



CHATHAM URBAN TRANSPORTATION STUDY

Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting Summary

Mendonsa Hearing Room
112 East State Street

April 15, 2004

5:30 p.m.

Members Present:

Brant Attaway
H. L. Burgstiner
Phyllis Hardeman
Ronald Kolman
Henry Levy
Mark McDonald
Helen McCracken, Vice Chair
Lee Mundell, Chair
Joyce Murlless

Representing:

Savannah
Chatham County
Thunderbolt
Chatham County
City of Tybee Island
Chatham County
Thunderbolt
Savannah
Savannah

Others Present:

Al Black, P.E.
Jean Iaderosa
Teresa Scott
Thomas L. Thomson, P.E., AICP
Wykoda Wang
Michael Weiner, P.E.
Mark Wilkes, P.E., AICP

Representing:

Chatham County Engineering
Chatham Area Transit
GDOT, JESUP
Executive Director, MPC
MPC
City of Savannah Traffic Engineer
MPC

I. Approval of Agenda

Mr. Mundell called the meeting to order. Hearing no additions or changes, the agenda would stand approved as presented.

II. Action Items:

- A. Approval of February 19, 2004 CUTS Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Mr. Burgstiner **moved** to approve the minutes of the February 19, 2004 CUTS Citizens Advisory Committee Minutes. Ms. McCracken seconded the motion.

CAC Action: **The motion carried with none opposed.** The motion was to approve the minutes of the February 19, 2004 CUTS Citizens Advisory Committee Minutes. Voting were Mr. Burgstiner, Mr. Kolman, Mr. McDonald, Ms. Murlless, Mr. Attaway, Ms. Hardeman, Ms. McCracken, and Mr. Levy.

B. Endorsement of final FY 2005 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

Mr. Wilkes stated that the document that is before the CAC is similar to the draft that was reviewed at the previous meeting. Wording was added in Special Transportation Studies to allow staff to continue pursuing the Transportation Amenities Plan into next year. The amortization of consulting assistance was added to the financial table.

Ms. Wang added that ACAT members requested the addition of language on Page 22, Special Transportation Studies, to request that travel training be conducted to educate current paratransit users on the option of using fixed bus route system.

Mr. Wilkes replied that this would be worked out at the staff level.

Mr. Burgstiner **moved** to endorse the final FY 2005 Unified Planning Work Program to the Policy Committee. Ms. Hardeman seconded the motion.

CAC Action: **The motion carried with none opposed.** The motion was to endorse the final FY 2005 Unified Planning Work Program to the Policy Committee. Voting were Mr. Burgstiner, Mr. Kolman, Mr. McDonald, Ms. Murlless, Mr. Attaway, Ms. Hardeman, Ms. McCracken, and Mr. Levy.

C. Endorsement of the proposed intermodal connector addition to the National Highway System (NHS)

Ms. Scott stated that Port Wentworth approached GDOT about adding Grange Road to the state highway system. A road must meet the state standards; Grange Road does not meet those standards. Port Wentworth does not have funds to do that additional work. However trucks use the route when going into the port. One way to help Port Wentworth would be adding the road to the National Highway System, which would make the road eligible for federal funds. The matter was continued at the Technical Coordinating Committee in order to obtain comments from the Ports Authority and Port Wentworth since neither group was present at the TCC.

Mr. Kolman **moved** to continue the matter. Mr. Burgstiner seconded the motion.

CAC Action: **The motion carried with none opposed.** The motion was to continue the matter in order to obtain comments from the Ports Authority and Port Wentworth. Voting were: Mr. Burgstiner, Mr. Kolman, Mr. McDonald, Ms. Murlless, Mr. Attaway, Ms. Hardeman, Ms. McCracken, and Mr. Levy.

III. Informational Reports

A. Georgia Department of Transportation

Ms. Scott stated that the status report has been revised. Projects are shown in the order in which the projects are supposed to be let to construction, although some changes do occur.

