



Minutes

**JOINT MEETING/WORKSHOP
OVERSIGHT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (OAC) MEETING #21
TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (TAC)**

Wednesday, February 27, 2002

7:00 pm

City/County Building, Room 201

210 Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard

Madison, WI

-- ROLL CALL

OAC Members Present: Supv. Michael Blaska; David Cieslewicz; Kristine Euclide; Ann Falconer; Rob Kennedy; Supv. Scott McDonell; Ald. Warren Onken; Rose Phetteplace; Dick Wagner.

OAC Members Absent: LaMarr Billups; Ald. Ken Golden (*notified*); Patrick Goss; Ken Leonard (*notified*); George Nelson (*notified*).

TAC/Staff Present: Jim Arts (Dane County Executive's Office); Douglas Dalton (WisDOT, Bureau of Planning); Catherine Debo (Madison Metro); Michael Friedlander (Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Ozone and SIP Development Section); Lori Kay (UW-Madison); Bob McDonald (Madison Area Metropolitan Planning Organization); Mari McKenzie (WisDOT, Bureau of Planning); Larry Nelson (City of Madison, Engineering); John Norwell (Dane County Highway and Transportation Department); Bill Schaefer (Madison Area Metropolitan Planning Organization); David Trowbridge (Madison Planning and Development; *Project Administrator for Transport 2020*).

Others Present: Karen Baker (Bay Ridge Consulting); Fred Bartol (Dane Alliance for Rail Transit); John DeLamater; Stephanie Eiler (Parsons Brinckerhoff; *Project Manager for Transport 2020*); Don Emerson (Parsons Brinckerhoff, *conference call*); Jay Ferm; Kim Lobdell (KL Engineering); Al Matano (Sierra Club); Don Neumeyer; Kimon Proussaloglou (Cambridge Systematics, *conference call*); Bob Schaefer (Ridgewood Neighborhood Association); Tara Weidner (Parsons Brinckerhoff, *conference call*).

1. REVIEW OF AGENDA

Co-Chair Scott McDonell welcomed Committee members to Meeting #21 of the Transport 2020

Oversight Advisory Committee/Technical Advisory Committee. Trowbridge provided a brief overview of the meeting materials (sent in the packet). There were no modifications to the order of agenda items.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM OAC/TAC MEETING #19 (JANUARY 30, 2002) AND MEETING #20 (FEBRUARY 13, 2002)

The Minutes for Meeting #19 and Meeting #20 of the Oversight Advisory Committee/TAC were approved, as submitted on a motion by Supv. Michael Blaska/Rob Kennedy.

3. OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

The first speaker was Bob Schaefer. He pointed out the importance of a roadway-based transit system. He said that the Committees should seriously consider such a system as it offers greater flexibility, particularly when compared to a fixed-guideway transit system.

The second speaker was Jay Ferm. He said that he supports bicycle and pedestrian transportation and said that public transit complements those modes very well. He said that the modeling assumptions in Phase 2 of Transport 2020 were not realistic, as they held several service variables constant. He urged the Committee to consider a street-running system with more frequent service headways. He also urged the consideration of increased parking fees, transit-oriented development and transportation demand management measures. Ferm asked the Committees to consider the full life-cycle costs and benefits of rail, and compare that to the costs of doing nothing.

The next speaker was Fred Bartol, representing Dane Alliance for Rail Transit (DART). Bartol said that a hybrid transit system is desirable, including elements of commuter rail, circulators and buses. He urged the Committees to take a system approach and link the bus transfer points into any implementation recommendation. He said that developing a combined system, that builds upon the strengths of each transit mode, is the best course of action.

The next speaker was John DeLamater. Mr. DeLamater provided a handout detailing some possible costs for a streetcar system. He said that many of the consultant team's cost assumptions were too high – such as the costs assumed for platforms, track, fare collection equipment and contingencies. He urged the Committees to take a closer look at a street-running alternative.

The final speaker was Don Neumeyer. Mr. Neumeyer said that he is particularly interested in energy systems. He pointed out that many of the variables that affect transit ridership are outside of our control, such as the price of gasoline. However, he said that some could be controlled locally - such as service headways - and he urged a closer look at some of those variables. He said that ridership projections could increase if some of these variables were changed.

