

# ULSTER COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL

## Technical Committee Meeting

### Meeting Summary

June 2, 2005  
Ulster County Community College  
Stone Ridge, NY

#### Members

<b>Present:</b>	Mircea Catona	UC Public Works Department
	James V. Dolaway	Town of Wawarsing
	Dennis Doyle	UC Planning Board
	Nancy Hammond	Town of Lloyd
	Ken Herman	Town of Marlboro
	Jack Hohman**	NYS Thruway Authority – NYC Division
	Richard Peters	NYS DOT Region 8
	Joseph E. Rich^	Federal Highway Administration
	Toni Roser	City of Kingston CitiBus
	Cynthia Ruiz	Ulster County Area Transit
	Charlie Schaller	UC Traffic Safety Board
	Frederick J. Wadnola <sup>+</sup>	Town of Ulster

#### Others

<b>Present:</b>	Maureen Brooks	New York Trailways
	Walter Cherwony	Abrams-Cherwony and Associates
	Peter Faith	Edwards and Kelcey
	Gil Hales	Citizen
	Larry Hammond	Town of Lloyd
	Tom Jackson	Ulster County Area Transit
	Tony Lanza	NYS DEC - Belleayre Mountain
	Geddy Sveikauskas	Ulster Publishing

#### Staff

<b>Present:</b>	Michele Bager	NYS DOT - Albany
	Marianne Davis	UC Planning Board
	Jean Gunsch	Region 8 MPO Staff
	Tom Mank	UCTC - Kingston
	Russell Robbins	NYS DOT Region 8
	Bill Tobin	UCTC - Kingston

<sup>+</sup>Permanent Voting Member

<sup>\*</sup>Current Voting Member (Until June 4, 2005)

<sup>\*\*</sup>Voting Proxy

<sup>^</sup>Advisory Member

## CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Doyle at 10:00 a.m. Those in attendance introduced themselves.

## CALL FOR CITIZEN COMMENTS

Mr. Gil Hales passed around a brochure on *Saugerties Scenic/Historic Bike Routes*.

## APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Mr. Doyle asked for approval of the minutes for the March 21<sup>st</sup> joint Technical and Policy meeting.

**Motion to approve by Mr. Wadnola, seconded by Ms. Hammond.**

## COMMUNICATIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

- a. Mr. Tobin announced that the Saugerties Area Mobility Study Analysis (SAMA) Committee met on May 9 to kick off Phase II of the Saugerties study. The purpose of this project is to look at multi-modal transportation and land use issues in the Route 32/212 and 9W corridors. Study area includes eastern third of the Town of Saugerties, the entire village of Saugerties, and the northern tier of the town of Ulster. Project is divided into three phases: Phase I Origin and Destination Study (to be performed by NYSDOT); Phase II Comprehensive existing transportation and land use analysis, and Phase III Future transportation and land use alternatives analysis. Hope to have a consultant selected by mid September.
- b. Mr. Tobin announced that the Ulster County Traffic Operations and Public Safety (TOPS) Committee recommended the approval of a RFP/scope of work at its May 12 meeting. The primary purpose of this project is to develop a quiet zone implementation plan for the City of Kingston and Town of Ulster and also to analyze short- and long-term pedestrian crosswalk safety features within the City of Kingston. An RFP has been released to the Public and staff hopes to have a consultant selected by mid September.
- c. Mr. Tobin announced that an Ulster County Ulster and Delaware Railroad Corridor Rail-With-Trail (RWT) Committee meeting was held May 17 and was well attended (with the exception for the Catskill Mountain Railroad). The RWT Committee decided it was important to have Catskill Mountain Railroad present to voice their position on the concept before proceeding. Therefore, the next RWT Committee meeting is scheduled for June 28 at 2:00 pm at the Olive Free Library in the Town of Olive.
- d. Mr. Tobin announced the scope of work is in development stages for the City of Kingston Route 32 at Fair Street Intersection Alternatives Analysis. Staff plans to utilize the Dutchess County MPO's retained consultant (Creighton Manning) to perform the intersection alternatives analysis study. Up to \$30,000 has been programmed for to complete the study.

