

DURHAM-CHAPEL HILL-CARRBORO METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION BOARD**11 January 2017****MINUTES OF MEETING**

The Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization Board met on January 11, 2017 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
Damon Seils (MPO Board Vice Chair)	Town of Carrboro
Don Moffitt (Member)	City of Durham
Ellen Reckhow (Member)	Durham County
Barry Jacobs (Member)	Orange County
Pam Hemminger (Member)	Town of Chapel Hill
Jenn Weaver (Alternate)	Town of Hillsborough
Lydia Lavelle (Alternate)	Town of Carrboro
Ed Harrison (Alternate)	Town of Chapel Hill
Richard Hancock	NCDOT, Division 5
Patrick Wilson	NCDOT, Division 7
Julie Bollinger	NCDOT, TPB
Max Bushell	Orange County
Bergen Watterson	Town of Carrboro
Tina Moon	Town of Carrboro
John Hodges-Copple	Triangle J Council of Governments
Danny Rogers	GoTriangle
Geoff Green	GoTriangle
Terry Bellamy	City of Durham/DCHC MPO
Ellen Beckmann	City of Durham/Transportation
Tasha Johnson	City of Durham/Public Works
Bryan Poole	City of Durham/Transportation
Scott Whiteman	Durham County
Kayla Seibel	Town of Chapel Hill
Eddie Dancausse	Federal Highway Administration
Felix Nwoko	DCHC MPO
Andy Henry	DCHC MPO
Meg Scully	DCHC MPO
Aaron Cain	DCHC MPO
Dale McKeel	City of Durham/DCHC MPO
Brian Rhodes	DCHC MPO
Heidi Carter	Durham County Commissioners

Quorum Count: 7 of 10 Voting Members

Chair Steve Schewel called the meeting to order at 9:04 a.m. A roll call was performed. The Voting Members and Alternate Voting Members of the DCHC MPO Board were identified and are indicated above. Chair Steve Schewel reminded everyone to sign-in using the sign-in sheet that was being circulated. Chair Steve Schewel recognized Durham County Commissioner Heidi Carter. Chair Steve Schewel welcomed Ellen Beckmann, the new Technical Committee (TC) representative to the MPO Board.

PRELIMINARIES:

2. 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 MPO Board and requested that if there were any identified during the meeting for them to be announced. There were no known conflicts identified by MPO Board members.

3. Adjustments to the Agenda

Chair Steve Schewel stated that a report on the new funding plan for the Durham-Orange Light Rail Transit (D-O LRT) would be added to the agenda.

4. 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.

5. Directives to Staff

The Directives to Staff were included in the agenda packet for review.

CONSENT AGENDA:

6. Approval of December 14, 2016 Meeting Minutes

Chair Steve Schewel asked if there was any discussion on the December 14, 2016 meeting minutes. Vice Chair Damon Seils stated that he had submitted minor changes to the minutes. Ellen

Reckhow made a motion to approve the December 14, 2016 minutes as amended. Vice Chair Damon Seils seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

ACTION ITEMS:

7. 2017 Joint Legislative Agenda

Aaron Cain, LPA Staff

On November 30, 2016, board members of the DCHC MPO and the Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO) reviewed a draft legislative agenda. Board members provided input at that meeting and suggested that each board review the draft individually and bring a revised document back to a joint meeting at a future date. Aaron Cain shared the legislative agenda and the comments that were received at the joint meeting.

Chair Steve Schewel asked whether changes had been made in response to the comments, and Aaron Cain stated that permanent changes would be made with the blessing of the MPO Board.

Ellen Reckhow, Aaron Cain, and Andy Henry discussed the best way to clarify the language about the removal of the 10% cap on light rail transit funding given that the cap affects more than light rail funding. Vice Chair Damon Seils suggested referring to the statute which specifies a 10% cap on light rail and commuter rail.

Ed Harrison, Aaron Cain, and Felix Nwoko discussed whether other MPOs were working to allow state funds to be used for bicycle and pedestrian projects.

Vice Chair Damon Seils requested that a final copy of the legislative agenda be circulated when it is complete.

Pam Hemminger made a motion approve the legislative agenda inclusive of comments made at the joint meeting and at this MPO Board meeting. Ellen Reckhow seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

8. Release of Division Rankings from SPOT 4.0

Dale McKeel and Aaron Cain, LPA Staff

On December 13, 2016, the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) released the division rankings from Strategic Planning Office of Transportation (SPOT) P4.0. Dale McKeel had reviewed the list of projects that were and were not funded at the December MPO Board meeting. Dale McKeel stated that NCDOT recently released the draft STIP. Dale McKeel reviewed the next steps in this process, and noted that one-on-one meetings between NCDOT staff and the MPO Board would be held on March 8, 2017.

