



CHATHAM URBAN TRANSPORTATION STUDY

Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting Summary

Arthur A. Mendonsa Hearing Room
112 East State Street

February 16, 2005
MPC Arthur A. Mendonsa Hearing Room

5:00 p.m.
112 East State Street

Members

Tony Abbot
Brant Attaway
Phyllis Hardeman
Chandler Kinsey
Joe Laufenberg
Henry Levy
Helen McCracken, Vice Chair
Chris Miller
Lee Mundell, Chair
Clint Murphy
Russell Peterson
Andrew Rawlings
David Saussy
Linda M. Smith
Joe Steffen
Stephen Traub
James Weaver

Representing

Chatham County
City of Savannah
Town of Thunderbolt
City of Tybee Island
City of Savannah
City of Tybee Island
Town of Thunderbolt
City of Savannah
City of Savannah
Chatham County
Chatham County
City of Bloomingdale
City of Savannah
Port Wentworth
Chatham County
City of Savannah
City of Savannah

Present

X

Excused
X
X
X
X
X
X
Excused
X
X
X
X
X
X
X
X
X

Others Present

Al Black, P.E.
Jean Iaderosa
Mike Weiner
Teresa Scott
Mark Wilkes, P.E., AICP
Wykoda Wang

Representing

Chatham County Engineering
Chatham Area Transit Authority
City of Savannah
GDOT – Jesup
MPO Staff
MPO Staff

X
X
X
X
X
X

Call to Order

In the absence of Chairman Lee Mundell, Vice Chairman Helen McCracken called the February 16, 2006 Citizens Advisory Committee meeting to order and called attendance.



I. Action Items

A. Approval of December 8, 2005 Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Mr. Henry Levy moved to approve the December 8, 2005 Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes subject to corrections. Mr. Clint Murphy seconded the motion.

CAC ACTION: The motion to approve the December 8, 2005 Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes subject to corrections carried with none opposed. The correction was to add the CAC Action on the request to keep US 17 Widening on the fast track.

B. Collection of City of Savannah Annual Check-Up Form

Ms. Wykoda Wang explained the Annual Check-Up Form and asked that the Board Members complete the form and submit it to the staff for tabulation by the end of the meeting.

II. Agency Reports (verbal)

A. GDOT Interstate Improvement Study

Ms. Wykoda Wang stated the Georgia Department of Transportation has recently signed a contract with Jordan, Jones & Goulding (JJ&G) for the Interstate Improvement Study. The consulting firm will conduct a study on all Interstate Routes (I-95, I-16 and I-516) and their intersecting routes in Chatham County. JJ&G is currently in the data collection stage.

B. CAT Downtown Transit Station Study

Ms. Jean Iaderosa stated staff is continuing to explore all options regarding the Downtown Transit Station Study.

C. Georgia Department of Transportation

Ms. Teresa Scott reviewed GDOT status report of projects planned for Chatham County. 1) Widening of Gwinnett Street from Stiles Avenue to I-16 - the initial concept meeting has been held and the PE has been authorized; 2) The I-95 southbound welcome center project is moving along with an addition to the building and additional parking; 3) Whitefield Avenue Widening - a public information meeting will be held at the Hess Elementary School on February 28, 2006; 4) The widening of SR 21 from Smith Avenue to SR 307 will be approved; 5) I-95 will have improvements made at SR 204 Interchange; 6) Jimmy DeLoach Parkway - the preliminary engineering has been authorized and a concept meeting has been scheduled; and 7) Grange Road - the preliminary engineering has been scheduled to be authorized this year.



Questions were directed to Ms. Scott regarding: 1) SR 204/Abercorn St. widening from King George Blvd. to Rio Rd. including the overpass at King George Blvd; 2) SR 204/Abercorn St. widening from Rio Rd. to Harry S. Truman Parkway Phase 5; 3) I-16 bridge shoulder widening over I-516 & Stiles Avenue; 4) I-16/I-516 Interchange reconstruction; and 5) I-95 and Quacco Rd. Ms. Scott reported on these projects and on the status of Highway 17 widening. The contract for US 17 widening has been turned over to the bonding company. The contractor will put a right turn lane outside Wal-Mart.

Ms. Linda Smith asked how to fix traffic problems along SR 21 in the north part of Chatham County. The traffic congestion in that area is very severe due to the area's multi-jurisdictional and dynamic characteristics.

Mr. Wilkes indicated that since SR 21 is a state route, normally the Georgia Department of Transportation initiates a study to solve the problem. Ms. Scott indicated that GDOT is aware of the traffic problems in that area even though there is no study to solve the problem yet. She will pass the information along to appropriate GDOT personnel.

Ms. Smith **moved** to recommend traffic signal retiming and synchronization and road widening along SR 21 in the north part of Chatham County. The motion was seconded.

CAC ACTION: The motion to recommend traffic signal retiming and synchronization and road widening along SR 21 in north part of Chatham County carried with none opposed.

Questions were then directed to Mr. Wilkes on how the Citizens Advisory Committee could get a positive result on advice submitted.

