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SFMPPO-TPB MEETING
October 20, 2010**

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**MINUTES OF THE
SANTA FE MPO
TRANSPORTATION POLICY BOARD
September 9, 2010**

CALL TO ORDER

A regular meeting of the Santa Fe MPO Transportation Policy board was called to order on the above date by Chair Liz Stefanics at approximately 4:00 p.m. in the City Council Chambers at City Hall, 200 Lincoln Avenue, Santa Fe, New Mexico.

ROLL CALL

Roll call indicated the presence of a quorum as follows:

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Commissioner Liz Stefanics, Chair
Mayor David Coss, Vice Chair
Commissioner Kathy Holian for Michael Anaya [arriving later]
Councilor Patti Bushee [arriving later]
Councilman Mark Mitchell
Councilor Ron Trujillo
Mr. Lawrence Barreras for Deputy Secretary Max Valerio, DOT

MEMBERS EXCUSED:

Commissioner Virginia Vigil

STAFF PRESENT:

Mr. Mark Tibbetts, MPO Officer
Mr. Keith Wilson, MPO Planner

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Councilor Trujillo moved to approve the agenda as presented. Mayor Coss seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous voice vote.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES B September 9, 2010

Councilor Trujillo moved to approve the minutes of September 9, 2010 as presented. Mr. Barreras seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous voice vote.

A. PUBLIC HEARING

1. Adoption of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan 2010-2035

Mr. Wilson covered just the changes since his last presentation at the September TPB meeting. He had handouts of it in the back and in the packet for members.

They approved the draft for public review by a public participation plan. During the review period there were three public input meetings and the September TPB meeting was an additional one. They had over 40 interested people at the meetings and many who emailed comments to staff.

Councilor Bushee arrived at this time.

Mr. Wilson briefly summarized the changes. He clarified that there were no changes to major recommendations of the plan - just clarifications and additions. The first was to the them when they removed "Complete Streets" and replaced it with "multi-modal."

Commissioner Holian arrived at this time.

Mr. Wilson said there were minor wording changes to one of the tasks which was included in the executive summary.

Regarding Zia Station, the original language made it sound like the land zoning had already been approved and on page 55 it was clarified with better language.

Page 58, multi-modal trails - they added language to beef it up and give a context. Same with p 61 on pedestrian systems.

Page 62, Safe Routes to Schools - the program was clarified.

On Page 64 they reorganized the wording.

Page 69 on pedestrian crossings - they added additional information to make it clear.

Page 85 talked about multi-modal service to the city - corridor studies were added into this section.

Page 88 on sources of projects - many comments from the public were related to the Richards Avenue extension and they felt it necessary, based on the input, to add a similar type of language about the Richards interchange and to explain why it was being added to the plan. Staff didn't feel it appropriate to change or remove it from the plan and left that decision to the Board. That also included Richards Avenue between Agua Fria and 599.

Page 92, Figure 5-1 had made some minor changes to the map.

Page 93 previously showed future projects and not current projects. So they added a table to chapter 5 to show current (programmed) projects.

On Page 100 they made a minor change on multi-modal centers at The Santa Fe Place Mall the City was negotiating improvements to that center.

Page 107, chapter six, showed regional priorities. They neglected to include programmed projects so we added language there and changed figure 6-2 to show them.

That was the extent of the changes they brought to the TCC on October 7. They made a unanimous recommendation to TPB to adopt the plan with these changes.

Mr. Tibbetts handed out the public comments that would be attached as Appendix B along with staff responses. The responses were in general to the comments; many of them were reiterations. The main concern of residents nearby was the Richards Avenue extension. Staff went to the site and talked with residents. Beyond what they wrote, they saw existing traffic congestion in that Bellamah area - especially on Carlos Rey and Camino de las Campanas. Since then they did traffic counts and found 6000+ on Siringo where Richards meets it.

It was about the same in 2008 but had a slight increase. The extension would actually decrease some traffic in that area. They kept the extension on the plan to address the existing problems that would just get worse with more backups on Zafarano and with the development at Las Soleras and growth of Rancho Viejo as well as along Cerrillos.

