



KERR-TAR RPO RTCC MEETING

November 8, 2007

1:30 P.M.

Oxford Public Works Facility

Oxford, NC

MEETING ATTENDEES

RTCC MEMBERS

*Alligood, Brian – Granville County Mgr
Ayscue, Jerry – Vance County Mgr
(Alternate: Tom Anderson)
*Barlow, Jonathan – Roxboro City Mgr
Baynes, Timmy – COG Director
Becker, Kelly – NCDOT Traffic Engineer
Bowman, Wally – Division 5 Engineer
*Brink, Rob -- KARTS
Bruff, Mike – NCDOT TPB (Alternate: Julie Bollinger)
*Bullock, Ray – Middleburg Mayor
Carpenter, Steve – Person County Mgr
(Alternate: Leigh Woodall)
Church, John – Warren County EDC
Coudriet, Chris – Franklin County Mgr
(Alternate: Pat Young)
Day, Jack – Stem Mayor

*Finch, Benny – Vance County EDC
*Freeman, John – Warrenton Town Mgr
Goswick, Ronnie – Franklin County EDC
(Alternate: Richie Duncan)
Harris, Carroll – Macon Mayor
Jones, Linda – Warren County Mgr
*Lunsford, Gerald -- PATS
Marrow, Tommy – Oxford City Mgr
*Moss, Jerry – Henderson City Mgr
Newman, Walter – Norlina Mayor
*Newsome, Glen – Person County EDC
Parrott, Janet – Stovall Mayor (Alternate: Tonya Sneed)
Powell, Shelby – RPO Planner
*Turner, Leon – Granville County EDC
Warren, Mark – Louisburg Town Mgr
*Wynne, Howard – Kittrell Mayor

* denotes voting members who were absent

OTHERS PRESENT

Ken Krulik – Warren County
Geraldine Dumas – RPO Staff
Scott Walston – NCDOT TPB
Jonathan Cooper – Kerr-Tar COG
Robert Farnum – Vance County
Ellen J. Wilkins – Town of Stem
David Foster -- NCDOT

Meeting Minutes

Welcome and Introductions – P. Young announced that RTCC Chair Scottie Wilkins was absent due to illness, and that he would be conducting the meeting.

Minutes from September 13, 2007 – Motion made by J. Day, Second by T. Baynes to accept the meeting minutes as presented in the agenda packet. There being no further discussion, the motion carried unanimously.

Southeast High Speed Rail Presentation – David Foster from NCDOT’s Rail Division gave an overview of the Southeast High Speed Rail project, focusing on North Carolina’s section of the corridor. The following points were made:

- NC was designated in 1992 as part of the Southeast High Speed Rail Corridor
- In 2002 a Record of Decision was made joint by the FRA and FHWA
- The Petersburg to Raleigh section had an environmental study completed in 2003
- The project was extended to Richmond, making the study area 168 miles long
- A 30-foot trail on 60-foot right-of-way parallel to the SEHSR corridor is being investigated
- The draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will be completed by August 2009, and will enable a preferred alignment to be chosen
- Approximately six public hearings will be held in or around December 2009 regarding the EIS
- The final EIS will be complete in 2010
- A Record of Decision for the corridor should be complete in November 2010
- There are 50 bridges from the NC/VA line to Raleigh proposed because of attempts to grade separate the rail track from the road
- NCDOT is in the process of completing the vertical railroad alignment; the highway work down to Norlina is complete and the entire design should be complete by March 2008
- The train will have a maximum speed of 110 miles per hour in this area, with track suitable for upgraded high-speed trains in the future
- The goal for speed is between 85 and 87 miles per hour between Charlotte and Washington, DC
- Norfolk Southern is looking at commuter rail options in NC
- The SEHSR is a high-speed express train, with two non-stop trains per day from Petersburg to Raleigh and two one-stop trains per day from Petersburg to Raleigh.
- There will be one stop in Henderson and one stop in Virginia
- The corridor will be suitable for traditional passenger and commuter rail service as well, which would have more frequent stops
- The Record of Decision will be good for three years to be used in application for federal funding; NCDOT hopes to apply for federal funding immediately upon completion of the Record of Decision
- There is a need to update the economic impact study for the SEHSR, but previous studies showed a \$2.59 return per \$1.00 investment in North Carolina
- NCDOT is not committed to building the adjacent multi-use trail, but the environmental work will be completed so local towns or counties could apply for funding to build portions of the trail
- Multi-modal stations serving single-occupancy vehicle and transit are being looked at in major cities along the SEHSR, and local towns are encouraged to plan around potential stops in their areas to attract development compatible with a rail stop
- David Foster can be reached at 919/733-RAIL (7245), extension 266

