

DURHAM-CHAPEL HILL-CARRBORO METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION BOARD**13 September 2017****MINUTES OF MEETING**

The Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization Board met on September 13, 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
Ed Harrison (Member)	GoTriangle
Barry Jacobs (Member)	Orange County
Brian Lowen (Member)	Town of Hillsborough
Pam Hemminger (Member)	Town of Chapel Hill
Wendy Jacobs (Alternate)	Durham County
Lydia Lavelle (Alternate)	Town of Carrboro
Michael Parker (Alternate)	Town of Chapel Hill
Penny Rich (Alternate)	Orange County
David Keilson	NCDOT, Division 5
Richard Hancock	NCDOT, Division 5
Patrick Wilson	NCDOT, Division 7
Jen Britt	NCDOT, Division 8
Julie Bogle	NCDOT, TPB
Craig Benedict	Orange County
Bergen Watterson	Town of Chapel Hill
Tina Moon	Town of Carrboro
Kayla Seibel	Town of Chapel Hill
John Hodges-Copple	Triangle J Council of Governments
Ellen Beckmann	City of Durham
Bill Judge	City of Durham
Eddie Dancausse	Federal Highway Administration
Felix Nwoko	DCHC MPO
Andy Henry	DCHC MPO
Meg Scully	DCHC MPO
Aaron Cain	DCHC MPO
Dale McKeel	DCHC MPO/City of Durham
Brian Rhodes	DCHC MPO
Anne Phillips	DCHC MPO
Evan Tenenbaum	Durham City-County
Matt Day	Triangle J Council of Governments
Heidi Perry	Carrboro Resident

47 Quorum Count: 8 of 10 Voting Members

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49 Chair Steve Schewel called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m. A roll call was performed. The
50 Voting Members and Alternate Voting Members of the DCHC MPO Board were identified and are
51 indicated above. Chair Steve Schewel reminded everyone to sign-in using the sign-in sheet that was
52 being circulated.

53 **PRELIMINARIES:**

54 **2. Ethics Reminder**

55 Chair Steve Schewel read the Ethics Reminder and asked if there were any known conflicts of
56 interest with respect to matters coming before the MPO Board and requested that if there were any
57 identified during the meeting for them to be announced. There were no known conflicts identified by
58 MPO Board members.

59 **3. Adjustments to the Agenda**

60 Chair Steve Schewel asked if there were any adjustments to the agenda. There were no
61 adjustments to the agenda.

62 **4. Public Comments**

63 Chair Steve Schewel asked if there were any members of the public signed up to speak.

64 Heidi Perry, a resident of 407 Robert Hunt Drive in Carrboro and a member of the Orange
65 County OUT Board and the Carrboro Bicycle Coalition, spoke about her frustration with the fact that
66 the North Carolina Department of Transportation's (NCDOT) Strategic Prioritization Office of
67 Transportation (SPOT) scoring criteria favors motor vehicles over other modes of transportation. Heidi
68 Perry stated that widening existing lanes or adding lanes of traffic does not alleviate congestion in the
69 long run, and in fact leads to an increase in fatal and serious injury crashes. She added that while
70 NCDOT's stated mission says nothing about prioritizing one mode over another, NCDOT's scoring
71 system prioritizes projects that temporarily cut motorists' travel time over projects that increase

bicycle and pedestrian safety. Heidi Perry discussed the portion of NCDOT's budget that is spent on maintaining existing roadways, noting that adding more lanes of traffic only adds to the burden of road maintenance. She commented that NCDOT only spends \$700,000 on bike projects, and there is no budget for pedestrian safety projects. Heidi Perry stated that we should be working to reduce our dependency on cars, and that perhaps additional travel lanes should be dedicated public transit lanes and bicycle lanes or wide shoulders should be added to rural roads. Heidi Perry asked that the MPO Board consider requesting that NCDOT reevaluate the way it scores projects, its allocation of construction dollars, and its budget for alternative forms of transport so that roads can become more environmentally sensitive and North Carolina can truly become a Vision Zero state.

