

**MECKLENBURG-UNION METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION**  
**Charlotte-Mecklenburg Government Center Conference Room 267**  
**July 21, 2010 Meeting**  
**Summary Minutes**

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**Members Attending:**

David Howard (Charlotte), Jim Bensman (Cornelius), Brian Jenest (Davidson), Sarah McAulay (Huntersville), John Quinn (Indian Trail), Paul Bailey (Matthews), Dumont Clarke (Mecklenburg County), Ted Biggers (Mint Hill), John Ashcraft (Monroe), Lynda Paxton (Stallings), Daune Gardner (Waxhaw), Nancy Anderson (Weddington)

**Non-Voting Members:** Joel Randolph (Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Commission)

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**1. Call to Order**

MPO Chairman Ted Biggers called the July 2010 MUMPO meeting to order at 7:05 PM.

**2. Monroe Parkway Project Status Update**

Presenter:

Steve DeWitt, NCTA

Summary:

Mr. DeWitt provided information to the MPO via a Power Point presentation, the contents of which are incorporated into the minutes. The presentation covered the following main points:

- Environmental impact statement: the record of decision (ROD) for the EIS is expected to be signed in the coming weeks
- Project financing
- Project aesthetics, including a discussion of how the portion of the roadway along existing US 74 might be designed
- Details of the design/build contract

David Howard asked when the NCTA would be ready for other projects in the area. Mr. DeWitt stated that the Garden Parkway is coming up soon and the managed lanes project on I-77 North could be in the near future. A number of financing-related questions were posed.

Following Mr. DeWitt's presentation, J.J. Eden, the NCTA's chief operating officer, provided information about toll collections. He stated that all collections will be handled electronically and that toll booths will not be a part of the project. Video will be used to capture the license plate numbers of vehicles not equipped with a transponder. The transponder selected for use can be used on the EZ Pass and Florida systems. A local office will be established for customer service and smart phone applications are being developed.

**3. Approval of Minutes**

Summary:

Chairman Biggers asked if everyone had an opportunity to review the May 2010 minutes and called for a motion.

Motion:

John Ashcraft made a motion to approve the May 2010 minutes as presented. Sarah McAulay seconded the motion. The May 2010 minutes were approved unanimously.

**4. Citizen Comment Period**

Summary:

There were no public comments.

**5. Congestion Mitigation & Air Quality (CMAQ) Program**

Presenter:

Jason Wager, Centralina COG

Summary:

Mr. Wager provided information to the MPO via a Power Point presentation, the contents of which are incorporated into the minutes. He stated that the request being made of the MPO was to endorse the list of CMAQ projects being presented, and noted that the Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC) unanimously recommended doing so at its July meeting. The I-77 North managed lanes project was the subject of discussion. Jim Bensman asked if support for local funding indicated support for the project overall. NCDOT Division 10 engineer Barry Moose stated that it did, and noted that NCDOT is pursuing a TIGER II grant for the project. Ms. McAulay observed that the recommendation calls for the funds to be allocated in fiscal years 2014 and 2015 but that if the TIGER II grant is obtained, and other funding sources become available, the CMAQ funds might be needed in FY 2013. She then asked if the funds could be shifted if they are needed in FY 2013. Chairman Biggers asked Mr. Cook if the TCC has considered that. He replied that the subject was discussed at the TCC meeting, and that the TCC indicated it would support a shift. The MPO indicated that it, too would support a shift. Questions were raised about the effectiveness of the GRADE project (Grants to Reduce Aging Diesel Engines). Leslie Rhodes of Mecklenburg County Air Quality stated that in FY 2010, local GRADE projects resulted in the removal of 17 tons of NOx.

Motion:

Ms. McAulay made a motion to endorse the CMAQ project list as presented and to adopt the proposed resolution. Mr. Howard seconded the motion. Upon being put to a vote, the motion passed unanimously.

