



**Rockford Area Transportation
Study**
Metropolitan Planning Organization

POLICY COMMITTEE

*Mayor Charles E. Box, City of Rockford
Mayor Darryl F. Lindberg, City of Loves Park
Board Chairman Kristine Cohn, Winnebago County
President Stephen Kuhn, Village of Machesney Park
District Engineer William D. Ost, Illinois Department
of Transportation, District 2*

Meeting Minutes -- RATS Policy Committee

Meeting Date: December 18, 1997
Winnebago County Administration Building, Room 501

Members Present: Mayor Charles E. Box, City of Rockford; Steve Chapman representing Board Chairman Kristine Cohn, Winnebago County; President Stephen Kuhn, Village of Machesney Park; District Engineer William D. Ost, Illinois Department of Transportation, District 2; and Mayor Darryl F. Lindberg, City of Loves Park..

Others Present: Gary McIntyre, RATS; Russ Petrotte, RATS; Mary Allen Verdun, IDOT Dixon; Ping Yu, BWR Corp.; David Dratnol, Winnebago County Highway Department; David Noel, Winnebago County Planning; Larry Reed, IDOT Dixon; Dan Jacobson, Loves Park Planning; Wayne Dust, City of Rockford Planning.

1. CALL TO ORDER: With a full quorum, Steve Kuhn called the meeting to order at 1:37 PM.

2. COMMUNICATIONS: Gary McIntyre presented a letter from IDOT approving the RATS FY98 TIP (August 28, 1997 version). Mr. McIntyre also presented a list of proposed CY98 RATS Technical and Policy Committee meeting dates. As a rule the Technical Committee meets on the Thursday following the third Tuesday of each month. The Policy Committee meetings are held on the next Thursday after the Technical Committee meeting. Some adjustment to this schedule will be needed to accommodate holidays and other unique situations as the year progresses.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Bill Ost moved to approve the minutes of the September 25, 1997 Policy Committee meeting. The motion was seconded by

Stephen Kuhn and approved unanimously with no corrections to the minutes.

4a. RATS LRP AMENDMENT/REFINEMENT: Russ Petrotte explained that the development of the West Hills Neighborhood Plan by the Boone/Belvidere Regional Planning Commission led to work by IDOT in developing and refining an access control plan for the stretch of U.S. Business 20 between Lyford Road and High Line Road. IDOT has asked that RATS adopt this access control plan as part of the RATS Long-Range Transportation Plan. He said RATS is not being asked to adopt the West Hills Neighborhood Plan itself. RATS does not usually adopt land use plans and, in this case, cannot because Boone County's plans for the area differs slightly from the plans of Rockford and other jurisdictions that might eventually annex into the area. However, the U.S. Business 20 Access Control Plan, as developed and proposed by IDOT, would be compatible with any of the land use plans proposed for the area.

Mary Allen Verdun presented the Access Control Plan to the Policy Committee. The plan included generalized roadway cross-sections, intersection locations and access limitations throughout the stretch. The intersection spacings are similar to that established to the west in Winnebago County. They allow for full intersections at one-quarter mile intervals with possible right-in/right-out access half way between the full intersections. No other direct access is to be allowed onto U.S. Business 20.

Mr. Petrotte said the Access Control Plan has been reviewed and unanimously approved by the RATS Technical Committee.

After a brief discussion, Bill Ost moved to approve the plan via RATS Resolution 97-7. The motion was seconded by Darryl Lindberg and approved unanimously.

4b. RATS LONG-RANGE PLAN AND TOWN HALL ROAD: Russ Petrotte stated that, as part of the above discussed work, the Technical Committee reviewed other aspects of the West Hills Neighborhood Plan for consistency with the RATS Long-Range Transportation Plan. One inconsistency staff found was the absence of the planned Town Hall Road connection between U.S. Business 20 and Newburg Road. This segment is planned on the RATS Plan but has been omitted on the West Hills Plan. Boone County planners say the expense of building the road is prohibitive. The RATS Technical Committee expressed concern that the expense of not building the road may be greater. Without the Town Hall Road segment, significant expansions may be needed to Newburg, Shaw and Appleton Roads. Also, the ROW for the Town Hall Road segment has already been acquired.

