

MINUTES OF THE TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Held on December 3, 2009

The following members were present for the regular meeting of the Technical Advisory Committee on December 3, 2009 at the offices of the Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council, 1926 Victoria Avenue, Fort Myers, Florida.

Those in attendance included:

David Loveland	Lee County Depart. of Transportation
Bill Horner	Lee County Port Authority
Carmen Monroy	LeeTran
Dawn Gordon	Lee County School Board
Glenn Heath	Cape Coral Community Development
Persides Zambrano	Cape Coral Department of Public Works
Kitty Sayers	Cape Coral Mini Bus Service
Eliana Hayes	Fort Myers Department of Engineering
John Patterson	Town of Fort Myers Beach
David Hutchinson	SWFRPC
Mark Clark	FDOT

Others in attendance included: Trinity Scott and Julia Davis with FDOT; Darla Letournea concerned citizen; Mark Gumula with Charlotte MPO; Peter Blackwell with Lee County; Gary Bryan with Good Wheels; and Don Scott, Ron Gogoi and Meghan Marion with Lee MPO.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 9:33 a.m. by Chairman Loveland.

Ms. Marion announced that a quorum was present.

Chairman Loveland stated that there would be a few changes to the agenda as LeeTran has brought their Hybrid Bus for the Committee to view. Agenda item 5 will be moved up in the agenda because of Mr. Gumula's schedule and MPO staff has provided a Walk-on Item.

Ms. Monroy stated that the bus would be officially introduced at FGCU and is the only fully electric bus. The bus was funded through a 2007 grant from FDOT with Lee County providing the matching funds and was also supplemented by a federal earmark.

The vehicle cost \$500,000 and part of the cost was underwritten by ITE Technologies. It is currently undergoing FTA testing and recently won an award for innovation and creativity.

Chairman Loveland asked if Ms. Monroy had information about the capital costs.

Ms. Monroy stated that a clean burning 35-foot diesel vehicle cost \$350,000 to \$375,000.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Agenda Item #1 – Minutes of the November 5, 2009 TAC Meeting

MOTION BY MS. MONROY TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 5, 2009 TAC MEETING. SECONDED BY MS. ZAMBRANO. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

NEW BUSINESS

Agenda Item #5 – Agenda Items/Issues for an upcoming Joint Meeting with the Charlotte MPO

Mr. Scott said that Mr. Gumula was present at today's meeting from the Charlotte MPO and that when he went to the Charlotte TAC meeting two weeks ago, discussion ensued on the Babcock DRI, Burnt Store Road Corridor and Seminole Gulf rail corridor.

Mr. Scott asked if the members had any items they wanted to have included on the agenda at the Joint Meeting with the Charlotte MPO and that the meeting would most likely be held in late February or early March.

Ms. Monroy asked about Fixed Route Transit service and asked for an update on Charlotte's system plans as the initiative was back to the drawing board.

Mr. Gumula replied that on November 10th, the BOCC voted against it, however, there was a lot of discussion about reconsidering the issue. He reported that staff should know the decision by the BOCC by December 8th and that he would not be surprised if it did pass as there has been considerable discussion since the meeting on November 10th.

Ms. Monroy said that they would be glad to provide technical assistance to Charlotte County that would help them with that decision.

Chairman Loveland asked what the Charlotte BOCC's opposition was to establishing a fixed route.

Mr. Gumula said that if they didn't like fixed route, could go back to Dial-A-Ride. There are concerns that with system changes that may lose contract money.

Ms. Monroy said that the constituency is highly dependent on demand response systems and any changes cause apprehension. She suggested that a discussion of transit items should be included in the corridor discussion. Lee Tran was looking at having a discussion between all of the transit agencies in Charlotte, Collier and Lee counties, and perhaps Hendry and Palm Beach that are operating service along SR 80.

Chairman Loveland said that there was some interest in pursuing an effort to minimize impact on rural parts of Lee County in addition to widening the road to look at alternative transportation beside alternative routes. There should be a discussion of at least trend service across county line.

Ms. Monroy said their initiative would be to put technical staff together to share contact information which is critical when a TIGER grant opportunity arises.

Mr. Leung said the first study was a Transit Feasibility Study and it incorporated a transit component as part of the overall solution.

Discussion ensued on Zemel property.