Vice Chair Damon Seils stated that Heidi Perry is pointing to some of the structural difficulties in the process that state uses for scoring projects, and that some of this was out of the hands of the MPO. He added that the MPO could still express an opinion about some of the issues that Heidi Perry discussed and reflected on productive conversations that the MPO has had with North Carolina Secretary of Transportation James Trogdon and his staff. Vice Chair Damon Seils stated that it might be a good idea to schedule another conversation with the Transportation Secretary given that the MPO is currently going through the scoring process.

Felix Nwoko stated that Transportation Secretary James Trogdon has asked MPOs to come up with comments about NCDOT's Bicycle and Pedestrian policy, and that a DCHC MPO subcommittee is working on this issue and would bring it to the MPO Board in coming months. Felix Nwoko stated that this is an opportunity to convey the MPO's opinion on bicycle and pedestrian issues to NCDOT. Chair Steve Schewel clarified that Felix Nwoko was referring to NCDOT's Bicycle and Pedestrian Policy, and not the scoring process.

Lydia Lavelle and Ed Harrison discussed the possibility of bicycle coalitions identifying bicycle-friendly Republicans in the state legislature who might be willing to advocate for bicycle issues. Ellen

Reckhow stated that Heidi Perry's comments also reiterated the importance of the MPO being more aspirational in its mode splits as it develops the 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP).

Chair Steve Schewel thanked Heidi Perry for attending the meeting and stated that a different kind of conversation with the Transportation Secretary may be necessary. Vice Chair Damon Seils pointed out that while there is a disconnect between the values and vision of NCDOT, policy changes may be limited by state statutes. Barry Jacobs stated that it might be wise to have a session to discuss changes the MPO would like to see before inviting the Transportation Secretary back to an MPO Board meeting.

Chair Steve Schewel asked Felix Nwoko and the Lead Planning Agency (LPA) Staff to consider the best opportunity for advancing the goals of the MPO, especially when it comes to mode split, and whether those opportunities are legislative or related to approaching the Transportation Secretary and his staff. Ellen Reckhow pointed out that there are many great examples of metropolitan areas around the country that are committing to bicycle infrastructure, and that the MPO can use evidence from other communities in support of its argument. Michael Parker stated that it is also important to emphasize public transit's role in reducing congestion. He also commented on the transit cap imposed by the legislature and noted that there are clear statutory obstacles that need to be resolved.

Ellen Beckmann stated that Julie White, formerly the North Carolina Metropolitan Mayors Coalition Executive Director, is now Deputy Secretary for Multi-Modal Transportation at NCDOT, and that she may be interested in visiting the MPO to discuss some of these issues. Chair Steve Schewel asked Felix Nwoko and Ellen Beckmann to consider how to best move forward on this issue.

Pam Hemminger stated that the Town of Chapel Hill, the Town of Carrboro, NCDOT staff, and MPO staff is working to resolve issues with the proposed roundabout at the Merritt Mill/Main Street/Franklin Street intersection. Pam Hemminger added that she may need to leave the meeting early to attend a ribbon cutting for newly installed solar panels at East Chapel Hill High School.

5. Directives to Staff

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

CONSENT AGENDA:

6. Approval of August 8, 2017, Meeting Minutes

7. Approval of Amendment #11 to the FY2016-25 Transportation Improvement Plan

Aaron Cain, LPA Staff

Ellen Reckhow stated that there were two typos in the minutes related to the spelling of her name and Ellen Beckmann's name. Ellen Reckhow made a motion to approve the amended August 8, 2017, MPO Board Meeting Minutes and Amendment #11 to the FY 2016-25 Transportation Improvement Plan. Don Moffitt seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

ACTION ITEMS:

8. 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)

Andy Henry, LPA Staff

Matt Day, Triangle J Council of Governments

Andy Henry reviewed the schedule for developing the MTP, and noted that the MPO staff is working closely with local staffs to develop the MTP. He also discussed comments that have been received on the MTP to date.

Chair Steve Schewel opened the public hearing on the 2045 MTP. There were no comments from the public. Chair Steve Schewel closed the public hearing.