The Technical Committee unanimously recommended adoption of Resolution 97-9 to address the above inconsistency. The resolution directs staff to more thoroughly analyze the need for the missing road segment via the computerized traffic simulation model now under development. It also recommends further comparison of the two plans and, if additional inconsistencies are found, further modeling analysis.

Bill Ost concurred that the State had, indeed, purchased the ROW for the Town Hall Road segment. More thorough study is needed at this time to determine if that ROW should be retained.

Darryl Lindberg moved to adopt Resolution 97-9. The motion was seconded by Charles Box and approved unanimously.

5. CONGESTION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM REPORT

FOR RATS: Gary McIntyre and Russ Petrotte explained that the federal Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act requires that RATS develop and The proposed TIP amendment accommodates the above changes. The additional "operating" funds have

adopt a report and strategy for avoiding, reducing or managing congestion on our highway system. He said IDOT has provided assistance to us in this task by hiring a consultant to develop the report. In essence, the consultant concluded that the RATS area is already, and has been for several years, engaged in congestion management activities sufficient to meet all federal requirements. These activities include monitoring of traffic conditions to determine congested areas, modeling future traffic to forecast future congestion potential, assigning priority to traffic improvements that have high congestion management/reduction potential, and coordinating the congestion management activities of the multiple jurisdictions in the Rockford area. The report made numerous suggestions for expanding congestion management activities but stopped short of mandating this work.

The Technical Committee unanimously recommended adoption of the Congestion Management report via Resolution 97-6. Bill Ost moved to approve the resolution. The motion was seconded by Darryl Lindberg and approved unanimously.

6. RATS FY98 TIP (TRANSIT ELEMENT) AMENDMENT: Russ Petrotte explained that, subsequent to the August 28, 1997 adoption of the RATS FY98 TIP by the Policy Committee, a number of significant changes have occurred. First, the federal apportionments for FY98 have been issued and they are slightly different than that forecasted in the TIP. Specifically, \$82,920 was unexpectedly issued for transit "operating" expenses and the apportionment for "capital" was \$135,240 less than forecasted. Second, the Loves Park Transit System has reevaluated its capital projects needs. Specifically, the LPTS fuel tank removal/replacement project has been revised to "remove only". Loves Park has decided to purchase all fuel from private off-site providers instead of purchasing fuel in bulk and storing it on-site. LPTS has also justified the need for a new bus/vehicle hoist, a brake drum lathe, an air compressor for vehicle maintenance, and new office equipment for filing, bookkeeping, administration, and paratransit operation.

been divided between RMTD and LPTS at 91.38% and 8.62%, respectively. This is the formula split that has

been used for years. No attempt was made to recalculate this formula because of the complexity of factors involved relative to the small amount of money involved and the fact that "operating" funds are being phased out. The net dollar effect of the changes by LPTS will be to slightly reduce their funding request. Their decision to not replace the fuel tank freed a large sum of funds.

Mr. Petrotte said the Technical Committee unanimously recommended approval of the proposed amendment via Resolution 97-8. A motion to approve the resolution was made by Darryl Lindberg. The motion was seconded by Steve Chapman and approved unanimously.

7. REQUEST FOR A SECTION 16(b)2 VEHICLE: Mr. Petrotte stated that a request has been made by Dorothy Bennet for RATS approval of a Section 16(b)2 vehicle for use by the tenants of Collier Gardens. Mrs. Bennet submitted a petition signed by 86 Collier Garden residents stating that the vehicle would be used to go for medical services, recreational activities, places of worship and places of volunteer work. The petition states, "There are several of us that have no transportation to these places and are unable to walk to the bus stop."

