



**Rockford Area Transportation
Study**
Metropolitan Planning Organization

POLICY COMMITTEE

Mayor Charles E. Box, City of Rockford
Mayor Joseph E. Sinkiawic, City of Loves Park
Board Chairman Kris 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: October 24, 1996
Machesney Park Village Hall

Members in Attendance: Mayor Joseph E. Sinkiawic, City of Loves Park, PRESENT; Mayor Charles E. Box, City of Rockford, PRESENT; Board Chairman Gene Quinn, Winnebago County, PRESENT; President Stephen Kuhn, Village of Machesney Park, PRESENT; District Engineer William D. Ost, Illinois Department of Transportation, District 2, ABSENT.

Others Present: Kris Cohn, Winnebago County; Scot Capovilla, Citizen; Steve Ernst, Rockford; Dan Jacobson, Loves Park; David Noel, Winnebago County; Gary McIntyre, RATS; Russ Petrotte, RATS; Dave Sliktas, Belvidere/Boone County; Michael Slavney, Vanderwalle & Associates.

1. CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Joseph Sinkiawic called roll and with a quorum present called the meeting to order at approximately 1:35 PM.

2. COMMUNICATIONS: Gary McIntyre distributed a schedule of Policy and Technical Committee meeting dates for 1997. He noted that these dates are tentative for preliminary scheduling purposes only. Notices and/or agendas will be mailed out 1-2 weeks prior to each date confirming the dates, times and locations of meetings.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: A motion was made and carried unanimously to approve the minutes of the September 26, 1996 Policy Committee meeting.

4. BOONE COUNTY STATE STREET STUDY:

Michael Slavney from the consulting firm of Vanderwalle & Associates of Madison Wisconsin gave a detailed presentation on preliminary concepts and ideas being considered as his firm proceeds in the task of assisting the Belvidere/Boone Regional Planning Commission and other entities in Boone County in the development of a land use plan for the U.S. Business 20 Corridor in western Boone County.

Mr. Slavney said he has met with numerous officials, planners and citizens from both Boone and Winnebago County over the last month to exchange ideas on how the corridor should be developed. He discussed the following factors as important considerations: (1) the desire of many residents in the corridor to maintain a low density character for the area and a fear by these residents of being taken over by Rockford-like development and Rockford-like problems; (2) the existence of large expanses of flood plains, wetlands and environmentally sensitive lands; (3) a rolling topography that does not lend itself to the type of "big box" development that occurred to the west in Rockford; (4) the opinion that the development of heavy commercial may have peaked in the area and that further commercial development might be detrimental to the existing businesses both to the east in Belvidere and to the west in Rockford; (5) the desire of many Boone County officials to see a more structured or controlled development pattern than that to the west; (6) the need to provide for pedestrian movement across the corridor to the parklands to

the south and (7) the lack of a well developed north/south road network that crosses Route 20. Mr. Slavney presented illustrations that suggested a low to moderate residential development over Mayor Box and others commented that a more intense development proposal would be more in tune with the large public investment already made and planned for Business Route 20. The development patterns to the west make better use of the public investment in the roadway and provide a better tax return to the community.

President Kuhn stated that he has heard arguments in the past of commercialization extending beyond what the market could bear, but in reality he has never seen that happen. His statements suggested that the free market system might best determine when there was enough commercial.

Mayor Sinkiawic explained some of the situation surrounding recent attempts by developers to annex Boone County lands into the City of Loves Park. He expressed dismay at attempts by some officials in Boone County to condemn land for a school site when the site was obviously an inappropriate place for a school because it was so far away from the present and likely future center of school-age population.

Russ Petrotte said he was supportive of the consultant's attempt to preserve or protect environmentally sensitive lands in the area. He also saw the need to thoroughly buffer and protect the character of residential lands already developed in the corridor and agreed that the rolling topography of the area does not lend itself to the sprawling development patterns characteristic of Route 20 to the west. He noted that the strip development in Rockford is particularly unfriendly, if not unsafe, to pedestrians. However, he said he was also strongly sympathetic with arguments for maximizing the use of the public investment in Route 20 and the need to improve the area's tax base, regardless of what jurisdiction annexes the properties. He hoped the consultant would seek communication between and compromise among all the parties involved.

The consultant was asked to keep RATS informed as the study progressed and to appear again before the Policy Committee after more work has been done on the study.

5. PROGRESS REPORTS ON CURRENT PROJECTS: Gary McIntyre reported that an RFP was under development for consultant assistance on the Riverside/Alpine/Forest Hills Congestion

most of the corridor with limited commercial on both ends and a neighborhood commercial hub in the center.

Management Study. He reiterated that IDOT has agreed to fund 80 percent of the cost of this study and asked RATS to endorse a matching-fund cost-share arrangement. Staff has proposed that the match be funded via an equal-share split between Rockford, Loves Park and Winnebago County.

Mr. McIntyre said an Intergovernmental Agreement has been prepared that prescribes the extent of cooperation and cost share by Rockford, Loves Park, Winnebago County and RATS, as described above. He distributed a draft of Resolution 96-12, as a means of authorizing RATS participation in the Intergovernmental Agreement. If approved, 96-12 authorizes Chairman Sinkiawic to sign the Agreement on behalf of RATS.

A motion was made to approve Resolution 96-12. By roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously.

6. OTHER BUSINESS: Gary McIntyre presented and discussed a model resolution that had recently been developed by the Interorganizational Council (an impromptu group of staff from local government service providers involved in the land subdivision/development process). Among many planning topics, the group is seeking to rekindle and reaffirm local government support for pedestrian and bike facilities in the area. Mr. McIntyre said he has some reservations with the exact wording of the resolution and how the proposal would be merged into the RATS planning efforts. Nonetheless, he was supportive of the effort and asked that the matter be referred to the Technical Committee. By consensus, the Policy Committee concurred.

Mr. McIntyre distributed copies of the recently published area-wide ADT map. He explained that the map was developed in conjunction with IDOT and the City of Rockford on the RATS computerized mapping system. The map depicts traffic data generated from the last comprehensive traffic count program. This is the first time we have displayed the data on a single sheet. He was very pleased with the job George Adams, the RATS mapping specialist, had done on the project. Copies of the map are available for a nominal fee to help offset the printing costs.

7. ADJOURNMENT: At approximately 2:30 PM, a motion was made and unanimously approved to adjourn the meeting.