Vice Chair Damon Seils and Dale McKeel discussed whether bus expansion for several routes in Chapel Hill had been funded. Dale McKeel stated that he did not believe that the Chapel Hill bus expansion had been funded, but that he would confirm that this was the case.

This item was informational and no further action was required by the MPO Board.

9. Draft FY2018 United Planning Work Program

Meg Scully, LPA Staff

The DCHC MPO is required by federal regulations to prepare an annual Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) that details and guides the urban area transportation planning activities. Funding for the UPWP is provided on an annual basis by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). The UPWP must identify MPO planning tasks to be performed with the use of federal transportation funds, including highway and transit programs.

Meg Scully reminded the MPO Board that the MPO initiated a cost sharing of the local match required for the Local Planning Agency (LPA) planning activities. Meg Scully walked the MPO Board through the UPWP document, drawing attention to the summary of accomplishments from the 2016 UPWP and the first quarter of FY2017. Meg Scully highlighted the emphasis areas that the MPO would be focusing on in FY2018. Meg Scully drew attention to federal, state, and local funding sources. Meg Scully stated that funds for the LPA are primarily used for staff salaries, operations, and consultants.

Meg Scully shared the schedule for the next steps in this process.

Meg Scully stated that the Town of Chapel Hill would increase its funding participation in the Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBGP) by \$40,000 based on a re-evaluation of what the Town expects its level of effort to be among task codes in FY2018.

Chair Steve Schewel, Meg Scully, and Felix Nwoko discussed the work of the LPA Staff, primarily which tasks are the most time-consuming.

Chair Steve Schewel and Felix Nwoko discussed whether the sample size of the Travel Behavior Survey was sufficient. John Hodges-Copple explained the relationship between the Triangle Regional Model (TRM) and CommunityViz.

Barry Jacobs made a motion to release the UPWP for public comment. Ellen Reckhow seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

10. Approval of Amendment #6 to the FY2016-25 Transportation Improvement Program

Aaron Cain, LPA Staff

Amendment #6 to the DCHC MPO FY2016-2025 TIP includes two requests from the Town of Chapel Hill. The first is to amend project EB-5721, US15-501 Bicycle and Pedestrian Sidepath Willow to Cleland, to use Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBGP) rather than Safe Routes to School (SRTS) funds and alter the project timing. The second is a request for a small increase in STBGP funds and delay of Right-of-Way (ROW) by one year for project C-5179, North Estes Drive. Aaron Cain described the content of the amendment and reasons for modifying the funding source.

Ed Harrison asked if this amendment was a result of SRTS funding no longer being available, and Aaron Cain confirmed that this was the case.

Aaron Cain stated that a similar amendment pertaining to a Durham project would be brought before the MPO Board in February 2017.

Vice Chair Damon Seils made a motion to approve amendment #6 to the FY2016-25 TIP. Barry Jacobs seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

11. Bicycle Safety on Old NC 86 - Letter to NCDOT

Dale McKeel, LPA Staff

On December 14, 2016, the MPO Board requested that the Chair and LPA Staff draft a letter to NCDOT about bicycle safety issues on Old NC 86 between the Carrboro town limits and the intersection with Homestead and Dairyland roads.

Dale McKeel discussed the aims of the letter and comments he received from Pat Wilson on how to improve the letter. Dale McKeel also described previous attempts to fund the project through the SPOT process.

Ed Harrison discussed the legality of "Bicycles May Use Full Lane" signs.

Pam Hemminger stated that the intent of the letter gets lost as it is currently written and proposed that the MPO write two separate letters.

Dale McKeel stated that he needed to revise the letter to incorporate Pat Wilson's comments.

Vice Chair Damon Seils stated that the language of the letter should make clear why the MPO did not assign points to the Old NC 86 project during the SPOT process. Vice Chair Damon Seils stated that two requests should be made clear in the letter, one about signage and sharrows and the other about what options are available on corridors like NC 86 when existing processes do not offer a solution.

Ellen Reckhow commented that the letter was disjointed, but that it could be edited to be more coherent. She suggested noting that the letter was a result of comments received during a public comment period to add needed context.

Dale McKeel and Lydia Lavelle discussed whether the project on NC 86 might be eligible for SPOT Safety funds.

Ellen Reckhow stated that the conclusion of the letter should broadly address bicycle safety on other secondary roads.

Pam Hemminger made a motion to authorize Chair Steve Schewel to sign a revised version of the letter. Ellen Reckhow seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

12. Discussion of Equity Issues regarding Managed Lanes

Felix Nwoko, LPA Staff

Steve Schewel, MPO Chair

Barry Jacobs, Orange County Board of Commissioners

As NCDOT and its consultant teams complete their feasibility studies for the addition of managed lanes on I-40 and NC 147, concerns have been raised by MPO Board members regarding the equity of this strategy for lower-income users of these roads. Felix Nwoko stated that the MPO Board could write a letter to NCDOT and the consultants working on the I-40 and NC 147 projects in order to express their views and desires regarding managed lanes.

