

# ULSTER COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL Policy Committee Meeting

## Meeting Summary

March 7, 2006  
Ulster County Community College  
Stone Ridge, NY

### Members

<b>Present:</b>	Joel B. Brink**	Town of Ulster
	Barbara Budik**	Town of Saugerties Econ. Development Council
	Robert Dennison <sup>+</sup>	NYS DOT Region 8
	Steve Finkle**	City of Kingston
	Jack Hohman**	NYS Thruway Authority
	Cindy Lanzetta*	Town of Marlborough
	Nadine Lemmon**	Town of Gardiner
	Hector Rodriguez**	UC Legislature
	Toni Roser**	City of Kingston CitiBus
	Jill Ross**	NYS Thruway Authority
	Cynthia Ruiz**	UC Area Transit
	Jeremy Wilber*	Town of Woodstock

### Staff

<b>Present:</b>	Marianne Davis	UC Planning Department
	Dennis Doyle	UC Planning Department
	Jean Gunsch	NYMTC – Region 8 MPO Staff
	Tom Mank	UCTC
	Bill Tobin	UCTC

### Others

<b>Present:</b>	Mike Campbell	Village of Saugerties
	Mircea Catona	UC Public Works Department
	Walter Cherwony	Abrams & Cherwony Associates
	Lou Frangella	CSX Transportation
	Nancy Hammond	Town of Lloyd
	Mary Howard	UC Area Transit
	Tom Jackson	UC Area Transit
	Kathy Nolan	Town of Shandaken Citizen
	Rich Peters	NYS DOT Region 8
	Myles Putman	Shuster Associates
	Charles Schaller	UC Traffic Safety Board
	Bob Shepard	Town of Lloyd
	Art Snyder	UC Emergency Communications/Management

<sup>+</sup>Permanent Voting Member

\*Current Voting Member (Until June 4, 2007)

\*\*Voting Proxy

<sup>^</sup>Advisory Member

### CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Doyle at 10:00 a.m. Mr. Tobin announced that a quorum has been achieved.

## CALL FOR CITIZEN COMMENTS

Ms. Nolan said there was a community meeting held in Shandaken to discuss the proposed roundabout in Mt. Tremper.

## APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Mr. Doyle asked for approval of the minutes from the September 27, 2005, meeting.

**A motion was made to approve the Minutes by Ms. Ruiz, seconded by Mr. Finkle.**

## ANNOUNCEMENTS/COMMUNICATION

Mr. Doyle announced the upcoming meeting schedule. The next UCTC Policy Committee is scheduled for Tuesday June 6, at 10:00 a.m. SUNY Ulster. The next UCTC Technical Committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday May 9, at 10:00 a.m. SUNY Ulster. A UCTC-sponsored City of Kingston Route 32 at Fair Street Intersection Alternatives Analysis public meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 21, 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm at the George Washington Elementary School on Wall Street.

Mr. Doyle encouraged voting members to appoint a voting proxy represent their municipality in their absence, if they haven't already done so.

Mr. Doyle said an advertisement of the intermodal center design analysis RFP is out but we will not be entering into contracts or agreements until the UPWP is done. Ms. Ruiz asked if there would be a pre-bid meeting. Mr. Doyle answered that two addendums to the RFP have been issued.

Mr. Doyle stated a Transportation Management Area (TMA) 5307 staff meeting was held on March 3, 2006 to discuss how to award \$1.7 million in federal funds to designated 5307 recipients. Mr. Doyle noted that TMA staff is working toward developing project selection criteria with assistance from NYSDOT. Ms. Ruiz stated that capital project money is available as part of this funding for municipalities interested in improving their transit services. Ms. Ruiz suggested that anyone with questions should call or e-mail her to discuss applicable projects. Mr. Doyle stated there will be a solicitation process and schedule but it has yet to be defined and agreed upon by Dutchess, Orange and Ulster Counties.

Mr. Doyle announced UCTC staff was audited by NYSDOT for compliance with Title VI/Civil Rights requirements on February 17, 2006. Mr. Doyle believes the audit went well and a findings report will be sent to staff and the Council members in the near future.

Mr. Doyle informed the Council that the next regular TMA staff meeting (non-5307) is scheduled for Wednesday, April 12, at 10:00 am in Goshen, NY. Several public and private bus carriers will be invited to attend for discussion of 5307 funds.

Mr. Doyle informed the committee that Tom Mank, Senior Transportation Planner, will be leaving and moving back to Ithaca. His last day is scheduled for March 31, 2006. Mr. Tobin added that we are actively recruiting for Mr. Mank's replacement.

Mr. Tobin announced the next Ulster & Delaware Railroad Corridor Trail Feasibility Study public meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 28, at 7:00 pm in the UC Legislative Chambers. Mr. Doyle added that the first public meeting was held in the Town of Olive with approximately 100 people in attendance supporting both the railroad and the bicycle and pedestrian trail concept.

