



Chairman John Bennett called the October 15, 2009 Citizens Advisory Committee meeting to order, followed by self-introductions by committee members. Mr. Bennett welcomed the newest member, Mr. Louis Wilson, representing the City of Savannah.

**I. Approval of Agenda**

It was moved and seconded to approve the agenda for the October 15, 2009 Citizens Advisory Committee meeting.

**CAC Action: the motion to approve the agenda for the October 15, 2009 Citizens Advisory Committee meeting carried with none opposed.**

**II. Action Items**

**A. Approval of the August 20, 2009 Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes**

It was moved and seconded to approve the August 20, 2009 Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes.

**CAC Action: the motion to approve the August 20, 2009 Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes carried with none opposed.**

**B. Endorsement of the FY 2010-2013 Transportation Improvement Program**

Ms. Wykoda Wang made a presentation to the committee. The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is updated every year generally, although it covers a four-year period. The proposed document is for the fiscal years 2010-2013. The TIP is the short-term programming document of the MPO, which must be consistent with the Long Range Transportation Plan. This document is a multi-year listing of proposed multi-modal projects. Ms. Wang divided her presentation into three sections: highway projects, transit projects, and rail projects.

Ms. Wang reviewed the list of highway projects that will be carried over from the current TIP to the proposed TIP. This highway listing includes two transit projects because these two projects are funded by earmarked funds from the Federal Highway Administration.

She also reviewed a list of projects funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) that will be carried forward from the current TIP to the proposed TIP. The City of Savannah has notified the MPO that the Anderson St. curve reconstruction project, the W. Gwinnett St. curve reconstruction project, and the Mall Blvd signal upgrade at Hodgson Memorial Dr. project will not be ready, so they intend to re-allocate the funds to other MPO-approved city ARRA projects.

Ms. Wang reviewed a list of projects that have not been included in the proposed TIP because funding has already been authorized. She also reviewed a list of projects not

included in the proposed TIP for a variety of other reasons, such as moved to the local section of the TIP, or have been moved to long range or to the vision plan.

Her final list was a list of projects added to the proposed TIP. Since the MPO has discretion over L230 funds they are proposing in the new TIP to set aside L230 funds for the regional traffic control center and for stand-alone bike/pedestrian projects that will be identified in the Total Mobility Plan currently under development.

Transit projects include regular formula projects, New Freedom projects and JARC projects. There are also some ARRA-funded projects carried over from the current TIP. The proposed TIP also includes projects that are contingent on the awarding of Transportation Investments Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grants. CAT and the trade center have also received some earmark funding. Depending on their status for authorization, they may be carried over to the proposed TIP.

Transportation enhancement projects, rail projects, and local projects included in the proposed TIP were also reviewed.

Ms. Wang explained the public participation plan for the proposed TIP. She noted that today is the last day of the comment period. She referred the committee to page 21-25 which records all the comments and staff responses received thus far.

She recommended that this committee endorse the proposed TIP for fiscal year 2010-2013.

Mr. Bennett opened the public hearing.

Pamela Howard Oglesby – Vice President of West Savannah Neighborhood Association spoke. She defined the general area as including West Savannah, Woodville and Hudson Hill, all of which share an interest in West Bay St. Some improvements have been made to W. Bay St. in the Woodville neighborhood but no improvements have been made to W. Bay St. in the West Savannah and Hudson Hill neighborhoods. The lanes are still only ten feet wide while standard lane width is twelve feet. Several citizens have been killed attempting to cross the street. Improvements to W. Bay St. would help with safety issues and also improve the blighted areas in the neighborhood. She fears that injuries and fatalities will increase as people move back into Sustainable Fellwood (the new housing complex). But, still W. Bay St. has not been improved. She stated that residents concerns are: 1) Safety; and 2) Economic Development – not traffic congestion.

Bernetta Anderson – President of Hudson Hill Community Organization spoke. Hudson Hill is the only residential community north of Bay Street, just west of downtown Savannah. It was formed in the late 1800's and has been home to many residents for generations. They began in 2003 working with GDOT to improve W. Bay St., addressing safety issues, economic improvements and aesthetic improvements. The community sees this as much more than a "widening" project. It's an enhancement project. They are considering pedestrian-friendly solutions, a calm street, perhaps a boulevard style. She noted that W. Bay St improvements are currently ranked as priority #3. She believes that this project

meets all the criteria to be a #1 priority project. She realizes that it is all about the funding. She would like this committee to approve the TIP but with the stipulation that this project receive a higher priority.

Ms. Wang reported that the priority list Ms. Anderson referred to was adopted several years ago. Ms. Wang confirmed that the W. Bay St. improvement project is a very high priority. The MPO has programmed some ARRA funds (\$2.4 million) for right-of-way acquisition. Right-of-way acquisition costs are estimated at \$11 million. When the SR 307 widening project was moved to the local list, the MPO requested that those released federal funds be used for W. Bay St. widening. Those L240 funds are state controlled and GDOT turned down the request, therefore the project is \$8 million short of the necessary right-of-way funds. The County is working to have the right-of-way plan approved by December 2009.

Ms. Love clarified that agency reports that were distributed today are not necessarily a listing of the TIP projects and thus the numbering on those does not reflect TIP priority.

There being no further public comment, Mr. Bennett closed the public hearing.