The other responses were to clarify issues at the Zia Station and were working on it now to see about an access plan there and how to mitigate traffic problems there.

Councilor Bushee noted on public comments that West Alameda should not be major arterial. She asked if that was just what the public said. Mr. Tibbetts agreed.

Councilor Bushee asked that they talk about page 107 after public comments.

Mr. Tibbetts clarified that the order there was based on time need factors.

Councilor Bushee said at last meeting before the public hearing staff had a sheet on prioritizing.

Mr. Wilson said that started on page 111. He shared three copies of the plan for those board members who forgot to bring theirs.

Mr. Tibbetts said the handout was copy of the comments and there shouldn't be duplications in it.

Chair Stefanics added that many board members had received many calls and comments.

Mr. Tibbetts said she didn't put them in any order

Mr. Wilson said it was just those that staff received from September 30 to present.

Councilor Bushee was looking for a summary of them. It was harder to gather what they contained

without that.

Chair Stefanics said the calls to the County were about 50/50 on Richards.

Mr. Wilson said the responses they received were only on specific issues. They didn't get responses on the general plan itself.

PUBLIC HEARING

Almost all of the hands raised from people who wanted to speak were about Richards Avenue

Mr. Steve Coca said he was passing around a sign-in sheet and wanted to get a copy of it.

Mr. Coca identified himself as the President of SW Bellamah Assn and they were against the further study of Richards Ave extension. The headlines today said it all - the police suspected high speed was the cause of the fatal accident. The Richards Ave extension would be the same thing. They knew individuals didn't drive 35 mph on Rodeo or 25 mph on Richards and Camino Consuelo. The white paper made it sound like the extension would be the solution to all the traffic problems but they didn't think so.

He shared a petition of over 200 residents who were opposed to it. [exhibit A] They didn't want to increase the dependency on motor vehicles on a Richards extension. He didn't want to have to come back in the future to tell the Board, "I don't you so." The Bellamah Assn and Vista del Prado Assn stood together in opposition.

He asked the TPB to please amend the MTP to permanently remove the Richards Avenue extension from the plan.

Mr. Coca read a comment Ramona Atencio, 3316 James Street [attached as Exhibit B].

Secretary Denko said he was vehemently opposed to the extension. He lived near the area and lots of people came to his door who were working people and couldn't attend any hearing. He saw the extension as something that shouldn't happen. Santa Fe was a community of neighborhoods. When he was chief of police they had problems in that area. There were two young children hit and nearly killed there. After that, speed bumps were put in but didn't have much effect. He described a speeder who almost took out the gate at the State Game and Fish.

Here there were front yards right down to sidewalks. This would cause a decrease in property values. A real estate person told him the extension would have that effect. No one was thinking about the people here.

As for traffic studies on Siringo, he knew for a fact, and had been in the same house there for 35 years, that Siringo would be adversely affected because people would not only come down Siringo to go north but also to the south.

This was a bad idea. He knew they said it would only be done down the road but who would be

answerable when it got implemented. It was a small area but if it were being done in the northeast part of town, you would have hell to pay for it. These were not wealthy people. Please shoot it down.

Chair Stefanics asked people to keep comments short

Mr. Tomas Rivera, 109 Quapah Street, said his grandmother lived on Richards and Lorraine. Their homes were more than an investment property but their homes. Something like this could affect the way people were living in Santa Fe and displace their legacy.

Also, regarding traffic calming, as an avid bicyclist, traffic calming in the long term was about getting rid of car dependency. They needed to start thinking about how to encourage people to stop driving cars here and provide pathways for public transportation. He asked them to get rid of this plan.

Mr. Michael Vigil at Lorraine and Richards grew up there. When he married he moved back there. The fire department built a road there and they were not in favor of that. He was against opening up Richards Avenue and questioned- how that could reduce traffic. The streets were 50 years old and Richards was once a dirt road. He watched a car trying to get out on the street and it took over ten minutes. Crime rates would increase with increased traffic. Please take this off the plan. It would be highly dangerous.

He read a letter from Janet Cordova, 3261 Lorraine Street, who could not be present and was highly against a Richards extension.

