned Mr. Demattia had spelled out what could be an inexpensive scenario, however by his own admission he did not know that without field testing.

ON MOTION by Vice Chairman Johnson, SECONDED by Mr. Bowman to recommend the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) follow staff recommendation to undertake sufficient additional analysis to confirm the cost conclusions in Mr. Demattia's report.

UNDER DISCUSSION Mr. Demattia reiterated three of the options went through the center of expensive real estate, and Kimley-Horn Associates indicated with those fatal flaws the options could not be accomplished. Mr. Matson agreed there was too much property to acquire.

Mr. Woodard asked how much would be spent on obtaining data on the wetlands to know if it were feasible. Mr. Matson answered the original study indicated the fatal flaw analysis to date was \$30,000, with \$80,000 in Phase II. He stated it would now probably be less than \$10,000 to \$20,000 in laboratory testing and field study.

Vice Chairman Johnson inquired when bringing this matter back for review to have the concerns discussed herein addressed in general terms. Chairman Young added it was more than buying properties under the road, but cutting off numerous canals and taking waterfront from people.

Mr. DeMattia reminded everyone if one more parcel was developed on the north route it would mean losing the potential to acquire the right of way.

THE CHAIRMAN called the motion to vote and the

members voted, (7-4) to follow staff recommendation.

ON MOTION by Mr. Donald Wright, seconded by Mr. Walter Wright, to undertake sufficient analysis to provide access to the southern canal route.

UNDER DISCUSSION Mr. Matson recalled from the original study of the southern canal route provided the two options of piping the canal or using the embankments adjacent to the canal. He stated piping the canal was not an engineering solution because of the flood plain and a spillway needed for emergency. Mr. Matson related the remaining embankment option did not provide enough land to take the 120-foot right-of-way; however, 80-feet was closer, without taking something on the north or south side.

THE CHAIRMAN called the motion to vote and the members voted unanimously (11-0) in favor of the motion.

Status Report of Other MPO Advisory Committees

Mr. Matson reviewed the status report dated February 1, 2007, a copy of which is on file in the County Commission Office.

Mr. Matson noted the next meeting scheduled for March 6, 2007 at 2:00 p.m. in Conference Room "A" had been cancelled.

Other Business

Vice Chairman Johnson thanked staff for cooperating with the citizens report and being supportive.

Mr. Donald Wright indicated he would like to see in the future a greenway plan for north county. Mr. Matson clarified a full blown scope studying everything from the Atlantic Ocean to Fellsmere and beyond would be reviewed in a future meeting, probably in June, 2007.

Comments from the Public

None

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 3:55 p.m.

Next Meeting: May 1, 2007 at 2:00 p.m. in Conference Room "A".