



**Citizens Transportation Advisory Group (CTAG) Meeting Minutes
September 13, 2017**

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Committee Members Present:

Mr. Dave McLaughlin, City of Fredericksburg
Mr. Tim Davis, Caroline County
Mr. Robert Ek, Caroline County (via “Go-To” meeting call-in)
Mr. John Davis, Spotsylvania County
Mr. Rupert Farley, Spotsylvania County (At-Large)
Mr. Larry Gross, Spotsylvania County (At-Large)
Mr. Stan Huie, Spotsylvania County
Ms. Adela Bertoldi, Stafford County
Ms. Dawn McGarrity, Stafford County
Mr. David Swan, Stafford County

Staff:

Ms. Marti Donley, FAMPO
Mr. Nick Quint, FAMPO

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Quint called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Upon request by Mr. Farley, the editorial that ran in the September 9th Free Lance-Star was added on tonight’s agenda for discussion under Staff Report.

APPROVAL OF CTAG MEETING SUMMARY OF JUNE 14, 2017

Mr. Swan requested an edit to comments he made on page 3. The comments requested were clerical in nature and not in context. Upon motion by Mr. Farley and seconded by Mr. McLaughlin, with all concurring, the June 14th minutes were approved with the understanding an amendment would be made after the conclusion of tonight’s meeting.

**REVIEW OF FAMPO POLICY COMMITTEE MEETINGS OF JUNE 19, 2017
& AUGUST 21, 2017**

Mr. Quint advised the main topic of discussion from both meetings was consideration of establishing a Regional Transportation Authority to obtain additional revenue for the region.

Mr. Quint stated that decision from the Policy Committee from the August 21st meeting is the RTA will temporarily be put on hold. It was decided to re-evaluate this topic after the November elections have been held. It was also felt that the citizens and newly elected officials will need more education and information on this topic before being able to decide for or against.

Mr. Quint relayed that it was also decision from the Policy Committee to review paper presentations from both HRTAC and NVTVA who currently have an RTA established. The Policy Committee will discuss the paper presentations at the September meeting and then make a recommendation whether representatives from both respective organizations would be asked to come and make a presentation to the Policy Committee at the October meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

a. Election of Officers – Mr. Nick Quint

There was committee consent in electing Mr. Dave Swan to serve as Chair for the upcoming year. As there were limited Spotsylvania County members present, two of whom were brand new members, the decision was made to defer appointing a Vice-Chair from Spotsylvania County until the October meeting.

At this time, CTAG members introduced themselves and Mr. Swan took over presiding as Chair.

b. DC2RVA Update – Mr. Nick Quint

Mr. Quint advised that the draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) was released by DRPT on September 8, and a public comment period was opened and will run for 60 days. Mr. Quint relayed that a public hearing will be scheduled in our region in early October, but details were not known as of the meeting.

Mr. Quint relayed the purpose and need of the study is to improve reliability, decrease travel times, and increase the frequency of service. Mr. Swan had questions regarding the Long Bridge portion of the project and Ms. Bertoldi asked if the recommended alternatives are finalized and moving forward.

Mr. Quint stated that the Commonwealth has determined that the most critical needs are in Northern Virginia. Mr. Quint relayed there are two projects in Northern Virginia that are moving forward, and no funding has been applied to the rest of the corridor. Mr. Davis stated that he thought the Long Bridge Project had received separate funding.

Mr. Quint stated the Long Bridge Project is currently under study with the District Department of Transportation, and this effort is slightly behind the DC2RVA study. To date, there is no funding designated for construction of the Long Bridge Project.

Mr. Quint relayed that DRPT stated there are no changes expected from the recommendations already presented. Mr. Ek asked if additional stops further south are planned. Mr. Quint relayed the study is not recommending new passenger service; however, this does not mean that additional stops will not happen in the future. Mr. Farley stated the platforms need to be raised and wondered if this was a recommendation. Mr. Quint stated that this was not part of the scope of the study. Mr. Swan stated that at the October DRPT public hearing the question needs to be asked about the fiber optic cable running along the tracks. Mr. Swan wondered if DRPT is getting any revenues from the cable, and if so, can this money be allocated towards rail improvements.

Mr. McLaughlin asked what the CTAG's role is in this process. Mr. Quint stated the public, as well as FAMPO staff is encouraged to attend the upcoming public hearings; however, this is not a FAMPO project so the role we play is limited at best.

Mr. Huie stated that one option that could be considered is "Rails with Trails". Unfortunately, the Rail Authority board does not want to be bothered with this option. The trail, though, could serve multiple functions since CSX could use it for maintenance purposes, and this could open up additional funding opportunities. Mr. Davis stated the problem with this alternative is that the study focused solely on rail expansion. Mr. Huie stated that people who ride "Rails with Trails" do this alongside the tracks. Mr. Huie stated that there are many communities in the State that have been revitalized with the trails. Mr. Huie stated this alternative gives functional options to a community and is a healthy community approach.