Chair Steve Schewel stated that he liked Felix Nwoko's idea of a letter to NCDOT and the consultants. Chair Steve Schewel stated that his takeaway from the report on this issue is that there are ways in which managed lanes can be implemented that can be more equitable than other solutions, such as a gas tax. Chair Steve Schewel highlighted some of the remedies identified in the report and noted that an implementation strategy that includes a subsidy for low-income users might be most favorable.

Barry Jacobs noted that there is not a lot of experience in the US on how to manage the equity issues posed by managed lanes. He stated that organizations, such as the Institute for Transportation Research and Education at the University of North Carolina and the Justice Center in Raleigh, might be helpful in formulating an approach to these equity issues. Barry Jacobs commented that New York City is facing similar equity issues when it comes to subway fare pricing. Barry Jacobs discussed problems that might arise in identifying low-income users of managed lane facilities.

Chair Steve Schewel expressed concern that low-income people are less likely to have a transponder and that this might make it difficult to subsidize smart cards. Chair Steve Schewel reiterated his support for a letter to NCDOT and the consultants that conveys that the MPO's support for managed lanes will be contingent on a solution to equity issues.

194 Lydia Lavelle stated that it might be wise to reach out to the new Secretary of Transportation on
195 this issue. Felix Nwoko stated that it is important to convey that the MPO has philosophical issues with
196 managed lanes and that he liked the idea of reaching out to think tanks for guidance. Chair Steve
197 Schewel asked Felix Nwoko to draft a letter to NCDOT and the consultants and bring it back to the MPO
198 Board. Chair Steve Schewel stated that he liked Lydia Lavelle's idea of personally reaching out to folks on
199 this issue.

200 Ellen Reckhow, Felix Nwoko and Chair Steve Schewel discussed whether a toll-free carpool
201 option might be more equitable. Chair Steve Schewel stated that it might be helpful to be general in the
202 letter, but to convey that equity issues are important to the MPO. Vice Chair Damon Seils stated that
203 while a toll-free carpool option was a mitigating factor, this may be an opportunity for the MPO to
204 express values around privileging certain kinds of transportation projects over others. Vice Chair Damon
205 Seils noted that equity could be addressed through not allocating funds to these kinds of projects at the
206 expense of transit and other kinds of transportation modes.

207 Barry Jacobs pointed out that NCDOT did mention social equity issues in their discussion of toll
208 lanes, but that this may just be pro forma. Barry Jacobs commented that is important that NCDOT
209 provide more than a pro forma approach to equity issues.

210 Ed Harrison stated that the Triangle Expressway did not originally allow public transit to use
211 their facilities toll-free, and that it is important to reiterate that public transit should be toll-free on any
212 new facilities.

213 Ellen Reckhow stated that a toll-free option for carpools might be beneficial for other parts of
214 the transportation network.

215 Chair Steve Schewel asked Vice Chair Damon Seils to help the LPA Staff to draft the letter to
216 NCDOT and the consultants. Chair Steve Schewel thanked Barry Jacobs for bringing this issue to the
217 MPO Board's attention.

218 This item was information and no further action was required by the MPO Board.

219 **13. Funding for the Durham-Orange Light Rail Transit (D-O LRT)**

220 Danny Rogers, GoTriangle

221 In November of 2016, GoTriangle estimated a need of \$250 million dollars in additional local
222 funding sources to fund the D-O LRT. The February 2017 New Starts Financial Plan will eliminate the
223 need for this additional local funding. Danny Rogers discussed the assumptions of the original financial
224 plan, and the difference between the base case and downside cases or “what if” scenarios that needs to
225 be addressed in the FTA application. Danny Rogers described how financial advisors from Public
226 Financial Management (PFM) Group structured the debt in the new plan in order to improve cash flow.
227 Danny Rogers described the FTA process for evaluating the financial plan. Danny Rogers discussed how
228 inflation has affected cost estimates for the project.

229 Vice Chair Damon Seils asked for clarification about whether certain figures in the presentation
230 were in year of expenditure (YOE) dollars or base year dollars. Vice Chair Damon Seils stated that the
231 distinction between base year dollars and YOE dollars is important when communicating with people
232 who have concerns about the escalating costs of the project. Ellen Reckhow asked Danny Rogers to look
233 into whether at one point current year dollars were being used. Chair Steve Schewel stated that the
234 MPO Board would have to do some of the work in explaining the difference between base year dollars
235 and YOE dollars.