Mr. Henry Levy moved that the following four projects be given first priority over all other projects and all other studies, based on the issue of safety:

- Skidaway Narrows Bridge
- Extension of the Truman Parkway on the south end to I-95
- Extension of the Truman Parkway on the north end to Hutchinson Island & I-95
- Four-laning of the two bridges to Tybee Island, including bicycle lanes

Mr. Chandler Kinsey seconded the motion.

Mr. Levy spoke to the safety concerns of these projects. Discussion on this topic followed until the question was called.

**CAC Action: the motion that the following four projects be given first priority over all other projects and all other studies, based on the issue of safety:**

- **Skidaway Narrows Bridge**
  - **Extension of the Truman Parkway on the south end to I-95**
  - **Extension of the Truman Parkway on the north end to Hutchinson Island & I-95**
  - **Four-laning of the two bridges to Tybee Island, including bicycle lanes**
- carried with one opposed and one abstention.**

Mr. Bennett expressed appreciation to Ms. Oglesby and Ms. Anderson for coming forward to speak on their interests. The plans that these neighborhoods have for their communities fit nicely with the "complete streets" concept. He also sees similarities between W. Bay St. and DeRenne Ave. projects. He asked staff how to ensure that W. Bay St. improvements are in accord with the new Complete Streets policy.

Ms. Love expressed concern that the project has progressed to a point where it may be difficult to change the project design, given the money spent to get to this point. This discussion will need to involve city, county staff, and state staff, and not MPO staff alone.

Mr. Levy compared W. Bay St.'s issue to Butler Avenue and their plan for a planted median down the street to make it easier to cross (i.e. crossing two lanes at a time)

Mr. Louis Wilson spoke to the issue of W. Bay St. improvements, particularly the safety issues centered around the widening of W. Bay St. Mr. Wilson is also active on the Traffic Calming Committee and viewed a consultant's plan for W. Bay St. The consultants (Glattig Jackson Kercher Anglin, Inc.) and the Traffic Calming Committee do not want to disrupt or delay the widening project, but they do believe they can make it more pedestrian-friendly than is currently proposed. It is hoped that the design plan can be re-visited while still using the same right-of-way plan.

It was moved and seconded that the Citizens Advisory Committee urge the CORE Board to support the local efforts to re-evaluate the W. Bay Street widening project to incorporate the ideas of the Traffic Calming Committee's hired consultants.

**CAC Action: the motion that the Citizens Advisory Committee urge the CORE Board to support the local efforts to re-evaluate the W. Bay Street widening project to incorporate the findings of the Traffic Calming Committee's hired consultants carried with none opposed.**

### **C. Nominations & Elections of CAC Officers**

Mr. John Bennett was nominated for Chairman of the Citizens Advisory Committee. The nomination was seconded. It was moved and seconded to close nominations. No discussion.

**CAC Action: the committee elected John Bennett as Chairman of the Citizens Advisory Committee for the next year.**

Mr. Henry Levy was nominated for Vice-Chairman of the Citizens Advisory Committee. The nomination was seconded. Nominations were closed. No discussion.

**CAC Action: the committee elected Henry Levy as Vice-Chairman of the Citizens Advisory Committee for the next year.**

### **III. Agency Reports**

Ms. Love reported that at the August meeting Mr. Tony Abbott raised a question about a GDOT project – the I-16 bridge shoulder widening over I-516 & Stiles Ave. Ms. Love had checked with GDOT District 5 staff, and the work that is taking place at the interchange now is indeed related to this project. Since Mr. Abbott is not here tonight, she will send this information to him at a later time.

#### **IV. Other Business**

Mr. Jack Knops asked why the Truman Linear Trail was moved from the east side of Truman Parkway to the west side of Truman Pkwy., according to the map in the TIP. He is concerned that trail planners are caving in to a few Magnolia Park residents who were very vocal in their objections. Ms. Love said that she believes that the plans she saw show the trail on the east side of Truman Pkwy. for most of the route. Staff agreed to check on the alignment and correct the map in the TIP if necessary.

He is also concerned with the bridge over DeRenne. It was confirmed that the bridge is unfunded and not in the plan right now.

Mr. Bennett asked about the status of the spur off the Truman Parkway at Victory Drive that Mr. Traub suggested at the last meeting. Ms. Love reported that the Long Range Transportation Plan was adopted by the CORE Board in September, and the plan includes the Victory Drive mitigation strategies, which includes the spur, but there is not a separate line item for the spur.

Ms. Love will ask the consultant for the Congestion Management Process to come to a CAC meeting and explain the Victory Dr. strategies. Mr. Levy noted that all the committee is interested in is why the spur isn't being done now. Ms. Love noted that it is not scheduled, and to do it now would require a trade-off with an already scheduled project.

Mr. Traub wanted to have it as a free-standing project so that if, and when, a relatively small amount of funding became available, this project would be a ready candidate. Ms. Love explained that even though the spur is in the Long Range Transportation Plan as part of the larger project, it doesn't necessarily mean that it can't be done apart from the other aspects of the larger project.

The committee asked that the consultant address the committee specifically about the feasibility and cost of the spur.

#### **V. Adjournment**

There being no other business to come before the Committee, the October 15, 2009 Citizens Advisory Committee was adjourned. The next regular meeting will be on December 10, 2009. (This is one week earlier than usual due to the holidays.)

Respectfully submitted,

Jane Love  
Transportation Planner