

# **DURHAM-CHAPEL HILL-CARRBORO METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION BOARD**

**13 December 2017**

## **MINUTES OF MEETING**

The Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro Metropolitan Planning Organization Board met on December 13, 2017, at 9:00 a.m. in the City Council Committee Room, located on the second floor of Durham City Hall. The following people were in attendance:

Steve Schewel (MPO Board Chair)	City of Durham
Damon Seils (MPO Board Vice Chair)	Town of Carrboro
Ellen Reckhow (Member)	GoTriangle
Barry Jacobs (Member)	Orange County
Pam Hemminger (Member, excused absence)	Town of Chapel Hill
Charlie Reece (Member)	City of Durham
Vernetta Alston (Alternate)	City of Durham
Wendy Jacobs (Member, excused absence)	Durham County
Heidi Carter (Alternate)	Durham County
Jenn Weaver (Alternate)	Town of Hillsborough
Michael Parker (Alternate)	Town of Chapel Hill
Penny Rich (Alternate)	Orange County
David Keilson	NCDOT, Division 5
Richard Hancock	NCDOT, Division 5
Patrick Wilson	NCDOT, Division 7
Bryan Kluchar	NCDOT, Division 8
Jen Britt	NCDOT, Division 8
Julie Bogle	NCDOT, TPD
Craig Benedict	Orange County
Nishith Trivedi	Orange County
Bergen Watterson	Town of Chapel Hill
Tina Moon	Town of Carrboro
Kayla Seibel	Town of Chapel Hill
Patrick McDonough	GoTriangle
Geoff Green	GoTriangle
Terry Bellamy	City of Durham
Ellen Beckmann	City of Durham
Evan Tenenbaum	Durham County
Felix Nwoko	DCHC MPO
Andy Henry	DCHC MPO
Meg Scully	DCHC MPO
Aaron Cain	DCHC MPO
Dale McKeel	DCHC MPO/City of Durham
Brian Rhodes	DCHC MPO
Anne Phillips	DCHC MPO
Bill Judge	City of Durham

Don Bryson	VHB
Gretchen Coperine	RTP
Ed Harrison	Durham County Resident
Don Moffitt	City of Durham Resident
Danny Rogers	GoTriangle

Quorum Count: 9 of 10 Voting Members

Chair Steve Schewel called the meeting to order at 9:06 a.m. A roll call was performed. The voting members and alternate voting members of the DCHC MPO Board were identified and are indicated above. Chair Steve Schewel reminded everyone to sign-in using the sign-in sheet that was being circulated.

Ellen Reckhow stated that she was now the GoTriangle MPO Board member. Charlie Reece was introduced as the new MPO Board member representing the City of Durham, and Heidi Carter was introduced as the new alternate representing Durham County. Chair Steve Schewel stated that Vernetta Alston and Wendy Jacobs would also be joining the MPO Board, representing the City of Durham and Durham County, respectively. Chair Steve Schewel added that he would remain on the MPO Board as an alternate for the City of Durham.

Vice Chair Damon Seils made a motion to grant Pam Hemminger an excused absence. Michael Parker seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Ellen Reckhow made a motion to grant Wendy Jacobs an excused absence. Michael Parker seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

## **PRELIMINARIES:**

### **2. Ethics Reminder**

Charlie Reece read the Ethics Reminder. Chair Steve Schewel asked if there were any known conflicts of interest with respect to matters coming before the MPO Board, and requested that if there were any identified during the meeting for them to be announced. There were no known conflicts identified by MPO Board members.

Aaron Cain drew attention to an attachment from the North Carolina Ethics Commission regarding holiday gifts.

### **3. Adjustments to the Agenda**

Chair Steve Schewel asked if there were any adjustments to the agenda. There was one adjustment to the agenda. Former MPO Board Members Don Moffitt and Ed Harrison were recognized for their service to the MPO Board.

Chair Steve Schewel presented Don Moffitt with a plaque in recognition of his two years of service on the MPO Board. Don Moffitt reflected on how he first became involved with the MPO Board, and on the importance of the work of the MPO Board. Vice Chair Damon Seils presented Ed Harrison with a plaque in recognition of his sixteen years of service on the MPO Board. Ed Harrison reflected on his tenure on the MPO Board, and commended staff for their work over the years. Ellen Reckhow thanked Ed Harrison for his work on the MPO Board, and stated that his legacy is that people can now bike more safely in the region.

