

TRANSIT SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Meeting Summary
Thursday October 8, 2009

PRESENT: Rick Sanderson
Jenifer Falls, Huntersville
D Evans, Charlotte
Scott Jernigan, Charlotte
Terry Lansdell, Charlotte
Anthony Wesley, Charlotte
Rob Cornwell, Davidson
Charles Jolla, Charlotte
Walter Horstman, Charlotte
Don Carnahan, Cornelius
Kevin Spitzmiller, Charlotte

STAFF: Paul Renaud, Duretta Weicken, Ramond Robinson, Rocky Paiano, Dwayne Pelfrey, Theron Barrino, Don Ivey, Pamela White, Monifa Hendrickson, Vince Brown, Judy Dellert-OKeef

MEETING TIME: 4:00-5:30 PM

I. Call to Order and Approval of May Meeting Summary

Chairman Rick Sanderson called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. The September meeting summary was approved with two corrections.

II. Information Items:

A. North Davidson Renovation Expansion

Monifa Hendrickson

Monifa Hendrickson gave the committee a complete update as follows:
The renovation and expansion of the North Davidson BOD Facility (constructed in 1981) began as part of an overall 2002 initiative to improve and expand CATS Bus Operations Department (BOD) facilities. Major renovations were planned for the North Davidson facility while a new South Tryon BOD facility was constructed in 2005. The renovation project at N. Davidson has been deferred due to necessary modifications to program requirements as well as limitations on available funding.

In response to programming revisions, CATS developed the 2009 Master Plan. The master plan has been separated into two phases; phase1 – Renovations to Existing Facilities and a New Parking Deck, and phase 2 – New STS Operations and Maintenance Facility w/ STS Fleet Parking Deck. Phase 1 has secured funding with a \$20 million grant under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) and

has been separated into three contracts with a schedule for completion of 2011. Phase 2 has been deferred pending additional funding and rezoning of City of Charlotte real estate along of North Alexander Street.

Contract A – Maintenance Building Renovation is scheduled to begin construction in November 2009. Both Contract B – Administration Building Renovation and Contract C – Parking Deck are in final design review with bid documents scheduled for January 2010.

Scott Jernigan asked if Alexander Street would be blocked because of the renovations and what would be in phase 2. Monifa stated that Alexander Street would not be blocked and that phase 2 is deferred at this time but the New STS Operations and Maintenance Facility w/ STS Fleet Parking Deck is proposed for phase 2.

Charles Jolla asked if the project had Green spaces. Monifa answered going green was being evaluated but currently the electrical system and motion sensors were all environmentally compliant.

D. Evans asked if the problems with phase 2 STS parking deck had been solved and if not what would STS do with vehicle parking. Monifa stated the parking has not been resolved but more studies are being done and that STS will be moved in phase 1.

Kevin Spitzmiller asked what impact the renovations would have on the bus maintenance facility. Monifa stated that Davidson street maintenance has been moved to South Tryon facility.

Walt Horstman asked when the project would be finished and how many CATS staff would be at the Davidson Street location. Monifa stated the project would be finished in 2011 and that she was not sure of the exact count of staff but there would be an increase in staff at that facility.

Terry Lansdell asked how many parking spaces would be at Davidson Street and in what phase the parking would be done. Monifa stated when CATS occupies the facility there will be 350 spaces for staff, 180 spaces for coach buses, and up to 93 STS vehicle parking spaces for phase 1, phase 2 will establish 200 coach bus spaces and the STS parking deck will have 122 spaces .

Dee asked if a parking deck was still being considered for STS parking. Monifa stated that a deck was still being considered with street access at two different levels of the deck because of the turn ratio of the vehicles.

Terry asked if the 12th street ramp would be redone. Monifa stated the project would not change the 12th street ramp.

Anthony Wesley asked what phases were funded by grants. Monifa stated A & B are funded by the Stimulus grant and C is funded by FTA grant money.

Rick Sanderson asked if the grant money is not completely used up on the Davidson project, can the remaining funds be used in other places. Monifa stated that all the

grant funds would be used on the Davidson project as there were second tier projects as well.

B. February Service Change

Ramond Robinson

Ramond Robinson presented the committees with the proposed changes for the February 2010 service change. Ramond stated there were proposals and suggestions for (Route 17-Commonwealth, Route 20- Sharon Rd, Village Riders, and Gold Rush Extension and 83x- Mooresville Express). The proposed changes were as stated,

Rt. 17 Commonwealth to extend route to the Matthews Independence Point Park and Ride along with providing a better connection for passengers to Windsor Square Shopping Center.

Village Rider to change the layover location to the Huntersville Gateway Park and Ride due to construction on Highway 73/ Sam Furr Road.

Rt. 20 Sharon Rd to reduce the frequency of the service during the weekday and to look at unproductive trips on weekend.

Rt. 83x Mooresville Express to reduce service due to Mooresville funding levels.

Gold Rush Service Proposed to extend the Gold Rush to Johnson C. Smith University and to the Presbyterian Hospital and adding N.C Music Factory trips for Thursday, Friday and Saturday from the Charlotte Transportation Center (CTC).

Walt asked if route 17 Commonwealth schedules would change. Ramond answered route 17 schedules would remain with the same headways.

Anthony asked if there would be a longer wait for the Rt.17. Ramond stated the route would remain with a 30 minute frequency.