Ms. Christine Sherman, Richards and Siringo, said Bellamah was already highly traveled. A recent count of our traffic was about 6000 cars per day. It was a 3-day count and he was told Camino Carlos Rey had about 8000 per day. She knew they needed to spread that out. But traffic from south of Rodeo was also going to go through her neighborhood. All traffic would bloom with all of these developments.

They already were hosting one alternate route and now were being asked to host two. Property values were falling and their homes were important investments for them. Values have fallen about 20% and projected to have another 20% loss. She would walk away with 50% of her original payment, let alone the improvements she made to it. She was stuck there and couldn't move. Just because the proposal existed, it would go through. It placed a large burden on a few residents. Just assessing them a contribution on the sale of their house was unfair. This was the same thing. The benefits and burdens of the city should be spread among all. The benefits of getting into the city was a benefit to everybody but just saving five minutes wasn't that great. They were already contributing for the greater good.

The city should consider its green belt and should make the Arroyo Chamiso into a Central Park type area. Right now they didn't have enough jobs and not enough water. Please vote to end the debate once and for all. [statement attached as Exhibit C]

Ms. Sandra Madrid, 3300 James Avenue, was against the extension. Her children were with her and she said the only thing in between them and the street was a wood fence and they rode the bus and got on it at that corner. Drivers didn't even stop for the school bus when it was stopped. She was truly against it.

Mr. Keith Higgins lived in the Town & Country Subdivision at 2940 Durango Drive. He had been in favor

of putting the Richards extension through for 25 years. He could see when it was a dirt road that it would be helpful to put it in. There had been no mention of fire protection. There was a nice new station on Richards to serve the neighborhood. They cobbled together some electric gates to get equipment to the Bellamah neighborhood and on that reason alone they should consider the extension.

He would totally agree with the study that it would reduce traffic on Carlos Rey, Siringo and Camino Consuelo. He was baffled by the response to the plan. Camino de las Campanas was a terrible bottleneck. He hoped they kept it.

Ms. Celeste Newbrough, 2175 Candelero and part of the Candlelight Association, spoke regarding the Zia Station. She called attention to the last sentence on page 55 and the second page of handout where she proposed the wording say, "The permanent entrance and passenger drop off would be provided." She was unaware of any agreement between the City and developer that this would take place. It was the city's responsibility to provide the entrance and drop off area. A future trade off of this component if done in a formal way, the city was entitled to do. But it seemed to be planning by presumption.

Ms. Suzanne Lockford, Vista del Prado subdivision, read her statement to the Board. She lived on a very narrow road off Richards. It would be difficult to get onto Richards. This had to do with quality of life.

Ms. Carmen Vigil lived at the corner of Richards and Lorraine and was totally against the extension there. The community had worked hard to keep this from destroying their community. It would cause increased traffic, congestion, noise and reduced pedestrian safety. The school buses picked up and delivered children right there on Richards. They had lived there many years and paid their taxes. They had put a lot into their homes. This was not the way to go.

Ms. Marilyn Bane, President of Santa Fe Neighborhood Network, opposed the extension. The Network was very concerned about the impact on Bellamah and Vista del Prado. She asked the Board to respect their concerns.

Mr. Robert Ochoa on Calle Hermoso, remembered when St. Francis was not there and there were burros on burro alley, but the community had changed. He thought they were crying wolf. He hadn't seen how this could be done. There were relocation funds available and they were trying to get money to buy a corridor through there. This had been needed for a long time. People always said this would lower their property values but he had yet to see any guarantee that a property was going to appreciate every year. To use that as an excuse to deter progress was not right.

He wanted to see traffic on Camino Carlos Rey slowed down. He had to build a drive at the back of his house. But they were not going to stop progress this way. He favored looking at plans that would benefit the whole community. Thank you.

Ms. Vivian Nelson, 3301 Vista del Prado, spoke for the association and as a homeowner. She read her statement. The purpose was to save five minutes for travelers and had a big affect on the homeowners. In spite of statements that no money existed for it, there must be other projects to use that money for.

