



METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

**CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING SUMMARY**

**Arthur A. Mendonsa Hearing Room
112 East State Street**

December 6, 2012

5:00 p.m.

<u>Members</u>	<u>Representing</u>	<u>Present</u>
Tony Abbott	Chatham County	
Daniel Brantley	Chatham County	x
John Chapman	City of Savannah	x
Gerald Cook	City of Bloomingdale	
Philip Cooper	Chatham County	
Mark Egan	Chatham County	x
John Getty	City of Tybee Island	x
Phyllis Hardeman	Town of Thunderbolt	
Elizabeth Hilliard	City of Savannah	x
Paula Kreissler	City of Savannah	x
Larry Longo	City of Port Wentworth	
Helen McCracken	Town of Thunderbolt	
Christopher Middleton	City of Savannah	x
Larry Miles	City of Savannah	x
Patrick J. O'Brien, Jr.	City of Savannah	
Harris Odell	Chatham County	
Deborah Rauers	City of Savannah	x
Linda M. Smith	City of Port Wentworth	
Joe Steffen	Chatham County	
Martin Sullivan	Chatham County	
Dale Thorpe	Chatham County	x
Vacant	City of Bloomingdale	
Vacant	Chatham County	
Vacant	City of Garden City	
Vacant	City of Garden City	
Vacant	City of Pooler	
Vacant	City of Pooler	
Vacant	City of Tybee Island	
Vacant	Town of Vernonburg	
Vacant	Town of Vernonburg	

Others Present

Representing

Michael Adams	MPO	X
Denise Grabowski	Symbioscity	X
Jessica Hagan	MPO	X
Jane Love	MPO	X
Barbara Settzo	for MPO	X
Wykoda Wang	MPO	X
Mark Wilkes	MPO	X
Julie Yawn	MPO	X

Mr. Mark Egan called the meeting to order.

I. Approval of Agenda

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

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

II. Action Items

A. Approval of October 18, 2012 meeting minutes

It was moved and seconded to approve the minutes of the October 18, 2012 meeting.

CAC Action: the motion to approve the minutes of the October 18, 2012 meeting carried with none opposed.

B. Approval of the 2013 Schedule of Meetings for CORE MPO CAC

It was moved and seconded to approve the 2013 schedule of meetings for CORE MPO CAC.

CAC Action: the motion to approve the 2013 schedule of meetings for CORE MPO CAC approved with none opposed.

C. Endorsement of the resolution to support Phase II of the SR204 Corridor Study

Mr. Michael Adams reported that this item will come before the CORE MPO Board next week. Phase II of this study will go into more detail concerning economic impact along this corridor, details on the constructability, and more study of a mid-point interchange around Armstrong and St. Joseph's Hospital. Because coordination of local governments with GDOT is very important as any project in the corridor goes forward, the resolution will go before city council and county commission to document their support after the MPO Board takes action. Then it goes to GDOT. He distributed DVDs to each member to view at their own time. Phase II will take 18-24 months to complete subject to change if delays occur.

He predicted 10 years before the project is completed, subject to change due to unforeseen delays and subject to funding availability.

Mr. Adams briefly reviewed other alternatives that were eliminated. There will be more public hearings during Phase II, but the scope and schedule of the Phase II process has not been finalized.

It was moved and seconded to endorse the resolution to support Phase II of the SR 204 Corridor Study.

CAC Action: the motion to endorse the resolution to support Phase II of the SR 204 Corridor Study carried with none opposed.

D. Endorsement of resolution of support for the visualization of US 80 Bridges Study

Ms. Jane Love offered a brief historical review of how and why this study has been undertaken. An earlier plan to widen the entire corridor of US 80, from west of Bull River Bridge to east of Lazaretto Creek, faced a couple of obstacles and essentially stalled. The MPO freed up funding for other projects a few years ago by removing the widening from the funded portion of the Long Range Transportation Plan. After numerous crashes, particularly ones on the bridges that blocked travel, there has been renewed concern about reliable access to and from the island. The MPO decided to fund a study of safety issues in the corridor, particularly the bridges, in order to identify a project that could be constructed sooner than the four-lane widening. From this study, six end-to-end alternatives have been presented. Alternative #3 is the recommended alternative. There is a public meeting, the fourth one in the study, on Dec 10, 2012 from 5:00 – 7:00 PM.