Ellen Reckhow stated that she was struck by comments about the strong need for commuter rail.

Andy Henry discussed how Triangle J Council of Governments (TJCOG) and the Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO) have contributed to the MTP in terms of modeling and fiscal constraint.

Matt Day provided an overview of the fiscal constraint that is factored into the MTP. Matt Day discussed how factors like Strategic Transportation Initiatives (STI) framework and the Durham and

Orange County Transit Plans shape the assumptions about state and federal funding in the MTP. He also reviewed the assumptions and differences between the constrained, moderate, and aspirational forecasts, and noted that the aspirational forecast would most likely be used as the foundation of the MTP. Ed Harrison asked for and received clarification that Matt Day was discussing funding for projects only within the MPO's boundary. Lydia Lavelle pointed out that the same amount of funding is assumed for transit in the aspirational forecast. She also suggested that the extension of the light rail should be added to the aspirational forecast.

Michael Parker pointed out that the aspirational forecast aspires to more roads, and not to things that the MPO is committed to, such as increased funding for transit. Ellen Reckhow concurred with Michael Parker, and noted that there is perhaps an opportunity to apply for federal funding for the commuter rail project. Matt Day clarified that the transit items in the plan were a baseline, and that transit related information could be added to the plan. He stated that the forecast was primarily about the revenue that would be available. Matt Day pointed out that regional- and Division-level STI funds that are shown as highway funds could be used for transit.

Andy Henry and Don Moffitt discussed the relationship between the MTP and the Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP), the potential effect of inaccurate funding projections, and how forecasted funds affect projects in the SPOT process.

Vice Chair Damon Seils commented that the term "optimistic forecast" might be more appropriate than the term "aspirational forecast." Vice Chair Damon Seils also stated that Matt Day's reminder that the STI statewide pot is almost entirely for highway funding, and that there are a variety of modes constrained by STI law was helpful. Chair Steve Schewel supported the notion that the forecast should be referred to as "optimistic" instead of "aspirational." Matt Day stated that there was no requirement that the forecast be named "aspirational," and there was continued discussion of whether the forecast should be termed "optimistic."

170 Matt Day discussed the funding available for projects in each decade of the MTP. Don Moffitt
171 and Matt Day discussed the funding projections for projects in the second decade of the MTP. Matt Day
172 reviewed the percentage of funding that would be allocated to different types of projects in the MTP.
173 Michael Parker and Matt Day discussed the 10% cap on rail projects, and Matt Day stated that the
174 forecast already assumes that these types of restrictions are in place. Andy Henry discussed the funding
175 assumptions for each decade of the MTP. Andy Henry and Chair Steve Schewel discussed how changes
176 in legislative policy should be factored into the later decades of the MTP. Ellen Reckhow commented on
177 the socioeconomic data that was used for the projections, highlighting population and job growth in the
178 MPO region, and noted that jobs put a lot of stress on roads and that there may be need for a more
179 optimistic revenue forecast.

180 Chair Steve Schewel and Andy Henry discussed the timeline for approving the fiscally-
181 constrained plan. Chair Steve Schewel asked the MPO Board to consider whether more optimism should
182 be factored into the optimistic scenario. Andy Henry added that looking at the preferred option, which
183 would be brought before the MPO Board in October, might help with this decision.

184 Ellen Reckhow commented on the projected growth of the area and the need to plan for more
185 public transit. Vice Chair Damon Seils stated that the MTP cannot go beyond what is realistically, if
186 optimistically, projected with regards to revenue. He added that the MPO should be talking to legislators
187 and lobbying for more funding for its aspirations.

188 Andy Henry called attention to a chart showing the difference between anticipated project costs
189 and the project budget for the three decades of the MTP. There was discussion of the STI statewide 4%
190 non-highway project minimum. Andy Henry discussed items that have not yet been factored into the
191 budget, such as roads that will be privately built and local jurisdiction impact fees. Chair Steve Schewel
192 and Andy Henry discussed the implications of the preferred option being similar in scale to the 2040
193 MTP. Vice Chair Damon Seils asked for and received confirmation that Andy Henry was assuming the

194 optimistic scenario. Ed Harrison pointed out that the phrase “non-highway minimum” is odd and may be
195 confusing to the public. Andy Henry clarified that the types of caps discussed in the presentation were
196 regional- and Division-wide respectively. There was continued discussion of the fact that the caps are
197 somewhat confusing.