Mr. Wilkes explained that the CAC is not a decision maker – it serves as an advisory body to the Policy Committee and the Technical Coordinating Committee. The CAC Chairman is a voting member of the Policy Committee and the CAC Vice Chairman is a voting member of the Technical Coordinating Committee. The Chairman of CAC reports to the Policy Committee on CAC actions.

Mr. James Weaver **moved** to have CAC Chairman provide a written set of recommendations to the Policy Committee and report the results of those recommendations back to CAC at the next scheduled meeting on a regular basis. The motion was seconded.

CAC ACTION: The motion to have CAC Chairman provide a written set of recommendations to the Policy Committee and report the results of those recommendations back to CAC carried with none opposed.

Mr. Wilkes indicated that the Committee should be responsible for its own representation at PC and TCC. If the Committee is not satisfied with the current situation and wants more representation, the CAC members are welcome to attend the



PC and TCC meetings to support their Chair and Vice Chair. Those meetings are not restrictive to public participation.

Mr. Wilkes then encouraged the Committee to refer to the bylaws about how CAC should work.

Mr. Peterson complained that he didn't get any orientation. Mr. Miller indicated that he didn't have time to read the orientation materials the staff sent him. Mr. Levy and several other members indicated that they haven't read the CAC Bylaws.

Mr. Wilkes indicated that two orientation sessions were held within the past year. One was given by the FHWA staff at a CAC meeting in the fall; the other was at a Policy Committee meeting, which the CAC was invited to. Previously the CAC members were appointed every two years and an orientation was provided at the beginning of the two-year cycle. When an orientation was scheduled, it was often deferred to the next meeting due to lack of interest from current members. Now the staff sends the new members materials on the transportation planning process and encourages the new member to attend various joint orientations such as the ones given by the consultant and the FHWA staff. In recent years, CAC members have been appointed sporadically throughout the year, which makes it more difficult to schedule training.

Mr. Steffen **moved** to have an orientation or retreat on how the transportation planning process works and how to impact that process and have it put on audio or video tape for Committee Members. The motion was seconded.

CAC ACTION: The motion to have an orientation or retreat on how the transportation planning process works and how to impact that process and place it on audio or video tape for Committee Members carried with none opposed.

Mr. Wilkes indicated that even though the MPO is severely understaffed, we will try our best to satisfy the Committee's needs. However, we still encourage the CAC members to review the materials the staff sends out, including the Bylaws.

D. Chatham County

Mr. Al Black gave a brief review on the status of the One Percent Sales Tax Chatham County Roadway Improvement Program. Questions were directed to Mr. Black regarding the Diamond Causeway Widening on which he gave a brief report.

III. Status Reports

A. Local Transportation Improvement Priorities

Mr. Levy **moved** to set three priorities for the Transportation Improvement Program: 1) completion of Truman Pkwy, 2) completion of a transportation loop in the north part of Savannah, and 3) the removal of US 80 widening to Tybee Island. The motion was seconded.



CAC ACTION: The motion to set three priorities for the TIP carried with none opposed. These three priorities are: 1) completion of the Truman Parkway; 2) completion of a transportation loop around northern Savannah; and 3) removal of US 80 widening to Tybee Island.

Mr. Wilkes indicated that these three recommendations are not very different from the MPO staff's TIP priorities and the Connecting Savannah recommendations. We are already working on much of it.

B. CAC Member Request that Other Municipalities Adopt the MPO Bikeway Plan

Mr. James Weaver requested that other jurisdictions adopt the current Chatham County Bikeway Plan. Specifically, bike lanes should be included in the Middleground Road and Diamond Causeway widening projects.

Mr. Wilkes indicated that the MPO is composed of representatives of local transportation providers as well as local jurisdictions. In this sense, the MPO is inclusive, and sets transportation policy area-wide. It might not be necessary for each jurisdiction to adopt the Plan since they already adopted it as a member of the MPO.

Mr. Wilkes further stated that the GDOT policy is to accommodate the bikeways in roadway projects if that roadway is identified as a bikeway corridor in the adopted Bikeway Plan. Since the adoption of the Bikeway Plan in 2000, GDOT has observed the policy. When the Bikeway Plan was adopted, Largo Drive instead of Middleground Road was identified as the priority bikeway corridor in that area, probably due to the high volume of traffic on Middleground Road. Even though it is probably too late to include bike lanes on Middleground Road since it is already under construction, Mr. Wilkes suggested that interested CAC members review the existing Bikeway Plan along with the planned roadway projects and make suggestions to the MPO staff for possible limited revisions to the Plan.

C. Contact Information for CAC Questions and Concerns

Ms. Wang stated in response to Mr. Levy's concerns regarding US 80 debris removal and Mr. Traub's request for street name spelling correction, the MPO staff has prepared a list of contacts. The list is provided to the Committee to address concerns or questions regarding transportation implementation. The committee members are encouraged to contact these transportation implementation agencies directly to resolve various issues. Mr. Black and Mr. Weiner are available for concerns regarding County roads and City streets.



IV. Other Business

Vice Chairman Helen McCracken asked if any CAC Member would take a leadership role to attend the County Commission Meetings, TCC Meetings and PC Meetings to voice concerns and report back to the CAC. Members will then be able to see how effective he or she can be in making decisions on how the CAC can be more effective.

V. Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Citizens Advisory Committee the February 16, 2006 Meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

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