

PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING
May 5, 2021
Meeting Minutes

MEMBERS ATTENDING

Bill Anslow, Albany County
Susan Barden, City of Saratoga Springs
Mark Castiglione, Capital District Regional Planning Commission
Peter Comenzo, Town of Rotterdam
Donald Csaposs, Town of Guilderland
Ross Farrell, Capital District Transportation Authority
Steve Feeney, Schenectady County
Michael Franchini, Capital District Transportation Committee, Secretary
Stephen Iachetta, Albany County Airport Authority, Chair
Andrew Kohout, Village of Scotia
Elizabeth Kormos, Village of Ballston Spa
Andrew Kreshik, City of Troy
Robert Leslie, Town of Bethlehem
Sean Maguire, Town of Colonie
Randy Milano, City of Albany
Paul Reuss, Village of Menands
Robert Rice, NYS Department of Transportation - Region I
Laura Robertson, Town of Niskayuna
John Scavo, Town of Clifton Park
Joe Seman-Graves, City of Cohoes
Michael Valentine, Saratoga County
Tony Vasil, Albany Port District Commission
Tim Wainwright, NYS Thruway Authority
Chris Wallin, City of Schenectady
Adam Yagelski, Town of East Greenbush

STAFF AND OTHERS ATTENDING

Chris Bauer, Capital District Transportation Committee
Jacob Beeman, Capital District Transportation Committee
Jennifer Ceponis, Capital District Transportation Committee
Joe Cimino, CHA Consulting
Christopher Desany, Capital District Transportation Authority
Kristin Diotte, City of Schenectady
Teresa LaSalle, Capital District Transportation Committee
Addyson Lyons, Greenman Pederson
Paul McDonnell, CHA Consulting
Sandy Misiewicz, Capital District Transportation Committee
Glenn Posca, Capital District Transportation Committee

Rima Shamieh, Capital District Transportation Committee
Melissa Shanley, Capital District Transportation Authority
Matt Smith, City of Schenectady
Jordan Solano-Reed, Capital District Transportation Committee
Andrew Tracy, Capital District Transportation Committee
Carrie Ward, Capital District Transportation Committee
Greg Wichser, NYS Department of Transportation - Region I

INTRODUCTION

Steve Iachetta opened the videoconference meeting at approximately 9:34 AM.

VISITORS' ISSUES

There were no visitors' issues.

ADMINISTRATION

Previous Meeting Minutes – April 7, 2021

Michael Valentine motioned to approve the April 7, 2021 minutes with the clarification that the DOT project list on Page 4 is for this state fiscal year, Andrew Kreshik seconded, and members approved the motion.

PRESENTATION – Albany County Airport Authority: "Going Places! - New Airport Master Plan Development Update

The Master Plan project began in 2020. CHA is leading the effort, with Jacobsen and Daniels and Gensler. An airport master plan is a long-term facility plan. The airport's rebranding will be incorporated into the study. Community Outreach is organized around a Regional Study Committee including Town and County partners, a Technical Study Committee with airport tenants, public meetings, and a [separate study website](#). The plan will forecast future aviation demand and guide physical development and modernization. The airport contributes over \$1B in economic activity and supports over 9,000 jobs. The plan focuses on improved traveler experience and safety, improving the TSA security checkpoint, future air cargo demand, land use and infill planning, and energy efficiency. The study will also consider passenger safety, related to COVID-19 transmission. FAA is forecasting enplanements to increase past pre-COVID levels in about 2 years for leisure travel and 3-4 years for business travel. The master plan will consider if and how the airport should develop, as well as any additional parcels that the airport should purchase.

ACTION ITEMS

FISCAL CONSTRAINT DISCUSSION - TIP SUMMARY TABLE 4

Mike Franchini shared Table 4, noting that we are more than 5% overprogrammed in the second and third years, and that we would like to make an adjustment to budget estimates to come under 5% in each year. The proposed adjustment would move \$3M of NHPP funding from 2022 (Year 3) to 2021 (Year 2). Mike Valentine made a motion to approve the proposed budget estimate change, Chris Wallin seconded the motion, and members approved the motion.

2019-24 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

S264, 1525.39, I-890 over Erie Blvd and Broadway: Element Specific Repairs

Greg Wichser explained that the cost estimate for the project has increased by \$2.183M due to the volume of concrete repairs and the needed bridge bearing replacements. Steve Feeney made a motion to approve the requested cost change, Chris Wallin seconded, and members approved the motion.

