

**DURHAM-CHAPEL HILL-CARRBORO METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION BOARD**

**January 13, 2016**

**MINUTES OF MEETING**

The Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization Board met on January 13, 2016, at 9:00 a.m. in the City Council Committee Room, located on the second floor of Durham City Hall. The following people were in attendance:

Steve Schewel (MPO Board Chair)	City of Durham
Jim G. Crawford (Member)	Chatham County
Don Moffitt (Member)	City of Durham
Ellen Reckhow (Member)	Durham County
Ed Harrison (Alternate)	Town of Chapel Hill
Pam Hemminger (Member)	Town of Chapel Hill
Barry Jacobs (Member)	Orange County
Brian Lowen (Member)	Town of Hillsborough
Lydia Lavelle (Alternate)	Town of Carrboro
Bernadette Pelissier (Member)	GoTriangle
Joey Hopkins	NCDOT, Division 5
Patrick Wilson	NCDOT, Division 7
Bergen Watterson	Town of Carrboro
John Hodges-Copple	Triangle J Council of Governments
Patrick McDonough	GoTriangle
Geoff Green	GoTriangle
Mark Ahrendsen	City of Durham/DCHC MPO
Dale McKeel	City of Durham/DCHC MPO
Edward Dancausse	Federal Highway Administration
Felix Nwoko	DCHC MPO
Andy Henry	DCHC MPO
Meg Scully	DCHC MPO
Lindsay Smart	DCHC MPO
Brian Rhodes	DCHC MPO
Ellen Beckmann	City of Durham Transportation
David Bonk	Town of Chapel Hill
Margaret Hauth	Planning Director/Hillsborough
Jennifer Britt	NCDOT, Division 8
Miller Cochran	VHB

Quorum Count: 9 of 11 Voting Members

Chair Steve Schewel called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. A roll call was performed. Brian Lowen, Town of Hillsborough, was recognized as a new member of the MPO Board during the roll call. The Voting Members and Alternate Voting Members of the DCHC MPO Board were identified as indicated above. Chair Steve Schewel reminded everyone to sign-in using the sign-in sheet that was being circulated.

**PRELIMINARIES:**

**Ethics Reminder**

Chair Steve Schewel read the Ethics Reminder, and asked if there were any known conflicts of interest with respect to matters coming before the Board, and requested that if there were any identified during the meeting for them to be announced.

DCHC MPO Board members did not identify any known conflicts.

**Adjustments to the Agenda**

Chair Steve Schewel asked if there were any adjustments to the agenda. Pam Hemminger wanted to add an update on the Durham-Orange Light Rail Transit project, on where we are in the process, what the deadlines are, etc. Mark Ahrendsen said the item will be added to the end of the agenda, and if no one comes from GoTriangle, staff will get information for her. Ellen Reckhow reminded the LPA staff and Board members about the State Ethics Compliance requirements and filing State Ethics forms by April 15, 2016.

Chair Steve Schewel said the DCHC MPO Board members should be receiving the forms soon by email from the LPA staff.

Chair Steve Schewel announced the retirement of Transportation Director and Technical Committee Chair Mark Ahrendsen as of April 1, 2016. He said Mark Ahrendsen is a remarkable Director, is an incredibly responsible person, built a great staff and developed a great relationship between transportation departments and jurisdictions. Chair Steve Schewel thanked Mark Ahrendsen for his

service to the DCHC MPO Board. The DCHC MPO Board will celebrate his retirement at a later date. It will be tremendous loss. Mark Ahrendsen said his last day with the City of Durham is March 31, 2016.

Chair Steve Schewel welcomed Patrick McDonough and asked him to provide an update at the end of the meeting on light rail. Patrick McDonough agreed to brief the DCHC MPO Board on on the D-O LRT project.

### **Public Comments**

Chair Steve Schewel asked if there were any members of the public signed up to speak. There were no members of the public signed up to speak during the meeting.

### **Directives to Staff**

The Directives to Staff were included in the agenda packet for review. Chair Steve Schewel asked for any comments on the Directives to Staff. He added a directive to facilitate an ongoing, regular discussion with GoTriangle and the DCHC MPO Board on issues related to light rail, including station location design, schedule, deadlines, and other issues. Felix Nwoko provided clarification of the last meeting in which GoTriangle agreed to provide that information on a quarterly basis beginning in March 2016.

