

Metropolitan Planning Organization
Meeting Minutes

April 22, 2009

Voting Members

Mayor Jim Byard, Vice Chairman, City of Prattville
Mayor Todd Strange, City of Montgomery
Mr. Ken Groves, Secretary, Director of Planning and Development, City of Montgomery
Mr. John Lorentson (ALDOT) Sixth Division Engineer
Mr. Earl Reeves, Elmore County Commission
Mayor Frank Houston, Town of Coosada
Mayor Jerry Willis, City of Wetumpka
Mr. Elton Dean, Montgomery County Commission
Mr. Charles Jinright, Councilman City of Montgomery
Mayor Al Kelley, City of Millbrook
Mayor Frank Houston, Town of Coosada

Non-Voting Members

Mr. Kelvin Miller, MATS

Guests

Ms. Barbara Hendricks, ALDOT
Rep. Thad McClammy, House Dist. 76
Mr. David Martin, CAC
Mr. David Bollie, ALDOT
Mr. Kleob Loflin, City of Wetumpka
Mr. Mike Bennage, MARC
Mr. Reginald Franklin, CARPDC
Mr. Greg Clark, CARPDC
Mr. Rod Wilburn, J.R. Wilburn and Associates
Mr. Jon Broadway, Easter Seals Central Alabama
Mr. Fitz Hudson, Hudson Community
Mr. Chad Adams, Urban Villages
Mr. David Barley, MTC-Realtor
Ms. Mattie Leonard, Citizen
Ms. J. Bowen, Citizen
Mr. Willie Pinkston, Citizen
Ms. Mary Johnson, Citizen
Ms. Ella Hendricks, Citizen
Mr. William Martin, Citizen
Ms. Brenda Barnett, Citizen
Mr. Nelson Rollins, Jr., Citizen
Ms. Deloris Williams, Citizen
Ms. Catherine Durham, Citizen
Mr. Johnny Taylor, Citizen
Ms. Mattie Leonard, Citizen
Mr. Moses Taylor, Citizen
Ms. Rebecca Foster, Citizen
Ms. Karen Daniel, Citizen
Ms. Lillian Gracie, Citizen

MPO Staff

Mr. Robert Smith
Mr. Kindell Anderson
Ms. April Delchamps
Mr. James Askew

At the regularly scheduled meeting of the Montgomery Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) on April 22, 2009 at 10:00 a.m. in the Conference Room of the Intermodal Transfer Facility, Montgomery, Alabama, the aforementioned members were present. Mayor Byard asked Mr. Groves if a quorum was present. Mr. Groves stated that a quorum was present and the meeting was called to order.

Mayor Byard made several announcements and introductions. He also recognized that many guests attended due to interest in the proposed Wares Ferry Interchange project. Mayor Byard asked to move Agenda Item 7 concerning the proposed Wares Ferry Interchange to the first order of business for the meeting. The MPO board agreed.

Agenda Item 7: Consider 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan Amendment Number Two (2). Mayor Strange stated he was the one who initiated the action to take the proposed Wares Ferry Interchange Project off the table and on the table to put it back into the 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan. He said he did that because he was getting frustrated that there wasn't any movement on the Proposed Outer Loop Rd issue. He also commented that he is satisfied that there is beginning to be some movement on it (proposed Outer Loop Rd) and he would not want the MPO or ALDOT to take away from the efforts on the Proposed Outer Loop Rd by looking at the Proposed Wares Ferry interchange project. He said he would like to keep it (proposed Wares Ferry Rd interchange project) where it is pending further developments on the proposed Outer Loop Rd project. He said if the proposed Outer Loop Rd does not move forward, like we think it will in the next six months or so, then we'll have a fall back position of getting the proposed Wares Ferry Rd interchange.

Mr. Robert Smith said that procedurally we would need to table it until the Outer Loop does advance, or does not, but said that all necessary work has been completed to bring the proposed Wares Ferry Rd project back into play. Mr. Groves pointed out that we do have a complete packet of materials from our Public Comment Period. The opponents significantly outweigh the proponents of the project. A number of the opponent's comments referenced the condemning of property and relocating people and that we should not commit that error again.

There were no further comments. Mayor Byard asked for a motion to reconsider. A motion was then made to place the proposed Wares Ferry Rd interchange Project on the table pending further information and movement on the Outer Loop Project. Mayor Byard asked for any further comment.

Commissioner Dean asked for the public to be notified if the project is taken off the table. He also stated that he would work with the Public Information Officer for Montgomery County to distribute the information and work with the representative of Congressional District Five (Thad McClammy) to distribute information as needed. The motion was then made with the stipulation that there would be 30 days notice to the public before the MPO votes on the proposed Wares Ferry Interchange Project in the future. The motion passed unanimously.

Representative Thad McClammy presented a petition of about 300 more names opposed to the Wares Ferry Rd interchange project for the record, but he said that all people in the area were for the proposed Outer Loop Rd project. He asked that the MPO send him a letter of commitment showing that it (proposed Outer Loop Rd) is vital to the community and the river region and that it supports the Outer Loop Project. He said they are prepared to help move this into the Congressional field as he understands this is a Congressional/Federal project. He said that maybe we can avoid dealing with the proposed Wares Ferry Road interchange issue further.

Mayor Byard moved back to Agenda Item 4 and asked for a motion to adopt the Minutes from the previous meeting. No additional comments were made pertaining to the Minutes. A motion was made, seconded, and the Minutes passed unanimously.

Mayor Byard moved to Agenda Item 5: Consider Amendments to the FY 2008-2011 TIP.