Chair Steve Schewel introduced Vernetta Alston to the MPO Board. Charlie Reece stated that he needed to leave the meeting early.

### **4. Public Comments**

There were no public comments.

### **5. Directives to Staff**

The Directives to Staff were included in the agenda packet for review.

### **CONSENT AGENDA:**

#### **6. Approval of November 15, 2017, Board Meeting Minutes**

#### **7. 2018 MPO Board and Technical Committee Meeting Schedule**

Aaron Cain, LPA Staff

#### **8. FY2018 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Amendment #2**

Meg Scully, LPA Staff

Ellen Reckhow made a motion to approve the items on the consent agenda. Michael Parker seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

# **ACTION ITEMS:**

## **9. NC 54 West Corridor Study**

Don Bryson, VHB

Aaron Cain, LPA Staff

Aaron Cain described the parameters and reasons for the NC 54 West Corridor study. Don Bryson stated that there are a number of small towns with different land uses and plans along the NC 54 West corridor. He added that there were some environment concerns and historical sites along the corridor. Don Bryson described the conditions and crash patterns, particularly related to bicycle and pedestrian crashes, along the NC 54 West corridor. Don Bryson stated that the best way to look at the corridor was in terms of critical nodes, or intersections where problems tend to occur.

Don Bryson defined Volume-to-Capacity (V/C) in response to a question from Charlie Reece. Chair Steve Schewel and Don Bryson discussed whether there is a V/C range typically associated with various Levels of Service (LOS).

Barry Jacobs inquired whether the Mebane bypass comes down to NC 54 and onto NC 119, and Don Bryson stated that it does not. Don Bryson described problems related to the NC 119 intersection. Michael Parker and Don Bryson discussed conditions for bicyclists on NC 54, and the results of an intersection analysis done along the corridor. Don Bryson also discussed the results of an economic development and land use analysis. He stated that there were underappreciated tourism opportunities pertaining to heritage and natural sites like the Haw River. Don Bryson stated that the economic analysis resulted in the notion of economic and conservation/heritage nodes along the corridor. Don Bryson described the public engagement process for the study. Michael Parker, Don Bryson, and Vice Chair Damon Seils discussed study stakeholders. Barry Jacobs stated that the corridor has historically been a route to Kenan Stadium, and suggested that Don Bryson look into adding signs that indicate mileage to

the next town. Michael Parker and Barry Jacobs discussed the need for better wayfinding signs in the study area. Jenn Weaver inquired whether Don Bryson was in touch with the Mountains-to-Sea Trail group about potential crossings along the corridor. Ellen Reckhow and Don Bryson discussed various bicycle facilities that are being considered for the corridor. Michael Parker and Don Bryson discussed the extent to which transit has been considered as part of the study. Vice Chair Damon Seils stated that he appreciated the focus on nodes, and that the approach is consistent with the Carrboro Board of Aldermen's longstanding approach to the corridor.

Don Bryson reviewed the schedule for the remainder of the study. In response to a question from Chair Steve Schewel, he stated that the study website was NC54west.com.

No further action was required by the MPO Board.

#### **10. Proposed D-O LRT Project Changes**

Danny Rogers, GoTriangle

Danny Rogers discussed reasons for adding the Blackwell/Mangum station, and some of the limitations imposed by a historical property near the proposed station site. Danny Rogers discussed how the Blackwell/Mangum station would affect overall ridership on the line. Danny Rogers discussed how changes to the alignment affect the overall budget for the project.

Michael Parker inquired whether pedestrian infrastructure would be added to help people to get to the Blackwell/Mangum station. There was discussion of the work that needs to be done to improve conditions for pedestrians in the station area. Danny Rogers discussed potential property impacts from the Blackwell/Mangum Street station in response to a question from Charlie Reece. There was discussion of whether an inducement around station naming could be used to get private entities to allow the use of their property. Danny Rogers discussed GoTriangle's station naming policy. Danny Rogers discussed recent adjustments to the project that have resulted in cost savings in response to a question from Vernetta Alston. Chair Steve Schewel recognized GoTriangle staff for the recent adjustments they have made to the project. Ellen Reckhow recognized the Durham Area Designers for

