

Cornelius
Davidson
Huntersville
Kannapolis
Concord



Lincoln County
Mecklenburg County
Cabarrus County

Meeting Minutes February 14, 2008 Huntersville Town Hall

Attendees: Lauren Blackburn (Davidson), Andrew Bryant (Lincoln County), Kim Phillips (Lincolnton EDC), Karen Floyd (Cornelius), Zac Gordon (Huntersville), Jack Simoneau (Huntersville), Bill Coxe (Huntersville), Derrick Caudell (Concord), Boyd Stanley (Concord), Kassie Watts (Cabarrus County), Ryan McDaniels (Cabarrus EDC), Charles Knox (LKN Chamber), Linda Dosse (NCDOT Planning Branch), Mark Stafford (NCDOT Division 12), Jackie McSwain (NCDOT Division 12), Louis Mitchell (NCDOT Division 10), Bill Duston (Centralina), Blair Israel (Centralina).

Welcome and Introductions: Bill Duston opened the meeting at 1:30 PM with a quorum. With the Chair not present to lead the meeting, and no current Vice-chair (as Lindsey Hobbs is no longer with the City of Kannapolis), Bill guided the process of appointing a new Vice-chair. Lauren Blackburn nominated Karen Floyd. Karen agreed. The motion was seconded by Andrew Bryant, and passed.

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

Approval of Agenda: Ms. Floyd asked if any changes should be made to the agenda. With no changes suggested, the original agenda was approved.

Approval of Minutes of December 6, 2007 meeting: The minutes of the previous regular meeting were approved.

OLD ISSUES

Corridor Mapping Project Update: Lauren Blackburn provided to each member municipality and county present, a CD containing the NC 73 digitized corridor plan. The CD contains both GIS shapefiles and static (JPEG and PDF) images. Lauren mentioned that Davidson is now in the process of hiring a new GIS manager. It was decided that a one-week review time of these files would be appropriate before Centralina reimburses Davidson for these services. Andrew Bryant volunteered to test the files and coordinate with Blair Israel before Friday, February 22nd. The other member jurisdictions would also have the option of conducting independent review. Bill Duston motioned to pursue this course. Linda Dosse seconded and the motion passed.

NEW ISSUES

Access Management Coordination along NC 73: Bill Duston began the discussion of the comparison of jurisdictional regulations, referring to the Regulation Comparison spreadsheet Bjorn Hansen had originally compiled, and which was recently updated by all participating municipalities (handout supplied). Bill solicited comment from the NCDOT division representatives.

Louis Mitchell (Division 10) relayed to the group a new policy being implemented under the direction of Barry Moose, Division Engineer. All strategic highways shall be analyzed for “super street” suitability, not as a “one size fits all” fix, but as a potentially useful tool to allow highway access while protecting movement. He added that full movement access breaks down highway corridors. Zac Gordon displayed a slide of a diagram of this facility. The primary apparent strategic design feature of the “super street” intersection is its ability to permit left exits from the highway without the need for left turns that cross opposing traffic. According to Jackie McSwain, Division 12 has not yet used the “super street, but that there are some in Pigeon Ford, TN. Division 12 is currently designing an “SU-40” on Highway 24. Discussion ensued about the suitability and challenges of the “super street” facility. Key issues arising from the discussion included:

- The expansive width of right-of-way required for “super-streets” and the availability of that right-of-way, particularly when the U-turn bulb-outs need to accommodate large tractor-trailers. A right-of-way width of 300’ and a length of 3000’ would be required in relatively flat terrain, more in hilly terrain. Bill Coxe pointed out the need to identify all such potential intersections and protect the right-of-way required. Lauren Blackburn added that local jurisdictions need to know now where that right-of-way will be required.
- The volume of traffic that would require “super-streets”. Louis Mitchell reminded the COP that volume would be based upon development trip generation and background traffic.
- The volume of traffic that would exceed the viability of such facilities
- The suitability of “super-streets” for pedestrian mobility. Crossing from one corner to the diagonal corner can require pedestrian to traverse a total of three street crossings in a “z” pattern.
- The preference by larger retail stores against these facilities. Bill Coxe mentioned that the concept held by many developers - that NC 73 should permit full access - needs to be corrected. It is the responsibility of the NC 73 COP members to inform developers what to expect regarding access to this highway.
- The menu of other intersection options available with their pros and cons.
- As highway access diminishes with time, political pressure increases in attempts to circumvent access restriction.
- The need to re-examine the entire NC73 Corridor Plan

Linda Dosse suggested that the NC 73 Corridor Plan should be updated. The plan has already been in use four years.