198 Chair Steve Schewel stated that the optimistic fiscally-constrained forecast should remain truly
199 fiscally-constrained, and that changes in legislation should not be assumed at this point. Lydia Lavelle
200 suggested two fiscally-constrained optimistic scenarios, A and B, where option B would consider
201 changes in the legislative caps. Barry Jacobs pointed out that two optimistic scenarios might show what
202 is being lost because of legislative action, and would therefore be educational. Michael Parker stated
203 that MTP should be structured to preserve the MPO’s future options in terms of applying for state and
204 federal funding.

205 Chair Steve Schewel and Andy Henry reviewed the three existing forecasts, and the factors that
206 would go into creating the two optimistic forecasts. Vice Chair Damon Seils emphasized that it is
207 important to understand why forecasting tools are useful, and pointed out that an optimistic B forecast
208 might not be particularly valuable. There was continued discussion of whether an optimistic B forecast
209 would be useful. Ellen Reckhow suggested changing inputs as it relates to land-use and jobs to avoid a
210 mismatch between demand and supply.

211 Chair Steve Schewel summarized the discussion about creating two optimistic scenarios. Andy
212 Henry stated that it would be a lot of additional work to come up with highway lists for an additional
213 forecast. Andy Henry discussed how the goals and objective and performance measures were developed
214 for the MTP.

215 Chair Steve Schewel and Andy Henry discussed whether there was sufficient emphasis on racial
216 and socio-economic equity in the MTP’s current goals and objectives. There was continued discussion of
217 the wording that should be used to emphasize economic equity in the MTP.

No further action was required by the MPO Board.

9. SPOT P5.0 Project Submittals

Aaron Cain, LPA Staff

Aaron Cain stated that the deadline for submitting SPOT 5.0 project is September 29, 2017.

Chair Steve Schewel recognized Durham County Commissioner Wendy Jacobs.

Aaron Cain stated that the MPO would be submitting 24 highway projects, 23 bicycle and pedestrian projects, 21 transit projects, and 11 rail projects. He discussed Chapel Hill's recent decision to swap a bicycle and pedestrian project at Ephesus Church Road/Pope Road with a project at Fordham Boulevard near Eastgate Shopping Center, and changes that were made to a Durham project at a Roxboro Street underpass that would better facilitate the proposed two-way conversion of Roxboro Street. Aaron Cain stated that the Roxboro Street project would be submitted as both a highway and a rail project. Chair Steve Schewel confirmed that the action was to approve the list of projects for final submittal to the SPOT 5.0 process.

Michael Parker and Aaron Cain discussed why the Fordham Boulevard project referenced the Legion Road extension even though the latter project was not being submitted. Vice Chair Damon Seils asked for and received confirmation that the final description of two Carrboro projects would be updated to reflect the outcome of recent discussions between MPO staff and Carrboro staff.

Ed Harrison and Aaron Cain discussed the jurisdiction of Pope Road, and bicycle lane and sidewalk gaps on Pope Road. There was discussion of the length of sidewalk on Pope Road, and how proposed nearby development related to the Durham-Orange Light Rail (D-O LRT) project would affect pedestrian traffic on Pope Road. Ed Harrison and Bergen Watterson discussed what was being included in the Pope Road project. Aaron Cain promised to have further discussions with Durham County about the Pope Road project, and noted that Durham County would have to provide the local match and potentially manage the project. Barry Jacobs and Aaron Cain discussed the parameters of the NC 86/US 70 project. There was discussion of the two-way conversion of the Downtown Durham Loop project.

Ellen Beckmann and Aaron Cain discussed whether the North Durham Parkway, US 70 to NC 98, could end at US 70 to Sharon Road, and whether making the project shorter might make it more competitive.