Mr. Tobin announced that new Bike/Trail maps provided by Mr. Peters of NYSDOT were available for anyone interested.

Mr. Peters stated NYSDOT would be accepting comments on the NYS Transportation Plan until March 24, 2006. He added that comment forms are available online and that the next round of Transportation Enhancements will begin soon. Mr. Finkle asked who the contact for Transportation Enhancements applications and information was for the region. Mr. Peters replied "Doug Cotton." Mr. Finkle asked if projects go through a rating process by the MPO. Mr. Peters replied they will have a couple rounds of applications, then each MPO will review their county's projects for eligibility and finally applications are then submitted to Albany. The Statewide Transportation Enhancements Committee makes the final decision regarding which projects will be funded. Mr. Finkle asked if Mr. Peters had an idea of what Region 8 would be receiving as funding. Mr. Peters replied no. Mr. Dennison asked if there was a committee to rank the applications. Mr. Doyle replied, "not yet." Mr. Dennison reiterated that MPOs make recommendations, since this funding is for statewide competition and there is no guarantee that Ulster County applications will be selected by NYSDOT in Albany, although each application will be given consideration.

Mr. Tobin stated a discussion on the topic of shared cost initiatives (SCIs) was brought up at the February 7, 2006 Technical Committee meeting. The question of how much Ulster County contributes was asked. He stated that Ulster County contributes approximately \$400 annually which is minimal compared with other MPOs in the State. Mr. Tobin passed around a copy of a CMS study recently completed illustrating what kind of deliverables come out of the shared cost initiatives program.

Mr. Rodriguez arrived and Mr. Doyle asked that everyone in attendance introduce themselves.

#### NEW BUSINESS

##### **RESOLUTION 2006-1: Year 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan Amendment.**

Mr. Doyle stated this amendment relates to double tracking safety, security, mobility and quality of life issues associated with the CSX railroad corridor. Mr. Dennison asked for a motion on the resolution. Mr. Tobin provided a brief background on the amendment language and stated that several members of the Council have expressed concerns that if public funds are made available to assist CSX achieve their capacity expansion goals (for example: using the UCTC TIP process to add capacity) then UCTC members should be involved in making programming and design decisions to ensure public funds are not improperly used to worsen conditions along the corridor.

##### **A motion was made to support the amendment to the plan by Mr. Finkle, which was seconded by Ms. Budik.**

Mr. Tobin stated that the UCTC can't tell CSX what they can or cannot do. If CSX seeks public funds, they, and NYSDOT, should inform the Council. Mr. Tobin stated that it's reasonable to believe NYSDOT could assist CSX with public funds. The railroad does not directly serve the community and if funds come from state or federal sources it would be a good gesture for CSX to have a discussion with the Council first.

Mr. Dennison stated he could not support the amendment as written. He said we should support double tracking without conditions. Publicly funded projects require environmental research and public review such as SEQR or NEPA. The 'conditional' language does not serve a purpose that those agencies wouldn't already handle. Mr. Dennison stated the Council should either clearly support the double tracking concept or not.

Ms. Lanzetta asked why we would conduct a quiet zone study if we can't tell the railroad what to do. Mr. Doyle stated the study was performed at the request of the City of Kingston and Town of Ulster to identify equipment costs that reduce/prohibit horn noise. Mr. Dennison stated that sounding locomotive horns is required at each public crossing by the Federal government.

Mr. Finkle asked, in regard to double tracking, if the railroad needed permission from the State. Mr. Dennison replied that an environmental process would have to take place and, if public funds are extended, there should be a discussion between NYSDOT and CSX.

Mr. Doyle stated it was more of a regional approach than a County approach. Mr. Dennison stated that endorsing the double track concept could be a benefit. Mr. Finkle asked if in supporting the double track concept we would require CSX to hold a public meeting. Mr. Dennison stated it would be redundant under SEQR. Mr. Dennison said CSX is not a public agency and suggested eliminating conditions but to make a request. Mr. Doyle asked Mr. Dennison for clarification. Mr. Finkle suggested making a modification to the Policy statement to support double tracking and request CSX have public meetings. Mr. Tobin stated we should then delete “as a condition of support” to remove the conditional basis of support.

Mr. Dennison asked for a definition of “adequately addressed.” Mr. Finkle suggested having two resolutions; one to support the double tracking concept and a second to request a public meeting. Mr. Dennison said that would only be necessary if public money were used and asked if FRA had to approve a double track. Mr. Tobin suggested eliminating the first part of the last sentence to avoid drafting two resolutions. Mr. Tobin referred to the last sentence reading as “condition of support” and suggested the Council change from “The UCTC requires” to “The UCTC requests.”

