



Rockford Metropolitan Agency For Planning

RMAP POLICY COMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, October 28, 2010

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Lawrence Morrissey, City of Rockford; Chairman Bob Walberg, Boone County; Mayor Fred Brereton, City of Belvidere; Chairman Scott Christiansen, Winnebago County; Mr. Bob Mullins, Village of Machesney Park; Mr. Dan Jacobson, City of Loves Park; Ms. Kris Tobin, Illinois Department of Transportation- District 2.

MEMBERS NOT PRESENT: All present.

OTHERS PRESENT: Steve Ernst, Christina Washington, RMAP Staff; Patrick Zuroske, Rockford Public Works; Wayne Vlk, Winnebago County Highway; Rich Lundin, Boone County Highway; Dave Taylor, NICTI Chairman; Ray Montelongo, Montel Technologies; Ralph Hoekstra, Rockford Bike Club; Tricia Gibbs, First Rockford Group; Glenn Trommels, City of Rockford IT; Dave Van Camp; Bob Soltau, SLATS, Mark Williams, Growth Dimensions.

1. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL AND REPRESENTATION: Meeting was called to order by Mayor Morrissey with a quorum present at 1:20 PM.

2. COMMUNICATIONS: Mr. Ernst stated that he had no new communications. Chairman Morrissey wanted to note that he and others just attended Governor Quinn's press conference where he announced investment for the Chrysler Plant in Belvidere, which is a great opportunity for the region. Mayor Brereton wanted to thank Mark Williams for his tremendous effort and commented on how instrumental he was in this project.

3. APPROVAL OF THE SEPTEMBER 30, 2010 RMAP POLICY MEETING MINUTES: Motion to approve minutes by City of Belvidere, seconded by IDOT. Motion carried unanimously.

4. IL-173 ACCESS MANAGEMENT PLAN AMENDMENT – RMAP RESOLUTION 2010-14:

Mr. Ernst gave a brief history of the access plans for IL-173 and then asked Ms. Tricia Gibbs from First Rockford Group to a summary of the proposed changes. Ms Gibbs indicated that an additional access point is being requesting for the section of IL-173 between Perryville Road and the Rock Cut State Park entrance. The Village of Machesney Park and IDOT have approved the additional access point, raising the total number to three (3) access points in this section. Mr. Mullins stated that the Village of Machesney Park supports the addition of the access point.

Mr. Ernst stated that RMAP has no concerns with the modifications and that the Technical Committee unanimously endorsed the modification at the October 21, 2010 meeting and recommended approval of RMAP Resolution 2010-14. Motion by Winnebago County, second motion by the City of Loves Park. RMAP Resolution 2010-14 was approved unanimously (7-0).

5. NOTICE OF PROPOSED RULEMAKING (NPRM) FROM THE CENSUS BUREAU – URBANIZED AREA DESIGNATION DISCUSSION:

Mr. Ernst stated that the Census Bureau is about ready to launch the 2010 Census. The Census Bureau issued a notice of proposed rulemaking in the Federal Register (NPRM) that could potentially affect the designation of urban areas (UA). It is possible that the Rockford and Beloit UAs may be combined together in a process known as “agglomeration”. Because many federal programs derive funding formulas and operating guidance from the UA designation the staff anticipate that an agglomeration could have detrimental effects for the Stateline Mass Transit District (SMTD) and the Beloit Transit System (BTS). The Rockford Mass Transit District, SMTD, BTS, SLATS and RMAP have been meeting to discuss the potential changes and its effects on transit operations. Both SMTD and BTS are allowed to “flex” FTA Section 5307 funds for operations. FTA 5307 funds are usually reserved for capital expenses. If the Rockford and Beloit UAs were agglomerated together it is possible that SMTD and BTS could lose the ability to spend FTA 5307 dollars for their bus operations. Therefore, RMAP staff suggest that each of the MPOs and the transit districts respond to the NPRM in writing outlining the issues and recommending against the agglomeration. Chairman Morrissey commented that we should be able to create our own flexible agreements despite any future federal decision that would be detrimental to our region in case the agglomeration takes place.

Mr. Ernst asked the Policy Committee to take into consideration this issue when talking to Beloit, South Beloit, Rockton, and Roscoe as future decisions, such as boundary agreements, may be affected by these federal actions. In addition, this federal action could also change the way MSAs are defined sometime in the future. No formal action is required. The Policy Committee consensus was to direct staff to proceed as outlined during the presentation.

6. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES PLANNING GRANT:

Mr. Ernst announced that we are one of 45 communities to receive the Sustainable Communities Planning Grant. Genevieve Borich from the RREDD was co-author and instrumental in the writing significant portions of the grant application. HUD will be negotiating a contract with RMAP that will have a 3-year window for completion, although RMAP intends to try to complete the process in 2 years. The final product will include a “Regional Plan for Sustainable Development” and this planning product will pre-qualify the region to receive implementation grants from the HUD-DOT-EPA federal partnership. Chairman Morrissey thanked RMAP staff and Ms. Borich for their work on the grant. During discussion it was noted that the grant covers both Boone and Winnebago counties and all of the regional partners will be included in the process. The grant work will include significant research and data measurement at the neighborhood level

Chairman Christiansen suggested that regular meetings with the smaller communities in the region might be a good idea, both for the grant work and to coordinate regional issues of planning, investment and quality of life. Chairman Morrissey commented on the significant contribution from the housing authorities in the application process and given his significant HUD background, John Cressman will be very helpful in the implementation process.

