

RATS **ROCKFORD AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY** **METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION**

POLICY COMMITTEE

CHARLES E. BOX, MAYOR, ROCKFORD
JOSEPH F. SINKIAWIC, MAYOR, LOVES PARK
STEPHEN KUHN, PRESIDENT, MACHESNEY PARK
WILLIAM D. OST, DISTRICT ENGINEER, IDOT DISTRICT 2
EUGENE R. QUINN, CHAIRMAN, WINNEBAGO COUNTY BOARD

TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

LOVES PARK TRANSIT / BELVIDERE-BOONE COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING
BOONE COUNTY HIGHWAY / ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
ROCKFORD MASS TRANSIT / WINNEBAGO COUNTY PUBLIC WORKS
WINNEBAGO COUNTY PARATransIT / CHERRY VALLEY PLANNING
ROCKFORD COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT / LOVES PARK PLANNING
GREATER ROCKFORD AIRPORT / MACHESNEY PARK PLANNING
ROCKFORD PUBLIC WORKS / WINNEBAGO COUNTY PLANNING

POLICY COMMITTEE **MEETING MINUTES** **June 26, 1996**

The following are the minutes of the June 26, 1996, RATS Policy Committee meeting held in the auditorium of the Northern Illinois University building on East State Street in Rockford, Illinois.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Bill Ost, District Engineer, District 2, Illinois Department of Transportation; Charles Box, Mayor, City of Rockford; Gene Quinn, County Board Chairman, Winnebago County; Joe Sinkiawic, Mayor, City of Loves Park, Chairman; Stephen Kuhn, President, Village of Machesney Park.

OTHERS PRESENT:

Al Werner, Rockford Public Works Department; Bill Smith, IDOT Bureau of Planning; Chris Cohn, Winnebago County Clerk; Dan Salameda, Loves Park Transit System; Dave Miller, Metro Transportation Group; David Sliktas, Belvidere-Boone County Regional Planning Commission;
2. & 3. AMENDMENTS TO THE FY97 UNIFIED WORK PROGRAM (UWP): Russ Petrotte reviewed the action at the last Policy Committee meeting that approved the UWP but omitted a request for funding of a study of the U.S. Business 20 corridor in the stretch between the Winnebago/Boone County line and the City of Belvidere. He said he and Bill Smith of the IDOT

David Noel, Winnebago County Planning; Gary McIntyre, RATS staff; Jason Neslon, IDOT Bureau of Local Roads; John O'Neill, Crawford, Murphy and Tilly, Inc; Laura Williamson, Rockford Gateway Association; Mary Allen Verdun, IDOT District 2; Mike Hughs, Student; Pan Mahajan, Winnebago County Highway Department; Rick Strader, Rockford Park District; Russ Petrotte, RATS staff; Steve Ernst, Rockford Public Works Department; Victor Lay, VHL Consulting.

1. CALL TO ORDER & APPROVAL OF MINUTES: The meeting was called to order at 1:32 PM by Chairman Joe Sinkiawic. A motion was made by Charles Box to approve the minutes of the May 23, 1996 Policy Committee meeting. The motion was seconded by Stephen Kuhn and approved unanimously without correction or discussion.

Bureau of Planning met with officials from Belvidere and Boone County and received assurances from them that the study would not be devoted to developing justifications or strategies for excluding eastward annexations of lands in Boone County by the municipalities in Winnebago County. The intent of the study is to develop detailed plans for the orderly development of the corridor

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regardless of what jurisdiction(s) the developers seek urban services from. He said the Technical Committee unanimously recommended an amendment to the UWP that reinstates the \$20,000 originally earmarked for the study. Proposed RATS Resolution 96-8 reinstates these funds for the study.

Mr. Petrotte next explained that proposed Resolution 96-9, also recommended by the Technical Committee, amends the FY97 UWP to add State/federal funding for the study of congestion problems in the Riverside/Alpine/Forest Hills area and partial funding for an ongoing Machesney Park-sponsored corridor study of the North Second Street corridor. The former study would employ a consultant to study growing congestion problems and propose detailed alternatives to reduce this congestion and preserve traffic flow through the area. The second study is broader-based and will examine a variety of planning, development, and redevelopment issues in a part of the North Second Street corridor in Machesney Park. The study will also look at existing access, ingress and egress situations and propose solutions to reduce or eliminate traffic conflicts. The State has approved \$50,000 for these studies, approximately \$40,000 of which will be devoted to the Riverside problem and \$10,000 for the North Second Street study.

Charles Box asked about the Technical Committee input to the Bus. 20 study. Mr. Petrotte said staff from RATS will serve on the steering committee for the study and periodic progress reports will be made to RATS as the study moves ahead. Mr. Quin asked who will be hiring the consultant and leading the study and how much Boone County or Belvidere will be contributing to the study. Mr. Petrotte said the Boone/Belvidere Regional Planning Commission (BBRPC) has already developed a general scope of study and selected a consultant but has not negotiated a contract. The estimated cost of the study will be in the \$40,000-\$60,000 range. \$20,000 will come through RATS and the remainder will be funded by entities in Boone County.

Mr. Quin asked if other routes such as Spring Creek Road are being studied. Dave Sliktas said the BBRPC is also considering studies that will lead to amendments to their Comprehensive Plan in the western parts of Boone County. The Bus 20 corridor was singled out for consultant assistance because of the complexity of issues in the corridor.

