

**TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY BOARD
MINUTES
September 17, 2009**

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Charlie Hileman, Chair
Heidi Perry
Seth LaJeunesse
Daniel Amoni
Michael Krasnov

STAFF PRESENT

Jeff Brubaker

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT

Austin Brown

GUESTS PRESENT

Robin Michler

I. Call to Order

Charlie Hileman, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:40 PM.

II. TAB Membership

Katie Schwing has resigned from the TAB. Robin Michler has expressed interest in filling the vacant seat.

III. Approval of Minutes

MOTION (Perry, Krasnov second): The TAB approved the meeting minutes of the September 3, 2009, meeting (unanimous).

IV. Staff Report

A. Safe Routes to School Grant

The Town received a \$300,000 Safe Routes to School Infrastructure Grant for constructing a sidewalk on Elm St. to Carrboro Elementary School. According to an SRTS newsletter, the Town was also awarded an SRTS Non-Infrastructure grant. Hileman asked if the Town needed to apply the infrastructure grant specifically to the Elm St. sidewalk. Perry indicated that, while she thought it would be a good project, the residents had previously objected to it, although it was not known if there was a recent discussion with them about the project. Staff will look into whether the grant has to be used specifically for the project. Hileman congratulated Adena Messinger, former transportation planner, who applied for the grant.

B. Greenways

The TAB discussed who should be the representative member of the Greenways Commission. No member was selected for the time being. There was a discussion of the extent to which greenways are legitimate transportation options. Perry said she thought that greenway funding takes away from money that could improve on-road bicycle commuting infrastructure. Hileman said that the 80%-20% federal-local funding share for greenways is favorable.

Town staff met with UNC staff to discuss the Bolin Creek Greenway. Additionally, the Town has applied for a Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grant from the U.S. DOT under the ARRA (economic stimulus). The TAB asked why the cost estimates for the greenways have increased. Staff indicated that the cost of building connector trails and additional environmental restoration along certain segments were potential factors.

C. Long Range Transit Plan

Staff summarized the Chapel Hill and Carrboro 2035 Long Range Transit Plan. The plan includes bus (express bus or bus rapid transit) and potentially light rail investment in “gateway” corridors to serve travel demand into and out of Chapel Hill-Carrboro. It also includes enhanced local bus service on main roads. Hileman noted that the bus system has a hub-and-spoke design and is oriented towards employee and student commuting to and from UNC. Krasnov said that over the next couple decades, bus service makes more sense than rail. Hileman said that rail from UNC through Carrboro to Carolina North could make a lot of sense. Amoni said that due to significant travel demand, light rail between Chapel Hill-Carrboro and Durham makes sense. Perry mentioned the demonstration train that came to Carrboro a few years ago, and there was a discussion of how the Norfolk Southern freight tracks were currently used.

D. 2012-2018 TIP

Staff noted that the 2011-2017 TIP has been pushed back and will now be the 2012-2018 TIP. Hileman noted the programming disparities between bicycle-pedestrian projects and conventional highway projects. Perry asked if Estes Dr. Ext. will be rerouted to accommodate Carolina North. There was a discussion of the Estes/Greensboro roundabout project on the draft 2012-2018 Regional Priority List. The TAB discussed the Smith Level Rd. project. Perry asked the current status of the project, noting that a meeting was planned between Mayor Chilton and a representative from NCDOT. Hileman noted that Alderman Coleman recommended that the TAB chair also attend, and that he would be happy to attend the meeting. Amoni said that the project was one of the biggest issues the TAB has addressed.

E. ARRA (Stimulus) Update

Staff summarized the list of Carrboro projects proposed to be funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. The TAB discussed the merits of the NextBus GPS bus tracking system. The TAB also discussed the merits of bike lanes on residential streets like Berryhill Dr. and other roads.

V. Monitoring Pedestrian Activity on N. Greensboro

Hileman noted that the TAB is still working on the project, and it can be discussed at the next meeting.

VI. Other Business

The TAB discussed the pros and cons of roundabouts and traffic rotaries.

Regarding pedestrian “hot spots”, Hileman noted that the TAB was planning on filming and mapping areas that were dangerous for pedestrians. Perry noted the police chief likes the mid-street crosswalk signs on Weaver St. Hileman noted that those signs cannot be placed in left-turn areas on N. Greensboro St., so the TAB was exploring the possibility of moving or consolidating the crosswalks. There was a discussion of how to present the issue to NCDOT. Perry suggested that a written statement to NCDOT from the police chief may be effective. Hileman noted that N. Greensboro St. has a lot of traffic signs. LaJeunesse and Michler mentioned examples of the effectiveness of signs directly on the pavement in the UK and the Netherlands.

Following up on joint review items, the TAB discussed traffic and bicycle facilities on Homestead Rd.

Perry asked if there is a transit forum this year. Hileman suggested asking at the Board of Alderman meeting the following Tuesday. The TAB discussed the usefulness of the transit forum in general.

VII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:25 PM.