



CHATHAM URBAN TRANSPORTATION STUDY

CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING SUMMARY

Arthur A. Mendonsa Hearing Room
112 East State Street

August 17, 2006
MPC Arthur A. Mendonsa Hearing Room

5:00 p.m.
112 East State Street

Members

Tony Abbott
Brant Attaway
John Bennett
Mark Egan (arrived later)
Phyllis Hardeman
Chandler Kinsey
Beth Kinstler
Jack Knops
Henry Levy
Helen McCracken
Lee Mundell
Clint Murphy
Russell Peterson
Andrew Rawlings
Linda M. Smith
Joe Steffen
Stephen Traub
James Weaver

Representing

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

Present

X
X
X
X

X
X
X
X
X
X
X
X
X
X
X
X
X
X
X
X

Others Present

Jane Love
Charles McMillan
Barbara Settzo
Tom Thomson, P.E., AICP
Wykoda Wang
Mark Wilkes, P.E., AICP

Representing

MPO
McMillan & Associates
MPC
MPC
MPO
MPO

X
X
X
X
X
X

Call to Order

Mr. Lee Mundell called the August 17, 2006 Citizens Advisory Committee meeting to order.

I. Introduction of Newly Appointed Members

Ms. Jane Love introduced the new members of the committee who are beginning two-year terms effective with the election of new officers this evening. Appointed to two-year terms ending in 2008 are Mr. John Bennett, Mrs. Beth Kinstler, and Mr. Jack Knops, representing the City of Savannah, and Mr. Mark Egan representing Chatham County.

II. Approval of Agenda

It was moved and seconded to approve the agenda as presented.

CAC Action: the motion to approve the agenda as presented carried with none opposed.

III. Report from CAC Effectiveness Subcommittee

Ms. Love presented a summary report which was included in the advance packet of information. Ms. Love reported that this subcommittee was formed in April at the suggestion of facilitator, Charles McMillan. The subcommittee met in May and reported at the June CAC meeting. At the June meeting, Mr. Thomson requested to meet with the subcommittee. This meeting was held on August 3, 2006. At this meeting it was agreed to take nominations from the floor for new officers at the next CAC meeting. Ways for the CAC to be more effective were also discussed and included:

- The size of the committee. With only 17 of the 30 seats filled on a regular basis, it was proposed to reduce the size of the committee. This would make it easier to communicate and to maintain a quorum.
- Involve the CAC in creating their meeting agenda. Currently, MPO staff bases the CAC agenda on the Policy Committee agenda, but if the CAC does not wish to cover these items, that is acceptable.
- Print a suspense calendar which would indicate the timing of annually recurring action items on the CAC agendas.
- Distribute a glossary of terms on a regular basis to supplement the one members received in their orientation materials.
- All committee members should come to meetings prepared. This includes reading the packet of materials sent to committee members in advance of the scheduled meeting.
- Provide CAC members with a membership list that includes contact information.
- Based on past experience the CAC and MPO staff cannot expect agency representatives to attend, therefore, these agencies could be taken off the agenda. MPO staff would attempt to answer any questions that come up on agency issues.

If the answer is not readily available, MPO staff could look into it and report back to the CAC.

Ms. Love pointed out that this evening she has provided the committee members present with a list of committee members' phone numbers and e-mail addresses.

IV. Action Items

A. Election of Officers

Mr. Tony Abbott placed into nomination Clint Murphy for Chairman and Russ Peterson for Vice Chairman. Mr. Mundell asked for any further nominations from the floor. There being no other nominations, it was moved and seconded to close nominations.

CAC Action: The motion to close to nominations carried with none opposed.

CAC Action: There being no other nominations, the proposed slate of officers was approved by acclamation.

Mr. Mundell turned the meeting over to newly elected Chairman Clint Murphy.

Mr. Levy proposed a rising vote of thanks for Mr. Mundell's hard work on this committee. The committee acknowledged such with a round of applause.

B. Approval of the June 22, 2006 Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Several members stated that their absences at the June meeting were not shown as excused in the minutes, as they should have been. Clarification of excused or non-excused absences was given by Ms. Love and Ms. Wang. The minutes do not indicate the type of absence, but only who was actually at the meeting. It was moved and seconded to approve the June 22, 2008 Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes.

CAC Action: The motion to approve the June 22, 2006 Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes carried with none opposed.

