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SANTA FE MPO TRANSPORTATION POLICY BOARD
October 8, 2009

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**MINUTES OF THE
SANTA FE MPO
TRANSPORTATION POLICY BOARD
October 8, 2009**

CALL TO ORDER

A regular meeting of the Santa Fe MPO Transportation Policy board was called to order on the above date by Mayor Coss at approximately 3:00 p.m. in the City Council Chambers, City Hall, Santa Fe, New Mexico.

ROLL CALL

Roll call indicated the presence of a quorum as follows:

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Commissioner Michael Anaya
Councilor Miguel Chávez [arriving later]
Mayor David Coss
Commissioner Liz Stefanics
Mr. David Harris NM DOT for Max Valerio

MEMBERS EXCUSED:

Councilor Robert Mora, Chair
Councilor Matthew E. Ortiz
Councilor Rosemary Romero
Commissioner Virginia Vigil

STAFF PRESENT:

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

OTHERS PRESENT:

Bruce Poster
Beth Mills
Christine Cordova
David Quintana

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Tibbetts reported there were no changes from staff.

Councilor Chávez moved to approve the agenda as published. Commissioner Stefanics seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous voice vote.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – August 13, 2009

Commissioner Stefanics moved to approve the minutes of August 13, 2009 as presented. Councilor Chávez seconded the motion and it passed by majority voice vote with all voting in favor except Commissioner Anaya who abstained.

A. MATTERS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

B. ACTION ITEMS:

1. Possible TIP Amendment – Kennedy Line Rail Trail

Mr. Wilson said it should not have been labeled as a possible TIP Amendment. It was a request for an amendment. [Attached as Exhibit A]. He explained that some design for this trail had been offered and it had to be included in the TIP. The MPO-TCC met on September 28th and approved a transfer of \$100,000 from the budget for the Santa Fe Rail Trail to be used for the Kennedy Line Rail Trail. He anticipated that more enhancement money would be realized so there should be sufficient funds.

Commissioner Stefanics moved to approve the TIP Amendment. Commissioner Anaya seconded the motion and it passed by unanimous voice vote.

C. INFORMATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS:

1. Progress Report on the Metropolitan Transportation Plan Update

Mr. Tibbetts said the progress was based on the studies.

Mr. Wilson referred to a packet [Attached as Exhibit B - Urban Trail and Bikeway System]. He said it showed the arterials and the trails and helped to see where the gaps were in the trails and facilities. Staff had been working with the County through the Sustainable Land Use Plan where those bike paths needed to be for connectivity. These maps were a work in progress where they were identifying those missing links - like the rail trail between Alta Vista and Cerrillos.

He said they would end up with a comprehensive plan. They were also working with BTAC and would have an extensive discussion with them at their next meeting. They were also working with COLTPAC.

Some of the major things like pedestrian trails they could not take on now but over the next five years they would do something for the pedestrian network - find missing links, etc. There would be many recommendations for the next five years coming out of it.

Commissioner Stefanics noted the County recently passed a resolution with bikeways on roads. She asked if they had looked at whether the standards were the same for County and City. She understood the FHWA also had standards that the NMDOT was using. This was something the MPO needed to address, especially if they had incongruities.

Mr. Wilson said they hoped to come up with best practices on it, like paving the shoulder. They would work with the County on identifying those major corridors.

2. Santa Fe Studies Update – NMDOT

Mr. Quintana said there was not a lot to report since last time.

a. I-25 Corridor Study

November 5th would be the next public meeting. They had one in August. This study generated the most public comment of all the studies, especially the Carlos Rael extension. As that study moved forward they were beginning the Phase B part. He hoped to have recommendations for the TPB at the December meeting and the final report by next March.

b. NM599 Interchange Priority Study

A public meeting was held last Tuesday and they had good attendance and comments. There was an inaccurate editorial last Saturday in the New Mexican. There was some thought about providing access points for various land owners but that was not true. The plan would develop prioritization. Other than that, all comments were favorable. They were able to gauge what the public thought were priorities. CR 62 seemed to be the consensus.

Mayor Coss said there had been 13 access points since the beginning.

Mr. Quintana agreed and added that two were not yet built. There was no intent to increase that number. They were now working on the Phase B to report to the TPB in December, as well.

He didn't know if all three would report in December but they were trying to finish up by then before going forward further.

c. St. Francis Drive Corridor Study

A public meeting took place on Sept 16 with good turnout and comments. Phase B would be done by next year either in December or January of the following year.

They were also working on all 3 together at the end of the month on the traffic modeling that needed to be done (by Bohannon Huston) to see what good alternatives they could present to TPB.

Councilor Chávez said he attended the 599 study meeting and they focused a lot on intersections and at-grade intersections. They were told there were many accidents in between those intersections so that changed his thinking a little. He asked what they could do to address those.

Mr. Quintana said they were looking at some improved signage and some improved lighting - Some of the horizontal curves seemed to be where the accidents were happening. Probably they would not be redesigning the road.

They also got feedback on lack of speed limit signs. People thought it was 75 like an interstate but it was actually 55.

They were also looking at the need for education for drivers and maybe some warning signs at those curves.

Mayor Coss asked about frontage roads.