Pat Wilson discussed the decision to submit the Franklin Street/Merritt Mill Road/Brewer Lane project as a bicycle and pedestrian project at the Division level, in addition to submitting it as a highway project. Vice Chair Damon Seils confirmed that the project would be submitted as both a bicycle and pedestrian project and a highway project. Vice Chair Damon Seils and Pat Wilson discussed the implications of submitting the project as both a highway project and a bicycle and pedestrian project. Vice Chair Damon Seils asked Aaron Cain whether submitting the Franklin/Merritt Mill Road/Brewer Lane project as both a bicycle and pedestrian project and a highway project would affect the submittal of any other bicycle and pedestrian projects. Aaron Cain explained that the Division would be submitting the project as a bicycle and pedestrian project, which would not affect the number of projects submitted by the MPO. Vice Chair Damon Seils and Aaron Cain discussed whether there were any concerns about submitting the project twice. Lydia Lavelle stated that she appreciated having a second option for the project. Don Moffitt and Aaron Cain discussed the projects that are the highest priority for Durham.

Don Moffitt made a motion to approve the list of project to be submitted to SPOT 5.0. Ellen Reckhow seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

REPORTS:

10. Report from the DCHC MPO Board Chair

Steve Schewel, DCHC MPO Board Chair

Chair Steve Schewel stated that John Hodges-Copple is working on scheduling a meeting between the chairs and vice chairs of DCHC MPO and CAMPO, and that the meeting should be scheduled shortly.

11. Report from the DCHC MPO Technical Committee Chair

Ellen Beckmann, DCHC MPO TC Chair

Ellen Beckmann stated that she has been asked to be on the NCDOT working group tasked with updating NCDOT's Bicycle and Pedestrian Policy.

12. Reports from LPA Staff

Felix Nwoko, LPA Staff

Felix Nwoko stated that a kick-off meeting was recently held for the NC 54 corridor study and that the Request for Proposals (RFP) for the US 15-501 corridor study would be released shortly.

Dale McKeel reminded the MPO Board of the upcoming Greenways Summit that would be held in Durham from October 1-3, 2017.

13. NCDOT Reports:

Richard Hancock, NCDOT Division 5, stated that Mike Holder has retired as Chief Engineer, and that Tim Little, previously Division Engineer of Division 4, will be the new Chief Engineer. Richard Hancock stated that a public meeting would be held for the US 501/Latta/Infinity project on September 28. He also discussed potential uses for the \$1.7 million of high impact/low cost funds that have been allotted to each Division. Richard Hancock discussed upcoming closures related to the East End Connector project and the Alston Avenue project. He stated that the Division has had some difficulty mobilizing the contractor for the Herndon/Barbee roundabout, and that the project will now have a late November completion date. Richard Hancock also mentioned that there were some complaints about noise and light related to the nighttime work on the Old Chapel Hill Road project, and that the Division was discussing this issue with City of Durham staff.

Pat Wilson, NCDOT Division 7, stated that the Division is currently working on modifying the design of the Franklin Street/Merritt Mill Road/Brewer Lane intersection project to possibly include bicycle and pedestrian improvements. He added that the cost estimate for the project would be shared with staff when it becomes available. Pat Wilson added that the Division has received the design for the fence for the pedestrian bridge over I-40 on Orange Grove Rd. He stated that the project would be

advertised at the end of the September with a bid opening in mid-October. Pat Wilson promised to provide an update on the project at the November MPO Board meeting.

There was discussion of whether it would be possible to contact the members of the public who brought the unsafe conditions of the pedestrian bridge over I-40 on Orange Grove Road to the MPO Board's attention to let them know that action is being taken on the matter.

There was no report from NCDOT Division 8.

There was no report from NCDOT Transportation Planning Branch.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:

14. Recent News, Articles, and Updates

Chair Steve Schewel thanked local staff, MPO staff, NCDOT staff, and TJCOG staff for the work that they do.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business before the DCHC MPO Board, the meeting was adjourned at 10:29 a.m.