SA334, 1722.74, Sitterly Rd Over I-87, Bridge Replacement

This proposed approximately \$9.5M new project will replace the Sitterly Road bridge that was recently damaged by an over-height vehicle. The estimated cost to replace the damaged portion of the bridge would be about half of the cost to replace the entire bridge to the new interstate standard height of 16 feet. Funding will be provided by the NYSDOT Main Office. An interim temporary bridge is planned until construction for the new bridge begins next spring. Steve Iachetta made a motion to approve the new project, John Scavo seconded, and members approved the motion.

S260, 1111.41, US 20 Over Schoharie Creek: Element Specific Repairs

Greg Wichser explained that this change proposes switching the fund source to statewide funding to offset the previously improved increase to S264. Steve Feeney made a motion to approve the fund source change, Adam Yagelski seconded, and members approved the motion.

T6B, 1820.37, STAR Buses Replacement and Expansion

T11, 1821.18, Passenger Facility Improvements at Various Locations

T14B, CDTC.08, Transit Operations Support for Saratoga Service

T16, 1821.80, Transit Support Vehicles

T17, 1820.48, Transit Bus Replacement/Expansion

T57, 1TR6.04, Preventive Maintenance

NEW – Retrofit Fleet with UV Disinfecting System

Melissa Shanley explained that CDTA receives 5339 and 5307 formula funding from FTA each year. The TIP assigns estimated amounts prior to known FTA formula grants, which were finalized this year in January. CDTA's board then approved its budget. This amendment, as well as the following six amendments, will bring the TIP in alignment with CDTA's budget. There is one new project, to retrofit the existing fleet with a UV disinfecting system. Going forward the technology will be included in the standard bus build. Following approval of these amendments, CDTA will be able to apply to FTA to receive the grant funding. Steve Feeney made a motion to approve CDTA's six cost change amendments and one new project, Mike Valentine seconded, and members approved the motion.

UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM

Draft Progress Report for the period October 1, 2020 – March 31, 2021

Mike Franchini noted that this document is a required biennial report, in which we report on progress for each task in the UPWP. He highlighted the New Visions learning series, Public Participation Plan and Policy, the Smart Communities Toolbox, implementation of the trails plan, the new freight study on truck parking, linkage studies, and the Traffic Safety Ambassador Program for bicycle and pedestrian safety. Andrew Kreshik made a motion to approve the Progress Report, Steve Iachetta seconded, and members approved the motion.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

TIP APPLICATION AND EVALUATION UPDATE

Sandy Misiewicz provided an update on staff progress updating the TIP application and evaluation process. Staff is testing a new online application form and will provide it for review in July, along with a finalized merit evaluation spreadsheet revised based on Planning Committee comments.

Sandy noted that the definition for preservation and non-preservation is often unclear. Considering factors including the New Visions 2050 key planning and investment principle of preserving and managing the system, NYSDOT's Transportation Asset Management Plan, and past TIP experience, staff worked with NYSDOT on the provided draft discussion paper. The paper outlines definitions for preservation and beyond preservation by project type.

If you have any comments regarding the merit evaluation spreadsheet or the preservation discussion paper, please email them to Mike.

CDTC PROJECT DELIVERY UPDATE

Jacob Beeman noted that the City of Schenectady submitted PS&E on the Broadway mill and fill project south of Weaver Street. John Scavo provided an update on the Town of Clifton Park's Pedestrian Safety Action Plan project. The project is out to bid now, with anticipated construction completed by September. The project includes five signalized and four unsignalized intersections, with RRFB's at midblock crossings, where possible.

NYSDOT PROJECT DELIVERY SCHEDULE

Bob advised that there haven't been any changes to the list provided at the last meeting.

STATUS OF CDTC PLANNING ACTIVITIES

CDTC/CDRPC Technical Assistance Program Projects

Sandy noted that CDTC and CDRPC jointly funded 8 projects in the 2020 year, and four have been completed. Projects still underway include an electric vehicle zoning and stormwater management/site design concepts for the Town of Colonie. The City of Troy's regional growth and capacity analysis is looking at pressures on sewer capacity with additional development in neighboring towns and on Hoosick Street. Staff is assisting Ballston Spa by documenting existing conditions and developing an RFP for consultant assistance for the comprehensive planning process. The Hoffman Hill Road safety analysis in Glenville will provide recommendations to improve safety. The solicitation for the 2021 program is now open. Please contact techassist@CDRPC.org with any questions.

