



Rockford Metropolitan Agency For Planning

ROCKFORD METROPOLITAN AGENCY FOR PLANNING
POLICY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
THURSDAY, AUGUST 27, 2009

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Fred Brereton, City of Belvidere; Mayor Larry Morrissey, City of Rockford; Chairman Scott Christiansen, Winnebago County; Mayor Darryl Lindberg, Loves Park; Kris Tobin, Illinois Department of Transportation-District 2; Mayor Tom Strickland, Machesney Park.

MEMBERS NOT PRESENT: Bob Walberg, Chairman, Boone County

OTHERS PRESENT: Steve Ernst, RMAP Executive Director, Jon Paul Dipla, Mary Swanson, Michael Maddox and Michael Hren, RMAP staff; Bob Soltau, SLATS ; Wayne Vlk, Winnebago Highway; Dave Taylor, NICTI Chairman; Curtis Jones, IDOT; Thomas Bona, Rockford Register Star; Peter Lemmon, Metro Transportation Group; Ralph Hoekstra, Blackhawk Bicycle Club; Ross Monk, Lockner; Pankaj Mahajan, First Rockford Group; Joe Vanderwerff, Winnebago County; Dan Jacobson, City of Loves Park.

- 1. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL AND REPRESENTATION:** Meeting was called to order by Chairman Brereton with a quorum present at 1:15 p.m.
- 2. COMMUNICATIONS:** Mr. Ernst mentioned three items; The 3rd Annual Symposium on Transportation to be held on November 2, Mr. LaHood will speak at this and Mr. Ernst will email information to the Policy members. He also received an email from the Brookings Institute regarding accurate census counts and their affects to communities, again he will email this information to members. He also received the Tollway Annual Report book.
- 3. APPROVAL OF THE JUNE 25, 2009 RMAP POLICY MEETING MINUTES:** Motion to approve minutes by City of Loves Park, seconded by County of Winnebago. Motion carried unanimously.
- 4. RMAP FY 2009 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) AMENDMENT REGARDING AMERICAN RECOVERY AND REINVESTMENT ACT OF 2009 (ARRA) FUNDS: RMAP Resolution 2009-11:** Winnebago County and the City of Rockford have requested to amend the FY 2009-FY2012 TIP. Changes include some adjustments to project amounts; the City of Rockford's Whitman Street Interchange did not meet IDOT pavement requirements and has been removed from the ARRA list of projects. The City of Rockford has a new list of projects to replace the Whitman Street project. Mayor Lindberg queried as to why Whitman did not meet the pavement requirements. Pavement limitations did not meet the LAP requirements and the ramps are deficient due to being constructed in the 1960's. Motion to approve Resolution 2009-11 by City of Loves Park, seconded by Winnebago County. Motion unanimously carried.
- 5. SECTION 5310 CONSOLIDATED VEHICLE PROCUREMENT (CVP) APPLICATIONS:** RMAP staff has reviewed three applications and they have been sent to IDOT for their approval. Applications are for small paratransit vehicles. The applicants were RMTD, Lifescape and Barbara Olson Center for Hope. The Mobility

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Subcommittee and the RMAP Technical Committee have approved these applications. No action is needed on this item today.

6. **RMAP FY 2010-FY 2013 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP):** RMAP staff is presently working on the draft TIP document. Mr. Maddox has been working very hard on the document to make it more reader friendly and is inserting new visuals. There are new photographs highlighted in the document as well. Note the section numbers in the document have been taken off of local bike and walk paths in the area. This draft will be presented at the September Technical and Policy Committees. No action is required on this item today.

7. PROGRESS REPORTS:

7.1 **Northwest Tollway (I-90) Improvements:** No update is available but the Tollway is planning a ribbon cutting towards the end of the year. All projects are on budget and on schedule. Mr. Christiansen stated that he has met with representative from the Tollway on noise abatement in the Roscoe area and the section of I-90 between Cherry Valley and Randall Road. He suggested we invite the new director and board to a meeting and also send letters collectively to the Tollway announcing our support. Mr. Ernst will coordinate with Mr. Towns regarding the letters of support.

7.2 **NICTI Alternative Analysis:** The consulting team and Mr. Ernst met in July with the FTA at the Region 5 office in Chicago. A new person has been assigned to our project and has been very aggressive in getting our project moved through the New Starts process. Comments are expected from the FTA regarding the environmental portion of the document by the end of August. With new guidance from Washington an executive meeting will be held within the next 45 days or so. Mr. Ernst mentioned an article by Mr. Bona regarding Amtrak's submittal and the bonds to pay for the capital program, however no time frame is known at this time on a bond sale. Mayor Morrissey asked for an update on the status of Belvidere vs. Genoa and any issues relating to the debate that we could be supportive of. Mr. Ernst stated if Chicago to Dubuque is funded with stimulus money rather than the capital program it may be likely that the work through New Starts and the environmental document would be helpful in looking at alternative corridors. Mayor Morrissey mentioned speaking with George Weber and that there should be no way Genoa should get the rail through their area. Chairman Brereton stated the joint letter has been sent to the Governor. It was suggested that Mr. Ernst send a letter to the Governor regarding when the bonds would be sold. After further discussion regarding funding and the sale of bonds, it was decided that it would be appropriate to send this letter to the Governor supporting this.

Chairman Brereton questioned if there is anything in the TIGER application that could be an appropriate part of this. Mr. Ernst stated it would be difficult to say at this point due to the fact that the application is being put together and the cost estimates are being refined. The application should be very robust and we are hopeful that ours will be very competitive.