Chairman Loveland said the actual property fronts on Burnt Store Road. The property on US 41 is a bigger concern and the issue is what the future plan is for US 41 in that area.

Mr. Gumula stated that the Charlotte MPO would like to discuss two different items: 1) a formal interlocal agreement between the Charlotte and Lee County MPO's; 2) the creation of a Southwest Florida MPO Coordination Association to include all the MPO's in Southwest Florida (Lee, Charlotte, Collier, Hendry, Glades).

Chairman Loveland said it was not a bad idea to have a regional transportation association focus and we might want to include Glades and Hendry as well.

Mr. Gumula said it was a matter of not only shared road network, but also I-75 which would benefit Charlotte as well.

Discussion on location of meeting ensued.

Mr. Loveland said that the key issue was the LRTP update process as we are looking at facilities that affect both counties.

Agenda Item #2 – Endorsement of FDOT's Draft Tentative Work Program for FY 2010/2011 through FY 2014/2015

Mr. Loveland said that there was a handout with additions and modifications.

Ms. Scott said that there have some changes since it was sent out in the agenda package, but that the MPO staff has provided the committee with the updated version in a hard copy. She reviewed the Add/Defer/Delete table that had been updated as there were a few last minute changes.

Ms. Davis said that there will be one more addition for corridor funds. She did not have the amount as of yet for the US 41 projects.

Discussion ensued.

Ms. Zambrano asked about the placeholder for sidewalks on Page 8.

Ms. Scott that the MPO had a bike ped box and a congestion management box previously and that FDOT had now moved this to a combined box consistent with the MPO action.

Ms. Zambrano asked about SRTS projects.

Ms. Scott said that there were no new SRTS projects. FDOT had received and evaluated them but was not programming them until the new federal authorization because staff did not know if the program was going to be continued.

Mr. Gogoi asked about two projects funded on the summary page – Michigan Avenue to Clothilde and Hanson from Florida to US 41 and if the funds could actually be advanced.

Ms. Scott said that the project has to be in the adopted work program. All advancements are going to central office for approval for cash flow issues and it is not an easy process. She recommended that as soon as anyone has plans ready for LAP projects to get them to FDOT so that they can start review process. FDOT was trying to make sure funding is spread evenly across all the counties.

Chairman Loveland clarified that the second project on Page 4 (Alico Road) was completed and an SIB loan repayment is showing the last year of payment. On Page 8, funds were added for Phase 2 of computerized traffic signal update. He was happy to see the design for SR 82 advanced on Page 13.

Ms. Scott said that if funds are freed up, he assumed that the MPO will have suggestions on how District dollars spent.

Discussion continued on the SR 82 to Shawnee Road and I-75/Daniels Interchange projects.

Chairman Loveland addressed the six laning of US 41 funding.

Ms. Zambrano asked about the agreement on SR 78 and the paybacks.

Ms. Scott said this starts next fiscal year (2015/2016). The SR 82 commitment is fulfilled in FY 13/14.

Mr. Hutchinson asked about Page 20 with respect to the Geo Technical & Survey preliminary design for the parallel runway.

Ms. Scott said that this was everything she had in the work program description about that project.

Ms. Monroy asked that since the bus replacement money was moved down what was happening to the money in 13/14.

Ms. Scott said that the money is there and the MPO was working on Congestion Management process of how funds will be allocated and the projects chosen.

Ms. Monroy stated that they have an ongoing need for bus replacements and would like to receive some funding each year so replacing buses on continuous basis so they are aging at different times and Lee Tran is not having to replace them all at the same time.

Discussion continued.

Ms. Monroy said that the transit facility project doesn't have the substantial investment from FDOT. There was \$3 million of TRIP money and \$500,000 of intermodal funds. It is a \$30 million project which is deferring a lot of their capital from federal side for that project. Lee Tran is in process of acquiring a parcel and would appreciate FDOT looking at the project again.

Discussion continued.

Ms. Monroy said that the SIB loan is not technically funded. It is an important project for us and represents the top priority.

Mr. Scott asked about the I-75 project.

Ms. Scott said FDOT had not been able to go forward with STIP amendment to put the project in the current year and this is still going to be determined.

Discussion continued on bidding of the two projects.

Mr. Hutchinson asked about the design for the intermodal hub on Page 24 at Edison Mall.

Ms. Monroy said that Lee Tran had reached agreement with the Edison Mall and construction has been let and will begin construction after the holiday season.

