

ULSTER COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL
Technical Committee Meeting

Meeting Summary

February 22, 2013

SUNY Ulster, Stone Ridge, NY

Members Present:

Anne Noonan	Adirondack Trailways
Kathy Nolan	Ulster County Trails Advisory Committee
James Quigley III	Town of Ulster
Joel Brink	Town of Ulster
Richard Peters	NYS Dept of Transportation
Sue Ronga	Ulster County DPW
Kristen Resnikoff	NYS Thruway Authority
Ralph Swenson	City of Kingston
Diane Beitel	Ulster County Safety Board/Traffic Control
Robert DiBella	Ulster County Area Transit
Edward Pine	Ulster County DPW
Andrwe Emrich	Ulster County DPW
Alan Adin	City of Kingston
Curt Lavalla	Village of New Paltz
Patrick McCaroll	NYS Thruway Authority
Jeanne Walsh	Town of Rosendale
Carolyn Ryan	NYS Dept. of Transportation
Alex Wade	Village of Saugerties
Herb Litts	Town of Lloyd
Anne Gordon	Ulster County Historian
Kelly McMullen	Ulster County Department of Mental Health

Staff:

Dennis Doyle	U.C. Planning Board/UCTC Staff
Brian Slack	UCTC Staff
David Staas	UCTC Staff

CALL TO ORDER

The Technical Committee meeting was called to order by Mr. Doyle at 10:00am. Roll call was conducted by Mr. Doyle.

CALL FOR CITIZENS' COMMENTS

Mr. Doyle asked if there were any citizen comments. Anne Gordon, the Ulster County Historian, expressed concern over the condition and status of the Wurts Street Bridge. Concern arose over funding availability and delays. Rich Peters responded, indicating that work on the bridge is still on schedule for 2016. Sue Ronga further commented on t/he condition of the condition of the roadway on the bridge.

No further citizen comments were submitted.

APPROVAL OF THE NOVEMBER 29, 2012 JOINT TECHNICAL AND POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING SUMMARY

Mr. Doyle requested a motion for discussion of the minutes from the 11/29/12 meeting of the UCTC Joint Technical and Policy Committee. Mr. Joel Brink made a motion to approve the minutes; second by Mrs. Susan Ronga. **No further discussion. All in favor, none opposed -- Motion Carried.**

CORRESPONDENCE

Mr. Doyle reviewed important pieces of correspondence received by UCTC staff as follows:

- 1/4/13 NYSDOT Safe Routes to School funding awards – City of Kingston and Village of Ellenville
- 1/16/13 New Yorkers for Active Transportation
- 1/29/13 City of Kingston re: Reprioritization of 2014-2018 TIP Projects
- 1/29/13 Ulster County Attorney – Issuance of a certificate of public convenience and necessity
- 2/5/13 Town of Woodstock letter to congressman Gibson in regards to Route 212
- 2/14/13 Florida Department of Transportation – LRTP as an example of a citizen-friendly document
- 2/20/13 Town of New Paltz – Concern over bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure funding allocation
- 3/4/13 Village of New Paltz – Concern over bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure funding allocation

Mr. Slack further explained the 1/14/13 NYSDOT Safe Routes to School correspondence and provided further information about the program and the awards to both the City of Kingston and the Village of Ellenville. Robert DiBella spoke to the 1/29/13 certificate of convenience and necessity, reaffirming that the certificate allows UCAT to operate in Orange and Dutchess County. Mr. Doyle passed around the Florida Department of Transportation Long Range Transportation Plan Citizen-Friendly Best Practices and highlighted the section which cites the UCTC 2035 LRTP as a model for clarity.

NEW BUSINESS

a) FFY 2012 Annual Obligation Report: Federal regulations require an annual listing of bridge, highway and transit projects, including pedestrian and bicycle facilities, which Federal transportation funds have been obligated in the preceding year.

Mr. Slack began by explaining the requirement of MPO's to produce an annual obligation report to provide clarity to the transportation process regarding expenditures. The report is produced to inform the public of where the money is going for transportation projects. He further explained that obligations are the commitment of the Federal Government to pay the federal share of a projects cost and that the phase has a "green light" to move forward in regards to federal funding. This does not mean that the money was actually spent or that the phase was completed. Six million dollars was supplied for state projects while local projects received just over 1 million dollars. The rate of obligation metric in the LRTP was then explained, providing some background to the importance of these numbers. Mr. Slack noted that although this is an important metric the UCTC has a goal to have 100% of the allocated funds obligated; the number can be misleading as projects fall off schedule. The shortcomings of this metric underscore the

importance of ensuring that projects stay on schedule and that phases do not fall behind. When funds are obligated and not spent it represents an opportunity cost as those funds could have been spent elsewhere on projects that were prepared.

