

PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING
Meeting Minutes
August 6, 2008

MEMBERS ATTENDING

Bradley Birge, City of Saratoga Springs
Wayne Bonesteel representing, Fred Howard, Rensselaer County
Peter Comenzo, Town of Rotterdam
Frank Commisso, Albany Port Commission
Steve Feeney, Schenectady County
Rocky Ferraro, Capital District Regional Planning Commission
Michael Franchini, Albany County (Chairman)
Robert Hansen, NYS Department of Transportation Region 1
Steve Iachetta, Albany County Airport Authority
Doug Melnick, City of Albany
John Poorman, Capital District Transportation Committee (Secretary)
Thomas Richardson, City of Mechanicville
Bill Roehr, City of Troy
Phil Serafino, representing Bill Rinaldi, NYS Thruway Authority
Bernie Sisson, City of Schenectady
Mike Valentine, Saratoga County
Kristina Younger, Capital District Transportation Authority (Vice-Chair)

STAFF AND OTHERS

Anne Benware, Capital District Transportation Committee
Samuel Blanchard, Capital District Transportation Committee
Kathleen Bronson, City of Albany
Pat Campbell, Capital District Transportation Authority
Jamie Cepler, Capital District Transportation Committee
Jennifer Ceponis, Capital District Transportation Committee
Rob Cherry, NYS Department of Transportation Region 1
Eric Deyoe, Town of Bethlehem
Jim Digioia, Interested Citizen
David Jukins, Capital District Transportation Committee
Dave Kahlbaugh, Clough, Harbour & Associates
Irwin Kessman, Systra Consulting
Sandy Misiewicz, Capital District Transportation Committee
Mike Morelli, Town of Bethlehem
Leah Mosall, Town of Bethlehem
Sree Nampoothiri, Capital District Transportation Committee
Dennis O'Malley, Capital District Transportation Committee
Chris O'Neill, Capital District Transportation Committee
Phil Parella, Capital District Transportation Authority
Glenn Posca, Capital District Transportation Committee
Jason Purvis, Capital District Transportation Committee
Brian Rowback, NYS Department of Transportation Region 1
Deborah Stacey, Capital District Transportation Committee
Michael Wieszchowski, Laberge Group

VISITORS ISSUES

Chairman Franchini opened the meeting at approximately 9:35 am. There were no visitor's issues.

SCHENECTADY TOD LINKAGE PRESENTATION

Margaret Irwin from Riverstreet Planning attended the meeting to provide a brief overview of the City of Schenectady Transit Oriented Development Linkage Study. The study area encompassed State Street in Schenectady from Nott Terrace to Steuben Street. This section of State Street traverses the economically and physically challenged neighborhoods of Hamilton Hill and Vale. The study provided an opportunity for the City to capitalize on CDTA's investment in two BRT stations on State Street to encourage revitalization of the neighborhoods. The consultant redefined the corridor with plans to add bike lanes, pedestrian amenities and turn lanes. An 8' median (combination of flush and raised), 7' parking lane and 14' travel lanes are all part of the plan with a variety of streetscape amenities. RiverStreet developed a full action plan, focusing on transportation improvements, business and workforce development and housing actions.

Action Items

ADMINISTRATION

Approval of the July 2, 2008 Meeting Minutes

The meeting notes from the July 2nd meeting were approved with one minor correction. Frank Commisso's name will be added under "Members Attending".

2007-12 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

TIP Set-Aside Programming

ITS for Local Signals Set-aside—Since the July meeting, CDTC staff confirmed the project scopes for the City of Albany and City of Troy candidate ITS projects. The City of Albany's project scope is similar to the low-end scope that staff evaluated. Standard amounts for engineering, contingencies and inflation were added, bringing the cost to \$0.845M with a revised B/C of 8.3 (reduced from the B/C of 10.0 from the July meeting). The City of Troy clarified that the scope of its Pawling Avenue ITS candidate is more similar to the City of Albany's ITS project than what was evaluated by staff in preparation for the July Planning Committee meeting. The scope does not include poles, drop curves and stamped sidewalks but does include new controllers and cabinets, pedestrian signal equipment and other associated hardware. The cost estimate, including inflation is \$0.686M for this project and the B/C ratio remains near the original B/C of 2.4. Based on this revised information, members approved both ITS projects.

Safety Set-aside (HSIP)— Schenectady County's proposed signal project at Providence and Hillside Avenue was further evaluated for the safety set-aside. The application called for the addition of a right turn lane at the intersection along with a new traffic signal. Although the safety data offers support for the signal, additional analysis of the data since the July Planning Committee meeting does not support the installation of a right turn lane (from a safety standpoint). The county indicated that they will more than likely construct the right turn lane with county funds if this project is funded without the right turn lane as a safety project. NYSDOT indicated that this project will go through the project development process which will make the final determination regarding the safety aspect of the turn lane. Regardless, a \$500,000 cap remains for any safety project under this set-aside. Members approved the \$210,000 project which includes the installation of a fully actuated traffic signal, pedestrian treatments and minor geometric improvements.