Mr. Quint advised that the recommended alternative for the FAMPO region is to add a third track through the City of Fredericksburg on the existing right-of-way. This includes a new Rappahannock River bridge parallel to the existing rail bridge. Mr. Quint advised that the portion of the corridor project to be built in Fredericksburg is expected to cost approximately \$507 million.

Mr. Quint stated that DRPT's prioritized recommendation summary for construction priority is as follows: Northern Virginia, Arlington, Fredericksburg, Richmond, and Central Virginia so this region ranks third in funding priority. Mr. Quint advised that there is still going to be a separate study that will occur after the conclusion of the study in place now for the Town of Ashland and that Ashland's improvements will not be a consideration with the current study recommendations.

Mr. Quint relayed that after the public hearings are concluded, the CTB will vote on a preferred alternative. A final EIS and Record of Decision (ROD) will be completed by December 2019.

c. 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) Update – Mr. Nick Quint

i. I-95 Corridor Study Presentation – Mr. Nick Quint

Mr. Quint advised the Phase II study objectives are to develop a revised master plan for I-95 between mileposts 145 and 110 that will consider both weekday and weekend travel conditions. Mr. Quint stated that staff is looking at submitting smaller projects along the corridor for funding consideration in the Smart Scale process, as well as capitalizing on other grant/funding programs that could be available.

Mr. Quint stated that staff are soliciting feedback on potential build alternatives for 2045. Some ideas that are being considered include:

- General Purpose lane widening in select areas
- Express Lanes extension to various points within the study area
- Potential new I-95 access points
- Collector-Distributor lanes constructed in key areas
- Improvements to existing interchanges
- Combinations of the above

Mr. Quint advised that each advisory committee member can submit up to three improvement projects for consideration. Mr. Quint relayed that CTAG is represented on the Advisory Committee (Mr. Farley & Ms. Larkins), so CTAG can submit up to three projects.

Mr. Quint stated the deadline for project submission is September 20. Mr. Swan asked that all CTAG members ensure Ms. Donley has correct email addresses, so he can follow-up with everyone after tonight's meeting. Mr. Swan stated he would take recommendations from each member, compile a list of the projects submitted, prioritize them accordingly, and forward to Paul Agnello. Mr. Swan stated that since the deadline is the 20, CTAG members should provide feedback to him by Friday, September 15.

Mr. Quint stated that the next steps are:

- Test the alternatives to see if they are eligible for moving forward
- Develop planning level cost estimates to each project submitted
- Complete modeling and calibrations of future no-build alternatives
- Continue working with Advisory Committee to receive consensus on build alternatives for testing
- Report results to Advisory Committee
- Screen alternatives to work towards a preferred solution

The CTAG committee members had the following comments, questions, etc.:

Mr. Davis asked if CD lanes are similar to the feeder lanes in Dale City. Mr. Quint concurred that they are.

Ms. Bertoldi stated she thought the current extension of the 95 Express Lanes was going to Route 17. Mr. Quint concurred that it will, but it is a separate project from the current extension that is under construction. Mr. Quint stated that the extension is known as Fred Ex, and preliminary engineering is currently underway; construction is expected to be completed in 2022.

On the slide that lists potential build alternatives, Mr. Gross stated it lists improvements to the Stafford Parkway from Exit 136 to Route 17 west, and a new arterial west of I-95 in Stafford between Garrisonville and Route 17. Mr. Gross asked if any Stafford representatives have heard anything about this project. Stafford representation advised they have not.

Mr. Farley asked if the Stafford Parkway is what was previously referred to as the Berea Parkway, and if so, why was the name changed. Mr. Quint concurred the Stafford Parkway is what was previously referred to as the Berea Parkway. Mr. Quint stated that since there was a lot of opposition to the original Berea Parkway project that included the outer connector, the name was changed to heed off some of the initial opposition.

d. Update on Smart Scale Round 3 – Mr. Nick Quint

Mr. Quint advised that this presentation was made to the Policy Committee at last month's meeting. Mr. Quint explained the Smart Scale process to the new members.

Mr. Quint advised that there have been some recommended changes to Round 3 of Smart Scale:

- Application process will now begin in March rather than in August
- The number of applications a locality/entity can submit has been reduced
- There are limits/restrictions in place on how far multimodal projects can be from one another

Mr. Quint stated that all eligible entities will be divided into two categories (Tier I & Tier II). Tier I entities can submit up to four applications and Tier II can submit up to eight. All GWRC jurisdictions are Tier I. VRE is Tier II. Mr. Quint advised that the region as a whole can submit eight projects – four from FAMPO and four from GWRC. Also, each locality within the region can submit up to four projects, so potentially 28 projects could be submitted each cycle.

Mr. Quint stated that the Smart Scale process will begin in March 2018 and is a biennial process. In the November-January time frame, FAMPO committees will be discussing regional priorities. Mr. Quint stated that early in 2018, FAMPO will allocate the region's CMAQ and RSTP funding. Mr. Quint stated that CMAQ stands for Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program and RSTP stands for Regional Surface Transportation Program. Mr. Quint stated that the region receives approximately \$4 million annually from these two funding sources. Applying this funding to Smart Scale candidate projects makes them more competitive because the requested funding isn't as high.