Alex Wade then commented asking where the Village of Saugerties crosswalk project was. Carolyn Ryan noted that the obligation report was for 2012 and that the crosswalk project would take place in 2013 and had not been removed.
No further discussion.

Mr. Doyle noted that the Safe Routes to School TIP amendment was not on the agenda and decided to discuss it as the next item.

Draft Resolution 2013-02: Amendment to the Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2011-2015 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to Include Safe Routes to School Projects in the City of Kingston and Village of Ellenville

Mr. Doyle stated that the amendment would add in the Safe Routes to School projects for the Kingston school district and the Ellenville school district. Mr. Doyle noted some confusion over whom the sponsors would be and requested that Carolyn Ryan to fill in the details.

Carolyn Ryan noted that the local projects unit had not yet met with the awarded sponsors and that in the amendment there was no engineering phase listed for the City of Kingston Safe Routes to School Project. The lack of a programmed engineering phase means that the City of Kingston would not be reimbursed for any engineering work done on the project.

Mr. Doyle noted that the amendment request came from NYSDOT and it was programmed as requested.

Jeanne Walsh wanted to clarify that when discussing the funding; the City of Kingston and the Village of Ellenville refer to the locations where the improvements will take place and not the communities that use the school district. Mr. Doyle responded and stated that it was where the projects were taking place rather than the communities that use the district.

Mr. Doyle then expressed concern about adding the projects to the tip as they would then have to be amended at a later point in time as there was no engineering phase for the City of Kingston project.

Richard Peters then noted that if the amendment was not voted on during the next UCTC Policy Committee meeting that funding would be delayed for the projects. After discussing the Scheduling with Mr. Doyle, Mr. Pe stated that the municipalities would most likely not have started the projects by the time the amendment could be passed in May. Ralph Swenson indicated that the City of Kingston was not involved with the amendment request. Richard Peters then indicated that the amendment was created based off of what was requested in the Safe Routes to School application.

Jeanne Walsh asked if funding would be lost due to delays in the amendment process to which Richard Peters responded that it would only affect the timing of the projects and that funds

would be delayed approximately two months and that the projects would not even be started within that window anyway.

Ralph Swenson noted that there had not been any solicitation for engineering services for the project. Mr. Doyle then stated that they could start the IPP process without the project being on the TIP based upon the idea that they had been awarded the funds. Mr. Doyle then went on to move to table the resolution until more details were known and changes could be made to eliminate the requirement to make further amendments for the project in the future.

Mr. Doyle requested a motion to table; motion made by Jeanne Walsh; second by James Quigley. Open for discussion. No discussion. **All in favor, none opposed – MOTION TABLED.**

b) Draft SFY2013 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP): A preliminary draft of UCTC's State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2013-14 UPWP has been completed.

Mr. Slack introduced the UPWP and explained that it is an outline of the tasks that the Council staff will be working on. The UPWP also shows the priorities, emphasis areas, and projects to be undertaken by the MPO. The document provides a timeline and funding amounts for the various undertakings of the MPO. The purpose of the work outlined in the UPWP is to support and implement a program that is consistent with the 2035 LRTP. The 2013 allocation for the MPO comes from the FHWA and the FTA with \$390,805 and \$54,200 respectively. In addition to this funding there is the local match and carryover funds from previous years.

Mr. Slack then reviewed the various projects listed in the UPWP. Accomplishments of the MPO were noted and staff turnover was cited as a reason as to why many projects had not been move forward. Mr. Slack then started to review the budget, noting that it was in draft phases and is still constantly changing as more information becomes available. Once the numbers are finalized, the draft UPWP will go into a public comment phase before being voted on at the next Policy Committee meeting.

Mr. Slack then opened up for any questions. Carolyn Ryan then asked how the Ulster and Delaware Rail Corridor plan would affect Ulster County's capital project for the Rail Trail. Mr. Doyle responded indicating that the project is intended to look at major barriers beyond the areas that the capital Rail trail is already programmed for. The areas that the Corridor plan would focus on will depend on how far along capital Rail Trail is. Jeanne Walsh then thanked the council for having the Rosendale circulation study on the UPWP. Mr. Doyle then went on to note that funding amount available is less than the amount proposed to be spent and explained that there are carryover funds from previous years that would be used. In order to use the carryover funds, an amendment to the master contract must be done. Getting the amendment has not been an issue in prior years. The total budget is similar to the previous year and is support by the County Planning Department budget. Some funds have been rolled over and there should be no issues in supporting the level of consultant work in the 2013 UPWP. The final budget will come out after reimbursements for the fourth quarter are completed. Mr. Doyle then opened the floor to comments and questions. Hearing none, a motion to move the UPWP into a public comment period and then onto the Policy committee was requested. Motion made by Sue Ronga; second

by James Quigley. **All in favor, none opposed – MOTION CARRIED.** Resolution to be forwarded to the Policy Committee for consideration.