7.3 **RMTD East Side Transfer Center:** They have had several successful open houses. They have secured an architectural design team to start design work on the building. They are looking for tenants for the building.

7.4 **Northeast Urban Planning Area (NUPA) Study in Boone County:** Mr. Lemmon will be giving his presentation at the end of progress reports.

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- 7.5 Regional Fiber Optic and Broadband:** Mr. Ernst stated fiber optic application will be ready for submission by the September due date. It is now a three county application, Boone, Winnebago and McHenry. It is now in the \$50-\$75 million dollar range and we have received a letter from the Governor's office guaranteeing us a local match of \$5 million dollars. There are two broadband programs that are part of the stimulus, one program is more urban in nature, called "BTOP" through the Department of Commerce and the other is called "BIP" and is rural in nature which is designed to provide broadband to communities that don't have it and this is through the Department of Agriculture. Approximate dollars available could be up to \$3 billion nationwide. Our application brings together enough partners that provides a very robust and competitive application. NIU and IT directors of various departments worked very hard on a collaborative effort on the document.
- 7.6 RMAP Regional Freight Study:** Mr. Ernst reported that the study is on track for completion by the end of the year. Many components are part of the TIGER application. Chairman Christiansen hosted a meeting with the Canadian Pacific Railroad. This Railroad recently made acquisitions of the assets from the DM& E and ICE lines. With these acquisitions, the CP becomes a leader in freight movements from coast to coast. The meeting was very productive and provided information for the Railroad to see our region and its potential for freight rail movement.
- 7.7 RMAP Mobility Subcommittee:** The next meeting will be September 8th at 10:00 a.m. at the YWCA.
- 7.8 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS):** The CEDS document has been submitted to the Economic Development Administration office in Chicago and they are currently reviewing it. Results of the review should be available in September. There is no update on the status of the Economic Adjustment Grant the Ms. Fadden and Mr. Williams spoke on at a previous meeting.
- 7.9 RMAP Website:** The website, rmapil.org, is not a 100% mature yet but the site is up and running. The link to the City of Rockford's web site has been terminated. A press event is anticipated in the future to launch the RMAP web site.
- 8. OTHER BUSINESS:** Mr. Ernst reported that RMAP has been asked to convene a storm water management team and have talked with people in Boone and Winnebago Counties. Both Winnebago County and the City of Rockford have created ordinances on surface water management. More information will be available at a later date. The City of Rockford has plans to launch a storm water master plan in the near future.

Mr. Ernst spoke of a meeting he had earlier today with Mayor Morrissey focusing on affordable housing and the Affordable Coalition of Illinois and issues related to affordable housing and how it is becoming a regional focus around the State and how RMAP can play a role in this. Mayor Morrissey spoke of discussion that has taken place with members of the committee, in prior meetings, regarding the challenges of poverty levels in Rockford and the area. Part of the discussion dealt with the density management challenge and working with RHA and other government subsidized authorities to try to come up with an ordinance limiting density on low income housing but no one in the country has come up with one yet. There are ordinances requiring affordable housing in new construction but when it comes to Section 8 or public housing units there are stipulations or no ordinance coverage.

Mayor Morrissey would like to volunteer to create or be part of an ad-hoc committee with part of the Policy Board to look into the following areas: housing, human services and work force development. We have partners in the Winnebago County Housing Authority, as well as RHA to invite to be part of the committee and from the human services side, we have George Davis, the director of Rockford's Human Services Department and our Work Force

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Investment Board. Mayor Morrissey would like to get some of these professionals that we have already on board from these other entities together for a meeting to discuss these housing issues. At this time, this endeavor would not require any additional dollars to be spent, however, Mayor Morrissey is asking that we seek liaisons from these other agencies for support and RMAP staff support on this ad-hoc committee. With the Board's approval, Mayor Morrissey moves to create an ad-hoc committee on housing, human services and work force development to come back and report to the Policy Committee.

Motion to create an ad-hoc committee on housing, human services and work force development made by Mayor Morrissey and seconded by Winnebago County.

Mr. Ernst mentioned the fact that those in attendance at this morning's meeting were impressed with the accomplishments of the Mobility Subcommittee with regards to recognizing individual needs to get to and from employment.

Mayor Brereton asked Mr. Ernst if he was comfortable with the ability for RMAP staff to dedicate staff hours to undertake this assignment and he replied that he was very comfortable with this.

Call for vote on the motion: all were in favor and the motion carried unanimously.

7.4 A Presentation was given by Mr. Peter Lemmon, from the Metro Transportation Group regarding the Northeast Urban Planning Area (NUPA) Study in Boone County.

Mr. Lemmon presented a power point presentation on the study conducted for the area of Poplar Grove Road, IL Rt. 76, IL Rt. 173 and the Boone County Line. The main focus was the Poplar Grove corridor for the development of a long range plan to accommodate future development, employment and future roadway uses. Some of the methodology used included data collection, land use data, design character, stakeholder interviews, and open houses. There were three stages used at the open houses which included: 1.) land use; 2.) design character and 3.) Transportation. He showed slides depicting existing roadway conditions and recommended plans for roadways in this targeted area.

9. ADJOURNMENT: At 2:30, Mayor Brereton needed to entertain a motion to adjourn as there was no longer a quorum. Motion to adjourn by City of Belvidere, seconded by city of Rockford, meeting adjourned at 2:32 p.m.

Mr. Lemmon concluded his presentation after the adjournment.

Mr. Ernst also mentioned the presence of Ross Monk, who is leaving IDOT to join the private sector and he will be working for HW Lockner and will have a Rockford office.