Comprehensive Planning Needs List Update – S. Powell stated that there were several Comprehensive Transportation Plans were underway in the region, and had been taken off the CTP needs list. Those are Franklin and Granville and Warren Counties, including the municipalities in each county. An updated list was provided in the agenda packet, with the following priorities:

1. Person County
2. Vance County
3. Roxboro
4. Oxford
5. Henderson

It was noted that, as discussed in previous meetings, a local government must have a land use plan no more than five years old in order for NCDOT to assign staff to work on a Comprehensive Transportation Plan. **Motion made by T. Baynes, Second by J. Day, to recommend the CTP priority list for 2007 to NCDOT as presented by staff.** There being no further discussion, the motion carried unanimously.

Granville County CTP Endorsement – S. Powell reiterated that Scottie Wilkins, Granville County Transportation Planner, could not attend the meeting but had hoped to present this plan for RTCC consideration. S. Powell reviewed the two-year process that had been undertaken by the Granville County CTP committee. There had been considerable public involvement and local input into the creation of the plan. The CTP has been adopted by the County and the municipalities of Creedmoor, Stem, Stovall, Oxford and Butner. The RTCC is asked to recommend that the RPO RTAC endorse the plan and recommend adoption of the plan to the Capital Area MPO and the NC DOT Board of Transportation. **Motion made by J. Day, Second by T. Sneed, to recommend to the RTAC the adoption of a Resolution Endorsing a Comprehensive Transportation Plan for Granville County, North Carolina.** There being no further discussion, the motion carried unanimously.

Statewide RTAC Association – S. Powell noted that the NC Association of RPO's has discussed a need for a forum for local elected officials to discuss common transportation issues. This bore the idea of a statewide RTAC Association. The NC Association of RPO's is looking for individual RPO support prior to working further to creating such a committee. The NC Association of MPO's is also considering endorsing this idea. The RTAC Association would likely be staffed by the Executive Committee of the NC Association of RPO's, but details on frequency of meetings and location and other operational details had not been determined at this point. S. Powell asked that the RTCC consider endorsing the concept of the RTAC Association to the Kerr-Tar RPO RTAC. **Motion made by T. Sneed, Second by J. Day, to recommend to the Kerr-Tar RPO RTAC the adoption of a Resolution Supporting the Formation of a Statewide Association of Transportation Advisory Committees.** There being no further discussion, the motion carried unanimously.

NCDOT Transportation Planning Branch Update – J. Bollinger updated the RTCC on several items:

- The Franklin County CTP is underway, and the committee is working on traffic projections and compiling survey results.
- The Louisburg CTP is still on hold, awaiting contact from the Town.
- The Warren County CTP is undergoing local adoptions; the Towns of Warrenton and Norlina still need to adopt the plan, but Macon and the County Board of Commissioners have both adopted the plan. The RPO will look at adopting the plan after the local adoptions are complete.
- The Granville County plan, as discussed earlier in the meeting, has been locally adopted by all municipalities and the county, and will go to the NCDOT Board of Transportation after adoption by CAMPO. Work on the technical report for this plan is underway.