She asked who at the state or city was pushing this project and how it would benefit them. The future

held no promise for things being better. The city was considering the best use for the rodeo grounds. And it was needed.

The quality of life was being compromised with this plan. She urged all city and DOT people and the MPO to vote it out and replace it with one more suitable that would keep neighborhoods intact.

Mr. David Pease, Candlelight District, thanked them for taking out the TOD language for the Zia Station. He agreed the drop off should be provided by city. The comment that it would not be a park and ride facility and was unlikely to attract drop-off passengers was one with which he didn't agree. It would rather be the most convenient place to be a park and ride. He was also surprised to see a 25 year plan without addressing the problem at Zia and St. Francis.

Ms. Sylvia Ketterman, 3332 James Street was opposed to the extension. She had a letter from three people. One was from Dolores Gonzales, 3325 James, who couldn't be present. Another was from Esther Cordova at 3336 James Street and the third was from her sister, Hope Cordova, 1200 Camino Consuelo. They wrote that the retired would be very affected and the extension would disrupt their lives and they could not look for a new place to live. It would give more access to criminals and they were afraid. [statements attached as Exhibit D]

Mr. Dan Sohn, Casa Linda Association, said he met the staff at the public library and shared his concerns. The Rail Runner didn't seem to have the proper infrastructure. Ten of the 24 trains were empty. The trains were parked in places of the city that were just as disruptive as a train full of passengers. He gave written comments to them by September 30 to be included but when he looked at the website he saw they weren't there. He gave another copy at the meeting two and a half weeks ago and didn't know if the Board had received them or not.

He thought it might be a white wash and he was offended if his comments didn't get included. Santa Fe was not equipped to handle 24 trains a day. The downtown Railyard was not being used as a Railyard by the public but by private interests.

The Rail Runner was in no way regulated by this community. They were self-regulated and that didn't seem to work too well. The Rail Runner needed to be regulated. The out of state contractors came in and drove these trains. They didn't care about Santa Fe but just about moving their passengers. They were not regulated. He asked the Board to please consider doing something about the infrastructure that allowed these empty trains in the Railyard or ask the state to build a Railyard between Alta Vista and Cordova. They were supposed to but they got rid of that plan.

Something needed to be done to keep them out of the neighborhood and have the out of state contractor drive them responsibly.

Mr. Jim Butler from Rodeo de Santa Fe, said their concern was if there was a plan out there they wanted to know if this Richards extension was to be a two-lane or four lane road. Rodeo de Santa Fe gave up a bunch of land for the Rodeo Road and they wanted to know how much more they would have to give up for this plan and how far they were on it.

Chair Stefanics explained that this was on a 25 year plan.

The Public Hearing was closed and Chair Stefanics thanked everyone who came.

Councilor Trujillo asked staff who owned this section of Richards to Siringo between Richards and Arroyo Chamiso.

Mr. Tibbetts said most of it was owned by the New Mexico Game and Fish Department.

Councilor Trujillo asked when the MPO staff response concerning reducing emergency response time was written.

Mr. Tibbetts said it was written over the last few days.

Councilor Trujillo said they already had a response because he worked on getting the fire department into the Bellamah neighborhood.

Mr. Tibbetts explained that he and Mr. Wilson talked with the Fire Chief and the chief of Station 7 and Police Chief Aric Wheeler and for twenty minutes those people told staff about how hard it was and the difficulty of having that dirt road. Chief Wheeler went on about emergency response. Mr. Tibbetts said he didn't realize how strong their response was. The former Chief requested that road for the same reasons. They were not here today.

Councilor Trujillo said he wasn't on the Council at the time but the way that intersection was developed was not good. He didn't understand this because they wouldn't have the owner knock down their building for this road.

He had lived in Bellamah for 42 years. He understood the traffic flows and rode them on his bike. He wished the city's forefathers 60 years ago would have extended it before residents lived there. That would have been ideal. He thought their counts on vehicles had gone up from 6000. He didn't buy that. He would buy 6,100 on Siringo where he traveled every day. At this point he didn't think it was a good idea.