Ellen Reckhow had a comment on an item on the list dated, dated September 10, 2014. She thought there was a follow-up on how the DCHC MPO Board might address Complete Streets. Lindsay Smart stated that it was discussed at the December 2015 DCHC MPO Board meeting and it was determined that it would be covered in the goals and objectives for the 2045 MTP.

### **CONSENT AGENDA:**

#### **6. Approval of December 9, 2015 Board Meeting Minutes**

The DCHC MPO Board meeting minutes for December 9, 2015 were not available and will be submitted at the February 10, 2016 Board meeting.

### **ACTION ITEMS:**

**7. Draft FY2017 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)****Meg Scully, LPA Staff**

Meg Scully reviewed the annual Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). She stated that the MPO is required by federal regulation to develop the UPWP, which identifies the transportation planning tasks that will be performed during FY2017. The funding for the annual work program is provided by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). It's generally 80% federal money with a 20% local match, and some portions of the match may be provided by the state. She stated that in 2014, the MPO began a new cost-sharing program where all of the local jurisdictions contribute a portion of the 20% local match that is required for the planning activities of the Lead Planning Agency (LPA). Local agencies provide their own local match for their own planning activities. Prior to that, the City of Durham covered the entire local match that was required for the Lead Planning Agency.

Meg Scully referred to the 130-page attachment. She said the work program is identified by 46 funding tasks that are generally grouped into eight categories. Meg Scully reviewed a summary of the work that was performed in the FY16 UPWP. Pages 11 to 13 have the FY17 focus areas for the DCHC MPO, and page 15 summarizes funding by source and recipient. This year, she said, GoTriangle received a very large grant for planning transit-oriented development (TOD).

Ellen Reckhow asked if the GoTriangle grant required a local match. Meg Scully stated, yes, and that they received contributions from local jurisdictions. Ellen Reckhow asked if they were in-kind and staff support contributions. Meg Scully stated, yes.

Meg Scully reminded everyone that the STP-DA funds are distributed first. She said some agencies use a small portion of it while others opt out of using it for planning. The City of Durham uses the funds for planning purposes. She said the section 5303 funds are administered by the North Carolina Department of Transportation. NCDOT notifies the MPO each year of the amount, which is distributed among Chapel Hill Transit and GoDurham. If all the money is not used, they lose it.

118           The DCHC MPO distributes the section 5307 funds each year. If the transit agencies decide to use it  
119   for planning, it is reflected in the UPWP. She explained the task breakdowns, discussed the LPA funding,  
120   which is referenced on pages 22-34, and pointed out that there is a narrative for the projects. The bulk of  
121   the UPWP document is composed of tables showing the sub-recipients funding by task and descriptions of  
122   the work to be done.

123           Meg Scully provided an overview of the LPA expenditures. Chair Steve Schewel asked if the LPA is  
124   the same as the MPO staff. She said, yes, it is the MPO staff, which consists of eight and one-half full-time  
125   staff people plus interns and some consultant work.

126           Meg Scully also explained the local cost sharing for FY17 and referenced more information that is  
127   located on page 16. She said the local cost is generally based on population and the level of data collection  
128   within each jurisdiction.

129           Meg Scully presented the schedule for the UPWP. The DCHC MPO Board will approve the final  
130   UPWP in February after holding a public hearing at that meeting. Today, the UPWP will be released for a  
131   21-day public comment. This schedule is driven by the requirement of NCDOT to have a nearly complete  
132   draft submitted by the end of January, and then hopefully there are only minor changes after that date.

133           Meg Scully noted that since this document was developed, the LPA had a conversation with the  
134   Capital Area MPO regarding three additional potential projects for FY2017 that would require a fairly small  
135   amount of money. The Technical Committee will review these projects and possibly make minor changes to  
136   the UPWP.

137           Don Moffitt asked if the public hearing is February 10 and if it occur during the normally scheduled  
138   DCHC MPO Board meeting. Meg Scully said yes.

139           Meg Scully stated that at their December 2015 meeting, the Technical Committee recommended  
140   the DCHC MPO Board release this draft for public comment, and asked if there were any questions.