NCDOT Division 5 Update – W. Bowman stated that the 2009-2015 Draft TIP had been released, and that S. Powell had distributed copies at this meeting. It was a good year for Division 5 in the TIP, as very few projects had been delayed. He noted that Ken Spaulding, our NCDOT Board Member, had made a good showing for the rural areas of the Division. Right-of-way was funded for US 501 B section in Person County, US 401 B & C sections remained funded in 2010 and 2011, while right-of-way for C & D sections was in 2014 and 2015, respectively. Project R-3608 in Louisburg was funded for right-of-way in 2014 and construction in 2015, in keeping with the RPO's priority on US 401. He further noted that Durham County's top priority project, the East End Connector, was delayed from 2012 to 2014. W. Bowman stated that North Carolina needs additional resources to maintain interstate quality, and that he supported expediting the I-85 pavement projects if funding became available. Currently, the pavement rehabilitation project from the Granville County line to milepost 213 is under contract, and the 19-mile pavement preservation project up to the Virginia line is scheduled to be complete by August 2008. There is a signal going in at US 401 and Tarboro Road, and the Division is looking at installing a flashing signal at Brassfield Road at NC 96 due to the safety concerns surrounding the sharp turn. Further, there is a traffic study underway to determine if the intersection in Stem meets signal warrants yet. T. Anderson asked if the Division had considered the additional load of traffic that would use I-85 if I-95 were to

be tolled. W. Bowman advised that it was an issue worth studying, but that no formal studies had been undertaken.

Planner's Report -- S. Powell updated the group on the following topics:

- a. 2007 NADO National Peer Learning Conference – Staff attended this conference in Chattanooga, TN. The Kerr-Tar RPO won a 2007 Transportation Innovation Award for the planning process of the Granville County CTP. Also, the NC Association of RPO's won an award for the NC Transportation Answers website (www.nctransportationanswers.org) discussed in previous meetings. The conference was well-attended by rural transportation professionals from across the nation, with especially good representation from North Carolina. Across the nation, rural consultation programs seem to be strengthening. Several years ago at the conference, North Carolina was held up as an example of a strong RPO program; this year it was clear more and more states were catching up and even surpassing North Carolina as far as support for the program at the state DOT level and legislatively. There was some discussion about bringing a regional conference to North Carolina to look at some of those issues more closely.
- b. 2007 NC Association of MPO's Conference – Staff attended this conference, as did RTCC Vice-Chair Patrick Young and RTAC Vice-Chair Jack Day. It was a good chance to see what other RPOs and MPOs in the state are doing, and knowing that most areas are experiencing frustration at lack of transportation funding.
- c. TIP Draft 2009-2015 – There will be public hearings scheduled in January or February 2008, and the TIP is in a new format, with a “deliverable TIP” for the first three years and more project detail.
- d. Safe Routes to Schools – A handout regarding the grant program was distributed at the meeting. The call for proposals is open until January 14, 2008. Applications can be made on a school-wide basis or system-wide basis for action plans and/or non-infrastructure grants. Action Planning is an award where NCDOT assigns a consultant to perform an assessment and create an action plan for bettering the pedestrian environment for schools serving students in Kindergarten through 8th grade. The non-infrastructure grant award is for encouragement or enforcement activities to encourage kids to walk or bike to school. Neither of these grants require a cash match, but the non-infrastructure grant award is a reimbursement program. An infrastructure grant call will be made next year. W. Bowman reviewed some Safe Routes to School Division-wide funding that is available. There is \$200,000 available to each Division for sidewalks, bike racks, filling sidewalk gaps, traffic calming, and other activities. Maintenance of existing sidewalks is not eligible, and right-of-way can not be purchased with the funds. The Division office should be contacted to apply for these funds. The contact person is Battle Whitley.
- e. US 158 in Warren County – Public meetings will be scheduled in the Spring on this project. NCDOT is working on maps for those meetings, and the project is still programmed only for planning and environmental study on the TIP.
- f. Oxford Loop Project – This will be designed as a four-lane divided road. The Environmental Assessment is underway, and the project will not go through the full Merger 01 process, but Merger team members, including the RPO, will be kept informed as the project progresses. There will be some new location sections on either end of the project to make the Loop the prevailing movement along US 158. Acquisition of right-of-way is scheduled in the new TIP for 2011. Construction remains unfunded in the Draft TIP.

Other Business – J. Day thanked NCDOT for their guidance and participation in the RPO. P. Young reminded the committee of the next scheduled meeting on January 10, 2008.

Adjournment – There being no further business, P. Young, upon **motion by J. Day and second by W. Bowman**, adjourned the meeting.