Councilor Trujillo moved that this section, the Richards Avenue extension plan be taken off the 2010-2035 Metropolitan Transportation Plan. Councilor Bushee seconded the motion.

Councilor Trujillo felt there were other ways to accomplish this. He was not an engineer but the road right by Zafarano, Vegas Verdes, could handle the traffic. He'd like to discuss that for the future. There were ways to help connectivity. Having worked with public transportation, he understood these things. They were affected on the east side and the south side. People called it NIMBY ism which he didn't like too much. But these people had a way of life and had lived there for years and the impact on their family and children was great. He was much wiser for his time on the Council. He knew it would take some time but it would have a greater effect and be better on neighborhoods. Putting a bridge over the Arroyo Chamiso and connecting with Vegas Verde could be done as an alternative and have a better reception and not affect neighborhoods.

Councilor Bushee wanted to amplify the motion by offering amendments. On page 55 she agreed with the speaker who had to leave and spoke about the last paragraph on the Zia Station.

Chair Stefanics asked that they separate that from this motion on Richards Avenue.

Councilor Bushee said she would have made the motion to approve the MTP with the amendment to permanently remove Richards Avenue Extension from the plan.

She referred to page one of the plan in the executive summary where there were three bullets that would be the emphasis for the plan. She felt they were a contradiction for this Richards Avenue Extension. The first bullet said "The sustainable part of our theme reflects the balance of the desire to reduce transportation's contribution to greenhouse gas emission..." The second bullet said, "The MTP's project priorities relate to livability principles." The third bullet said, "Providing safe and secure access for all users not only develops a transportation system at a human scale..." All three of these bottom line premises for this futuristic plan were a contradiction or a violation by the concept of the Richards Avenue extension.

She agreed with the speaker that it was the 25 year old 1980's idea and was not a safe idea. She understood the public safety piece. They were talking about Complete Streets and sustainability. It was not for the future but was 25 years old. There were other ways. It might add five more minutes but she would like to have a safe way to ride a bike from downtown down Richards to SFCC. She completely agreed with Councilor Trujillo on this. There was no reason to extend Richards Avenue. She understood it surfaced with a legislator's request. It was money expended and didn't add anything new.

Mayor Coss was willing to support the motion. He thought it was a 1960's idea. It reminded him that they tried to take it off the TIP a few years ago. While they were building a lot of roads they were not getting anywhere. It would fill up and not make things better. It wouldn't help Zia and St. Francis and Siringo. It was a residential neighborhood. They could widen Zafarano but not in the residential area.

He lived on Osage which was busier than Zia Road. It filled up with traffic and was a busy place. So he didn't support damaging a whole neighborhood for the convenience of a few.

Mr. Barreras asked if the motion included adoption of the plan or not.

Councilor Trujillo clarified that his motion was just to take off Richards Ave.

Chair Stefanics said they had not gotten to the total plan yet.

Councilman Mitchell said regarding Richards Avenue that the preplanning should have been done but wasn't. He too, stood in opposition to it because of the effect on people. It should have happened long ago. If there was any way that this short piece of Richards from Cerrillos could be renamed it would help because it now gave the impression from Cerrillos that Richards went through.

Chair Stefanics supported Councilor Trujillo's comments for finding another thoroughfare coming from the south side over. She recommended looking at some other venue for the south side.

The motion to exclude the Richards Avenue Extension from this Plan passed by unanimous voice vote.

Councilor Bushee moved to approve the Metropolitan Transportation Plan with a few amendments. On page 55 in the paragraph regarding Zia station, the last sentence said "... a drop off area will be is provided."

Mr. Wilson said the word "is" was in strikethrough meaning it was stricken.

Councilor Bushee said her amendment was to strike the last part of the sentence and end it after "will be provided."

Then on the priority list she wanted a clarification. She was looking for a higher priority for the St. Francis crossing for pedestrians.

Mr. Wilson said that project was currently in the Transportation Improvement Plan so in this plan it was listed as one of the programmed projects. It was listed in table 5-1 in the handout given. It was on the third or fourth page. It was labeled at the bottom as Acequia Trail-Railyard Crossing.