150 their work around the Blackwell/Mangum station. Barry Jacobs stated that the Orange County Board of  
151 Commissioners recently voted on the Blackwell/Mangum station, and that they were excited about the  
152 addition of the station. Penny Rich stated that the Orange County Commissioners pointed out that the  
153 Blackwell/Mangum station would be used at night, and would not only serve commuters but visitors to  
154 entertainment venues as well. Vice Chair Damon Seils inquired whether the decision to move to two-car  
155 platforms would preclude the use of three car platforms in the future, and Danny Rogers stated that it  
156 was highly unlikely that three-car platforms could be used in the future. Danny Rogers discussed  
157 measures, such as increasing the frequency of trains, which could be used to increase the capacity of the  
158 line. Danny Rogers discussed how ridership distribution on the Durham-Orange Light Rail Transit (D-O  
159 LRT) project differed from comparable light rail lines. Ellen Reckhow stated that ridership projects do not  
160 often take into account special events, and that special events might help the D-OLRT exceed ridership  
161 projections. Charlie Reece thanked staff for adding the Blackwell/Mangum station and for making sure  
162 that the line now goes further into East Durham.

163 Vice Chair Damon Seils made a motion to approve the addition of the Blackwell/Mangum  
164 station. Ellen Reckhow seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

165 Danny Rogers discussed the reasons for and the benefits of modifying the alignment of the  
166 Gateway station. Danny Rogers discussed how the modified station alignment would encourage  
167 economic development in the station area. Ellen Reckhow stated that modifying the alignment of the  
168 Gateway station would be beneficial for both Durham and Orange counties. Chair Steve Schewel  
169 reflected on how the D-O LRT project would affect the region in decades to come.

170 Danny Rogers asked MPO Board members to submit any thoughts about the Gateway station to  
171 Aaron Cain. Penny Rich stated that it was important that County Commissioners of both Durham and  
172 Orange County are involved in all steps with economic development opportunities related to the

Gateway station. Danny Rogers stated that GoTriangle was working with Drew Cummings and Travis Myren to make sure that this was the case.

No further action was required by the MPO Board.

#### **11. 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)**

Andy Henry, LPA Staff

Chair Steve Schewel described the MPO Board's recent involvement the MTP process. In response to a question from Heidi Carter, Andy Henry stated that the MTP is approved every four to five years.

Andy Henry described the next steps for approving and adopting the MTP, and recent changes that were made to the MTP. In response to a question from Heidi Carter, Andy Henry defined the term "modernization." Andy Henry briefly described the differences between the fiscally constrained MTP and the fiscally unconstrained Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP). Andy Henry described recent corrections that were made to the MTP. Andy Henry described why he ultimately decided against breaking highway projects down by the statewide, regional, and highway level, and the benefits of not making such distinctions.

Michael Parker asked Andy Henry to look into whether the light rail extension to Carrboro as it is currently conceptualized would be competing with Chapel Hill's Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project for ridership. Andy Henry described the public comments that were received on the MTP. There was discussion of how to respond to members of the public who ask why there is no direct rail access between Raleigh-Durham International Airport and the City. Andy Henry discussed changes to the Triangle Regional Model (TRM) related to more recent population projections for each county. Andy Henry described how the TRM is used, and how the performance of the TRM is evaluated.

Michael Parker made a motion to approve the 2045 MTP. Ellen Reckhow seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

#### **12. DCHC MPO Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Transition Plan and Self-Assessment**

Felix Nwoko, LPA Staff

In compliance with the ADA, the MPO has prepared a Transition Plan and Self-Assessment. The MPO is required to develop a Transition Plan as well as monitor its recipients of federal funds. The draft ADA Transition Plan has been reviewed by NCDOT and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

Vice Chair Damon Seils clarified that no comments were received on the Transit Plan and Self-Assessment since the last MPO Board meeting. Vice Chair Damon Seils stated that the plan involves responsibility on the part of the various local jurisdictions, and that it is important for policy makers and staff to be aware of this fact.

Felix Nwoko stated that the Town of Chapel Hill has almost completed their ADA Plan, and that the MPO is working with Carrboro on ADA compliance. Felix Nwoko added that the MPO Board would be tying ADA compliance to its allocation of Strategic Transportation Block Grant Direct Attribution (STBG-DA) funds.