4. OAC/TAC DISCUSSION OF PHASE 2 EVALUATION INFORMATION

Stephanie Eiler provided an overview of the numerous materials included in the OAC/TAC packet, such as the environmental screening matrix, a memo providing a land use update, a memo detailing possible streetcar costs and the overall "Phase 2 alternative evaluation matrix". She then asked OAC and TAC members for feedback or questions about the materials. She said that representatives from PB and Cambridge Systematics were available via conference call to answer questions of the Committee members.

David Cieslewicz and Kristine Euclide asked about the differences among land use impacts of light rail vs. commuter rail transit. Tara Weidner (PB Team, Portland office) responded that the land use impacts would be the same if the service characteristics of the transit modes were the same. She did, however, point out that the geographic locations (and number of) transit stations were different for light rail vs. commuter rail. Bill Schaefer (MPO staff) also noted that light rail extended out to Prairie Towne Center on the west side of the City, while commuter rail extended to Greenway Center.

Cieslewicz agreed that the land use impact analysis (for light rail vs. commuter rail) was conducted on different segments and lengths of service. He said that the commuter rail service was the 4-line system, while light rail service was somewhat less extensive. He said that this may have impacted the land use impact analysis and asked that this distinction be made clear in the report.

Michael Friedlander (Wisconsin DNR) said that he would like to see a more refined air quality analysis, particularly as it relates to system-level vehicle miles traveled (VMT) among the five alternatives. Friedlander said that this air quality information would help inform the discussion of the merits of each of the Phase 2 alternatives. Kimon Proussaloglou (Cambridge Systematics) said that he would provide Friedlander the VMT data he needed to run that analysis.

Stephanie Eiler referred Committee members to the memorandum on streetcar cost estimates. She said that David Cieslewicz, Professor John DeLamater and several members of the PB Team participated in a recent conference call to discuss the cost estimates. Eiler acknowledged that there could be lower per-mile costs for a streetcar system in Madison, but she felt that the cost estimates developed by the PB Team were reasonable and credible. She felt that they reflected the true range of costs that could be expected in an urban setting.

Kristine Euclide asked if contingency costs were included for all of the alternatives. Eiler said that they were. Rose Phetteplace asked about the fare collection assumptions and whether or not there were alternative, less expensive, ways to approach that issue. Mari McKenzie also questioned the time savings benefits and cost effectiveness of the more-expensive fare collection mechanism. Eiler responded that there were pros and cons for each type of fare collection approach and acknowledged that a cheaper way of collecting fares could be pursued.

Rob Kennedy asked about the cost assumptions made for stations, and how they differed among the various mode alternatives. Eiler explained the assumptions and noted that less expensive stations could possibly be built, but that the cost estimates reflected a range of situations and costs based on existing rail system experiences. She said that the PB Team developed the cost estimates in a manner that would ensure that the real costs incurred by a Madison (if a system were implemented) would not be significantly different than the planning estimates. She felt that the consultant team would be doing the Dane County community a disservice by severely under-estimating costs at this stage of planning.

Stephanie Eiler noted that a detailed traffic impact analysis was expected to be completed in April. She said that Cambridge Systematics personnel were working on developing that information. Kimon Proussaloglou pointed out that all of the additional traffic counts were completed and were being integrated into the recently-developed traffic analysis network. Proussaloglou agreed that this information could be presented in April.

Eiler said that the matrices would be modified to integrate the numerous comments made and also to clean up any factual errors. She noted that a revised version of the evaluation materials would be provided to Committee members in the near future.

5. FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION (FTA) REVIEW, LPA REQUIREMENTS, AND FINANCE/GOVERNANCE ISSUES: REVIEW AND DISCUSSION OF NEXT STEPS

Stephanie Eiler introduced the next agenda item and said that Don Emerson (PB Team, Herndon, VA office) was available via conference call. She asked Emerson to provide a brief overview of what type of financial information the Federal Transit Administration would be interested in as the project moved forward. She also distributed a memorandum (dated February 21, 2002) discussing this issue.

