



Meeting Summary

TRANSPORT 2020: IMPLEMENTATION TASK FORCE (ITF) FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE SUBCOMMITTEE

Monday, April 26, 2004

6:30 pm

Madison Municipal Building, Room 300
215 Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard
Madison, WI

-- ROLL CALL

Subcommittee Present: Sandy Beaupre; Lori Kay (*for LaMarr Billups*); Supv. Michael Blaska; Ald. Ken Golden (*alternate*; 7:05); Supv. Scott McDonell (*alternate*); George Nelson; Ald. Warren Onken (7:30); Randy Romanski; Dick Wagner.

Subcommittee Absent: None.

TAC/Staff Present: Catherine Debo (Madison Metro); Rob Kennedy (Dane County Executive's Office); Bob McDonald (Madison Area Metropolitan Planning Organization); Bill Schaefer (Madison Area MPO); David Trowbridge (Madison Planning and Development; *Project Administrator for Transport 2020*).

Others Present: Fred Bartol (Dane Alliance for Rail Transit); Jesse Kaysen; Bob Schaefer.

1. REVIEW OF AGENDA

Transport 2020 Co-Chair Scott McDonell welcomed Finance and Governance Subcommittee members to the first meeting. There were no suggested modifications to the meeting agenda.

2. OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no members of the public wishing to speak on future agenda items.

3. ELECTION OF FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIR

George Nelson nominated Michael Blaska and Dick Wagner to serve as Co-Chairs of the Finance and Governance Subcommittee. The Subcommittee unanimously elected Blaska and Wagner to serve as Co-Chairs.

4. REVIEW, DISCUSSION AND APPROVAL OF FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE SUBCOMMITTEE CHARGE/MISSION

The only registrant on this agenda item was Bob Schaefer. Mr. Schaefer urged the Subcommittee to evaluate the financial implications of the Transport 2020 Full System Vision, and not just focus on the Start-Up System. He said that the full costs should be identified and evaluated.

David Trowbridge summarized the key components of the Subcommittee Charge/Mission and said that the Transport 2020 Start-Up System would be the focus of the initial finance and governance discussions, although he acknowledged that the service characteristics (i.e., exact vehicle type, route, stations, etc.) would continue to be refined as Task Force activities move forward.

Dick Wagner said that the Subcommittee Charge/Mission looked good at this point, and said that a full range of governance options would need to be looked at. He said that using Dane County as a border is one option, but that other options may require state enabling legislation. He said that a base level of information needs to be gathered to help the Subcommittee sort through the options.

Bob McDonald said that it would be useful to lay out the advantages and disadvantages of the various governance options, including the different kinds of regional authorities. He said that he did a report several years ago that could be updated to provide some information on this issue.

In terms of funding, Sandy Beaupre said that Rod Clark could be helpful in explaining the various state and federal funding sources for transportation (including public transit sources). She also said that Beth Nachreiner could be asked to provide some information on funding sources. Catherine Debo said that the American Public Transit Association (APTA) would likely have a great deal of information about the range of operating authorities, and that Madison Metro staff could be helpful in sorting through this information. Project Administrator David Trowbridge said that he appreciated the offers of staff support in gathering this information on financing and governance. George Nelson said that it would be useful to look at peer communities, such as those urban areas with less than 500,000 population.

Scott McDonnell referred to a State Legislative Council report (from Senator Risser's office) that reviewed how to establish a regional authority. He said that this may be useful. Trowbridge said that he would follow up with McDonnell to find out how to obtain this report. Dick Wagner also said that there are non-transit ways to establish a regional authority, such as was done with Miller Park. Bill Schaefer suggested showing how much funding could be raised with a county-wide sales tax, such as a ½-cent or ¼-cent tax. Bob McDonald said that boundaries less than the entire county should also be considered.

Dick Wagner said that the full realities of transit service in Dane County needed to be considered - which includes elderly and disabled transportation, as well as fixed-route transit service.