Mr. Sliktas said the total study along the Bus. 20 corridor will develop a detailed land use plan for the corridor and will include plans for school and park sites and other public facilities. Transportation will be one chapter of the total study.

Mayor Sinkiawic noted the plans of the Boone County school district to locate a major school adjacent to Loves Park and thereby block future annexations by Loves Park into Boone County.

Mr. Quin asked that the study consultant be asked to make a presentation to the RATS Policy Committee at one of the next two RATS meetings to explain the consultant's view on the study and receive input from the Policy Committee.

Mayor Box expressed concern that an advocate rather than an unbiased consultant has been hired. He noted the mention of the Stop Rockford group in one of the memos regarding the study and stressed strongly that he could not support this study if the sympathies of the Stop Rockford group were to be part of the focus of the study. He reiterated Mr. Quin's request that the consultant be asked to appear before the Policy Committee.

Bill Ost spoke in favor the study. He said we should address access situations and proposals along this stretch of Bus. 20 before development pressure increases. He supported having the consultant appear before RATS at key points in the study.

Mr. Sliktas emphasized that it has always been his intention to involve RATS in the study.

Mr. Quin moved to approve Resolution 96-8. The motion was seconded by Stephen Kuhn and approved unanimously without further discussion.

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The Committee engaged in a discussion about who would be involved in the Riverside Study. Mr. Petrotte explained that all three entities (Rockford, Loves Park and the County) will all asked for detailed input into the study and these three entities will be asked to share equally in the providing the local matching funds for the study. The "lead agency" designation, as noted in resolution, specifies the agency that will conduct the mechanics of drafting the RFP, coordinating the interviews with possible consultants, entering the actual contract with the consultant and making payments for the work. Representatives from Rockford, Loves Park and the County will share equally in approving the scope of work and directing the emphasis of the consultant.

Mayor Box moved to approve Resolution 96-9. The motion was seconded by Gene Quinn and approved unanimously without further discussion.

Mayor Sinkiwic noted that there is somewhat of a crisis concerning the triangle of property bounded by Riverside, Alpine and Forest Hills. He said the developer has been working at preparing this land for development over the last three years. They are seeking an answer to their access requests as soon as possible. Ron Heinen said he met with the developers earlier this morning and received a revised development plan which he will review. He will attempt to give them some answers so that they can proceed ahead of the study approved above.

5. REMOVAL OF WCPS FROM THE RATS TECHNICAL COMMITTEE: Mr. Petrotte state that he prepared the proposed Resolution 96-10 in accordance with instructions from the Policy Committee at their last meeting. The resolution will remove the Winnebago County Paratransit System from the RATS Technical Committee. WCPS no longer exists as a private-not-for-profit entity. It has been restructured under private ownership and although it still provides paratransit services, it is no longer funded in any way with public funds under the review of RATS. They have not attended a Technical Committee meeting in nearly a year

and they have asked not to be included in RATS mail outs. The Technical Committee recommended approval of the resolution.

Gene Quinn moved to approve Resolution 96-10. The motion was seconded by Bill Ost and approved unanimously.

6. PROGRESS REPORTS ON CURRENT PROJECTS: SPRINGFIELD HARRISON PROJECT. Ron Heinen reported that the consulting engineers have submitted a schedule stating that the final plans will be ready in April of 1997. He has been discussing early acquisition of properties where there are hardships. The Environmental Assessment (EA) is in circulation. A recommendation was made by the RATS Technical Committee that a Major Investment Study was not needed on this project and that recommendation was included in the EA. He said he has been given permission to start hardship acquisition but appraisals are needed and a hardship plan prepared and approved.

7. COMMUNICATIONS: On behalf of the Perryville Path Committee, Rick Strader invited the members of the Policy Committee to a luncheon to be held prior to the next Policy Committee at which time a proposals will be presented for a community information program and fund raising campaign for the next phase of the Perryville Path. Mr. Strader gave a brief report on the progress of the path development to date.

Mr. Strader also noted that he, Laura Williamson and members of the Rockford Gateway Association have been working on the development of a path plan for the East State Street corridor between Alpine Road and the County Line. They hope to make a presentation on this work at the Policy Committee's convenience in the near future.

8. OTHER BUSINESS: None reported.

9. PRESENTATION ON THE WOODRUFF/WALLENBERG PARKWAY STUDY:

Steve Ernst gave a detailed presentation that included numerous visual illustrations on the results of the Woodruff/Wallenberg Study. The

- We need to refine the model to better evaluate possible intersection improvements.
- We need to evaluate several partial build alternatives and intersection improvement alternatives.
- We need to initiate a detailed public involvement process.
- We need to continue and expand dialog with the railroads.
- We need a better evaluation of the economic, environmental and social impacts of the various alternatives.

Mr. Ernst stated that he was not requesting action on the recommendations of the study at this time. Rather, the recommendations should be referred to the Technical Committee for further detailed review and refinement. Gene Quinn moved to refer the study to the Technical Committee for further review. The motion was seconded by Mayor Box and approved unanimously.

10. ADJOURNMENT: Mayor Sinkiawic adjourned at approximately 3:00 PM.

details of this presentation are contained in a summary report of the study, distributed at the meeting and also available from RATS staff and the Rockford Public Works Department. Among the many conclusions and recommendations from the study were the following: