

SYRACUSE METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL

MINUTES of the DECEMBER 12, 2019 POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING

Voting Members

Brian Schultz, Chair
Corey Driscoll Dunham
Odean Dyer
Jerrin George
Helen Hudson
David Knapp
Dan Kolinski
Dan Kwasnowski
Heather Lamendola
Rob Simpson
David Smith

Organization

Central New York Regional Transportation Authority
City of Syracuse
Onondaga County
NYS Thruway Authority
City of Syracuse Common Council
Onondaga County Legislature
Empire State Development
Onondaga County Planning Board
Syracuse Planning Commission
CenterState CEO
NYS Department of Transportation

Also Attending

Mark Frechette NYS Department of Transportation

SMTC Staff

James D'Agostino, Kevan Busa, Mario Colone, Jason Deshaies, Andrew Frasier, Kevin Kosakowski, Danielle Krol, Aaron McKeon, Meghan Vitale, and Patricia Wortley

BUSINESS MEETING

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Schultz called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m., in the Lower Level Conference Room of the Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council, Syracuse, NY.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Chairperson inquired if there were any changes to the June 19, 2019 minutes. Hearing none, the Chairperson called for a motion.

Ms. Hudson moved and Mr. Smith seconded approval of the minutes. Motion carried.

3. COMMUNICATIONS AND REPORTS

A. UPWP STATUS REPORT

Mr. D'Agostino stated that the 2019-2020 Status Report would be highlighted under item 5A.

B. UPDATE ON THE I-81 VIADUCT PROJECT FROM THE NYSDOT

Mr. Frechette stated that the last Policy Committee meeting was in June. The Preliminary DEIS was released in the springtime that included a lot of information not previously released to the public. The primary find was the DOT recommending the Community Grid option. There was a large turnout at the public meeting. It was an opportunity to listen to what the community had to say. They conducted follow-up on the Open House with 11 neighborhood meetings, primarily downtown, but also in DeWitt, Cicero, LaFayette and Salina. They heard a lot of good things. It was good to have conversations on how things would change with commutes into the city. The City

meetings are more concerned with impacts on citizens. They received over 1,000 comments from the public. They are working through resolution of all the comments. They will be part of the DEIS which the public will see some time in 2020. They find this to be very successful in engaging with the public. Mr. Frechette is a firm believer that they can make things better through interaction with the public, including the SMTC meetings.

Mr. Frechette stated that there are new developments that the DOT is undergoing currently based on what they heard from the public. There were a number of communities north of the city concerned about traffic volumes based on business loop. Exit 3 on I-481 also came up. These things are being analyzed and they could be part of the I-81 project. It really improves what the project is going to be. Community engagement is a key component. They are trying to narrow the focus of what the community grid is going to improve. They are meeting with DEC and WEP. They met with Centro already. They also met with CenterState and MACNY as well as the SMTC. They have met with National Grid as well.

Mr. Frechette stated that the Department is committed to work with people to try to minimize impacts. Even in construction, they will work with the community and stakeholders. This is very challenging to implement. He noted they have made tremendous strides in 2019.

Mr. D'Agostino inquired about funding and when the NYSDOT would be coming to this Committee for funding. Mr. Frechette stated they initially put into place the funding for the Design Phases. The Federal Transportation bill expires October 1, 2020. Congress needs to act to identify what levels of funding we are going to have. This project cannot come out of the coffers of money that come to Region 3. The EIS has to be signed off on by the State and Federal governments first. Extensions are not a good thing in the planning world.

Mr. Simpson inquired as to the timing for the release next year. Mr. Frechette stated they do not have a date as of right now. They have to go through a process with their federal partners. He is optimistic that it will be some time not too late in 2020. Mr. Smith added that once the document is put together by the NYSDOT then it has to be reviewed by FHWA before being released.

4. OLD BUSINESS

None.

5. NEW BUSINESS

A. 2020-2021 UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM (UPWP)

Mr. D'Agostino reviewed the current work program noting the completed items and other accomplishments. Mr. D'Agostino reviewed the new UPWP, with a \$1.6 million budget. He noted that we are receiving \$400,000 in SPR funds from the New York State Department of Transportation for the Dome Traffic Management and Events Strategic Plan. This will be a consultant-led, multi-year study. We received 15 applications in response to our October call letter. Mr. D'Agostino reviewed the proposals. There were two projects from the City of Syracuse and two projects from CenterState CEO that will be not part of the new program. We have no carryover funds to program to the new UPWP.

Mr. Frechette inquired as to the City's Safe Routes to Schools (SR2S) Manual if it was building on the State's SR2S. Mr. Colone stated it would be more detailed. Mr. D'Agostino stated the project had not been scoped yet. Ms. Hudson inquired if Syracuse University would be contributing to the University Hill study, noting that they need to pitch in for big-ticket items. Mr. D'Agostino stated that we had not approached the University.

Mr. Simpson stated that he respects to the decision on the two items CenterState submitted for consideration. He does have concerns as to the timeline for the release of the State's DEIS. He stated the desire was to get as much of the information beforehand. They do not want to replicate the State's efforts. We are still waiting for detailed planning and analysis. Mr. D'Agostino stated Mr. Simpson's concerns are very real. He hopes NYSDOT is listening to these comments. CenterState can and should come back to the SMTC if they feel the State is not meeting their needs.