C. Endorsement of the Amendment to the FY 2007-2009 TIP to include Study of the Savannah Northwest Truck Tollway.

Ms. Wang reported that GDOT requested this amendment to the FY2007-2009 TIP. She referred committee members to the map on page 3 of the hand-out indicating the location of the proposed tollway to be studied. Ms. Beth Kinstler requested that this vote be postponed until the next meeting since there were new members who were uninformed about the project. Mr. Abbott commented that this project was a new one to all members and asked Ms. Wang to further explain it to the committee now. Ms. Wang explained that

GDOT is initiating this study to see if a truck tollway is feasible. The funds for the study are ready, but the local MPO cannot access the funds for this study unless the study project is included in the TIP. The funds are split 80/20% between federal and state funds.

Mr. Thomson reported that a consultant has already been selected by GDOT for this study. Some funding is controlled by GDOT and some by the local MPO. The MPO staff pays particular attention to any projects using the funds controlled by MPO and slightly lesser attention to those projects where the funds are controlled by GDOT. This is a project that does not affect any currently scheduled funded projects approved by the MPO. This project is in the MPO's Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). At this time, it is being moved up by putting it in the TIP.

Ms. Wang continued, saying that since this is a major amendment there must be a 15-day public review and comment period (August 6 – August 20). It was advertised in the newspaper and on the MPC web site.

It was moved and seconded to endorse the amendment to the FY 2007-2009 TIP to include Study of Savannah Northwest Truck Tollway.

CAC Action: the motion to endorse the amendment to the FY 2007-2009 TIP to include Study of Savannah Northwest Truck Tollway was carried, with one vote against. Later in the meeting, Mr. Knops, asked that the minutes reflect his change of vote on this issue from “no” to “abstain.”

Mr. Murphy took this opportunity to address some procedural issues. He announced that beginning with the next meeting he would be sitting in the center chair on the panel. Mr. Murphy also stated that he would like to form two subcommittees – one focusing on immediate issues and one focusing on long range issues. These subcommittees would meet intermittently between the scheduled committee meetings to deal with any major issues that the staff could help the group address. He invited committee members to see him following this meeting if they are interested in serving on one of these subcommittees. He assured the committee that he will take their issues to the Policy Committee and bring back to this committee information from the Policy Committee.

Mr. Murphy recognized Mr. Wilkes who stated that there was an additional item that the CAC should review at this meeting. Staff seeks the CAC's endorsement of new language in the 2030 LRTP in regard to enhancement projects, i.e. TE projects. Mr. Wilkes explained that the Transportation Enhancement program is a 10% set-aside from the surface transportation fund administered by the state. These projects are connected to transportation but are not capacity related. In Georgia this program is administered by GDOT. Individual project sponsors, with the cooperation of a local government agency, may apply to GDOT for these enhancement funds. The local MPO is not involved in these projects and has no input in the selection of these projects, but is still required to include them in the LRTP (Long Range Transportation Plan). To avoid presenting a new

amendment to the LRTP for each project as it is granted, the MPO is proposing a general statement to be included in the LRTP that addresses the MPO's approval and acceptance of GDOT's selection methods and choices. The proposed wording to be included in the 2030 LRTP is as follows:

“The Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) administers the TE program in Georgia and funds projects every 2 years on a competitive basis by congressional district. Applications for TE funding are made directly to GDOT, and final project selections are made by the State Transportation Board. TE projects which meet current state and federal requirements for TE projects, and have been duly selected for funding by the State Transportation Board are considered to be consistent with the MPO's 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan.”

Mr. Wilkes further explained the list of TE projects in the MPO's 2030 LRTP. This list illustrates projects that future TE grant applicants could consider. Some projects that have been awarded TE funding are AASU bike path, Pooler sidewalks, and MLK streetscaping.

Mr. Wilkes reported that awards are made every two years. It has been 3-4 months since the most recent awards were made. This proposed wording is an effort to not get in the way of the process and to not overburden the MPO with a list of amendments.

Mr. Thomson explained that his vision of the MPO's LRTP is as a policy statement which includes the types of projects to be included in a LRTP, not a laundry list of specific projects approved by GDOT.

It was moved and seconded to approve the amendment to the 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan to include language in support of enhancement projects.

CAC Action: the motion to approve the amendment to the 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan to include language in support of enhancement projects carried with none opposed.

V. Status Reports

A. SR 204/Abercorn Extension

Mr. Wilkes was expecting Tommy Crochet, the project manager with McGee Partners, to be at the meeting. In his absence, Mr. Wilkes and Mr. Thomson spoke from the audience. Mr. Wilkes said that the consultant was looking into two possibilities – an 8-lane surface road and a 6-lane limited access highway. The concept meeting for this project will be here in this room on Wednesday, August 23, 2006 at 1:30. In response to a question from a committee member, Mr. Wilkes defined the term horizon date. Federal Highway requires a minimum planning horizon of 20 years. The MPO Long range plans are developed for 25 years and updated every five years so they never fall below the 20 year benchmark.