Mr. Dennison stated that whether or not funds are available, it is a good idea to support the double track concept. Ms. Ruiz asked what is the benefit of a double track in Ulster County? Mr. Frangella used Kingston as an example saying that trains slow down to move through and double-tracking would eliminate the need for trains to slow or temporarily stop in the Kingston area. Mr. Finkle stated the double track concept is a good idea, and is also good for the economy. Mr. Tobin suggested removing “as a condition of support” and changing the sentence to “UCTC requests that safety, security, mobility and quality of life issues, within affected communities, be adequately addressed.” Ms. Budik suggested “publicly addressed”

Mr. Dennison said that “addressed” may mislead the public into thinking they will get their way with the Railroad. Mr. Dennison stated “publicly discussed” would be a better choice of words. Mr. Doyle asked for support to change the last sentence to read “*UCTC requests that safety, security, mobility, and quality of life issues, within affected communities, be publicly discussed.*” Mr. Finkle stated he would change his motion to reflect that sentence. Ms. Budik said that safety is a big issue in Saugerties we want to keep it at least publicly discussed. Ms. Budik further stated the Council does not want to give away its voice to these issues. Mr. Frangella added that if the UCTC didn’t have any influence on CSX actions he wouldn’t be in attendance at today’s meeting.

Mr. Wilber stated that the word “is” is incorrectly utilized in the last sentence of the amended Policy Statement. Mr. Wilber stated the correct sentence structure should read “*within affected communities ‘be’ publicly discussed.*”

**A Motion to approve the Resolution Amending the Year 2030 Long Range Plan to include the wording to be modified and read as follows:**

***“The Ulster County Transportation Council supports the CSX Railroad Corridor double tracking concept in Ulster County as a means of improving the efficiency of rail freight movement. The UCTC acknowledges that added rail freight capacity helps reduce air pollution, helps reduce truck traffic on the local and regional roadway system, supports Federal and State Planning goals, and is in the best interests of the National economy. The UCTC requests that safety, security, mobility and quality of life issues within affected communities be publicly discussed.”***

**Motion made by Mr. Finkle and seconded by Ms. Budik. All in Favor.**

**RESOLUTION 2006-2: Functional Classification System Map Update.** Mr. Mank stated the proposed changes are above and beyond automatic changes implemented due to results of the 2000 Census. If the Council approves these changes they will then be forwarded to Mr. Peters at NYSDOT and then to Albany and the Federal Highway Administration.

**Mr. Rodriguez made a motion to approve the Resolution and was seconded by Mr. Finkle.**

Mr. Campbell asked when a road becomes an urban collector does this mean the community can apply for funds they couldn't before. Mr. Mank answered that it would be available for federal aid because instead of being a local street it would be classified as an urban collector.

Mr. Peters stated it doesn't change anything in the community. Mr. Peters further stated it's just that now the road is of sufficient importance to qualify for federal aid.

**All in favor of amending the Ulster County Federal Functional Classification System Map.**

**RESOLUTION 2006-3: Draft Year 2006-2007 Unified Planning Work Program Motion by Mr. Rodriguez, seconded by Ms. Ross. No discussion. All in Favor.**

**RESOLUTION 2006-4: Transportation Management Area (TMA) Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).** Mr. Doyle stated the MOU presented was requested by the Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration as one of the recommendations of federal certification review completed in May 2005.

**Motion by Mr. Shepard, seconded by Mr. Campbell. No discussion. All in favor.**

Mr. Doyle stated with the Council's permission he wanted to address one more Resolution not on the Agenda.

**RESOLUTION 2006-5: FTA Section 5307 Funds Small Urban Split Arrangement**

Mr. Doyle stated that within the urbanized area of Kingston, Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5307 funds is assigned to FTA designated recipients (City of Kingston Citibus and Ulster County Area Transit). The two transit operators have agreed to a split the FFY 2006 Small Urban allocation as follows: 55% to the County of Ulster and 45% to the City of Kingston. Mr. Doyle stated the language included within the Resolution is similar to that of Resolutions passed in 2005 and 2004.

**Mr. Rodriguez made a motion to adopt the resolution which was seconded by Mr. Brink. No discussion. All in favor.**

**Ulster County Area Transit/City of Kingston Citibus Transit Systems integration Analysis Final Report.** Mr. Cherwony presented the advantages, disadvantages and opportunities for public transportation integration in Ulster County.

Ms. Lemmon asked if a cost analysis was performed. Mr. Cherwony said an analysis was conducted but showed only a minimal savings.

Mr. Tobin asked if benefits were calculated resulting from more efficient operations. Mr. Cherwony said benefits were not quantified. The current system is not user friendly and the two operators need to coordinate to better benefit the transit users before ridership would increase. Ms. Ruiz stated there is already coordination with scheduling. Mr. Cherwony stated this coordination is good but it needs to be expanded on; perhaps make a more formal Coordination

Council to bring service up to the next level. Mr. Doyle stated that behind the scenes there is a good deal of coordination work underway.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

There was no other business.

**CITIZEN COMMENT**

There were no citizen comments.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 11:21 am