

# **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** **May 23, 1996**

The following are the minutes of the May 23, 1996, RATS Policy Committee meeting held in the Winnebago County Administration Building.

### **MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Charles E. Box, Mayor of Rockford;  
Eugene R. Quinn, Chairman of the Winnebago County Board;  
Bill Ost, District Engineer, IDOT District 2;  
Dan Jacobson, representing the Mayor of Loves Park; and  
Stephen Kuhn, President of the Village of Machesney Park (arrived at 2:30 pm).

### **OTHERS PRESENT:**

Mary Allen Verdun, IDOT;  
Geneva Anderson, Booker Washington Center;  
Ron Heinen, Winnebago County;  
Dan Jacobson, Loves Park Planning;  
Pan Mahajan, Winnebago County;  
Gary McIntyre, RATS Staff;  
David Noel, Winnebago County;  
Russ Petrotte, RATS Staff;  
David Sliktas, Belvidere/Boone Planning; and  
Bill Smith, IDOT.

**1. CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order at 2:10 p.m. by Vice-Chairman Quinn. All voting members were present except Stephen  
**4. RIVERSIDE BOULEVARD CORRIDOR STUDY:** Pan Mahajan explained that the County had made a proposal at the last Policy Committee

Kuhn who arrived at 2:30 p.m. Because President Kuhn had not yet arrived at the meeting, Russ Petrotte asked Mr. Quinn to reorder the agenda, placing the UWP later when Mr. Kuhn might be present.

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Minutes of the April 26, 1996, meeting were presented for discussion. Charles Box moved to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Bill Ost, and approved unanimously (4-0) without further discussion.

**4. PERRYVILLE ROAD CORRIDOR STUDY:** Ron Heinen presented the results of the latest phase of this study as prepared by the County Public Works Department and reviewed and recommended for approval by the RATS Technical Committee.

The results of this study are presented in the chart/map Addendum to RATS Resolution 96-4 as attached to these minutes.

After a brief discussion, Bill Ost moved to approve Resolution 96-4 including the chart and map dated May 23, 1996. The motion was seconded by Dan Jacobson and approved unanimously (4-0).

meeting for a series of improvements in the section of Riverside Boulevard between Material Avenue and Sage Drive. Access points were proposed and

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a bidirectional turn lane between the Cub Foods entrance and Sage Drive was also proposed. Although all persons involved in this work concurred that these proposals would certainly improve conditions in this stretch, some staff from RATS and the City of Rockford suggested that a more detailed study was warranted. This is the most significant bottleneck in the entire Riverside Corridor and it might be wise to take a more comprehensive and long-term look at the problem before we act. Mr. Mahajan distributed a rough sketch of the broader area that is in need of study. He said the Technical Committee is asking IDOT to consider appropriating more funds for this study. As an alternative, they are also considering reallocating some of the funds in the proposed FY97 UWP. This will be explained further under that item of the agenda.

Mr. Quinn asked why the Cub Foods signal could not be better coordinated with the Alpine Road signal. He was told the equipment is in the ground but is not connected. Mr. Mahajan said Rockford staff have told him a new equipment cabinet is needed at the Cub Food entrance. Dan Jacobson said he has also asked the City of Rockford Public Works Department to look into this and was assured they would.

**3. FY97 UNIFIED WORK PROGRAM:** Mr. Petrotte distributed extra copies of the March 27th draft of the Unified Planning Work Program for FY97. He explained the changes suggested to the program since he first presented it at the last Policy Committee meeting.

Mr. Petrotte said there has been some reluctance to fund the proposed work along the U.S. Business 20 corridor in Boone County because of the anti-Rockford sentiments of some of the constituents in Boone County. At the last Technical Committee meeting, this issue was discussed and David Sliktas reassured the Committee that the study would be addressing planning issues along the corridor that are irrelevant to what jurisdiction ultimately annexes the land. He reiterated the need to conduct the study and develop a plan for the area before development actually commences.

Mr. Petrotte said two additional proposals were also presented at the Technical Committee meeting. First, Machesney Park requested an additional \$9,000 funding contribution toward the access and congestion management and planning study they are doing along North Second Street. Second, Winnebago County, Rockford and Loves Park requested additional funds to conduct the detailed access and congestion management planning previously mentioned as part of the Riverside Corridor Study discussed earlier in this meeting. A study of this nature is likely to run in the \$40,000-\$50,000 range.

Mr. Petrotte said that, after debating these proposals at length, the Technical Committee unanimously recommended the proposed Work Program be amended to temporarily remove or withhold the \$20,000 earmarked for the U.S. 20 Corridor study. The program should be approved with this \$20,000 temporarily frozen. Its use would be decided after the above alternatives could be more thoroughly debated over the next month. Also, the Technical Committee requested that IDOT investigate the availability of additional funds so all of the proposed work could be funded.

Mr. Petrotte said one other small aspect of the March 27th draft was brought to his attention. In the draft and within the RCDP suballocation, he had budgeted only \$5,000 for a large format printer/plotter. Recent research has led him to conclude that the cost of this needed equipment will be closer to \$8,000-\$10,000. This was the cost of a similar unit recently purchased by the Rockford Public Works Department. This unit is presently being shared by RATS and the Public Works Department. Experience is proving the equipment to be even more useful than originally anticipated. Mr. Petrotte showed the Committee an example of the plotter's output and assured them that the additional monies would be well spent.

Mr. Petrotte distributed a draft of Resolution 96-6. This resolution with its addendum, if approved, would adopt the FY97 UWP (March 27th draft) with the changes suggested above.