Rick asked how long the Village Rider would be running the detour. Ramond answered about 12-18 months.

Terry asked if the Mooresville 83X had been presented to Council. Ramond stated the 83X had been presented to the Mooresville council and they made the decision on the 3 trips in the a.m. and p.m. schedule.

Rob Cornwell asked who pays for the Mooresville 83X route. Ramond stated is the 83X is 50% funded by Mooresville and 50% by CATS.

Rob stated he felt there should be on bus surveys to reach more people. Ramond stated there had been one onboard survey and that there is a tentative public meeting scheduled for mid November.

Scott asked if the hours of the Gold Rush Red line would be extended. Ramond stated the route schedule is still being evaluated due to funding.

Speedway Buses

Pamela White

Pamela White stated on Saturday, October 17, CATS will operate additional service on Route 79X Concord Mills Express for fans attending the races. The buses will operate every 20 minutes from 12:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. from Uptown Charlotte at the Charlotte Transportation Center located at 310 East Trade Street. After the races, the buses will be waiting for race fans to take them back to Uptown.

Round trip tickets for this service cost \$6 per person and may be purchased in advance at the customer information booth inside the Charlotte Transportation Center, located at 310 East Trade Street. Customers choosing to pay aboard the bus will need to have exact fare. Pamela went on to say the bus will start at the Charlotte Transportation Center. The 79X Concord Mills Express provides service to Uptown Charlotte, Gateway Village, University City area, Lowe's Motor Speedway and Concord Mills Mall. The route offers additional transportation options by linking the CATS 79X Concord Mills Express with the Concord-Kannapolis Rider (CK Rider). There will be a convenient drop-off and pickup location near the speedway's main entrance for fans coming to the NASCAR Banking 500. Pamela went on to explain that the two-year operating cost for the 79X Concord Mills Express service is funded by Lowe's Motor Speedway, City of Concord and CATS with the assistance of Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC) funds.

Rick asked if there were still going to be buses from Carolina Place Mall on race days. Pamela stated no.

Walt asked what the figures were for the new Concord Mills route. Ramond stated CATS was still calculating the figures for the Concord express but the route its self did perform well.

Jenifer Falls asked if riders needed to make reservations when planning to use the Concord route on race days. Pamela stated no.

Terry stated when scheduling the express buses CATS needed to be mindful of workers schedules. Pamela stated in regards to the #5 bus, the buses leave every 20 minutes to accommodate the workers schedules and if there are other express routes that need schedule adjustments if customers give some specific input CATS will evaluate and try to accommodate them.

III. Public Comment on agenda items:

Michael Morgan asked CATS to consider expanding the 79X by way of CPCC western part of the campus as ridership could be increased and stated more publicity/marketing is needed as the public does not know it the 79X exists. Mr. Morgan also thought the fare was too high.

Jenifer asked what the difference was between route 11 and the Concord Mills route. Ramond stated the Concord Mill route is an express bus and uses the highway with fewer stops and the route 11 goes up North Tryon with more stops.

Aileen Adams asked if CATS would consider running the Easy Rider 235 on Sundays. Ramond stated CATS will look into the ridership and need for Sunday service on that route.

IV. Service Issues

All

Walt stated the announcement "Please sit down" on the bus was being played after the bus was already moving. Dwayne Pelfrey stated the announcements are under review and that City Risk Mgmt. will have a lot of input to resolve.

D. Evans stated the announcement was not establish with the disabled riders in mind as being seated and wheelchairs being strapped in take longer and visually impaired riders need to hear the message more frequently as well.

Terry asked how the electric on the trains was running. Rocky stated the electric is good but there is some talk about a rate increase sometime soon.

Terry stated there is a problem with the crossing guard at the East/ West station. Rocky stated CATS will look into that problem.

V. Chairman's Report

Rick Sanderson

Rick gave report from the September MTC meeting stating MTC passed vote to call the purple line the Red line. There was also an update to the Blue Line Extension.

VI. Interim Manager of Operations Report

Rocky Paiano

Rocky reported the July Sales Tax numbers are lower than expected. The numbers were 4.2 million dollars which is about a million dollars lower than we were expecting this year. Rocky continued saying October 19 the new Celanese express route will start. The route runs from the Northwood shopping center to the I-485 train station, this route is fully funded by Rock Hill with 3 morning and 3 evening trips. There is a kickoff event on October 16 at the Northwood shopping center.

Walt asked how the Sprinter service to the airport is doing. Rocky stated there were 14,000 riders in about two weeks time. Walt asked how the search for CATS new CEO is going. Rocky stated the process is ongoing and there are at least 40 applicants. Rocky continues saying CATS received a Transit Investment Greenhouse Gas and Energy Reduction (TIGGER) grant of 3 million dollars which is part of the Stimulus money. This grant money will be used to purchase 5 hybrid buses in 2012.

Jenifer asked when the hybrid buses would be delivered. Rocky stated 2012.

Don Carnahan asked about the announcement on the initiatives for North Carolina. Monifa stated Charlotte/ Davidson St. Facility were selected as the place to announce the National Initiative for the North Carolina Institute of Minority development, which is part of the US Dept. of Commerce.

NEXT TSAC MEETING: THURSDAY NOVEMBER 12, 2009 4:00 PM