236 Ellen Reckhow and Danny Rogers discussed the FTA required maintenance reserve fund.
237 Danny Rogers discussed the required contingency funds for the project.

238 Barry Jacobs and Danny Rogers discussed how two additional years would affect the financing
239 costs for the project.

240 Ellen Reckhow, Danny Rogers, and Chair Steve Schewel discussed the funds that are currently
241 committed to the project.

242 There was discussion of how the Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) from local
243 jurisdictions regarding the allocation of additional funds for the D-O LRT were used in the FTA
244 application.

245 Danny Rogers discussed how the Chapel Hill Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project fits into the new
246 financial plan. There was additional discussion of funding for the Chapel Hill BRT.

247 Danny Rogers discussed differences in revenue projections between the original and the new
248 financial plans. Danny Rogers described the two sensitivity analyses that were required by FTA. Vice
249 Chair Damon Seils asked whether there was a sensitivity analysis that included both a 10% cost increase
250 and a pessimistic sales tax revenue projection, and Danny Rogers stated that this was not required by
251 FTA.

252 Danny Rogers discussed the schedule for the next steps in funding and implementing this
253 project.

254 Chair Steve Schewel thanked Danny Rogers and his staff for their work on this project, for
255 submitting the application on time to FTA, for coming up with a new base case, and for the addition of
256 the North Carolina Central University (NCCU) station.

257 Ellen Reckhow stated that it would be wise to look into providing more local funds for the
258 project given some of the lingering uncertainties that Danny Rogers outlined in his presentation.

259 Barry Jacobs and Danny Rogers discussed why it is unwise to pursue cost cutting at this time.

260 Danny Rogers reviewed the assumptions that have informed the base plan that was submitted
261 to FTA.

262 Vice Chair Damon Seils and Danny Rogers discussed the role that borrowing will play in funding
263 this project. Vice Chair Damon Seils asked Danny Rogers to share project updates with the Carrboro
264 Board of Aldermen. Lydia Lavelle suggested that updates be shared with every member of all of the local
265 boards.

Pam Hemminger commended Danny Rogers for presenting a new base case that relates to the original plan. Pam Hemminger and Danny Rogers discussed whether it would be possible to break out sales tax projections by year.

Don Moffitt inquired whether the overall amount of borrowing needed to fund the project has increased, and Danny Rogers confirmed that this was the case. Chair Steve Schewel and Danny Rogers discussed how increased borrowing might affect the commuter rail project. Danny Rogers stated that conversations with Wake County about the commuter rail will occur as the Durham and Orange County Transit Plans are updated in the coming months.

Chair Steve Schewel and Danny Rogers discussed how new elements in the financial plan, such as the NCCU station and the Hillsborough station, will affect the 77/23 split between Durham and Orange counties.

Danny Rogers, Geoff Green, and Chair Steve Schewel discussed how the LRT scored in SPOT 3.0 and how it might have scored in SPOT 4.0.

Chair Steve Schewel inquired whether increasing GoPass revenue was built into the assumption about light rail funding, and Danny Rogers stated that he thought that this was the case.

This item was informational and no further action was required by the MPO Board.

REPORTS:

14. Report from the DCHC MPO Board Chair

Steve Schewel, DCHC MPO Board Chair

There was no report from the DCHC MPO Board Chair.

15. Report from the DCHC MPO Technical Committee Vice Chair

Ellen Beckmann, DCHC MPO TC Vice Chair

Ellen Beckmann stated that the LPA Staff was meeting every other week with GoTriangle to work on updating the Bus and Rail Investment Plans. Five subcommittees are also meeting to

prepare for these meetings with GoTriangle. Ellen Beckmann stated that the staff is also working on the Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP) draft while it is out for public comment.

Ellen Reckhow, Ellen Beckmann, and Geoff Green discussed the point at which policy making boards would be given an opportunity for input on the updates to the Bus and Rail Investment Plans.

16. Reports from LPA Staff

Felix Nwoko, LPA Staff

Felix Nwoko reminded the MPO Board that the deadline for submitting an updated Statement of Economic Interest to the North Carolina Ethics Commission is April 15, 2017.

17. NCDOT Reports:

There was no report from NCDOT Division 5.

Pat Wilson, NCDOT Division 7, stated that he wanted to let MPO Board members from Chapel Hill and Carrboro know that members of his staff would be meeting with town staffs on Friday, January 13, 2017, to discuss the project at Franklin Street, Merritt Mill, and Brewer Lane.

There was no report from NCDOT Division 8.

There was no report from NCDOT Transportation Planning Branch.

There was no report from NCDOT Traffic Operations.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:

18. Recent News, Articles, and Updates

There were no informational items to report.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business before the DCHC MPO Board, the meeting was adjourned at 11:26 a.m.