141 Ellen Reckhow asked if the reauthorization of the transportation program at the federal level  
142 changed anything. Felix Nwoko responded that there is a slight increase in the money for FY16 and that  
143 there might be some other small impacts that we will amend into the UPWP later. Ellen Reckhow asked  
144 there will be some tweaking associated with the bill. Felix Nwoko stated yes. Mark Ahrendsen reminded  
145 everyone that a lot of the guidance comes out after the reauthorization bill passes. In fact, some of the  
146 rules and guidance for the previous bill, MAP-21, was just released.

147 Ed Harrison asked if the federal funds still provide 80% of the total for planning under the  
148 reauthorization. Meg Scully responded yes.

149 Bernadette Pelissier said they will talk about performance measures in the DCHC MPO Board –  
150 Goals/Objectives/Performance Measures workshop. Are there any constraints on performance measures  
151 for the 2045 MTP, such as cost? If so, will staff advise the Board on these constraints? Meg Scully said that  
152 after today's workshop, the staff will be discussing potential performance measures with TC members to  
153 understand what we will be able to do with the performance measures data and the funding that we have  
154 to support this effort.

155 Chair Steve Schewel noted that question 8 in the document needed to state "yes." Chair Steve  
156 Schewel said he would let Meg Scully know later if he finds a similar typo on page 5. Chair Steve Schewel  
157 checked page 7 and asked if an attorney reviewed a section for compliance. How do we monitor  
158 compliance? Felix Nwoko responded that it's generally monitored by FHWA and formally done every four  
159 years. He said the MPO just went through certification in April, and the MPO is in compliance.

160 Chair Steve Schewel asked if staff would be bringing the MTP goals and objectives to the Durham  
161 City Council for review as stated on page 79; if not, the note should be taken out. Ellen Beckmann replied  
162 that she would review the material.

Chair Steve Schewel referenced earlier comments by Ellen Reckhow and noted that page 82 includes the creation of a Complete Street Implementation Plan. This is something that Durham has planned, so this is good.

Chair Steve Schewel asked for a motion to release the Draft FY2017 Unified Planning Work Program for public input. Lydia Lavelle motioned to release the Draft FY2017 Unified Planning Work Program. Pam Hemminger seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

Chair Steve Schewel asked how they publicize the UPWP release. Meg Scully said that the MPO posts it on the website and puts an ad in the newspaper. Also, the announcement will be sent to an e-mail list that includes roughly 600 people.

#### **REPORTS:**

##### **8. Report from the DCHC MPO Board Chair** **DCHC MPO Board Chair**

Chair Steve Schewel stated he has already given his report and that he wants to hear more about the Unified Planning Work Program in the future.

##### **9. Report from the DCHC MPO Technical Committee Chair** **Mark Ahrendsen, DCHC MPO TC Chair**

There was no report from the DCHC MPO Technical Committee Chair.

##### **10. Reports from LPA Staff** **Felix Nwoko, LPA Staff**

Felix Nwoko said the Staff Report is attached. At the last meeting, the MPO staff distributed the first Annual Report for the DCHC MPO. LPA staff are collecting any comments to revise the report. The MPO has also completed its first report on the website, which went live January 2015. Chair Steve Schewel stated that the website is very much improved. He asked if this Annual Report was a draft. Felix Nwoko stated yes.

Chair Steve Schewel asked if there were any comments on the draft. He thanked them for making front and center the statement: The Region cannot build its way out of congestion. Chair Steve Schewel

said it looks like there's a typo at the bottom of the first paragraph of page 9. He wanted to note that they all were 191st out of 221 jurisdictions in compact development patterns. Chair Steve Schewel noted that the top of page 24 says Prioritization and Raking, which should be Ranking. Also, on page 25, the list of members has him listed as a Commissioner; which he's not. Chair Steve Schewel felt it was an extremely strong list of accomplishments. The MPO will issue this draft and Felix Nwoko will be looking for comments. Felix Nwoko stated that once they receive all the comments, they will post the final report on the website. Chair Steve Schewel asked how comments will be received. Felix Nwoko said comments will be received via email. Chair Steve Schewel asked when the comments are due. Felix Nwoko said by the next meeting.

