



**Charlottesville-Albemarle Metropolitan Planning Organization
of the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission**
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DRAFT
CHART Advisory Committee Meeting
April 1st, 2009 Minutes

Present

Members

Stephen Bach
Bobby Burke
Jim Currie
Marc Evans
Mac Lafferty, Vice Chair
Tom Loach
Jeff Monroe
John Pfaltz
Linda Seaman, Chair
Bill Wuensch

Representing

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

Staff:

Melissa Barlow TJPDC
Will Cockrell TJPDC
Sarah Eissler TJPDC
Chuck Proctor VDOT
Ann Whitham TJPDC

Ms. Seaman called the meeting to order.

Matters from the Public

Mr. Deily urged the committee to consider more investment in location of transit and not parking garages. Parking garages sabotage transit opportunities. He pointed out that garage costs could be reoriented to pay for a certain amount of light rail.

Mr. Lafferty responded that the library committee at Crozet has discussed this issue and eliminated parking to encourage walking.

Mr. Pfaltz stated that light rail does not meet the same broad audience as a parking garage, but a parking garage could be an asset to transit and combining the two could make transit more robust.

Approval of the Minutes

Approval of the February 4, 2009 minutes was deferred.

Upon a motion from Mr. Lafferty, seconded by Mr. Bach the March 4, 2009 minutes were unanimously approved.

ITS Presentation

Ms. Whitham introduced Mr. Coffman and Mr. Shelley. Several months ago the city requested an ITS Presentation from the Staunton Regional office.

Mr. Coffman presented on the residency's camera system. Mr. Coffman stated that the Staunton office covers all traffic operations in a 20 county area of the Staunton and Culpepper Districts and that the residency is working to enhance the camera service in Charlottesville.

Mr. Coffman mentioned four specific types of services...

- 1) Traffic Engineering
- 2) Regional operation, Traffic Transportation office center
- 3) Safety Service Patrol, white trucks assistance
Incidence management, Maintenance pavement, signs
- 4) Program delivery design and construct ITS projects

Mr. Coffman stated that the monitor system will detect problems, verify incidents conditions, respond to incidents, and inform motorists. The monitoring system will be feed into the 511 systems, Virginia traffic commuter information systems.

Mr. Coffman also discussed the ITS Cameras that are installed or will be installed in various locations in the Charlottesville-Albemarle region. Currently cameras are located at major roadways. A website called trafficland.com allows people to look at traffic cameras anywhere and the Charlottesville cameras will eventually be on this website. The current camera project is fully funded and will finish within the next two months.

Mr. Coffman stated that the project to improve the changeable message signs along major roadways is currently unfunded. The design work was completed, but the project is in limbo.

Mr. Evans asked how the cameras are typically used. Mr. Coffman stated that the cameras are used for visibility only, and could possibly be used for limited observations. Mr. Coffman was unsure of how the cameras could be used in a study capacity. Mr. Shiley stated that the cameras are in real time and that the images are not recorded therefore the cameras cannot currently be used for traffic study purposes.

Mr. Lafferty asked if the office was tied to homeland security. Mr. Coffman said that it was not but those connections are possible in the future.

Ms. Barlow asked if the real time camera feed could allow for changing traffic signals to improve traffic flow. Mr. Coffman stated we would like to be in a responsive mode, but currently are not.

Mr. Coffman also explained that signal coordination has been done on route 29 and Pantops. For any other optimization efforts the residency needs to talk with the City of Charlottesville and return with recommendations. The City and County have currently agreed upon traffic signalized coordination. However, route 20 and route 250 will still have congestion concerns.

Mr. Pfaltz asked if traffic signal cycle time had been increased on route 29. Mr. Coffman said that the city and the county are synchronized currently.

Mr. Barlow asked if the regional operations center was aware of VDOT 29 study. Mr. Coffman stated that they were.

Mr. Lafferty asked about the available methods for changing traffic signals. Mr. Coffman stated that some traffic signals can be changed at the headquarters location with master controllers; however most signal do not have this capacity at this time.

Ms. Seaman asked if funding was available for signalized improvements he mentioned. Mr. Coffman said he is unsure, but the projects are in current plans.

Mr. Lafferty asked how video is transferred back to Staunton. Mr. Coffman stated that a T-1 line was used for video transfer.

Mr. Pfaltz asked if the cameras were a beneficial investment. Mr. Pfaltz elaborated on his concerns explaining that if there was an accident it is likely to be reported before cameras can register it. Mr. Pfaltz asked if there is a long range plan for the monitoring system that will make it more useful. Mr. Coffman responded that these cameras are not intended to tie into independent traffic studies. Mr. Coffman also elaborated on the camera's capabilities stating that cameras can read an entire intersection and can zoom a mile.