Mr. Petrotte said that Rick McVinnie (RMTD) and he drafted a response to Mrs. Bennet's request based on RATS policy and past RATS practice. Copies of this response were distributed to the Policy Committee. The response covered a variety of concerns including: (1) the strong State-wide competition for this limited funding source; (2) the need for documentation and complete assurance regarding vehicle use, maintenance, and liability insurance; (3) the need for qualified drivers; (4) the past practice of reserving the bulk of these funds to meet the paratransit vehicle needs of the public transit systems and (5) the fact that it would be impossible to provide every public housing complex in the Rockford area with a vehicle via this funding source.

The response concluded that this request might be more favorably considered if the public Housing Authority sponsored the request for vehicle rather than a citizen group. The Housing Authority, as a fully chartered legal entity could have the means to assume

8.4 RIVERSIDE/ALPINE/FOREST HILLS CONGESTION STUDY: Mr. Dratnol reported that the consultant

full responsibility for the vehicle and its maintenance. It could also share the vehicle for use with all of its properties, thereby assuring that the vehicle would be fully utilized. Also, the response offered the services of RMTD toward improving the function of the existing public transit system in meeting the needs of Collier Garden residents. RMTD is willing to meet with Mrs. Bennet and Collier Garden residents and discuss what can be done to better serve the residents, to make the public system more responsive and user-friendly, and to educate the residents so they feel more comfortable and safe when using the public system. The response noted that these efforts would be more productive in the short-term because the time frame for acquiring a 16(b)2 vehicle can be as long as 3-4 years.

The Policy Committee asked staff to keep them informed of further discussions on this topic.

8. PROGRESS OF CURRENT PROJECTS

8.1 SPRINGFIELD/HARRISON: David Dratnol reported that the IDS has been approved for this project. He said approval is expected in January on the Design Report and he will be starting the Relocation Plan soon. Charles Box reiterated that the services of the City's Relocation Officer are available to assist in the property acquisition/relocation work.

8.2 REGIONAL GIS: Mr. Petrotte reported that the qualifications of six potential consultants for this project have been reviewed and a shortlist of four firms decided upon. Participants in this process include nearly all the participants funding the project. A draft RFP has been prepared. Staff and the GIS Technical Committee hope to review proposals and conduct detailed consultant interviews in January and negotiate a contract in February.

8.3 NORTHWEST BYPASS: David Noel reported that a subcommittee of the Technical Committee has been appointed to review this proposal. They will be meeting early in 1998 to discuss initial aspects of feasibility/needs and to determine if the services of a consultant will be needed or if further work will be done internally.

is nearing the completion of this work. He hopes to schedule pre-final presentations on the project at the

next Technical and Policy Committee meetings in January or February. He said this study is currently under budget.

8.5 IL 251 STUDY: Stephen Kuhn reported that work has slowed on this study and there is no new progress to report at this time. Mr. Petrotte said that he applied for an extension of the grant for both this study and the Riverside/Alpine/Forest Hills study. The deadline for funding these studies has been extended by IDOT from December 31, 1997 to June 30, 1998.

8.6 GREENWAY MAP: Gary McIntyre gave a brief presentation on the Greenway Map and its purpose in relation to the RATS planning process. The map is the product of a multi-agency effort and is intended to identify the most precious natural corridors throughout the community in the hopes of preserving or protecting these resources.

8.7 CERTIFICATION REVIEW: Mr. McIntyre said the FHWA/FTA has prepared a draft of their report documenting the findings of their Certification Review of the RATS planning process conducted last November. Staff will review this report for accuracy and forward their comments to the Federal and State authorities.

9. OTHER BUSINESS: Bill Ost reported that he received word that Bill Smith will be resigning his position with the IDOT Bureau of Planning due to failing health. Concern and sympathy for Mr. Smith was expressed by all present. Mr. Smith's service to the Rockford area has been outstanding. His skill, dedication and good humor have been inspirational to all of us. He will be missed. The Committee directed staff to draft a letter expressing the Committee's appreciation for Mr. Smith.

10. ADJOURNMENT: With no further business to conduct, Darryl Lindberg moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Bill Ost and approved unanimously at 2:20 PM.