Emerson said that an important part of the advancement of a Locally-Preferred Alternative (LPA) to the Preliminary Engineering (PE)/NEPA stage would be a financial plan. He noted that the FTA would be looking very closely at this document and urged the Transport 2020 Committees to give this issue careful consideration. Emerson said that all of the funding needed to implement the LPA need not be in hand, or even committed, at this time. He added that all of the funding sources did not necessarily need to be

completely identified at this time either. However, he said that the closer a community can come to identifying the sources and funding commitments, the more comfortable the FTA will be in reviewing the project and determining it to be suitable for advancement to PE/NEPA.

Emerson pointed out that the financial plan only needs to show how to pay for a minimal operable segment (MOS) and includes some flexibility as a project moves forward. However, he stressed the importance of having as much funding specificity and commitment as possible, as it will make the advancement of the project go that much smoother.

Stephanie Eiler suggested (in the 2-21-02 memorandum) that it might be prudent (for cost purposes) to start with a Middleton-downtown rail segment first and express bus service to the east (i.e., Sun Prairie), as a minimal operable segment to move forward.

Lori Kay asked about the cost effectiveness factors that will be reviewed by FTA and how the Madison alternatives would compete. She also asked how the Dane County alternatives compared to existing communities and their systems. Emerson replied that the current cost effectiveness measure used by the FTA is “cost per new transit rider”. He said that this basically takes the annualized capital and operating cost of the alternative and divides it by the number of new transit riders that are forecasted to be generated.

Bob McDonald noted that “total transit riders” are used for that measure, not just the forecasted rail ridership. Don Emerson concurred. However, he noted that the “cost per new rider” measure would be replaced in the near future. He said that the new measure would be “cost per unit of travel time benefit”, but noted that the rules on that change had not been finalized.

Emerson said that other communities can be reviewed to see how Madison compares. Rob Kennedy said that both measures should be reviewed after the Madison LPA is finalized. Emerson said that it is important to keep in mind that “cost per new rider” (or similar cost effectiveness measure) is only one of several criteria used by FTA to rank the appropriateness of transit projects moving to PE/NEPA. He said that land use, financial plans, governance plans, etc. are all very important in FTA’s ranking system. Emerson said that the PB Team could make a guess about how well the Madison LPA would rank in comparison to other systems.

In terms of the governance plan, Emerson pointed out that the FTA would be looking carefully at a “project management plan” for the LPA. He said that this plan needs to show how and by whom the Preliminary Engineering process would be managed. He also said that the project management plan should discuss the management of later phases of the project (i.e., final design and construction), although the level of detail need not be highly refined for these issues. Emerson did note, however, that the potential owner/operator of the LPA system needs to be clearly discussed, as this entity(s) would likely be a significant player in the management of PE process, and certainly subsequent phases of the project.

Dick Wagner asked if a general discussion of the primary operating partners would be sufficient for this stage of the planning and FTA evaluation process. Wagner pointed out that a detailed fiscal and operating agreement would likely be necessary and would likely be developed after a number of negotiations. He said that a number of these details may not be known until some time in the future. Emerson agreed that these types of issues could be accounted for in the project management plan. He said that language in the plan could be written in a way that allows for such “negotiation” issues to be worked out in the future, and allows the project to move forward. Emerson did say that it was important that the primary project partners be at the table and a potential owner/operator of the LPA be on board. He said that the management of the PE/NEPA project depends on some of these details to be figured out.

The Committees thanked Mr. Emerson for his overview of finance and governance issues and looked forward to continuing this discussion at the next meeting.

Rob Kennedy then distributed a draft 1-page (front/back) description of a Locally-Preferred Alternative, with discussion of a starter system and possible later project phases. He said that he would like to discuss this at a future meeting. He also said that the important finance and governance issues (as related to a potential LPA) needed to be discussed at the next meeting.

6. TRANSPORT 2020 PROJECT SCHEDULE/NEXT STEPS

The Committee members then confirmed the following Transport 2020 OAC/TAC meetings (*please note the varying meeting times and alternating meeting locations*):

- OAC Meeting #22/TAC: Monday, March 11th, 6:15 p.m., Room 201 City/County Building; and,
- OAC Meeting #23/TAC: Monday, April 8th, 6:15 p.m., Room 260 Madison Municipal Building.

7. ITEMS BY OAC CO-CHAIRS AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS

There were no items by the Co-Chair or Committee members.

8. ADJOURNMENT

The Committee adjourned its meeting at 9:20 p.m.