7. PROGRESS REPORTS ON:

7.01 NICTI Alternative Analysis & Amtrak Service: Mr. Ernst reported that the Village of Huntley has stepped up their efforts to join the Blackhawk Express Coalition and are currently collecting signatures and they hope to have 5000 signatures from their region. Chairman Morrissey mentioned the discussion at the Governor's press conference earlier in the day and the potential routing decision. Secretary Hannig indicated the report would be done by Thanksgiving. Chairman Morrissey stated his hope is that once the decision is made that it would put us in a better position for future federal rail funding. Mayor Brereton reiterated that Genoa and DeKalb are not part of our defined region and that all of the communities and elected officials in our region have been speaking with one voice.

Chairman Christiansen stated that a tentative meeting has been scheduled for November 9th meeting at 1:00p that will be held in his office. Representatives from DeKalb County, Genoa and Sycamore along with Representative Pritchard and Senator Burzynski have been invited. Chairman Morrissey asked about the high speed rail study O'Hare to Rockford segment. Mr. Ernst stated that the final draft is done and it is being reviewed by the technical folks and should be available within 30 days. Chairman Morrissey stated it would be a good idea to pass a resolution supporting recommendations extending service from O'Hare to Rockford.

7.02 RMTD East Side Transfer Center: Mr. Ernst reported that the RMTD East Side Transfer Center is currently under construction and the foundations should be in the ground before winter sets in.

7.03 Regional Fiber Optic and Broadband: Mr. Trommels provided information on the BTOP grant for developing more fiber access opportunities, especially in un-served and underserved areas. In the first BTOP round the Rockford region was considered a well served area. In the second BTOP round the State of Illinois suggested a broader project area. NIU was point on the grant application and will be the primary recipient. There are 3 sub-recipients and Mr. Trommels is providing representation for Boone and Winnebago County. The other sub-recipients are the Blackhawk Hills area covering many northwest Illinois counties and the LaSalle, IL area. Mr. Trommels stated the first work task is an environmental study which needs to get done fairly quickly. Mr. Trommels provided maps of the possible fiber optic preliminary routes. DeKalb won a grant in the first round and connections to their system will be provided. Mr. Trommels stated that our region will have private entities owning the fiber and the public agencies will have rights to 48 stands of fiber and that can be used for local government purposes.

7.04 RMAP Regional Freight Study: No report.

7.05 RMAP Mobility Subcommittee: Recently Lowe's Distribution Center is initiating a program through their corporate office to hire people with disabilities. Currently there is no transit service to the Lowe's Distribution center and they are looking to identify some grant funds to help launch a service to Lowe's Distribution Center.

7.06 Housing, Human Services & Workforce Development Subcommittee: Covered earlier.

7.07 Stormwater / Drainage Subcommittee: No report.

7.08 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy: Mr. Ernst reported that the update to the CEDS document will begin in the month of November 2010. There will be two November meetings and maybe two December meetings and Mr. Dick Van Evera has agreed to Chair the CEDS Strategy committee again.

7.09 State Route IL-173 (IL-251 to I-90): Covered in agenda item 4.

7.10 South Main Street / IL-2 Planning Study: Mr. Ernst stated no current update but the kickoff meeting with the consultant team was held yesterday (10/27/10).

7.11 Greater RMAP Environmental Education Network (GREEN): Mr. Ernst stated that the first draft of the greenway plan is being reviewed by staff.

8. OTHER BUSINESS

8.01 Mr. Jacobson stated that on Monday, November 8, 2010 the City of Loves Park will hold the Riverside Corridor Study Open House. RMAP funded the Riverside Corridor Study for Loves Park. Mr. Jacobson stated that on Monday, November 15, 2010 the City of Loves Park will have a public hearing at their City Council meeting completing the last boundary agreement with Timberlane. Once this agreement is approved the City of Loves Park will have an agreement with all of their neighboring communities.

8.02 Mayor Brereton brought up the changes to the clean construction from demolition debris requirements from the EPA. Mayor Brereton asked if RMAP has been involved in any of the discussions. Mr. Ernst stated that RMAP has not been directly involved with the discussions but the Technical Committee had reviewed the issue. Mr. Jacobson stated that there are some consulting engineering firms that are providing free seminars on this topic, such as Fehr-Graham. Mr. Jacobson stated that the City of Rockford and the City of Loves Park have already been affected financially by the EPA changes.

8.03 Chairman Christiansen suggested that RMAP Policy formerly pass a resolution supporting the Embry-Riddle initiative. Motioned by Winnebago County and seconded by City of Belvidere. Motion passed unanimously (7-0). Mr. Ernst stated that the Resolution can be hand circulated if necessary or will be signed at the next meeting.

9. ADJOURNMENT: As there was no further business, Chairman Brereton entertained a motion to adjourn. The motion was made by the City of Rockford, and seconded by the Village of Machesney Park. Approved unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 2:35 P.M