Michael Blaska asked what type of timeframe the Finance and Governance Subcommittee would be working under. David Trowbridge said that some initial information needs to be produced for Federal Transit Administration (FTA) review within the next 6-8 months, but that it is not clear how long the Subcommittee would need to meet. George Nelson asked that the Wisconsin and Southern Railroad (WSOR) commuter rail pilot proposal be presented to the Task Force. David Trowbridge said that he would arrange for this presentation at the May 24th meeting of the full Implementation Task Force.

Michael Blaska said that the Subcommittee should focus in on the most realistic financing options available to us. Randy Romanski reported that the reauthorization of the federal TEA-21 transportation funding bill would likely not occur this year, and that an extension to TEA-21 would push action on a new bill into 2005.

Dick Wagner said that, barring any objection, the Finance and Governance Subcommittee Charge/Mission is adequate at this time.

5. UPDATE ON ACTIVITIES TO DEVELOP AN INVENTORY OF POTENTIAL TRANSPORT 2020 FUNDING SOURCES

The only public registrant on this agenda item was Bob Schaefer. Schaefer again urged the Subcommittee to evaluate the funding sources of the Transport 2020 Full System Vision, and not just the Start-Up System. He said that the north/south commuter rail leg should be evaluated, in addition to the initial east/west service. Schaefer also said that the costs need to be shared regionally and added that a 20% farebox recovery is not good performance. He also said that a wheel tax would be a negative solution and that other fees, such a hotel fee, need to be tied to the benefits of the service.

Rob Kennedy (Transportation Consultant, Dane County) then provided an overview of some of the work he has been asked to do by County Executive Kathleen Falk. He said that he would be developing an inventory of funding sources that were the most realistic and available for financing the Transport 2020 project. Kennedy also said that possible funding sources for the upcoming PE/NEPA project would be explored.

Ald. Ken Golden recalled the Monona Terrace (MT) funding discussions and said that they were useful because they allocated benefits to various parties, such as the City of Madison, Dane County, the State, etc. He said that the Terrace debates were capital-oriented and that the cost-benefit analysis was justified. He also asked that a Portland funding model be looked at, a methodology that evaluated benefits to specific properties and used assessments to finance some of their streetcar project. Golden also asked that parking be looked at as part of the equation and see how it fits into a "value-recaptured" approach to financing. He said that a park-and-ride strategy should be considered as an important component of transit.

Catherine Debo said that a recent WisDOT report evaluated the public benefits of transit and that this should be looked at. She will try to get copies of this report to Subcommittee members.

George Nelson recalled that the Monona Terrace evaluation looked at an alternative of doing nothing, which showed some serious implications of disinvestment in the downtown. Dick Wagner also said that the MT discussion recognized the wider regional importance of such a large public capital investment, and said that Transport 2020 should do the same. Lori Kay agreed and said that the Dane County Regional Airport is widely recognized as beneficial to the private sector economy, and said that Transport 2020 should consider this as well.

George Nelson said that Transport 2020 should start with a base level of service and expand on this over time. Dick Wagner agreed, but added that future transit investments should be put into the context of how much expenditure is made on the transportation system as a whole in this area.

Jesse Kaysen said that air quality is a benefit that an improved transit system provides and that this should be included in the debate. Dick Wagner said that there are serious business disincentives of operating in an air quality non-attainment area (such as Southeastern Wisconsin) and that this should be explored.

George Nelson said that private sector investments in parking (and transit) should be discussed and that parking will be a key issue in anything that moves forward in Transport 2020. Lori Kay agreed, noting that the airport is also discussed in the context of the private sector. Kay also cautioned the Subcommittee that parking is an issue that often breeds a "we vs. they" mentality and that business operates in a regionally-competitive environment.

Rob Kennedy said that the Kerry Vandell/Monona Terrace study could be looked at for guidance. Ken Golden said that this could be helpful in putting together a study design for possible outsourcing. Dick Wagner agreed and said that an initial review of information to help identify of possible approaches (for a cost-benefit evaluation) would be a good start.

6. ITEMS BY THE SUBCOMMITTEE CO-CHAIRS AND OTHER MEMBERS

There were no items by the Co-Chairs or the other Subcommittee members.

7. ADJOURNMENT

The Subcommittee adjourned its meeting at 7:35 p.m.