Councilor Bushee asked what was meant by that in table 6-1.

Mr. Wilson said it had improvements to all of the intersections of St. Francis.

Councilor Bushee asked if the Rail Runner was mentioned in the plan. Mr. Wilson agreed.

Mr. Wilson said there were two recommendations out of this plan. One was to provide a transit & rail study which was in the UPWP right now. One was to do a Bikeways Master Plan that was also in the UPWP. And one for a pedestrian plan. There were not specific recommendations in this plan but as they developed those plans they would provide the specifics and come back and amend them into this plan.

Councilman Mitchell seconded the motion.

Councilor Bushee added that it included the previous action to remove the Richards Extension.

Mayor Coss offered one other amendment. He felt Mr. Sohn had a good point about running empty trains at the infrastructure at the Depot. The City and State needed to work that out. The Plan should include on page 100 in the discussion of the Santa Fe Depot Station where it was discussing the estimated \$5.5 million cost he asked that the motion include an amendment - "The City and the State should optimize the use of rail infrastructure on site to avoid running empty trains through the City."

Councilor Bushee accepted the amendment as friendly.

Commissioner Holian said she hadn't read through all the changes but made a correction in the plan. Santa Fe County had changed the Sustainable Land Development Plan to the Sustainable Growth

Management Plan. Next Tuesday was the final draft.

Chair Stefanics interpreted that as a technical change rather than an amendment.

Mr. Wilson said the removal of the Richards Extension would affect the fiscal constraints in Chapter 7.

Councilor Bushee asked if that was on page 130.

Mr. Wilson said it would be on Table 7-2 on page 137. That would free up \$4.4 million in fiscal constraints. Then in Table 7-3 on page 140 showed the illustrative projects they couldn't fund. The only project that would fit in at that cost was the I-25 auxiliary lanes at \$4 million. So he suggested amending Table 7-2 to add the auxiliary lanes as a project within fiscal constraints and removing it from Table 7-3.

Chair Stefanics asked if that would become a long term project.

Mr. Wilson agreed. It would go on the bottom of the list.

Councilor Bushee did not agree that amendment would be friendly.

She would like to see some kind of description of bikeways plan. She gave an example and wanted a new project that would emphasize this 25 year plan.

Mr. Wilson clarified that they didn't need to add the new project.

Councilor Bushee didn't know about the Richards interchange. She was interested in bumping another one up.

Chair Stefanics thought there were a couple of them to bring up next time such as sustainability, bike paths, and a connector to the south side. They needed to continue discussing that. Mr. Wilson agreed.

The motion as amended three times passed by unanimous voice vote.

B. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION

1. TPB Meeting Schedule for 2011

Chair Stefanics said because of office procedures and publishing deadlines, she asked the Board to consider the meeting schedule. She asked if the schedule was in the packet.

Mr. Wilson said the proposed schedule was to meet on the second Thursday of the month at 4-6 p.m.

Councilor Bushee moved to approve the TPB Meeting Schedule for 2011 as the second Thursday of the month from 4 to 6 p.m. Councilor Trujillo seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous voice vote.

C. MATTERS FROM THE SFMPO TRANSPORTATION POLICY BOARD

Mr. Tibbetts announced that the November meeting was just as important as this one. There was \$20 million worth of funding to be considered to amend the TIP. This Plan had to be approved in order to unfreeze the TIP.

Chair Stefanics asked them to communicate with Commissioner Holian on that.

Mayor Coss thanked staff for all of their work on the plan and their comments that were very helpful even though they disagreed on Richards.

Councilor Trujillo agreed it was a great job. He wanted to work with staff on the alternate route.

Councilor Bushee thanked them for all the work. It was a better plan than in the past.

D. MATTERS FROM THE MPO STAFF

There were no matters from the MPO Staff.

E. COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE NMDOT AND FHWA

Mr. Barreras thanked them for all of their work. The next meeting was important and would have a lot of items to consider.

F. ADJOURNMENT – Next meeting - Wednesday November 17, 2010

The meeting was adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

Approved by:



Liz Stefanics, Chair

Submitted by:



Carl Boaz, Stenographer