

Madison Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)
March 1, 2006 Meeting Minutes

1. Roll Call

Members present: Corey Finkelmeyer, Ken Golden, David Kluesner, Al Matano, Laura Rose, Doug Zwank

Members absent: Eileen Bruskevitz, Lisa MacKinnon, Chan Stroman, Robbie Webber, John Vesperman

Staff present: Bob McDonald, Bob Pike, Bill Schaefer

2. Approval of the February 1, 2006 Meeting Minutes

Moved by Matano, seconded by Kluesner, to approve February 1, 2006 meeting minutes. Motion carried.

3. Communications

- Letter from Laura Rose, MPO Board Member, to Mayor Cieslewicz, requesting that she not be reappointed to the Board when her term expires in April 2006.

4. Public Comment (for items not on MPO Agenda)

None

5. Presentation of the Green Tech Village Plan and Related Transportation Issues by the City of Fitchburg

[Note: Item #5 was moved to later in the agenda following item 8.]

Paul Woodard, Public Works Director for the City of Fitchburg and Mayor Tom Clauder, were joined by Rob Gottschalk from Vandewalle & Associates to give a presentation about city transportation issues and the Green Tech Village Plan. Woodward first provided some background information on the city's long-range land use plan and growth, which has been confined to the portion of the city within the urban service area since the 1970's. The city is continuing to support higher density development to preserve more agricultural and open space land. To achieve higher densities, transit service must be included in their plans. He then showed the location of the proposed USH 14 interchange, which is north of where Lacy Road now intersects USH 14 due to wetlands in that area. Gottschalk continued at this point, providing background on the planning for this area, which started a few years ago. He then reviewed the original Green Tech Village Plan and the new draft plan that shows the current planned location for the interchange and street connections. Originally, the interchange was planned for E. Cheryl Parkway extended. The plan is still essentially the same with a planned village center surrounding the planned transit station on the rail corridor. Gottschalk said the new interchange was necessary to achieve the level of investment envisioned and make the project work. Mayor Clauder spoke next and noted that the interchange connection to Lacy Road made sense since it was a major east-west route spanning the city. Clauder and Gottschalk then asked that the board include the project in the new RTP. In response to a question from Golden regarding the planned financing of the interchange, Woodard said special assessments and TIF were among the possible funding sources.

6. Discussion and Possible Action on Revising the Composition of the Madison Area MPO Board

McDonald reminded the Board that they rescinded their approval of the compromise agreement that had been sent out to local units of government. Based upon the presentation at the Board's last meeting, he

said it appears the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) plans to interpret Federal law and regulations to require that appointments to the MPO Board be local elected officials. Since that time, FHWA staff checked with headquarters and there was a meeting involving some of the MPO Board members and others to discuss the implications of this. McDonald said FHWA staff indicated they were willing to allow citizen appointments if the persons are members of a local transportation-related board. FHWA has also indicated that they would like this change to take place by the round of appointments in May 2007. Golden suggested that the MPO communicate this requirement to Mayor Cieslewicz and that the city introduce an ordinance change to institute this requirement as part of the city's appointment process. The list of commissions that citizen appointees would need to be on would be listed and include the three transportation commissions and the Plan Commission. He suggested this new requirement be communicated to the other municipalities as well. McDonald said another finding by FHWA was that residency was not a qualification for representation. He then reviewed tables he put together showing MPO Board appointments and representation percentages for the two scenarios discussed at the last meeting—12 and 14 member board—without a residency requirement.

Golden stated that he would have liked the Board to take action on the item tonight, but didn't think it was prudent with five members absent. He suggested instead that members comment on the two new scenarios, if they wished, to get a feel for everyone's position. Zwank said he thought the third scenario—the 14 member board—would get the most support from small city and village members. McDonald asked if the Board would like to meet with the appointing authorities to discuss the scenarios. Golden said he spoke briefly to Topf Wells, who expressed some concern about the dilution of the County's representation, particularly with the 14 member board. Golden added that the Madison Mayor's office has been aware of the scenarios and has not really expressed a concern about any of them. Golden said he inferred that as long as the City's representation is consistent with its population, the Mayor could support the structure. However, he cautioned that he hadn't spoken with the Mayor. McDonald added that the scenarios handed out don't include information on other issues, such as the requirement that one of the County appointments be a member of the Airport Commission or that one of the Madison Mayor's appointments be a representative for Metro Transit. Golden added that FHWA appears to support the idea that a public official could be citizen appointment to the governing board of the agency.

Golden noted that at the recent meeting with FHWA they were critical of the MPO's lack of leadership on transportation issues in the metropolitan area, and wanted the MPO Board to assert a greater leadership role. Golden observed that in order to be an effective leader the persons or officials following must want to be led, and the MPO doesn't have such a mandate at this point. Golden said he didn't know if the MPO would ever become the kind of leader that FHWA envisioned, but the MPO could become more visible and assert some more influence than is the case now. Golden said that he was talking to McDonald before the meeting about possibly forming a committee to explore with area community, county, and state officials how the MPO might play a more effective coordinating and leadership role.

