



**Charlottesville-Albemarle Metropolitan Planning Organization
of the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission**
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DRAFT
CHART Advisory Committee Meeting
July 2nd, 2008 Minutes

Present

Members

Stephen Bach
Bobby Burke
James Currie, Chair
Jay Gauldin
Mac Lafferty
Tom Loach
John Pfaltz, Vice Chair
Bill Wuensch

Representing

MPO, Bicycling
MPO, Pedestrian
Albemarle County, Environment
MPO
Albemarle County
Albemarle County Planning Commission
City At-Large
MPO

Not Attending:

James Burton	City At-Large
Marc Evans	MPO
Jeff Monroe	Albemarle County
Linda Seaman	MPO

Staff:

Cory Anderson	TJPDC
Melissa Barlow	TJPDC
Ann Whitham	TJPDC

Matters from the Public:

Joel Kovarsky: Mr. Kovarsky spoke in support of a bus system between Crozet and Downtown with four stops along the way and a central parking facility in Crozet. He offered help in the effort such as circulating a survey. He feels that this is an idea whose time has come, and that it is more immediately feasible than a commuter rail line.

Responses to Matters from the Public:

Mr. Pfaltz responded that there is also a strong possibility that a commuter train might run on existing track between Crozet and Downtown through the Buckingham Branch rail company.

Ms. Barlow also noted that Mr. Sam Froelich has contacted the MPO about opening a park and ride lot in Crozet, as well as finding locations for rail stops along the way. She encouraged Mr. Kovarsky to be the voice in his neighborhood and mentioned the forthcoming RTA Toolkit survey about service strategies to increase transit ridership.

Mr. Kovarsky offered to spread the word via an email to his neighborhood distribution list.

Mr. Currie encouraged Mr. Kovarsky to attend the MPO Policy Board meeting on July 16th to share his ideas.

Welcome New Members:

Mr. Currie and the Committee welcomed new Albemarle County Planning Commission representative Tom Loach to CHART.

Approval of the Meeting Minutes:

Upon a motion by Mr. Pfaltz, seconded by Mr. Lafferty, the June 2008 meeting minutes were approved as amended.

Nomination and Election of a Chair and Vice Chair:

Mr. Currie noted that he has served as the Chair for the past 13 months and feels that it is time for someone else to serve. Given the absence of several members, he suggested that the Committee postpone the election until the August meeting. Mr. Currie also noted that he would like to rotate off the responsibility of attending the MPO Policy Board meetings as the CHART representative.

Rivanna Footbridge Presentation

At Committee member Stephen Bach's request, Mr. Randy Salzman made a presentation to the Committee about Travel Demand Management for the relocation of Martha Jefferson Hospital. Mr. Salzman made a PowerPoint presentation to the Committee about the plans for moving Martha Jefferson Hospital to its new site on Pantops Mountain and the immediate increase travel across the Free Bridge. He noted that the Hospital has a TDM plan in place to address increased travel demand. [To obtain a copy of the presentation please contact info@tjpd.org]

He introduced the City of Charlottesville's proposed plans for a bike and pedestrian bridge across the Rivanna River from East Market Street to Riverbend and support among the Riverview neighborhood for a bike/pedestrian bridge from Riverview Park to Pantops. He suggested that Transportation Enhancement (TEA) Grant funds could be used to build the footbridge before the hospital relocates.

Mr. Gauldin asked if Mr. Salzman had any data to show how many cars might be taken off the road by building the bridge. Mr. Salzman responded that we don't know, but if the bridge was built strong enough for an electric trolley or provided people with electric bicycles to take between the two locations, then the number of people choosing not to drive might grow. He noted that it is difficult to know how many people would change because this data is difficult to gather.

Mr. Pfaltz noted that it makes sense to build a footbridge strong enough for a trolley, but that there is political pressure through the Eastern Connector Study process to build another vehicular bridge. He would like the project to be included in the Long Range Plan, but hopes that it might happen sooner with TEA Grant monies.

Mr. Burke asked if Mr. Salzman has discussed his idea with the Rivanna Trails Foundation. Mr. Burke noted difficulties with keeping the bridge ADA compliant and accessible without incurring great costs and added that the bus does currently serve the Martha Jefferson complex

on Pantops. Mr. Salzman responded that the bus must have shorter headways to be workable. He responded that the bridge should be re-sited if ADA issues are in play.

UnJAM 2035 Document Planning and Review

Ms. Whitham introduced the planning goals and regional vision from the UnJAM 2035 Plan to the Committee and solicited feedback on how the Committee might revise them. The Committee agreed that the very general vision and goals are still relevant and appropriate, but had several suggestions on how to revise the Plan more generally.

Mr. Bach suggested that the document should place more emphasis on more efficient modes of transport than the auto, especially in light of increasingly limited funding.

Mr. Pfaltz does not feel that the “side issues” listed under “Achieving the Regional Vision” in the draft outline are as important as problems such as rural residents commuting into the Charlottesville area and choke points along the way.

Mr. Gauldin feels that there should be a balance between all modes of transport discussed in the plan. He also feels that the plan does not appear to have actually achieved progress on the ground. Mr. Bach agreed, but still feels that the current transportation system is unbalanced toward the motor vehicle.

Mr. Wuensch suggested that putting more pressure on the private development sector to mitigate the transportation impacts of new developments is one way to achieve a more multi-modal transportation network. He noted that private development had driven reliance on the private motor vehicle, but that this trend is beginning to change. Mr. Lafferty commented that downtown Crozet is a good example.

Mr. Loach commented that the land use and transportation connection breaks down when development outpaces the 20-year vision. He added that the 20-year plan seems to be 20 years of catch up with what has already taken place.

Mr. Gauldin commented that the MPO should aim for the low-hanging fruit. He stated that the existing vision is workable, but there does not appear to be any way to accomplish it. Mr. Pfaltz agreed and added that the Plan needs to address where the problem areas for the region are now.

Mr. Bach commented that existing conditions should guide the creation of the fiscally-constrained project list and that the list should actually be prioritized.

Mr. Gauldin commented that the MPO should rely less on VDOT to run projects if they can be overseen locally.

Mr. Pfaltz suggested emphasizing the RTA in the 2035 Update and agreed with Mr. Gauldin’s preference for seeking local funding.

Mr. Currie feels that the current document is not lacking key information, but that the 2035 Update should emphasize the fact that the era of cheap gasoline has gone and that the rural poor driving older cars are bearing the heaviest burden now more than ever. Mr. Bach agreed and feels that decreasing vehicle miles traveled should be part of the vision and our future. Mr. Wuensch noted that this sentiment is present in the plan, but that it could be made more explicit.

Mr. Gauldin stressed the importance of public-private partnerships and market-based solutions to these problems. Mr. Wuensch agreed and noted projects in other localities where a private company constructed a road and the local government issued a bond to cover the cost after the fact.

Mr. Lafferty requested clarification from staff at the next meeting about what is boiler plate in the document versus what CHART can influence. He also wanted to know how the temporary cameras are being used on I-64.

Other Business

There were no items of other business.

Additional Matters from the Public

There were no additional matters from the public.

The meeting was adjourned.