Patroon Creek Greenway

Jen Ceponis noted that this feasibility study is part of the Capital Region Trails Plan. Working with the City of Albany, we recently contracted with Bergmann Associates and LAndArt Studio. The study seeks to identify a feasible alignment from the Albany Skyway to Six Mile Waterworks.

Bus Lane Feasibility Study

Sandy Misiewicz advised that a firm has been selected for this study and contract negotiations are underway. We expect to begin work in May. Study partners expect a robust public participation process.

New Visions 2050 Virtual Learning Series and Virtual Local Government Training

Jen Ceponis noted that the virtual learning series is a monthly webinar, with the next scheduled for Tuesday, May 18th at 3:30 and will focus on bike planning. Beginning in June we will start a three-part series on Complete Streets. Past webinars are available on [CDTC's Youtube channel](#). If your local government is interested in a virtual training geared to your local needs, please contact Jen.

STATUS OF PLANNING ACTIVITIES

CDRPC

Mark Castiglione provided updates in advance of the meeting. The apportionment report from the Census Bureau was provided to the President, and we anticipate full count data to be available this summer. CDRPC released the [Economic Recovery Dashboard](#) in March. It includes a variety of economic indicators, as well as mobility data provided by CDTA and CDTC. Custom dashboards are available for each County. In the latest stimulus, the federal Economic Development Administration is receiving three times more funding than it did through the CARES Act. A variety of infrastructure funding opportunities will likely be available. [Capital Region Indicators](#) will soon include preset maps and school district geography data. CDRPC's weekly webinar series continues on Wednesdays through June 2nd. Recordings are available on [CDRPC's website](#).

CDTA

Ross Farrell noted that ridership has been just below 35,000 per weekday in the last few days, rising from about 27,000 in January. In 2019 weekday ridership was about 55,000.

NYS DOT

Bob Rice noted that the Route 4 at I-90 project was let. The estimate was \$4.9M and the low bid was \$4.1M. Paving for I-90 from Exit 10 to the Thruway received a low bid of \$4.7M. The estimate was \$5.4M. The element specific bridge project was estimated at \$6.3M and received a low bid of \$7.2M, however the scope had included the Sitterly Road Bridge, which will now be separately rebuilt. There was a recent influx of payment requests, concurrent with conversion to the Statewide Financial System. Additional staff has been allocated to help to process payments. Last week was work zone awareness week. Utilizing Operation Hard Hat, state troopers disguised in DOT hard hats and vests wrote hundreds of tickets in New York work zones. About half of Amtrak operations in New York is subsidized by NYSDOT, with only about half of those trains running due to COVID. The Ethan Allen service to Rutland will be restored July 16th, with discussion of expansion to Burlington. The Adirondack and Maple Leaf services remain suspended because of the border crossings. The solicitation for the SR 378 over the Hudson River bridge scoping study should be released around the end of the month. It will be under the Planning and Environmental Linkages umbrella, with a focus on the environmental and social considerations that would impact the location of a future crossing. It will consider regional network implications for a new or improved crossing. A federal transportation bill is still expected.

New York State Thruway Authority

Tim Wainwright noted that the Thruway Authority also participated in Operation Hard Hat, and highlighted the dangers Authority staff face working on Thruway infrastructure.

Albany County Airport Authority

Steve Iachetta said that the Authority is advancing NEPA and SEQR for front entrance and street checkpoint expansion, as well as a 50,000 square foot hangar. This year the full 8,500 feet of Taxiway A will be repaved. Airside lighting is now almost all LED. All elevators will have touchless buttons.

Albany Port District Commission

Tony Vasil reported that tonnage through April this year was up 15-20% compared to the previous year. Longshoremen hours were at 20,000 compared to 12,000 the previous year. Design of the offshore wind facility will begin this year, along with clearing of the land. Construction is expected to begin in 2022 with production beginning in 2024. Tony discussed the impacts of the supply chain disruption at other ports, and noted that it is expected to continue through the third quarter of this year.

Local Planning Activities

There were no local planning activity updates.

UPCOMING MEETINGS/EVENTS

Steve Iachetta summarized upcoming meetings as noted on the agenda.

ADJOURNMENT

Steve Iachetta motioned to adjourn, Bob Rice seconded, and the members approved the motion at 11:45 AM. The next Planning Committee meeting will be on July 7, 2021.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael V. Franchini
Secretary