



**Rockford Area Transportation
Study**

Metropolitan Planning Organization

Meeting Minutes -- RATS Policy Committee

Meeting Date: May 15, 1997-- Winnebago County Administration Bldg.

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

Others Present: David Dratnol, Winnebago County Highway; David Noel, Winnebago County Planning; Gary McIntyre, RATS; Russ Petrotte, RATS; Bill Smith, IDOT/ Springfield; Jon-Paul Kohler, FHWA/ Springfield; Ron Marshall, FHWA/ Springfield; Dan Jacobson, Loves Park Planning; Larry Reed, IDOT/Dixon; Gordon Baggio, Cherry Valley Township Supervisor.

1. CALL TO ORDER: With a full quorum Acting Chairman Kris Cohn called the meeting to order at approximately 1:40 PM.

2. ELECTION OF OFFICERS: Gary McIntyre noted that the area-wide general elections in April of 1997 resulted in a change of elected officials. Darryl Lindberg was elected Mayor of Loves Park, replacing Joe Sinkiawic. Kris Cohn was elected Chairman of the Winnebago County Board, replacing Gene Quinn. Mayor Sinkiawic had been the Chairman and Gene Quinn the Vice Chairman of the RATS Policy Committee.

Charles Box moved to nominate Steve Kuhn as Chairman and Kris Cohn as Vice Chairman of the RATS Policy Committee; with their terms to begin at present and continue through June of 1998. The motion was seconded by Darryl Lindberg and approved unanimously.

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*

3. COMMUNICATIONS: Gary McIntyre cited a letter from Jon-Paul Kohler formally announcing the triennial certification review of the RATS planning process. Representatives from the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration will be in Rockford on August 26-28, 1997, to conduct this review. The public and any interested officials will be given opportunity to comment. The federal officials hope to make a presentation on the preliminary results of their findings at the August 28, 1997 Policy Committee meeting.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: This item was laid over.

5. FY98 UNIFIED WORK PROGRAM: Russ Petrotte said a detailed presentation on the proposed FY98 planning work had been made at the last meeting on March 13, 1997. Subsequently, on March 28th, a draft of the Work Program had been prepared and mailed out to all on the RATS mailing list. Mr. Petrotte distributed extra copies of the summary pages. He explained that no significant comments had been made on the draft and no major changes are proposed. A minor change was suggested by the Technical Committee -- that \$5,000 be shifted from the Rockford CD Department's allocation to the Rockford Public Works Department's allocation. The change will allow Public Works to purchase a lap top computer for evaluation of traffic count data while on site. Mr. Petrotte briefly recapped the major work items proposed in the program. He stated that the bulk of the funds remain allocated to the CD Department in their capacity as the lead agency and for the purpose of conducting the required planning under federal guidelines. He stated that an attempt was made, this year, to equalize, the allocations to the remaining participants such as Loves Park, Machesney Park and County (approximately \$19,000 each). He said that some of the funds

allocated to the CD Department would likely be held in reserve for GIS-related work.

He called the Committee's attention to proposed Resolution 97-2. This resolution, if approved, will adopt the March 28th UWP draft along with the shift of funds to the Rockford Public Works Department, as Mayor Box moved to approve Resolution 97-2. The motion was seconded by Mayor Lindberg and, with no further comments offered, approved unanimously.

6. FY98 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM: Gary McIntyre distributed a memo and schedule for the development of the FY98 TIP. He asked that participating agencies attempt to adhere to this schedule with the goal of developing the TIP in time for approval at the August 1997 RATS meetings. Notice has been placed in the Rockford Register Star and opportunities will be afforded for public comment.

7. PROGRESS REPORTS ON CURRENT PROJECTS: David Dratnol reported that a contract has been awarded to Barton Ashman consultants for the Riverside/ Alpine/Forest Hills Congestion Management Study. They have started field work and have had aerial photos flown. They expect to have a data report out in June and will complete the study sometime between July and September.

Mr. Dratnol reported that the ROW plan for the Springfield/Harrison Project should be completed by July 1st and the study design submitted to IDOT in early July. Mayor Box asked if the relocation plan had been prepared and approved by IDOT and the federal government. Mr. Dratnol said Mr. Heinen has been working on that aspect. Kris Cohn asked Mr. Dratnol to have Mr. Heinen contact her regarding the project. Mr. Dratnol said there is wet-land mitigation to be done on the project but the alignment of the project has not changed. There was discussion on the total cost of the project and schedule for its completion.

Bill Ost noted that there are several million dollars in funds allocated for the project and he urged that the project proceed expeditiously to avoid any possibility that the funds could lapse. Kris Cohn asked that a more detailed schedule for this project be developed for the next meeting.

Russ Petrotte reported on the Regional GIS project. He said IDOT has approved an \$80,000 allocation for the GIS work. The GIS Subcommittee met and instructed staff to notify all taxing bodies in the county of the project and invite their participation. Staff is developing a formula for the required local match. A suggestion has been made to use the operating budgets of the participants. Other statistics will be developed. Staff

noted above. The FY98 UWP will direct RATS planning in the time period between July 1, 1997 and June 30, 1998. The resolution was recommended unanimously by the Technical Committee at their last meeting.

has drafted a proposed cooperative agreement and is currently working on a Request for Qualifications for consultant services.

8. NEXTEA: Ron Marshall from the Federal Highway Administration talked to the Committee about issues related to the next reauthorization of the federal transportation act. The current act, the ISTEA (Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act) is due to expire this Fall. Several diverse proposals have been put forth to succeed the ISTEA. The current administration's proposal is referred to as the NEXTEA (National Economic Crossroads Transportation Efficiency Act). As proposed, the NEXTEA will be very similar in its programs to the ISTEA. However, there is still debate at several levels in Congress and it is too soon to say what will finally evolve. Currently, funding levels are proposed at higher levels than the ISTEA but budgetary considerations may reduce the amounts. Mr. Marshall distributed summaries and a list of sources of information available on the INTERNET. Bill Ost noted that IDOT supports continued federal involvement in the construction of major highways, mainly for the sake of standardization. Mr. Marshall said he would keep the Committee informed.

9. BOONE/WINNEBAGO COUNTY GREENWAYS PLAN: Gary McIntyre explained that RATS staff and members of the Technical Committee have become involved in the development of the Greenways Plan for Boone and Winnebago Counties. This effort is modeled after similar work by other MPOs and planning agencies in other parts of the State. He explained that RATS' interest in this stems from the RATS Long-Range Plan and the requirements of the ISTEA. Map 17 of our current Long-Range Plan identifies parks, forest preserves and natural areas. Map 18 identifies floodplains and other environmentally sensitive areas. These maps are very generalized and the Greenways Plan will go further to identify sensitive areas and hopefully will be incorporated as an embellishment to the plan. Also included on the Greenways plan will be major pedestrian trail facilities. Mr. McIntyre said he wanted to give the Committee a preview of this work which is still in the early draft stages. The work is being done in conjunction with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources and the Natural Land Institute. RATS is assisting the project with their computer drafting and mapping capabilities. Bev Moore from the Natural Land Institute will be visiting all local jurisdic-

tions in the near future to further explain this planning effort.

10. OTHER BUSINESS: Kris Cohn commented that recent concerns regarding the safety of the Perryville Path are being brought before the County Board. The Board is evaluating segments of the path that are close to Perryville to determine if changes need to be made.

11. ADJOURNMENT: At 2:50 PM a motion was made by Darryl Lindberg to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Kris Cohn and approved unanimously.