**6. CATS 2009-2015 TIP Amendment**

Presenter:

David McDonald, CATS

Summary:

Mr. McDonald stated that the proposed amendments were necessary to correct the funding source and timing of projects in the TIP and that most of the amendments were minor corrections. He further noted that the air quality conformity grace period that ended in early May prevented the amendments from being pursued sooner. Mr. McDonald added that the TCC unanimously recommended that the MPO adopt the amendments.

Motion:

Dumont Clarke made a motion to approve the proposed TIP amendments as presented. Mr. Howard seconded the motion. Upon being put to a vote, the motion passed unanimously.

**7. Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant**

Presenter:

Rebecca Yarbrough, Centralina COG

Summary:

Ms. Yarbrough provided information to the MPO via a Power Point presentation, the contents of which are incorporated into the minutes. She described the details of the grant, noting that it will allow MUMPO to enhance its LRTP development efforts. Ms. Yarbrough emphasized that participating in the project does not require the diversion of funds from existing projects or programs, and that the request for action was to approve MUMPO being a partner in the Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant consortium and to permit its funds to be used as leveraged funds.

Chairman Biggers asked about obligations if the grant is obtained, specifically, if a plan is prepared but not implemented by some communities, would there be negative implications if federal funds are requested in the future? Ms. Yarbrough replied that the only obligation was to participate in the process and went on to state that because communities that abide by any resulting plans are likely to get "extra points" when applying for future federal funds, those that do not will not be penalized, but will not likely receive the "extra points." John Ashcraft stated he was concerned about the effects on local land use plans and that the MPO could be rushing into this. John Quinn stated a similar concern. Mr. Howard observed that the federal government has been clear that their concern is at a regional level, not a local level. Daune Gardner stated that, at some point in the process the MPO determines it is not pleased, it can end its participation.

Motion:

Mr. Clarke made a motion to adopt the recommended resolution. Mayor Gardner seconded the motion. Upon being put to a vote, the motion passed unanimously.

**8. Small Project Ranking**

Presenter:

Lauren Blackburn, TCC Representative, Town of Davidson

Summary:

Ms. Blackburn reviewed what was discussed at the education session that preceded the May meeting. She also reviewed a list of projects that could be included on a small project list if one were to be developed in the future. Ms. Blackburn noted that the projects were described in general terms to avoid suggesting that this was a final TCC list. The criteria that was developed to guide the list's preparation was also reviewed. The MPO was then asked if a) should the criteria be refined?; b) should a prioritization process be developed?; c) where do the funds come from?

Mr. Ashcraft asked what happens now-do we ask the division engineer for projects? Mr. Moose responded, "yes." He then asked if the preparation of a prioritized list would preclude towns from going directly to the division engineer. Mr. Moose's response was that it would not, but added that he would like to honor a prioritized list. Mr. Ashcraft then recommended that the decisions should be at the sole discretion of the division engineer because he can be flexible. Nancy Anderson supported the recommendation. Mr. Bensman suggested allocating a portion of equity formula funds for use on small projects. Mr. Howard stated that doing so would result in currently funded projects being delayed because funds have already been allocated. Mr. Moose noted that Mr. Howard was correct and added that federal funds must be spent on roads identified as federal-aid roads. Chairman Biggers stated that this topic would be considered again at the September meeting.

**9. North Carolina Railroad/NC 49 Feasibility Study**

Presenter:

Greg Boulanger, HNTB

Summary:

Mr. Boulanger provided information to the MPO via a Power Point presentation, the contents of which are incorporated into the minutes. He stated that the study's purpose was to determine the best method for a future thoroughfare (now identified as the Eastern Circumferential) crossing of NC 49 and the NC Railroad. The study was initiated by MPO staff in response to the receipt of economic stimulus funds (ARRA) funds by the railroad to add a second track and provide high speed rail service between Charlotte and Raleigh.

**10. FY 11 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)**

Presenter:

Robert Cook

Summary:

Mr. Cook stated that staff would be presenting the MPO with an amendment to the UPWP at its September meeting. The amendment would result in the reallocation of approximately \$56,000 in Planning (PL) funds to specific task codes. The funds were not allocated to specific task codes when the UPWP was adopted because the final amount of PL funds was received late the UPWP development process.

**11. Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 9:25 PM.