The implementation project is in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for Preliminary Engineering. There will be more environmental work and more public meetings before a final concept is approved.

Ms. Love introduced Ms. Denise Grabowski as a member of the consulting team on this study. She presented a brief video to the committee describing Alternative #3.

Discussion followed the presentation of the video. In response to Ms. Elizabeth Hilliard's question about the relative benefit cost ratio of the various alternatives, Ms. Love answered that neither Alternative #3 nor Alternative #5 (popular among attendees of the third public meeting) had the highest benefit-cost ratio. The more minimal alternatives had a better benefit/cost ratio, mostly because of their lower cost. However benefit/cost ratio was not the only criteria. Anything over 1 as a benefit/cost ratio means benefits are greater than costs. All alternatives had "good" benefit-cost ratios. For review, Ms. Love opened a matrix showing all of the criteria. Public preference was among the criteria, which had been calculated from responses at one of the public meetings. There was a grading scale of 0-4 for all the criteria. Life cycle costs were one reason that Alternative #5 did not have as high a total score.

Ms. Love reviewed the design details of each alternative; #3 includes two new bridges, 2-lane roadway throughout with shoulders, and a barrier-protected multi-use path on the bridges. The old bridges will be removed.

When asked about improved roadways being elevated to avoid flooding, Ms. Love noted that there would be some increase in elevation of the low spots but not as much as was in the four-lane widening plan. Responses from a public meeting revealed that the flooding was not among the top concerns of those attending. The consulting team had studied the flood data and reported that a substantial overlay could address the flooding in certain spots that is associated with peak tides twice per year. Some fill will be required too.

In answer to a question, Ms. Love said that the Lazaretto Creek bridge was built in 1960 and Bull River bridge in 1967.

When asked about more expansion that may be necessary in 20-25 years, Ms. Love explained that traffic projections do not warrant the four-laning of the entire corridor. There is certainly seasonal congestion; the traffic counts conducted during this study showed that the roadway is at capacity (handling its upper limits of traffic) on days such as a weekend near the Independence holiday. But most of those trips are more discretionary – not a daily problem of getting to and from jobs, for example. Roadways are not built for the absolute busiest time period, because that would mean the majority of the time, there is costly unused capacity. Growth on Tybee Island is already limited by their city ordinances and development regulations, such as height limits. Ms. Love noted that it is still technically possible to build second, parallel bridges in place of the torn-down bridges if four lanes are found to be needed in the future. Implementing the study recommendations gets half way towards four-lane crossings.

In response to a question, Ms. Love commented that the environmental impact of Alternative #3 is approximately 6 acres as opposed to the four-lane project's 27 acres. Alternative #3 will still require some fill to accommodate the widening of shoulders.

Ms. Rauers compared the bridge construction on Tybee Island with the bridge construction on Skidaway Island, noting the differences in population on the two islands. Ms. Love commented that the solution in each case was similar, i.e. new 2-lane bridge with shoulders and the removal of the old bridge. The Tybee Island corridor will be getting more-protected bicycle and pedestrian facilities than the Skidaway Island bridge, if the study recommendations are implemented. Barrier-protection for bicyclists and pedestrians on the US 80 bridges was a topic that came up frequently at MPO meetings back when GDOT was reporting on the four-lane widening. Ms. Rauers' sentiment was that both populations were demanding very expensive projects for relatively small numbers of people. Many projects are competing for money.

It was moved and seconded to endorse the resolution of support for the US 80 Bridges Study.

CAC Action: the motion to endorse the resolution of support for the US 80 Bridges Study carried with none opposed.

E. Plan B – Transportation Funding

Mr. Adams reported that this item has been postponed pending the gathering of more information. There was no further action at this time.

III. Status Reports

There were no status reports at this time.

IV. Agency Reports

There were no agency reports at this time. Committee members are reminded to submit questions prior to the cut-off date to the MPO staff if they wish any report or information from an agency about any project.

V. Other Business

No other business at this time.

VI. Public Comments

There were no other public comments at this time.

VII. Announcements

Public meeting for the US Bridges Study – Dec 10, 2012 5:00 – 7:00 PM

The next CAC meeting will be on February 21, 2013 at 5:00 PM.

Public meeting on CORE MPO re-certification on February 27, 2013 5:00 PM

VIII. Other non-agenda information

IX. Adjournment

There being no other business to come before the committee, the December 6, 2012 Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Jane Love
Transportation Planner