Mr. Levy asked what he could do to stop the proposed widening of U.S. Highway 80 from west of Bull River to East of Lazzaretto Creek.

Ms. Scott replied that the project would be moved to Long Range status.

Mr. Burgstiner asked what the CAC could do to move the project forward from State Route 204/Abercorn Street from King George Boulevard to Rio Road. He also asked the status of the U.S. Highway 17 widening near Wal-Mart.

Ms. Scott replied that there is only so much money to be applied to local projects, nor does she have the power to make certain projects a priority. She understands that this is a concern. She travels through the intersection also.

B. Chatham County

Mr. Black reviewed the status of One Percent Projects in Chatham County. A report was available at the meeting. The Montgomery Cross Road/Middleground Road project is scheduled to be let in May.

Mr. Attaway requested the status of public meetings that were to be held regarding Abercorn Street.

Mr. Black replied that the public information meetings would be held by the summer. The matter has been delayed because some changes have been made.

Mr. Wilkes asked that the MPC be notified when the public information meetings are scheduled.

C. City of Savannah

Mr. Weiner reviewed a schedule of the projects that are underway in the City of Savannah during the last quarter. A status report was distributed at the meeting. The weekend traffic volume on Abercorn Street equals that of peak weekday rush hour. In order to accommodate the traffic volume, new signal timing plans have been implemented.

D. Chatham Area Transit Authority

Ms. Iaderosa stated that CAT has voted to continue operating the downtown shuttle, thanks to major operating assistance from the City of Savannah. CAT also received approval from the board for purchase of ten replacement buses. These new buses will be low—floor buses, as are the newest 31 buses. CAT is working toward a goal of installing 100 new or replacement bus shelters by the end of June.

Ms. Iaderosa added that CAT has started a program of travel training. The target group is users of the paratransit service to transition riders to the fixed route service.

V. Discussion Item: Transportation Priorities

Mr. Thomson, Executive Director of the Metropolitan Planning Commission, stated that citizen input is vital to work of the MPC and in the transportation program. He shared with the group an announcement from the governor about the transportation system in Georgia.

Ms. Wang stated that an item was distributed to correct the October meeting dates.

IV. Status Reports

A. Congestion Management System

Mr. Wilkes stated that staff hoped to have a steering committee meeting earlier in the day. However, upon further review of the data, additional specificity was necessary before a meeting could be held. A verbal commitment from the consultant states that the report would meet the end of April deadline.

B. Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)

Ms. Wang stated that the public involvement process for the LRTP started in March, at the request of the Town of Thunderbolt. Additional public meetings were held in Pooler, Islands Communities, and Jenkins High School. The purpose was to obtain comments on the draft goals and objectives and to establish the community priorities.

Mr. Wilkes added that the target date for the LRTP is the end of June. Round two meetings are tentatively scheduled for early June.

Mr. Thomson stated that in the second round of meetings, staff will try other things to go to where people are gathered and try to get input from them.

C. East-West Corridor Study

Mr. Thomson stated that the CUTS Policy Committee asked him to bring back the East-West Corridor Study initiative. Staff put out a request for qualifications and received ten responses last Friday. All responses are in the review team's hands. The intention is to short list that to three or four teams who will be asked to respond with more information and prepare for an oral presentation scheduled for May 21, 2004, which would be followed by contract discussions and a notice to proceed before the end of June.

Mr. Thomson added that it is going to be a citizen-based approach, starting in the neighborhoods and working with groups that are engaged in the process.

Mr. Kolman described an effort that he and Jill Weaver have started to develop a model for citizen participation in transportation issues.

V. Transportation Priorities

Mr. Wilkes invited the CAC to nominate one or two members to participate in the meetings that would set the transportation priorities for the Long Range Transportation Plan. The meetings have been scheduled for Thursdays, April 22, May 6, and May 20 at 10:00 AM.

VI. Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Citizens Advisory Committee, the April 15, 2004 meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark A. Wilkes, P.E., AICP
Director of Transportation Planning