Amendments to the TIP

Four amendments to the 2007-12 TIP were noted in the materials distributed to members. The first three, A502 Meads Lane/Van Dyke Road, SA201 Ballston Avenue and A501, A502 and SA245 are FYI type amendments, which require no action. The fourth project listed, T83-CDTA Alternative Fuel Retrofit requires action because the cost increase is over 25%. In brief, CDTA is requesting the TIP change to fund additional retrofits (beyond the 24 buses funded with CMAQ) using section 5307 monies. CDTA intends to retrofit a total of 200 buses using the CMAQ and 5307 monies. Members approved all four amendments.

Discussion Items

REGIONAL OPERATIONS INITIATIVE

John Poorman presented a PowerPoint on the Regional Operations Initiative. This initiative would involve regional coordination of operations and will be a system that will respond when necessary, as opposed to a static on-line system. CDTC's New Visions Plan identifies 31 adopted Planning and Investment Principles, many of which cannot go forward without integration of operations between jurisdictions and modes. This initiative is presently in the planning stage and has no funding behind it. Monies from CDTC's Planning funds and from ITS (at a scale of about \$1M/year) could be programmed if CDTC's Planning Committee and Policy Board want to move this forward. The PowerPoint is on CDTC's website. CDTC staff is seeking feedback on this subject.

TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM UPDATE

FHWA Ruling on 10 year Preliminary Engineering Rule and Implications

The FHWA has begun to deliver Federal Ineligibility Notices to NYSDOT regarding projects that have been programmed in the TIP for 10+ years without moving into ROW acquisition or the construction phase. About \$1.2M in federal aid will be lost in Region 1. Several capital District projects are in jeopardy, including the Exit 3 project, the Selkirk By-Pass and Livingston Avenue. The NYSDOT R-1 is pursuing a few avenues to get the monies reinstated.

TIP Enhancement Program

Twenty applications from the Capital District were submitted for funds under the Enhancement Program. About \$24M is available statewide. The Capital Region received around \$5M last time Enhancement Funds were available. CDTC staff is a participant of the evaluation committee. Projects will be evaluated over the next month and a ranked list will be presented to the Planning committee at the October meeting.

Section 5310 Applications

Deborah Stacey distributed summary information regarding the seven Section 5310 Applications that were received from human service agencies located in the Capital District (4-Albany County, 1-Saratoga County, 2-Sch'dy County). The Section 5310 program is a federal program administered by NYSDOT and provides funds to human service agencies to purchase vehicles that are used to provide transportation to elderly and disabled clients. The MPO is asked to evaluate the applications and submit their evaluation to an interagency review committee that also evaluates the submittals. The SAFETEA-LU legislation now requires all applications to be consistent with the CDTC's locally developed, coordinated public transit-human services transportation plan and puts more emphasis on the "coordinated" aspect of the applications. All seven applicants do currently coordinate some services, such as maintenance and driver training. It is anticipated that the newer SAFETEA-LU requirements will result in more coordinated efforts as time goes by. The Committee members concurred with the evaluations presented.

2008-13 Program Update

NYSDOT has indicated that a draft program must be submitted by November 1st, 2008. This is problematic given that the NYSDOT Main Office has not released funding allocations for the next program cycle. CDTC cannot develop the 2008-13 Transportation Improvement Program unless allocations are known. If NYSDOT Region 1 forwards order of magnitude information, staff can conduct an order of magnitude survey of cost changes and schedule changes to existing projects and of funds moving from the Post Column to the 5 years. Another option is to skip the TIP update this year. A mid-month Planning Committee meeting was tentatively scheduled for August 20th to discuss these and other options; members will be advised if this meeting is feasible based on information needed from the Region and Main Office.

Bids and Lettings

There were no Bids and Lettings distributed.

STATUS OF PLANNING ACTIVITIES

CDTC

Sandy Misiewicz announced that the NYSMPO Associations' Safety Working Group has been guiding a shared cost initiative to develop a statewide Safety Assessment Process for local road owners. This effort fine tunes the FHWA Road Safety Audit process and tailors it to experience in NYS. A draft document is now available for review and CDTC is looking for a few volunteers from local communities to help in reviewing the report which is designed for use by local government. In addition to developing the process, the consultant team tested the process at three locations in NYS representing urban, suburban and rural environments and the results of those assessments are included in the appendix of the report.

CDTA

Ridership is up 22 percent. The Authority is facing a \$10M deficit. There will be fare increases and service cutbacks in the fall unless additional funding is received.

CDRPC

CDRPC staff is working on a local planning guide with CDTC and CDTA staff. CDRPC is also involved in a mapping exercise for the census Bureau in preparation for the 2010 Census. CDTC staff will aid in this effort.

OTHER

The deadline for nominations for the Fred Field Award is Monday September 15th. CDTC is looking for nominees that reflect the spirit of Fred's approach to planning and guiding.

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:20 p.m. A mid-month August Planning Committee meeting is tentatively scheduled for August 20th.

Respectfully submitted,

John P. Poorman
Secretary