Ms. Barlow stated that there is an advantage to setting up the monitoring system infrastructure and then seeing the possibilities.

Mr. Deily asked what kind of time turn-around is the average for getting the information from the cameras to the public. Mr. Coffman stated that the team can turn around information in five minutes.

Mr. Shiley presented the traffic engineering component to the plans for ITS. Mr. Shiley stated that system allows investigation of high crash locations and that this engineering analysis could be used to find problematic traffic patterns and determine remedies for those locations.

Ms. Whitham distributed a memo from Ms. Alexander discussing ITS projects in the City. Ms. Whitham stated that the city ITS software allows them to change signalization from the office unlike the region. Mr. Coffman stated that the Charlottesville system was created to do the in office signalization changes unlike the regional system. Mr. Proctor explained that changing one signal can really affect the entire corridor and it is necessary to have studies and technology to see the effects of total changes.

Transit Survey Efforts Update

Ms. Barlow presented an update to the Regional Toolkit. The toolkit was funded by a grant whose purpose is make transit better for current riders and asked non-riders what amenities would get them to ride transit. SIR used two approaches; short-form surveys for CTS questions about improvements, which included questions about a Regional Transportation Authority. The second survey targeted non- riders. This survey was a random telephone survey approximately

15 minutes long. The telephone survey questions were vetted with several groups and MPO. All groups agreed to the questions. The telephone survey also included questions about the RTA and funding possibilities. The shorter form survey was sent to underrepresented communities and various local media affiliates. The results of this survey process are anticipated for late April to early May.

Mr. Burke endorsed the survey and mentioned CMC is transit oriented and trying to get people to ride buses.

Mr. Bach noted that the telephone survey does not mention biking commutes. Ms. Barlow stated that question was amended.

Mr. Pfaltz stated that the bus survey is excellent. Mr. Pfaltz also expressed concerns that the phone survey might be too long, which will adjust the sample toward citizens who are highly interested in transportation issues. Mr. Pfaltz was also concerned that the telephone survey is solely opinion oriented and includes no data about where respondents live and work. Ms. Barlow responded that surveys are problematic because people don't admit actual behavior. She continued that the goal in telephone survey is to transition survey information into factual information.

UnJAM 2035 MPO-Area Public Outreach Final Steps

Ms. Whitham stated that in reviewing the Public Participation Plan TJPDC staff has become more aware that the participation from low-income and minority areas is extremely low and are trying a new tactic to engage populations.

Mr. Cockrell presented the TJPDC efforts to address these participation gaps. Mr. Cockrell mentioned that the TJPDC has written a short piece about the UnJAM 2035 Plan in Charlottesville Housing Authority newsletter. Also, the Charlottesville Housing Authority communities have regular meetings and TJPDC staff will present on UnJAM 2035 for 15 minutes at each meeting. Mr. Cockrell asked the committee for feedback regarding these public meetings.

Ms. Whitham also mentioned that there is no low-income or minority representation on CHART. She also mentioned that CHART has several vacant committee positions. Mr. Pfaltz stated that the Charlottesville Housing Authority meeting presentations were a great strategy for recruiting in these under-represented communities. Mr. Lafferty asked if help is needed from CHART members at the presentations. Ms. Whitham stated she would contact CHART members if they were needed but that their presence was always helpful in discussing UnJAM with the public. Ms. Seaman mentioned a mobile-home community along 5th street and asked if TJPDC was trying to engage this community. Ms. Whitham stated that there are plans to reach out to underrepresented communities beyond CHA but resources for this are currently limited.

Ms. Whitham also presented the draft of UnJAM 2035 that has been sent to both the Albemarle County and City of Charlottesville Planning Commissions. Both Commissions have meetings scheduled for April 14th. Ms. Barlow continued by stating that the MPO is asking the Commissions for endorsement. The MPO Policy Board will then hold public meetings April and May. Final approval of UnJAM 2035 will be in May.

Mr. Bach asked if the document was on website, because he had some difficulty finding UnJAM on the TJPDC website. Ms. Whitham stated that the documents were available and that staff would verify the accessibility.

Other Business

Mr. Lafferty asked about the status of the TJPDC's new Executive Director. Ms. Barlow stated the director has been selected but the selection is not yet public.

Mr. Lafferty also stated that May is national bicycle month and asked if CHART wanted to participate and asked about ideas to promote "bike month." Mr. Lafferty also asked if ACCT is promoting bike month. Mr. Bach stated that ACCT was especially focused on promoting bike week, which begins May 15th.

Ms. Seaman asked the committee if they would mind not meeting in May. The committee members agreed.

Mr. Bach asked when MPO Policy Board will vote to approve UnJAM 2035. Ms. Barlow stated the vote would occur May 27th.

Matters from the Public

There were no additional matters from the public.

The meeting was adjourned.