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Mayor Box moved to approve Resolution 96-6 (including Addendum A) as drafted. The motion At this time, President Kuhn of the Village of Machesney Park arrived at the meeting. Mr. Petrotte briefly reiterated the information he presented earlier on the Work Program.

Mr. Quinn called for discussion of the motion and hearing none called for action. By role call vote, the motion was approved unanimously.

**6. FY97 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM:** Gary McIntyre explained that some progress has been made, but he has not received all of the information from the various participating agencies necessary for the FY97 TIP (highway element).

Mr. McIntyre said IDOT staff called earlier this week and informed us that two minor projects are ready for bid letting but are not in an approved TIP. The first is for culvert repair on U.S. Business 20 located just east of Townhall Road in Boone County. The second is the resurfacing of Beltline Road in the 1.32 mile stretch between the Kishwaukee River and IL-251 (11th St.). The culvert project is estimated at \$50,000 and will be funded with IDOT funds only. The resurfacing project is estimated at \$350,000 and will be funded with \$280,000 of Federal STP funds from the State's suballocation and \$70,000 of IDOT funds.

IDOT is asking that these projects be amended into the FY96 TIP so that the bid letting can proceed. Mr. McIntyre said the bid letting is scheduled for July 12th. Action on this request could be delayed until June but IDOT is asking that RATS act sooner. He distributed copies of a draft of Resolution 96-7. The resolution lists the details of these projects.

Bill Ost moved to approve Resolution 96-7. The motion was seconded by Mayor Box. Opportunity for discussion and public comment was provided. There were no comments and Mr. Quinn called the motion for a role call vote. It was approved unanimously (5-0).

was seconded by Dan Jacobson.

Mr. Petrotte said he has met with both RMTD and LPTS and a list of capital projects for FY97 has been tentatively developed. He hopes to complete this list and distribute it within the next few weeks. The "operating" side of the transit program remains a big question because of the uncertainty of federal operating apportionments.

Mr. Petrotte noted that the transition of public paratransit services from the Winnebago County Paratransit System to the Rockford Mass Transit District (RMTD) and the Loves Park Transit System (LPTS) is essentially complete. Some details regarding reciprocal charges for trips between Loves Park and Rockford remain to be worked out, but all public equipment has been transferred from WCPS to RMTD and LPTS. WCPS remains in existence and still continues to provide paratransit services, but the agency has been restructured as a private-for-profit entity. It no longer provides any publicly-funded service (i.e., funded with public funds under the jurisdiction of RATS or IDOT). Therefore, its budget and proposed expenditures will no longer be listed in the RATS TIP.

Related to this, Mr. Petrotte noted that WCPS is no longer an active participant in RATS. They have not attended a meeting of the RATS Technical Committee for nearly a year and, as a strictly private entity, they are no longer eligible for vehicles or funds under the programs we (RATS) oversee. He asked the Policy Committee if they wished to change WCPS' status as a member of the RATS Technical Committee.

Mr. Quinn suggested that staff prepare a resolution for the next meeting that would remove WCPS from the RATS Technical Committee. The issue could be discussed further at that time.

**7.1 PROGRESS REPORT ON THE HARRISON/SPRINGFIELD PROJECT:** Ron Heinen said he attended a NEPA meeting where the Harrison/Springfield Project was on the agenda. (NEPA stands for National Environmental Protection Act. Agencies instrumental in implementing this act meet periodically to review

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and comment on various topics and projects.) The review concluded that, if we could qualify for a

He said the second revision of the Environmental Assessment will be circulated within the next few weeks. A finding of "No Significant Impact" is being sought.

We are seeking a waiver or reduction of the Major Investment Study (MIS) requirement because this is a project that was already in the "pipeline" (planned and largely designed before the requirement became law). There are no other options that will meet the transportation needs in this area, the project does not pose obstructions to other transportation modes, and as designed, the project will work in concert with other transportation modes. An MIS meeting was held on this project following the last RATS Technical Committee meeting. The meeting was announced and the public and interested parties were invited to attend and comment as part of normal RATS meeting announcement procedures.

Mr. Heinen has continued working with the IDOT Land Acquisition staff and is attempting to obtain approval to begin land acquisition. However, the lack of a Relocation Plan and full Design Approval makes it difficult at this time. The County will be hiring a consultant to prepare the Relocation Plan.

Mr. Petrotte asked if Mark Rose from the City could be of assistance in preparing the Relocation Plan. Mayor Box and Mr. Heinen said they would look into this possibility. Mr. Heinen is hoping to have the Environmental Assessment completed within two to three weeks and the Design Approval within two to three months.

**7.2 PROGRESS REPORT ON THE WALLENBERG/WOODRUFF STUDY:** Gary McIntyre said the Rockford Public Works Department has asked for extra time during next month's Policy Committee meeting to make a detailed presentation on the results of this study. Also, in the event there is larger than normal attendance, they have asked that the meeting be held at the NIU Rockford campus. The next Policy Committee meeting and this presentation will be

nationwide permit to cross Kent Creek, we would not have to return to that group for further review.

scheduled for Wednesday, June 26, 1996, at 1:30 pm. This is one day earlier than normal because some members have conflicts on June 27th.

**8. COMMUNICATIONS:** None reported.

**8. OTHER BUSINESS:** Geneva Anderson reported that the Booker Washington Community Center recently received confirmation from IDOT that they have been awarded an FTA Section 16 vehicle. The delivery of the vehicle is scheduled sometime in August. She thanked the Policy Committee for their support on this project.

**9. ADJOURNMENT:** With no further business to conduct, President Kuhn moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Mayor Box and approved unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 2:50 p.m.