## **REPORTS:**

### **11. NCDOT Reports:**

Joey Hopkins, NCDOT Division 5, stated that the Alston Avenue project (U- 3308) is currently scheduled to be let next month. However, they are having delays in right-of-way acquisition and railroad agreements. Those delays are backing other things up. Because of the right-of-way delays, the utilities cannot be relocated, and the billboards cannot be relocated or moved. They are thinking of letting the contract in May or June. He will have more information at the meeting next month. Don Moffitt asked the name of the project. Joey Hopkins said it is the Alston Avenue widening. Joey Hopkins stated that he didn't think it was prudent to let the project right now without the right-of- away in place. He thinks the project would cost more because of the unknowns and the longer contractual period.

Ellen Reckhow asked whether the issues raised earlier by citizens, such as creating a street that accommodates multiple modes and is as walkable as possible, have been addressed. Mark Ahrendsen answered that it would be wrong to say that they have been resolved to everyone's satisfaction, but the issues were debated and negotiated for a long time, and they have settled. Between Main Street and Holloway Street, the outside lanes will be parking and there will be bike lanes and sidewalks. Ellen Reckhow



mentioned that Fayetteville Street north of NC 147 looks too wide. Mark Ahrendsen said that area was a lot different when it was an active mill and railroad center that served Golden Belt. That is probably a good candidate for a road diet in the future. Ellen Reckhow asked whether the median will have any landscaping. Mark Ahrendsen stated that there will be landscaping where there are opportunities for it. Once the project is complete, there will be a separate landscaping agreement.

Pam Hemminger asked what the issues are for the billboard. Joey Hopkins stated it's on a parcel that the state does not own yet and so can't be moved yet.

Ed Harrison asked who the bridge contact person is for Division 5. Joey Hopkins replied Lisa Gilchrist (in the Raleigh's office) is the contact person. Joey Hopkins said he would get Lisa Gilchrist's contact information for Ed Harrison.

Joey Hopkins said Don Moffitt asked last month about the roundabout at Broad Street and Carver Street. The project is awarded but there are utility delays so the contractor agreed to delay his construction. NCDOT expects it to start in the spring. The famous 11' 8" bridge made the national news a week or so ago and as did the bridge over Roxboro Street. There are signal system projects under construction to address the crash problem. The Gregson Street signal might be done in February. The Roxboro Street project has some rock obstacles and there are few contractors that deal with rock obstacles. They hope to have both projects completed by March. Joey Hopkins said the Erwin Road and Randolph Road traffic signal was installed but is not operational yet. The contractor is working through the punch list so maybe sometime next week it will be done. The sidewalks are in place but the crosswalks are not in place yet. Joey Hopkins said the Barbee Road and Herndon Road roundabout did not have adequate funding. They were able to acquire additional funds for the roundabout thanks to actions by the N.C. Senate and the Secretary of Transportation, which the NCDOT Board approved last week. NCDOT will re-advertise the project, reduce the scope slightly to save money, and hope to get good bids that allow the project to start this summer.

Patrick Wilson stated that the NC 54 and Dodsons Crossroads intersection has been identified for a signal. The NCDOT Board will approve SPOT safety funding at their meeting in March. He will continue to update the DCHC MPO Board on the status of this project. Jim Crawford asked when the project would be completed. Patrick Wilson estimated that it would be finished in the summer.

Pam Hemminger requested a status update on the roundabout for Bennett Road and Mount Carmel Church. Patrick Wilson said he does not have a status but the project is in the STIP. He will check on it and send her the information after this meeting.

Pam Hemminger requested a status update on Merritt Mill Road, East Main Street, West Franklin Street, and Brewer Lane. Patrick Wilson asked whether the Town's staff have been working on the design. David Bonk said a consultant has been hired to do the design but they have not heard anything for a couple of months. Lydia Lavelle believed that Ed Harrison, Mark Ahrendsen, David Bonk, staff from each town, and she had attended a meeting on this project. She asked that staff pick this project up, again.

Pam Hemminger requested a status update on the US 15-501 corridor study. Patrick Wilson said he will get an update for her.

Lydia Lavelle asked about the status on the Morgan Creek greenway project. She attended the Greenways Commission meeting this week and this item came up again. She believes the Greenway Commission and staff inquired with NCDOT regarding how to cross Smith Level Road. Patrick Wilson said he will get and update.

Ed Harrison asked who the NCDOT bridge replacement contact is for Division 7. Patrick Wilson said he would get the contact information for Ed Harrison.

Jennifer Britt, Division 8, stated that she is standing in for Darius Sturdivant and has no updates. Jim Crawford said that Jeremiah Drive, which is a state road, is under five feet of water and about two dozen households have been unable to return home since Christmas Eve. It has been difficult because the Army Corps of Engineer controls the water and the state controls the level of the road. It once was a project but

got shelved. They had this problem with Hurricane Fran in 1996 and again this time. He asked if the project can be redefined and the road can be raised.

Jennifer Britt said she has not spoken with Marty Tillman since she received calls last week concerning this issue, because he is in training. Jim Crawford said he understands Stagecoach Road is under water, as well. Jennifer Britt stated that she will get Jim Crawford an answer on both of these roadways.

There was no report from the NCDOT Transportation Planning Branch and NCDOT Traffic Operations.

Chair Steve Schewel asked Patrick McDonough, GoTriangle, to give a brief update on light rail.

Patrick McDonough said GoTriangle provide a quarterly update on the light rail project as requested at the December Board meeting. The next update will be in March at the DCHC MPO Board and at the Durham-Orange workgroup. The Draft Environmental Impact Statement is on schedule, the target date is February 25, 2016. FTA is reading the draft final responses to comments. GoTriangle have drafted a Record of Decision with commitments, which includes the citizens and local government expressed concerns, and how the commitments will be studied and addressed in the future. The FTA is reviewing it for substance (any issues raised by the community) and potential legal actions. Patrick McDonough said such a review is very common for a project of this size to be reviewed for legal issues.

Ellen Reckhow asked when they will be able to see the responses to the questions. Patrick McDonough said he will find out.

Patrick McDonough stated GoTriangle has had some right-of-way discussions with the universities. The UNC conversations were very successful, and they believe UNC might sell some right-of-way for one dollar. GoTriangle has had some challenges with Duke University, issues such as US 15-501 right-of-way, Duke's golf course, and a sewer easement. However, there was some very successful problem solving at a Duke meeting yesterday. He announced that Danny Rogers, who worked on the Charlotte light rail project, will be the new GoTriangle light rail project manager starting March 7<sup>th</sup>. They are working on a

reorganization of GoTriangle and GoDurham services in the US 15-501 corridor. The draft recommendations, which include more frequent service, will go out in February or March. He will confirm the dates.

Ellen Reckhow asked how they pay for the service improvements. Patrick McDonough said he does not know if they break it out at a level where you can distinguish between sales tax and fees.

Patrick McDonough said he would read a statement by NCDOT Secretary Nick Tennyson from an article in The Herald Sun. Ellen Reckhow pointed out that members have a paper copy. Patrick McDonough believed that the statement showed support for the Durham-Orange light rail transit from the Board of Transportation and NCDOT.

Pam Hemminger asked about the timeline for citizen comments. Patrick McDonough said the public comment period on the DEIS is closed on the Durham-Orange Light Rail Transit project. However, the DEIS is not the end of engagement with the public. GoTriangle will have many public input opportunities over the next ten years as the project develops.

Patrick McDonough believes that public comments, like those at the Durham Planning Commission meeting last night, will continue. Pam Hemminger asked whether they still log those comments and how they let citizens know that they were heard. In the DEIS, Patrick McDonough explained their process of sorting comments. They will note that the public "X" expressed their concern and Go Triangle plans to mitigate the impacts or investigate a design adjustment in the engineering phase to see if there is a solution. The public can see GoTriangle's commitments to that as they go forward. He will ask Natalie Murdoch to come and talk directly to the Board on this subject.

Ellen Reckhow said that she saw a newspaper article in which GoTriangle is piloting collaboration with TransLoc, a company in Durham, to seamlessly connect people on their last trip mile using Uber. She attended a transit conference in October and learned that both MARTA in Atlanta and DART in Dallas used Uber successfully in this way.

312 Chair Steve Schewel asked if there was a motion to adjourn the meeting. Lydia Lavelle motioned to  
313 adjourn and Pam Hemminger seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

314 **INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:**

315 **12. Recent News, Articles, and Updates**

316 All handouts are available on the website.

317 **ADJOURNMENT:**

318 There being no further business before the DCHC MPO Board, the meeting was adjourned at  
319 10:01 a.m.