- e. Mr. Tobin stated we are close to finalizing a contract with Traffic Count consultant Lochner Engineering. Up to \$20,000 is programmed this year for this effort. Staff estimates that up to 90 counts will be performed this year (mostly on the eastern third of the County).
- f. Mr. Tobin announced that he attended transportation planning work shop in Boston, Massachusetts sponsored by the National Transit Institute. Mr. Tobin commented that it was an excellent learning experience and recommended the MPO consider do "scanning tours" and other professional development initiatives. Mr. Tobin encouraged the UCTC to consider taking a field trip every other year or so to visit other MPOs to learn about their operations and practices.
- g. Mr. Tobin announced that the UCTC is now two-years old and as such alternate voting membership alternates June 4, 2005 for the following 16 Ulster County municipalities:
  - 1) Village of Saugerties to the Town of Hurley
  - 2) Town of Rosendale to the Town of Esopus
  - 3) Town of Lloyd to the Town of Marlborough
  - 4) Town of Plattekill to the Town of Shawangunk
  - 5) Village of Ellenville to the Village of New Paltz
  - 6) Town of New Paltz to the Town of Wawarsing
  - 7) Town of Woodstock to the Town of Kingston

Mr. Tobin reminded the Committee that all municipalities will continue to receive agendas, minutes, and other important UCTC documentation and encouraged everyone to continue attending UCTC meetings.

- h. Mr. Tobin stated a Transportation Management Area (TMA) Certification review was completed the first week of May. FHWA and FTA grade the MPO and its staff on how work performed meets federal requirements.
- i. Mr. Tobin announced a transportation plan public meeting is scheduled for Thursday, June 16, 2005 at 6:00 pm at the Ulster County Office Building 6<sup>th</sup> Floor Legislature Chambers. UCTC Members and the Public are encouraged to attend.
- j. Mr. Tobin stated the next UCTC Technical committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, July 12 at 10:00 am, UCCC.
- k. Mr. Mank announced that staff has received the TransCad modeling software and will be calibrating traffic counts.

Mr. Robbins stated that modeling scenarios are being utilized in the New Paltz study. A public meeting is tentative for the fall and they are hoping to finish the New Paltz study next January.

Mr. Catona said he has been approached by interested parties for bicycle routes. He asked if the UCTC could spare some funds for road improvements (shoulders).

Mr. Tobin clarified that Mr. Catona was asking for funds to help accomplish this but noted the TIP process was recently completed.

Mr. Doyle suggested asking for specific roads to improve and we could look for money two years from now when the next TIP is done.

Mr. Catona said he would do an estimation of which roads to recommend.

Ms. Ruiz stated that the Rosendale park ride lot was moving along with the help of County Highway and Bridges, NYSDOT, and the Planning Department.

Ms. Brooks stated that Trailways has received many calls about the park ride lot and they are very excited about it. She asked if there was an estimated completion date. Ms. Brooks added that many non-bus customers were using the existing parking lot.

## NEW BUSINESS

- a. Mr. Doyle introduced Walt Cherwony of Abrams-Cherwony and Associates, consultants for the *Ulster County Fixed Route Public Transportation Coordination and Intermodal Opportunities Analysis*. Mr. Cherwony gave a presentation on the progress of his work.

Mr. Tobin stated that when we receive a Draft Final Report he will bring it for final review and adoption.

Mr. Doyle added that additional funds for transit studies in the future have been requested. Mr. Cherwony will be looking at structural integration, looking at in-depth park/ride lots and bus terminal needs.