c) UCTC TIP Subcommittee – Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2014-2018 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Update:

Mr. Doyle commended all of the parties involved for working together to accomplish significant cuts to the Transportation Improvement Program. Mr. Slack discussed the formation of the TIP Subcommittee and their three meetings. The Subcommittee looked through the TIP and identified where programming cuts could be made to fall in line with the Federal allocations. The Federal allocation for the 2014-2018 TIP update was 17 million dollars, forcing the UCTC TIP Subcommittee to remove 11 million dollars in projects and postponed 7.5 million in projects out beyond the 2014-2018 window. In total, 18.7 million dollars was removed from the 2014-2018 TIP by the Subcommittee. These vital projects will now either be postponed, undertaken by the local municipalities without federal aid, or not done at all. These cuts have helped bring the total TIP cost down to approximately 20 million. Despite being over the 17 million dollar Federal allocation, Mr. Peters expressed gratitude for the work done by the TIP Subcommittee and stated that, at the regional level, being over by 3 million dollars was tolerable given the cuts that had been made.

Sue Ronga expressed concern about the efforts of other MPOs in the region in comparison to the sacrifices made by the UCTC. Mr. Peters explained that other MPOs had similar cuts and project postponements.

Mr. Slack thanked the TIP Subcommittee and asked the DOT representatives present where the STIP program is. Mr. Peters acknowledged that the state program has been delayed due to the STEP program and personal issues. The MPOs have been balancing out the local programs but the state program still needs work. The federal portion of the STIP is in “good shape” but the state portion still needs work. In the past state funds were substantial enough to cover larger portions of state projects, freeing up federal money to go towards local projects. As both federal and state finding has been reduced, NYSDOT is becoming more reliant upon federal funding for state preservation projects. Mr. Peters stated that the state project should be ready within the next month and that the STEP projects will have to be part of the TIP process.

Mr. Doyle noted that the draft TIP presented was only of the local program listings and does not include transit projects but they are expected to be added shortly. The final 2014-2018 TIP must be completed no later than June 29, 2013. It was noted that the TIP should be passed before the voting membership change on June 4, 2013.

d) Revisions to Federal-Aid Urban Area Boundaries and Metropolitan Planning Area Boundaries.

The urbanized area designations based on the 2010 Census are available; NYSDOT has requested that MPOs coordinate revisions to urban area and Metropolitan Planning Area boundaries. Mr. Staas gave a presentation going over the terms, implications and draft version of the boundaries. The update to the boundary has only deviated from the 2000 FHWA urbanized area boundary where required and expansion of the boundaries has been limited. The Metropolitan Planning Area boundary will expand to include part of Greene County but is limited to the least amount of expansion possible.

Mr. Doyle wanted to make it clear that the urban cluster boundary is ultimately determined by the highest elected official within the cluster while the urban area boundary is determined by the Council in conjunction with NYSDOT and the FHWA.

Currently the Council is awaiting approval and input from NYSDOT as the draft boundaries have been submitted for review.

Sue Ronga expressed concern over which roadways will become federal aid eligible. Mr. Staas stated that he would work to establish a listing of roadways which were affected.

e) Competitive Transportation Funding Opportunities. NYSDOT has made competitive funding available through the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) and the Strategic Transportation Enhancements Program (STEP). Mr. Peters indicated that a number of potential STEP projects are in for consideration and listed off the application locations throughout the region. HSIP applications are due at the end of March for projects that would be in construction FFY 2014. This deadline gives a little over a year to design and develop a project. Projects with limited complexity and clear safety benefits were recommended to meet the requirements and time table of the program. The HSIP funding can be used in conjunction with other funding sources for components of a project, though it may weaken the application. Examples of ideal projects include pedestrian signal improvements and resurfacing in areas with high accident rates in slippery conditions. For Region 8 it is estimated that 5-6 million federal dollars should be available for HSIP projects.

OLD BUSINESS

PROJECT UPDATES

Mr. Doyle ran through the status of several projects:

- Transit Development Plan – Completed
- Boices Lane – Nearly done. Looking at Right of Way.
- Greenway Project – Ongoing. RPA is the consultant hired.
- Safe Routes to School – RFP is being developed and undergoing internal review
- New Paltz Intermodal Facility – RFP is out. Awaiting proposals in early March

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. DiBella announced that UCAT will be having a public meeting on February 28, 2013 between 5:30 and 7:30 to go over the changes suggested in the transit development plan.

Mr. Doyle announced that JARC and New Freedom funding is available and that the UCTC continues to reach out to transit operators

Mr. Doyle requested a motion to adjourn; motion made by Herb Litts; second by James Quigley.

MEETING ADJOURNED at approximately 11:35.