Bill Coxe stated that NC 73 policy originally adopted now varies with NCDOT practices that have changed over time.

Jack Simoneau illustrated Bill's observation with an example standard section from the NC 73 Corridor Plan that is no longer permissible by NCDOT standards. He pointed out that the language and policies of these two divisions need to mesh; that ideally they would be the same; and that these policies need to be clearly communicated and coordinated with the municipal and county jurisdictions affected.

The NCDOT representatives each emphasized that conditions vary with geography, and therefore policies can vary from one division to the next, or even across a single division.

Karen Floyd challenged the group to develop a plan of action.

Bill Duston suggested the discrepancies between NCDOT and NC 73 policy be identified in time for the next NC73 meeting, so that strategies could be determined at that meeting for making needed corrections.

Louis Mitchell proposed that in the meantime, the two NCDOT division heads and staff would meet to identify differences in their respective policy, inform the NC 73 COP of the inconsistencies identified, and make determinations for how such inconsistencies could be rectified. Louis also talked about the need for concurrent review of development projects by the local jurisdiction and the NCDOT division to help alleviate problems that can occur when differing standards are imposed upon the developer. He claimed Division 10 is attempting to do that.

Andrew Bryant underscored the advantage of such coordination and recommended the various member jurisdictions foster such a relationship with NCDOT, but Karen Floyd pointed out that NCDOT is not always available when needed.

Back onto the issue of revising the NC 73 Corridor Plan, a number of observations were made:

- The COP needs to consider the scope of that revising process.
- NCDOT paid for ½ of the cost of creating the original plan. What percentage they could pay for the revision would depend on the revision scope.
- It would be helpful to determine preliminary costs and the time commitment involved.
- A review by NCDOT of the current Plan could help determine where revisions are needed specifically.
- Minor amendments to the Plan could be made relatively quickly.
- The COP should determine soon what the issues are and inform the elected officials at the NC 73 COP Annual Meeting.
- Initial steps required for revising the Corridor Plan should be considered in next year's NC 73 COP budget. These steps would include determining the methodology and scope of the project. The cost of the actual



project would need to be part of a FY 09-10 budget for the participating municipalities.

Bill Duston said Centralina would send out the HNTB scope for the original Corridor plan to COP members in preparation for the next meeting. He also suggested that both NCDOT divisions have representatives at that meeting as well.

Returning to the specific subject of access management, Bill Coxe suggested that all jurisdictions, local and NCDOT, find ways to improve the documentation of access permits. He suggested a GIS-based system of tracking permits.

ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION ALONG THE CORRIDOR:

- Lauren Blackburn provided an update on the Davidson-Concord Road small area plan. The process has seen good public feedback including some useful input on zoning strategies for preserving open space between development nodes. The process will continue with another stakeholder meeting. Then the draft plan will go before the involved municipalities for approval. Zac Gordon volunteered to send the latest plan to Centralina to post on the NC73.org website. The next public meeting related to the plan will occur on February 28th @ 7 pm at the Davidson United Methodist Church. Randall Arendt (author of “Rural by Design” & proponent of conservation subdivisions) will be present to offer his critique of the plan. AICP credit for this presentation may be available (Check with Lauren Blackburn). A PowerPoint presentation of the plan presented can be downloaded at:
http://www.huntersville.org/Planning%20Info/Davidson-concord%20area%20plan/013108_DavidsonConcord-Presentation-Draft%20Plan.pdf
- Zac Gordon reviewed the CMS project on Davidson Concord Road (Mandatory Referral 08-11). His PowerPoint presentation showed the three-acre parcel 08-11 adjacent to the previously acquired 10-acre parcel 07-06. The school would have direct access onto NC 73 (see handout). NCDOT no longer has the authority over schools they used to. Lauren will ask Kris to send COG an explanation of what NCDOT is requiring here. COG will post on the NC 73 website.
- Bill Coxe reported on the intersection of NC 73 and Prosperity Church Road. Further information will be made available on the NC 73 website.
- It was recommended that a discussion of the NC 73 widening project from Hwy 21 eastward be included in next meeting’s agenda.

NEXT MEETING:

The next regular meeting was set for April 24 at 1:00 pm at the office of Centralina COG.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:45 pm.

Stay current. Visit the NC 73 COP website at <http://www.nc73.net/>