- b. Mr. Doyle introduced Peter Faith of Edwards & Kelcey, consultants for the Ulster County Long Range Transportation Plan. Mr. Doyle added that this was the first Long Range Transportation Plan rough draft. In 2001-2002, the Ulster County Planning Board prepared *Quality Communities and Bicycle /Pedestrian primers* as well as a *Transportation Plan*. Copies were handed out at the meeting.

Mr. Faith gave a presentation on the Long Range Transportation Plan. He stated that the draft was not complete.

Mr. Doyle added that some corridors need little improvement through the year 2030 while others are currently in need of improvements.

Mr. Lanza asked when the study was done and did it include Belleayre Mountain visitors? Mr. Faith responded that yes it does include Belleayre Mountain.

Mr. Herman stated that the trucks, not cars, on the 9W Corridor in Marlboro are a major traffic problem in the Town of Marlborough. He asked if truck traffic factors are included in the plan.

Mr. Faith stated that trucks have been incorporated into some studies. Thirty years into the future improvements will be included but this is not the type of plan that details Corridor operations.

Mr. Tobin added that we need to study the 9W corridor in the Town of Marlboro. One traffic item we have no control over is truck traffic from the interstate.

Mr. Doyle stated we should mention a freight study in the Long Range Plan.

Mr. Tobin suggested adding this to the Plan.

Mr. Robbins asked whether the Mid-Hudson bridges were included in the Long Range Plan.

Mr. Doyle stated that the traffic forecasting program has external zones and is modeled in that sense.

Mr. Robbins stated that something needs to be done about the Mid-Hudson Bridge.

Mr. Doyle responded our TransCad software will show congestion, however, Dutchess County does not model bridge operations.

Mr. Tobin stated he spoke with a CSX representative who want to see a double tracked rail corridor on the west side of the Hudson River from New York City to Albany. Mr. Tobin stated that the UCTC should support this concept and work closely with NYSDOT, the Federal Railroad Administration, and CSX on a CSX double track railroad corridor study. Mr. Tobin theorized that the while in the process of studying the double track concept, Ulster County could benefit from railroad corridor capacity enhancement study. Mr. Tobin explained that while studying the double track concept other issues must also be addressed such as major grade crossing safety improvements, grade separation facilities, and quality of life issues such as quiet zones and emergency responder and transit delays. And finally, with a double track study concept investigated and/or implemented, the possibility exists to entertain the concept of studying passenger rail service between Ulster County and the New York City area.

Ms. Ruiz added that a CSX double track may reduce truck traffic in the region.

Mr. Peters responded that most likely it wouldn't since local truck deliveries will always be needed. Perhaps, a reduction of truck traffic on the Thruway is a possibility.

Mr. Tobin answered that we would need to work with "west-side" counties on a

double track study concept. Ulster County couldn't do a study of this nature alone.

Mr. Doyle added that this would need to be a regional double track study, perhaps led by NYSDOT and partnered with CSX and the Federal Railroad Administration.

Ms. Ruiz said this was a big topic at a regional meeting she attended and added that it would be better to use railroads than trucks.

Mr. Lanza stated a big issue would be with the Tappenzee Bridge and the only way to replace the bridge is to include a passenger rail component.

Mr. Wadnola stated the trains have increased from 31 to 43 along the CSX rail corridor.

Mr. Doyle asked if there was a consensus to include support for a double track study in the Long Range Transportation Plan.

Ms. Ruiz said not without CSX participation and agreement on the concept.

Mr. Tobin said he could request a letter from CSX supporting the concept of a double track study.

Mr. Doyle asked Mr. Faith if he had any thoughts on the double track matter.

Mr. Faith responded that it sounded more like a NYSDOT matter and larger than one MPO could handle.

Mr. Peters said the concept should move to a downstate "integrater" where it would be looked at on an inter-regional basis.

Mr. Doyle stated that the double track study would force stakeholders to address safety and mobility issues throughout the corridor.

Mr. Herman said a double track concept may cause a serious problem with the river people as they could not cross.