Mr. Hutchinson asked what funding in 10/11 was for.

Ms. Monroy said should be for design/construction.

Discussion continued.

Ms. Scott said that the first project on I-75 up to SR 82 has been advertised so it will be let separately. The bid package is being worked on now.

Discussion ensued on the outer phases that are unfunded on the MPO list and intermodal grant projects.

**MOTION BY MS. ZAMBRANO TO RECOMMEND MPO
ENDORSEMENT OF FDOT'S DRAFT TENTATIVE WORK
PROGRAM FOR FY 2010/2011 THROUGH FY 2014/2015.
SECONDED BY MS. SAYERS. MOTION CARRIED
UNANIMOUSLY.**

Agenda Item #3 – Update on the Bicycle/Pedestrian Master Plan Negotiations

Mr. Scott presented this item.

Agenda Item #4 – Review the LRTP Media Distribution List

Ms. Marion asked the TAC members to review this current list and to email any changes or additions to MPO staff.

Chairman Loveland stated that it is hard to keep this media list current since there is always so much changing. He also suggested breaking the list down into categories and adding the elected officials from each jurisdiction to the list plus their assistants.

Mr. Hutchinson stated that there were some people on the list twice.

Agenda Item #6 – Tasks for the FY 2010/2011 and 2011/2012 Unified Planning Work Program

Mr. Scott presented this item.

Ms. Monroy said that Commissioner Hall had some concerns with the process of the Transit Authority. Her concern was that we were not getting full participation from the City of Fort Myers, Sanibel and Bonita Springs.

Mr. Scott said that this issue was raised at the MPO meeting.

Mr. Hutchinson asked about the Charlotte County MPO coordination and adding existing tasks under regional coordination.

Discussion continued on Transit Authority and rail operations.

MOTION BY MR. HUTCHINSON TO APPROVE THE TASKS FOR THE FY 2010/2011 AND 2011/2012 UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM. SECONDED BY MS. ZAMBRANO. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Walk on Item – Recommend MPO Board Approval of a Resolution Authorizing the MPO Chairman to Sign Off on TIP Amendments that may be needed to Fund Projects on the Previously Approved MPO’s Production Ready Project List

Mr. Scott presented this item.

MOTION BY MS. MONROY TO RECOMMEND MPO BOARD APPROVAL OF A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MPO CHAIRMAN TO SIGN OFF ON TIP AMENDMENTS THAT MAY BE NEEDED TO FUND PROJECTS ON THE PREVIOUSLY APPROVED MPO’S PRODUCTION READY PROJECT LIST. SECONDED BY MR. HEATH. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

OTHER BUSINESS

Agenda Item #7 – LeeTran Report

Ms. Monroy stated that the JARC and New Freedom contracts were awarded at the end of October and contracts went out on December 1, 2009. Lee Tran would be working closely with community groups to implement projects.

Agenda Item #8 – FDOT Report

Mr. Clark stated that the FDOT staff will hold the Public Hearing on the Draft Tentative Work Program at the December 18, 2009 MPO Board meeting.

Agenda Item #9 – Announcements

Chairman Loveland said that a special legislative session began today regarding rail issues at the statewide level. In the discussion leading up to setting the

special session, it was interesting as they were talking about one source of funding and then a different source of funding.

Ms. Monroy said it was supposed to be rental car surtax.

Chairman Loveland said that they dropped that and they are proposing revised revenue forecasts and taking in higher amounts than what was expected to fund the rail issue for Central Florida high speed rail. This is projected over five years and taking TRIP funding in the sixth year.

Ms. Monroy said she did not understand the reluctance to the rental car fee.

Discussion continued.

Chairman Loveland said that he was not comfortable about the way they are choosing to fund this.

Mr. Scott said that the goal is to protect the possibility of getting the high speed rail stimulus money.

Chairman Loveland stated that a rail feasibility study was needed.

Ms. Monroy said that was a huge financial expense.

Chairman Loveland said that coordination was the key.

Ms. Monroy said that if transit wasn't funded that it would go away.

Discussion ensued on modern growth scenario of transit.

Mr. Hutchinson said that a report on this would be a good agenda item for the MPO.

Agenda Item #10 – Topics for next meeting

None.

Agenda Item #11 – Information and Distribution Items

Distributed in agenda packet.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned at 11:00 a.m.