Mr. Quint advised that in February/March the Policy Committee will approve the regional projects to be submitted. Mr. Quint advised that currently the potential regional projects that are being considered are:

1. I-95 NB Rappahannock River Crossing project (Mr. Quint advised this project has been submitted in both the first two rounds of the Smart Scale application process and has been unsuccessful both times. Mr. Quint stated that staff is currently working with VDOT to make this project more competitive. Mr. Quint also advised that there has been discussion from the Policy Committee on whether or not to remove the project and submit other projects that could have a higher likelihood of being approved. To date, there has not been a vote to remove the project).
2. I-95 SB at US 17 interchange improvements and US 17 STARS Study improvements (Mr. Quint advised that STARS is a VDOT study program that stands for Strategically Targeted Affordable Roadway Solutions. This program focuses on economical safety and other improvements. This study was completed in July).
3. I-95 NB at Route 3 interchange improvements and Route 3 STARS Study improvements.

4. Regional Park & Ride Lot improvements (this packages improvements at various park & ride lots within the region).
5. Mine Road Park & Ride Lot expansion (Mr. Quint advised this project was submitted in Round 2 of Smart Scale but was unsuccessful because it was combined with the 95 Express Lanes direct connect ramp).
6. New Park & Ride lot construction in the Chatham Heights area of Stafford County (Currently, GWRC leases parking spaces in two separate lots in the area, so there is a definite need).
7. Lafayette Boulevard intersection improvements at Kenmore Avenue and Charles Street.
8. Bicycle/pedestrian improvements in the City of Fredericksburg.

Mr. Quint advised that projects from ongoing studies could be added to this list. Mr. Quint stated these projects would come from the following studies: I-95 Phase 2; US 301/207; US Route 1 STARS; & Exit 126 STARS.

Mr. Swan relayed that there were two Smart Scale recommendations submitted by FAMPO requesting that changes be made to the process. Mr. Swan advised that FAMPO was the only MPO to submit comments. Mr. Swan stated that out of the 27 suggestions submitted, the Commonwealth accepted part or all of nine of them.

i. Potential List of Regional Smart Scale Projects – Nick Quint

Mr. Quint advised that included in tonight's agenda packet information is a list of regional projects under consideration. Mr. Quint stated the list is not finalized and is provided for committee member review and input.

CORRESPONDENCE

Mr. Quint advised that on September 25 there will be an important meeting held by VDOT. This is the 95 Express Lanes Fredericksburg Extension (Garrisonville to US 17) location/design public hearing. This meeting will provide new information for where access points will be; what bridges will need to be replaced; where re-construction of I-95 will occur; how it will tie into the SB River Crossing project; etc. Mr. Quint stated the meeting is from 6-8 p.m. at Stafford High School. Mr. Quint advised that displays and visuals will be available for review and comment, and a presentation will begin at 7 p.m. Mr. Quint stated that FAMPO staff would be attending the meeting, and he encouraged each CTAG member to do the same.

Ms. Bertoldi stated that in years past, CTAG has had a table with displays and informational brochures and asked if this arrangement is in place for the September 25 meeting. Mr. Quint stated that FAMPO was not asked to set up a table for this meeting.

STAFF REPORT

Per request from Mr. Farley at the beginning of tonight's meeting, Mr. Farley requested that a Free Lance-Star editorial titled "Building just one side of I-95 river crossing doesn't make sense" should be addressed by the CTAG committee.

Mr. Farley said the editorial states that there is not a lot of money available to cover the projects needed in the region. Mr. Farley also stated that the I-95 NB River Crossing project has been submitted unsuccessfully twice. Mr. Farley stated that FAMPO's Administrator stated the NB River Crossing project "did not come close" to being selected for funding in part because Smart Scale is "very sensitive to funding leverage." In addition, Smart Scale metrics that were used to score projects only measure weekday commuter traffic between Tuesday and Thursday, and do not consider the worst northbound traffic congestion on Sunday.

Mr. Farley stated that his objections to the article were that the FAMPO Administrator did not also cite other concerns the region faces in making us more competitive with other regions within the state – i.e. the 45-minute cap on access to jobs; establishment of an RTA, etc.

Mr. Gross stated that he felt the statement was implying that if regions put up more money towards a project, possibly more projects would get approved.

Ms. Donley advised that FAMPO is in the process of updating its website, and she hopes this will be up and running by November. Mr. Gross stated that he thought the recent press release from the CTB regarding budget information was very informative. Mr. Gross stated that the focus appears to be all on Smart Scale where \$2.1 billion gets allocated; however, revenue sharing and other programs, etc. receive \$3.9 billion. Mr. Gross stated that all emphasis goes to Smart Scale; however, there are many other funding programs available that receive higher funding allocations.

MEMBER REPORT

None

ADJOURN

The September meeting concluded at 8:10 p.m. The next CTAG meeting will be held on October 11, 2017 at 6:00 p.m.

Meeting Minutes completed by Joanna Roberson