B. Context Sensitive Design Workshop

Mr. Wilkes presented a review of a 3-day workshop hosted by MPO staff and conducted by Glatting Jackson Kercher Anglin Lopez Rinehart, Inc. The workshop was a step towards the creation of a Context Sensitive Design Manual. Mr. Wilkes' presentation included a definition of context sensitive design, why it is important, and a review of each day's activities. Day one included informal discussions and a tour of corridors that could be studied in the workshop exercises. Day two was a full-day work session in which the consultants, MPO staff and a few of the MPC staff generated materials for the next day and for the manual. Day three was a full-day stakeholder workshop, which included an afternoon of mini-charettes, focusing on three corridors (Victory between Truman Pkwy & Skidaway Rd, East President St/Oglethorpe Landing, and DeRenne Ave.) Mr. Wilkes reviewed the team recommendations for each corridor. In the next step Glatting Jackson will send a draft of the Guidelines Manual.

In response to Mr. Levy's question about the omission of a facilitator across northern Savannah as a study project, Mr. Wilkes explained that the "projects" studied at this workshop were only illustrative examples and not meant to be a complete or prioritized listing of projects underway. The three selections were made jointly by the consultants and the workshop participants. The manual will provide guidelines that can be applied to many other projects.

Mr. Knops, who attended the workshop, commented that he was pleased with the workshop. He was surprised that more CAC members did not attend. Mr. Wilkes explained that due to the nature of the workshop activities, the attendance was meant to be small.

Ms. Helen McCracken raised the possibility of improving the Victory Dr. congestion by the placement of a traffic light at Skidaway Rd and Rowland Ave. This would encourage the use of Rowland as a parallel alternative to Victory Dr. for westbound motorists wanting to turn south on Skidaway Rd. A discussion followed about how to move the traffic around the Victory/Skidaway congested area. Mr. Wilkes noted that Ms. McCracken's idea of parallel alternatives appears to be very similar to the concept generated for this area in the workshop exercise. The sketch produced in that exercise and shown in Mr. Wilkes presentation here included a route parallel to Victory Dr., but on the west side of Skidaway Rd. (through a shopping center parking lot) instead. This would help east-to-south travelers on Victory and Skidaway and the north-to-west travelers on Skidaway and Victory avoid the Victory/Skidaway intersection.

Mr. Thomson suggested that this topic be put on a future agenda or worked on by a subcommittee. The MPO has secured funding for the next three years for special studies of areas that need more analysis. This funding will allow us to zoom in from our usual

systems level of analysis. Specific areas of analysis will be: 1. SW Chatham County due to excessive development, 2. the area around the port where residential development is running into truck traffic, 3. President St/Oglethorpe Landing/other development.

Mr. Murphy asked the committee members for any items of concern that they would like him to mention at the Policy Committee meeting next Wednesday. Any members should e-mail Mr. Murphy with any concerns.

Members would like to know more about the proposed subcommittees mentioned earlier by Mr. Murphy for immediate issues and for long range issues.

The question of downsizing the CAC was raised. Ms. Love suggested it be addressed at a future meeting. Mr. Murphy asked for comments on any of the suggestions from the "effectiveness" subcommittee, which had been read from the summary at the beginning of this meeting.

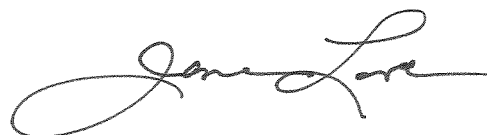
Mr. Weaver would like to have some historical document for recurring items, such as Rt 17 widening in order to keep everyone familiar with the current status of such long running projects. This way the group will not spend so much time in every meeting discussing the same things. Mr. Murphy stated that as Chairman, he will hold all spontaneous issues to the end of the meeting. Mr. Wilkes asked the committee to help the MPO staff craft the meeting agenda to cover what the committee wants to cover.

Mr. Thomson stated the purpose of the CAC is to review and engage in the planning of the LRTP, the TIP and the annual UPWP, and provide a citizens' view on these items. He also wants the committee members to take back to their communities and share the ideas with their communities. Mr. Thomson also reminded the committee that there are things you can do and things you can't. To be effective you need a core group of interested citizens who show up regularly and are engaged and educated in the process and the language of the subject.

VI. Adjournment

It was moved and seconded to adjourn. The motion to adjourn carried with none opposed.

Respectfully submitted,



Jane Love
Transportation Planner