Ms. Hammond said she strongly recommended getting a letter of approval than doing nothing.

Mr. Tobin added that CSX is very interested in a double track arrangement and a letter of support or a visit by CSX at a future meeting should be arranged.

Ms. Ruiz asked what about an environmental impact study?

Mr. Doyle suggested asking for feedback from NYSDOT on the overall double track study concept.

Mr. Faith said the plan could simply express support for a double track study with NYSDOT initiating the study.

Mr. Mank stated that having a Long Range Plan that doesn't mention the possibility of having passenger train service west of the Hudson would be a mistake.

Mr. Doyle added that we should look at issues surrounding double track.

Mr. Lanza stated that with his current Unit Management Plan, Belleayre was going from 17 to 25 miles of trails from now to 25-30 years from now. He asked about increase in the volume of traffic on Route 28.

Mr. Doyle stated we should look at the PM peak. Since Route 28 is a recreational corridor, we should see if recreational traffic is an issue and add to the corridor recommendations.

Mr. Faith stated that recreational traffic is included in the study.

Mr. Lanza stated that if Route 28 can't meet the traffic needs they would have to do a traffic study.

Mr. Jackson said to expect concerns on casinos in Saugerties at the next public meeting.

Mr. Doyle stated that the Saugerties Mobility Analysis Study will do it as a development site and not as a casino specifically. He added that most traffic would come from the Thruway.

Mr. Rich asked when information on financial tables would be available for the Long Range Plan.

Mr. Faith stated before the Public Meeting on June 16<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Hales asked about Figure 4 regarding the Change of Population in the Village of Saugerties and asked if it was based on the casino.

Mr. Doyle said no, casino or not, it is a potential development site.

Mr. Tobin stated that the plan will recommend a Bicycle/Pedestrian Committee to develop a detailed countywide Bike/Ped plan.

Mr. Mank added that the end goal of the Bike-Ped Committee may be a bike suitability map.

Mr. Tobin had received comments requesting a trail plan and stated perhaps next year we could address the issue.

Mr. Doyle announced that we would like comments back from this committee by the end of June. There will be a Policy meeting in August, where we will ask for an endorsement of the Plan. As a federal requirement, the Plan must be adopted by October 1<sup>st</sup>. Please send comments to Bill Tobin via e-mail, phone, website or regular mail. An announcement for the public meeting has been published in the newspaper. Mr. Doyle stated that we have to move this plan forward.

Mr. Schaller explained that rail traffic will not decrease truck traffic as most companies have centralized controlled systems from warehouse to retailer. The Hudson Valley has a high amount of truck traffic.

Mr. Peters added that truck traffic will increase faster than general traffic. The railroad will reduce Thruway traffic, not local truck traffic. He also stated that while everyone hates the trucks, they need to be accommodated to ensure deliveries are made efficiently.

Ms. Roser asked if backups on the Thruway on Friday evenings had been analyzed.

Mr. Faith said weekend traffic had not been addressed in the model.

Mr. Doyle asked if New Paltz shows congestion on arterial ramps.

Mr. Faith said yes.

Mr. Mank said he could model ski traffic using a special generator for known ski traffic as an input.

Mr. Lanza stated he didn't want to start something that isn't ready to be done.

Mr. Tobin asked about the light at Route 28 and Belleayre.

Mr. Lanza stated he has had lots of support from the State Police and would like to extend the left turn lane further up the hill to the Belleayre Mountain Resort intersection.

Mr. Doyle mentioned that particular intersection is being studied.

Mr. Tobin reminded the members of the next meeting on Tuesday, July 12.

Mr. Rich remarked that Federal Highway hopes to have a draft Certification Review report out to the Policy Committee. He also wanted to congratulate the UCTC and NYSDOT. He stated the MPO has come together faster than he's seen before and that the quality and timing is impressive.

## ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 11:48 a.m.