Mr. Quintana said yes, south of Airport on both sides and on the north side to Caja del Rio. Also between Montoyas and Ridgetop as well.

Mayor Coss thanked him and said he was looking forward to the recommendations.

Commissioner Anaya excused himself from the meeting.

3. Santa Fe Area Transit Service Plan Update – RPA Staff

Ms. Mary Helen Follingstad was on vacation so she had no report.

Commissioner Stefanics announced that Ms. Follingstad would be leaving Santa Fe in October. There was a plan to deal with on Oct 20th. A subcommittee was meeting to deal with the future of the RPA and changes in staff. There would be some recommendations in the near future.

4. Enhanced Regional Transit and Rail Study Investigation Update – MPO Staff

Mr. Wilson said this matter regarding the capacity of the City came up from recommendations on the St. Francis Corridor study. Transit and rail had to be looked at for shifting some of the capacity. MPO staff wanted to strike while the iron was hot on this so they decided to investigate how to initiate this study

and build on what had been done with things like the Park and Ride, Rail Runner, Santa Fe Trails and others. So they convened a couple of meetings with the State, MR COG, NCRTD and Santa Fe Trails to hash out what they thought needed to be done.

It became clear that it was not a simple thing to take on. Essentially, this was something that would become a major recommendation as an MPO to consider over the next few years to make the system work better for the long term. They wanted to get through this work and see what the State might do to help fund it.

Councilor Chávez asked where the pedestrian crossings were in the St. Francis study.

Mr. Wilson said that was one of the components they were looking at now.

Councilor Chávez asked if it was part of the enhanced issue.

Mr. Wilson said the whole corridor needed to be considered. They would look at it more as a service plan.

5. Rail Runner Service Update – MPO Staff

Mr. Tibbetts reported. He reminded them that for the last several meetings they had discussed possible local service. Staff gathered information with City staff, developers, DOT, etc. to find concerns and issues and help facilitate the needs. There were some that were pending resolution like ROW. The concern was how to provide access to the stations in a safe manner. Zia would be primarily a walk to/ bike to and not a parking station facility. There was some mistaken information to the public that it would be a park and ride facility. So the MPO needed to be more assertive in getting correct information to the public.

Stall wanted to facilitate a meeting. There were many comments from people in that neighborhood who said they were now riding their bikes to South Capitol.

Regarding local services stops at Sandia and Santo Domingo would soon open. There might be a need for a local rail runner tagging along with the express service. So staff was working with people on it.

Commissioner Stefanics said Commissioner Holian covered that area. She asked staff, as they worked on it to please include her. She was an avid biker and walker. But combinations for elderly and disabled needed to also be included.

Councilor Chávez agreed. Public transportation needed to include that.

Mr. Tibbetts said in response that there was a basic need and contingency for light parking, ADA, and the opportunities for the planned development approval. The plans did include all those groups. How much room they had for public right of way to get to that station was at issue.

Mayor Coss said the MPO decision was to not open it until some of the land use issues were settled and it was not to be another park and ride location.

Mr. Tibbetts said South Capital was very accessible (ADA) although all of them were required to be.

Commissioner Stefanics said she was amazed when she rode the train how few parking spaces there were. Some people had to go to other stations. They needed to have handicapped parking. The 599 station, even though handicapped accessible, required going almost a mile to get to the train. That was a long way to go so they might want to use the stations in town.

C. MATTERS FROM THE SFMPO TRANSPORTATION POLICY BOARD

Commissioner Stefanics announced that the NCRTD was meeting tomorrow with a ribbon cutting ceremony - They bought about 4 acres of land that would be home to their offices and bus facilities.

D. MATTERS FROM THE MPO STAFF

Mr. Tibbetts handed out a letter regarding other MPOs in the state [Exhibit C]. There were MPOs of various sizes and Santa Fe MPO was among the smaller ones. The Association had been working on the reauthorization of the Transportation Bill and the letter reflected that discussion. It was trying to give the smaller MPOs better standing as viable providers. There was a move in the last administration to do away with the smaller MPOs (below 250,000) and that would mean turning the planning back over to the DOT. So this letter was to try to maintain the status the MPO had now. The letter was to be sent to the national association in support of Santa Fe's position to recognize the need to include small MPOs in the reauthorization.

The other issue was imposed proportional voting. Las- Cruces had its own system of balance. If it was mandated, it would cause disruption. It was better for the MPOs to work it out on their own.

The third point was looking at common performance measures, some of which they were doing already. A lot of these things, they were already doing.

The final one was to have more authority over the budget where we determine as an MPO how best to spend the money received. Kennedy Rail Line was a good example where it began with \$600,000 and then was reduced to \$300,000. So these were the items in the letter.

Mayor Coss thought those points were fine but questioned if they could direct it as an MPO.

Mr. Tibbetts said this was what others had done but it could be discussed further.

Councilor Chávez agreed that something needed to be done. It was a contradiction with federal stimulus. It seemed the MPOs had a certain status on that transportation planning. They had proven that

it has worked and needed to safeguard that process

E. COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE NMDOT AND FHWA

None.

F. ADJOURNMENT – Next scheduled meeting was Thursday, December 10, 2009

Having completed the agenda and with no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

Approved by:


David Coss, Vice Chair

Submitted by:


Carl Boaz, Stenographer