Vice Chair Damon Seils made a motion to approve the Transition Plan and Self-Assessment. Michael Parker seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**13. Release of Amendment #1 to the FY2018-2027 TIP for Public Comment**

Aaron Cain, LPA Staff

On November 8, 2017, the MPO Board adopted the FY2018-2027 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Aaron Cain explained that the TIP must now be reconciled with the FY2018-2027 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) by the FHWA, a process that should take place by the end of the year. Due to issues of consistency with the STIP within the first four years of the program, there are a number of projects within the TIP that will need to be changed through an amendment process. Because some of these projects change the funding amount by more than \$1,000,000, per the MPO's Public Involvement Plan (PIP), the amendment must be released for a 21-day public comment period. Aaron Cain added that there were changes to the TIP not in the agenda attachment, but that the changes would be made clear to the MPO Board before the vote to approve the FY2018-2027 TIP.



223 Ellen Reckhow made a motion to release the FY2018-2027 TIP for public comment. Michael  
 224 Parker seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

225 **14. MPO Board Elections**

226 Aaron Cain, LPA Staff

227 Aaron Cain reminded the MPO Board of the stipulations that govern the Chair and Vice Chair  
 228 positions. Chair Steve Schewel stated that the nominating committee recommended that Vice Chair  
 229 Damon Seils become MPO Board Chair, and that Wendy Jacobs become Vice Chair.

230 Ellen Reckhow made a motion to approve this recommendation. Heidi Carter seconded the  
 231 motion. The motion passed unanimously.

232 **REPORTS:**

233 **15. Report from the DCHC MPO Board Chair**

234 Steve Schewel, DCHC MPO Board Chair

235 There was no report from Chair Steve Schewel.

236 **16. Report from the DCHC MPO Technical Committee Chair**

237 Ellen Beckmann, DCHC MPO TC Chair

238 There was no report from the DCHC MPO TC Chair.

239 **17. Reports from LPA Staff**

240 Felix Nwoko, LPA Staff

241 There was discussion about whether there would be any changes to MPO Board representation  
 242 from any of the other jurisdictions. Aaron Cain discussed plans to hold two separate orientations for  
 243 new Durham and Orange County representatives to the MPO Board. Felix Nwoko stated that the  
 244 materials for the MPO Board orientation are on the website.

245 In response to a question from Ellen Reckhow, Felix Nwoko stated that an offer has been made  
 246 for the new MPO Board staff working group administrator position.

247 **18. NCDOT Reports:**

Richard Hancock, NCDOT Division 5, stated that the Pettigrew Street bridge over Alston Avenue was recently demolished, and that a detour has been set up due to the related closure. He also provided updates on the Old Chapel Hill bicycle and pedestrian project and the East End Connector project. Chair Steve Schewel and Richard Hancock discussed whether Division 5 was satisfied with the progress of the East End Connector project.

Pat Wilson, NCDOT Division 7, stated that the fence for the I-40 bridge over Orange Grove Road has been let. He also provided updates on the Greensboro/Estes roundabout and the Bennett/Mt. Carmel roundabouts. Pat Wilson stated that the Division has been in contact with staff about the Franklin/Merritt Mill intersection, and that an update meeting would be scheduled shortly. Pat Wilson stated that the Division was trying to cobble together various funding sources so that no local match would be required for pedestrian improvements to the Franklin/Merritt Mill intersection. Vice Chair Damon Seils thanked Pat Wilson for the Division's work on the Franklin/Merritt Mill intersection project. Pat Wilson clarified that construction on the Bennett/Mt. Carmel project would begin in August of 2019.

Bryan Kluchar, NCDOT Division 8, stated that there was a re-alignment project at the intersection of NC 751 and O'Kelly Chapel Road in northeast Chatham County. Jen Britt added that there would be pipe replacements in all counties, and that Chatham County has already started the process.

Julie Bogle, NCDOT TPD, stated that WSP has been selected as the consultant for the statewide plan update. She added that corridors were bundled for the Strategic Transportation Corridor Study, and that these bundles would be assigned to different consultants. Julie Bogle stated that the Statewide Freight Plan was adopted by the NCDOT Board of Transportation and the FHWA on November 21, 2017. Julie Bogle stated the Division was wrapping up FY 2018 Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) projects, and applications for funding for 2019 CMAQ projects

272 would be due in March of 2018. She added that MPO/RPO ethics training webinars are available online  
273 for those who are interested.

274 **INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:**

275 **19. Recent News, Articles, and Updates**

276 Vice Chair Damon Seils thanked Chair Steve Schewel for his work on the MPO Board, and for  
277 being a good role model.

278 **ADJOURNMENT:**

279 There being no further business before the DCHC MPO Board, the meeting was adjourned at  
280 10:50 a.m.