Mr. Groves commented that there were some amendments to consider as advanced by ALDOT and some Stimulus Package issues to deal with. The TCC and CAC did recommend everything for our approval in the projects that are advertised.

Mr. Robert Smith reviewed the Amendments.

In reference to the project (NHS-10-AM) on Page 2 to resurface the service roads along the South Blvd., Mr. Jinright asked how that got ahead of the Court Street project which the Mayor is concerned about. Mr. Smith replied that the service road is a State maintained roadway and Court Street is a City maintained street, but eligible for federal funding. He said that we would have to propose a project for the MPO money by getting an estimated cost from the City Engineering Dept. and propose it at the next meeting. Mayor Strange said lets make that happen.

Mr. Fitz Hudson was introduced by Mr. Groves. Mr. Hudson argued the point that the Outer Loop road was not the best plan and was not in the best interest of the region or his development.

Mayor Strange commented that the real driver for the Outer Loop is different today than it was 20 years ago when it began, which was economic development and tourism. The driver today is not all about economic development and tourism, but he said that those would be potential benefits. He said that the Outer Loop Rd is vital to drawing traffic through our area when the I-10 connector through Dothan is made linking the interstates to Florida in the Focus 2000 project. If that connector goes through Columbus or the Auburn area we would miss out on that traffic from the east coast and the central part of the U.S. We need to be able to funnel all that traffic through Montgomery as it leads to the Florida and Alabama beaches and the Port of Mobile. He went on to say that he wanted to work with Mr. Hudson to help his development but didn't think the river region would want to give up the opportunity to link this outer belt to the possible toll road connecting to the Florida beaches.

Mr. Lorentson (ALDOT) commented that this corridor of the proposed Outer Loop Road has been through all of the environmental processes and Public Involvement. The Public Involvement process will be done again since it has been years since the first time it was done.

A motion was made and seconded to accept the amendments and they passed unanimously.

Mayor Byard moved to Agenda Item 6: Consider Final 2009-2013 Congestion Management System Plan (CMSP). Mr. Smith said that there had not been any significant changes since the plan was in draft form. He said that the TCC and CAC approved the final document. There was no discussion about the Plan. A motion was made and seconded to accept the CMSP and it passed unanimously.

Agenda Item 7 was done previously in the meeting.

Mayor Byard moved to Agenda Item 8: Update of Year 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). Mr. Rod Wilburn gave a brief update and commented that the TCC and CAC had been very helpful. Mr. Smith reviewed several slides of maps and data showing socioeconomic data being used for the LRTP development. Ms. Delchamps also reviewed some of the methodology in preparing various socioeconomic data for the LRTP.

Mr. Groves and Mr. Wilburn expressed their thoughts on the high quality of the data and methodology the MPO staff is using for the LRTP. They both said that it is some of the best socioeconomic data in the State of Alabama that they had seen in a long time. They both said that MPO Staff should be commended for a job well done on the data preparation.

Mr. Wilburn stated that we are building into the Travel Demand Model the ability to deal with transit. This is difficult to do but it is important. The existing transit network will be used.

Mayor Byard stated that the MPO needs to discuss the MATS system and look into having it move into some outer areas. He suggested a reliable Park and Ride feature for Prattville and Millbrook since they may not really need regular bus service yet.

Mr. Groves commented that the model would allow us to test the value of those kinds of movements. He said the statute of the current system limits it to the Montgomery municipal boundary but it could be modified. We could change it to a regional transit system if needed. Someone asked about using Stimulus Money but Mr. Groves stated that it was only available for Capital Expenditures.

Mr. Wilburn said we will begin some public meetings in July and then again in September or October. We'll try to wrap up the LRTP process in November.

Mayor Byard then moved on to Agenda Item 9: American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). The MPO area will have \$6.8 million. Mr. Groves said we should set our projects and spend the money quickly since there are redistribution penalties.

Mr. Lorentson stated that the funds must be authorized by March 2nd, 2010. He also stated that he has projects ready to authorize today to use this money if the MPO didn't spend it by the due date. We will spend the money. We'll not let it go back. We'll spend it in another area of the state if you don't use it.

Mayor Byard asked what the time limit is to get the MPO stimulus project list turned in. Mr. Lorentson agreed that a couple of weeks would be fine.

The members agreed to have a work session to discuss the stimulus projects and funding. Mr. Smith will contact all members about the work session.

Mayor Byard moved to Agenda Item 10: Transportation Projects Status Report.

Mr. Bollie gave the high points of the ALDOT report.

ALDOT has let the contract on I-65 from Mill Street Bridge to the AL River Bridge for \$15.6 million and it shall be complete by May 15, 2010 as the contract states. The other work on I-65 is ahead of schedule but the contractor will not give an expected completion date.

The Bell Street contract is to be let on Friday, April 24. It will have 300 working days.

The turn-outs at the SportsPlex on SR-14 in Wetumpka is scheduled to be let next month (May).

There is now a traffic signal at SR-14 and 143 as a temporary fix until the roadway is realigned.

The addition to the left hand turn lane to get onto I-85 northbound at the Eastern Blvd. should be complete in July according to the schedule of operations.

The Perry Hill Road and I-85 project plans are at 30% and the target date to set construction is November, 2010.

Main Street in Millbrook is waiting on the weather to get paint striping.

Work on the Southern Blvd from Troy Hwy to Rosa Parks Ave is waiting for the temperature to get consistently above 60 degrees for contractor them to continue and complete the project.

There was no further discussion. A motion was made and seconded to adjourn at 12:10 p.m.