Mr. Simpson moved and Ms. Driscoll Dunham seconded a motion to adopt the 2020-2021 UPWP. Motion carried unanimously.

B. SAFETY PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Mr. D'Agostino stated that as required by the FAST Act, the SMTC has the option to adopt the performance measures adopted by the State or develop our own. The State adopted 2020 safety targets in August 2019 for the following performance measures: number of fatalities, rate of fatalities per 100 million Vehicle Miles Traveled, number of serious injuries, rate of serious injuries per 100 million Vehicle Miles Traveled, and number of non-motorized fatalities and non-motorized serious injuries. We see no need to develop our own so we will adopt the State's.

Mr. Knapp moved and Mr. Dyer seconded a motion to adopt the Safety Performance Measures Resolution. Motion carried unanimously.

C. ERIE BOULEVARD TRANSIT MOBILITY ENHANCEMENT DRAFT FINAL TECHNICAL MEMORANDUM

Mr. D'Agostino stated that the Town of DeWitt requested this study. Mr. Busa gave an overview of the work performed.

Ms. Lamendola stated that Mr. Busa noted that the developer will pay for the improvements and inquired why Centro would not pay for the improvements. Mr. Busa stated that Centro does not pay for those improvements now unless there are over 50 riders. He stated Mr. Burke has already talked to Crouse about having the accommodations available. Ms. Lamendola does not want this type of stop to not be added if a developer was unable to pay for the stop since their customers would benefit from the accommodations. Ms. Driscoll Dunham inquired if this study could be applied to other major corridors based on ridership. Mr. D'Agostino stated this could absolutely be used on other corridors. Mr. Kwasnowski inquired if you can hail a bus from anywhere or if people have to be at a stop. Mr. Busa stated riders need to be at stops.

Mr. Smith inquired why Level One stops were all on the west and Level Three stops were on the east. Mr. Busa stated that Level One stops are where people are generally waiting for a bus to go to their destination, while Level Three stops are departure stops and people make their way to home or other destinations. He noted that enhanced shelters are needed for boardings. Ms. Hudson inquired what part Centro is paying for in this. Mr. Busa stated that they would need to make the ramps ADA compliant. They are not paying for the shelters due to the lower ridership numbers. He stated the Town of DeWitt came to the SMTC to request something they could use for future development.

Ms. Lamendola moved and Mr. Kolinski seconded a motion to acknowledge the completion of the Technical Memorandum for the above project. Motion carried.

D. NPMRDS WEB INTERFACE

Mr. D'Agostino stated that this is an informational item. The information is valuable as it gives

us a set of tools, in addition to our model. It is a better understanding of 'what is.' Mr. Deshaies gave an overview of the tool.

Mr. Simpson inquired if you can get directional and origin/destination data. Mr. Deshaies stated that directional data is available. We cannot get origin/destination data with this tool. There are companies out there that provide that information, but it is not cheap. Ms. Driscoll Dunham inquired what type of roads you can get the information for. Mr. D'Agostino stated it is your major road networks.

No action was required of this committee.

E. CONGESTION MANAGEMENT PROCESS 2019 STATUS UPDATE – DRAFT FINAL REPORT

Mr. D'Agostino stated that this report utilizes data from the NPMRDS, as described in the last presentation. This report is conducted as a federal requirement. This report Mr. Kosakowski gave an overview of the report.

Mr. Frechette stated the information is very valuable. He noted, we do not take in congestion into consideration in the TIP analysis and we should look at that in the future. Mr. Colone stated that this new data adds more value.

Mr. Smith moved and Mr. Knapp seconded a motion to acknowledge the completion of the Technical Memorandum for the above project. Motion carried.

F. COMMUNITY STREETS WHITE PAPER

Mr. D'Agostino stated this was completed under the City of Syracuse On-Call Planning Support work item. The SMTC researched other cities' programs for approving citizen-led 'tactical urbanism' projects. Mr. McKeon provided an overview of the work completed for the City.

Ms. Hudson inquired how traffic counts take place, and if people are calling the City for the count. Mr. McKeon stated that they could call the City or the data collection may come from the people who established the project. Ms. Driscoll Dunham stated this is really great and the City appreciates the SMTC looking into it. They get requests all the time and the answer is normally no. She is appreciative of this path. Discussion followed.

No action was required of this committee.

G. CITY OF SYRACUSE SUPPLEMENTAL PAVEMENT RATING PROGRAM

Mr. D'Agostino stated that the SMTC provided the City of Syracuse with pavement rating assistance. We are utilizing the NYSDOT windshield rating system. You may have seen the program on the news lately. Mr. Frasier gave an overview of the supplemental work conducted by the SMTC.

Mr. Dyer inquired if this data was open to everyone. Mr. Frasier stated it is not available yet, but will be next week most likely. Mr. Frechette inquired if layers can be turned off to only show certain ratings. Mr. Frasier stated not at this time, but that could be added in the future.

No action was required of this committee.

6. **PUBLIC COMMENT**
None.

7. **ADJOURNMENT**
With no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 2:32 p.m.