Zwank suggested consideration of a structure for the MPO similar to the proposed RPC model of an executive committee consisting of the County Executive, Madison Mayor, Cities & Villages Association President, and Towns Association President with the Planning Manager as a non-voting member. The executive committee would then appoint the MPO Board members. This would improve communication and get the officials with authority more involved in MPO decision-making. Golden questioned the role of the executive committee other than making the appointments and noted that the MPO is not a freestanding organization like the RPC was, but rather a policy board staffed by the city under contract. Zwank said his proposal would make it easy to absorb the MPO back into the RPC, since they would have the same executive committee. Golden said he wasn't necessarily opposed to the Zwank's proposal, but said there were many hurdles, including the fact there is no RPC now. He

preferred addressing the immediate issue of how to reconstitute the board structure to address the population and elected official requirements and then perhaps revisiting the executive committee proposal in a year or two. In response to a question from Kluesner, Zwank said that under his proposal decision-making would still lie with the board, and the executive committee would hire the director or manager and provide supervision and evaluation. Golden pointed out that the difference with the proposed RPC situation is that the MPO Planning Manager is a city employee and the MPO Board does not supervise him.

Golden concluded the discussion by saying his goal is to bring closure to the issue and he'd support either of the two new proposed scenarios. He thinks the bigger issue is for the Board to lose its parochialism. McDonald asked if the agenda for the next meeting should include a decision item on the board structure and Golden responded yes.

7. Consideration of Possible Options to Address or Appeal the Preliminary Findings of the Madison Area MPO Federal Certification Review

Golden stated that this item was covered the discussion of item #6 and there was no need to go into closed session.

8. Review of Partial Draft Pedestrian Transportation Section for the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) Update.

Schaefer said the material distributed is a partial draft of the pedestrian portion of the RTP. The parts that haven't been completed are the safety section and the discussion of key issues, which would build upon the discussion in the background paper. For example, one of the issues is designing pedestrian facilities to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Recommendations will be developed based upon the background information and discussion of issues. Schaefer then briefly reviewed the background information, including a sidewalk inventory map. The sidewalk inventory for regional roadways shows the system is fairly complete. Golden commented on the importance of bus pads at bus stops and that they should be considered part of the pedestrian system. Schaefer said a bus stop inventory Metro conducted includes that information. He said MPO staff does have a map that overlays Metro bus routes on the City of Madison's complete sidewalk inventory. In response to a question from Zwank, Schaefer said MPO staff only surveyed regional, not local, roadways. Schaefer then reviewed the survey conducted of local pedestrian-related policies and requirements of cities and villages in the MPO planning area. The survey covered sidewalk requirements and cost sharing policies, street requirements, and pedestrian access/circulation standards. He said there are many similarities in the local ordinances. A key finding was that some communities do not have any pedestrian access/circulation standards in their zoning ordinance or don't include standards in all of their non-single-family residential districts. The chapter also includes information on county and WisDOT cost sharing policies for sidewalks on county and state urban roadways.

9. Continued Review of Preliminary Results from the New Regional Travel Demand Model for the Regional Transportation Plan Update.

McDonald briefly mentioned that modeling of the North Mendota Parkway Scenario had been completed and staff was in the process of analyzing the impacts on regional traffic flows. He said staff has had to focus recently on modeling issues related to the Transport 2020 study. Additional improvements to the mode choice and transit components of the model will be made as part of the study, including much better calibration at a corridor level. MPO staff has been working with the consultants on this effort and preparing for a meeting with FTA to review the modeling approach for the study and get it accepted.

10. Status Report by MPO Board Members on Projects Potentially Involving the MPO:

- **Transport 2020 Implementation Task Force**

Golden reported that the sub-committees are starting to get active. The finance and governance sub-committee just met. The consultant gave a presentation, and challenged them to start putting some ideas together and work them through. For the application to FTA for approval to advance the project to PE, the consultant recommended that Metro be identified as the operator of the system and to indicate that a regional transit authority was being pursued. There was general agreement amongst the sub-committee members that for the Transport 2020 project to be implemented there would need to be a new, dedicated tax and they would have to go to the legislature to get the authority for that.

- **USH 51 (USH 12/18 to I 90/94/39) Corridor Study**

Finkelmeyer reported that a meeting was scheduled for March 9 at the WisDOT District office. McDonald added that two public meetings are scheduled for March 29th at MATC and March 30th at Lafollette High School. The agenda will be to present the various alternatives. Golden asked that an email be sent to all Board members reminding them of these meetings.

- **North Mendota Parkway Implementation Oversight Committee**

Golden stated that he would like to put on the next agenda an item to replace him as one of the MPO members on the committee. He has not been able to attend meetings. Kluesner reported that the two things taking place are finalizing an intergovernmental Agreement and getting the environmental study started. The next meeting is on March 16.

- **USH 51 (McFarland to Stoughton)**

Matano said that they were meeting at the same time that this meeting was taking place. McDonald added that the study has gone from an EA to an EIS, and as a result the major projects commission must agree to put the project on its list. As a result of this, STH 138 will now be considered as a serious alternative to expanding USH 51.

11. Discussion of Future Work Items

Deferred

12. Announcements and Schedule of Future Meetings

Deferred

13. Adjournment