

ULSTER COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL

Technical Committee Meeting

Meeting Summary

November 1, 2005
Ulster County Community College
Stone Ridge, NY

Members

Present:	Joel B. Brink	Town of Ulster
	Mike Campbell	Village of Saugerties
	Mircea Catona	UC Public Works Department
	Dennis Doyle	UC Planning Board
	Steve Finkle**	City of Kingston
	Greg Helsmoortel ⁺	Town of Saugerties
	Jack Hohman**	NYS Thruway Authority
	Toni Hokanson**	Town of New Paltz
	Albert Meyer**	UC Legislator
	Richard Peters	NYSDOT Region 8
	Cynthia Ruiz**	UC Area Transit
	Charles Schaller	UC Traffic Safety Board
	Bob Shepard	Town of Lloyd

Staff

Present:	Marianne Davis	UC Planning Board
	Jean Gunsch	NYMTC - Region 8 MPO Staff
	Tom Mank	UCTC
	Bill Tobin	UCTC

Others

Present:	Brian Donovan	Saugerties Village Business Association
	Ed Goff	NYSDOT Region 8
	Gilbert Hales	Citizen
	Nancy Hammond	Town of Lloyd
	Tom Jackson	UC Area Transit
	Myles Putman	Shuster Associates

⁺Permanent Voting Member

^{*}Current Voting Member (Until June 4, 2007)

^{**}Voting Proxy

[^]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. Hales stated that the roads in the Village of Saugerties were deteriorating fast and need attention.

Mr. Doyle asked if he was referring to the road surface condition or traffic congestion. Mr. Hales replied both and he hoped NYSDOT would look into the matter.

Mr. Tobin stated that the UCTC is currently studying transportation issues in the Village and Town of Saugerties and NYSDOT has resurfacing scheduled for next summer along the 9W corridor south of the Village.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Mr. Doyle asked for approval of the minutes from the August 30, 2005 meeting. A consensus was reached to approve the minutes as presented.

ANNOUNCEMENTS/PROJECT UPDATES

Mr. Doyle stated that all projects listed on page 3 of the Agenda were in progress with the exception of the intermodal center site location analysis.

Mr. Doyle stated Saugerties recently received a substantial amount of earmarked funds. He also noted that some traffic counts needed for the Village of Saugerties study are being performed by NYSDOT and UCTC so the consultant will not need to do so many themselves.

Mr. Mank stated that traffic counts will be finished this week. A Year 2005 Ulster County traffic count report to include NYSDOT counts will be completed early next year.

Mr. Doyle added it would also be posted on the UCTC website.

Ms. Ruiz asked if counts would be compared historically. Mr. Mank stated he will be providing a spreadsheet and map showing historical traffic count comparisons. He added that NYSDOT does counts every 3 years at their permanent locations on State Roads.

Mr. Doyle said that we have seen a substantial increase in traffic over the past three years.

PORT EWEN US 9W CORRIDOR PLANNING AND DESIGN STUDY

Mr. Doyle introduced Mr. Goff, project engineer for NYSDOT Region 8. Mr. Goff presented the Port Ewen 9W planning and design project.

Ms. Ruiz asked if utilities would go underground to the new Town Hall. Mr. Goff stated that it would be up to the Town. NYSDOT cannot fund underground utilities.

Mr. Schaller asked how many left hand turns are planned. Mr. Goff replied that there will be left turn lanes provided at Salem St., Canal St., uphill at BOCES and at River Rd. He also stated that many people are turning left early to avoid the light at Salem St.

Mr. Schaller asked about eliminating on-street parking. Mr. Goff said this would not happen. Any on-street parking spaces lost will be compensated by other new nearby spaces.

Mr. Doyle asked if there would be any change in the speed limit moving south. Mr. Goff replied no.

Mr. Tobin asked if the quarry was approached to help with funding. Mr. Goff replied no they haven't since it's a State road intersection related problem.

Mr. Catona asked how far the blacktop would go. Mr. Goff stated to Green Street. Mr. Catona suggested redoing the whole sub-base.

Mr. Tobin complimented Mr. Goff's corridor visualization displays as being an effective method to convey what the project might look like when completed. Mr. Goff stated they were created using PhotoShop software by NYSDOT staff and were helpful for people to understand the concept.

Mr. Doyle asked what NYSDOT's plan was with respect to traffic during Phase 2 construction of the project. Mr. Goff stated there was no good alternative route around the project and they will not detour through local streets. Night-time construction may be the preferred way to go. However, after having given residents a choice, they prefer the work to be performed in the daytime with limited night-time construction (lessen disturbance to sleeping residents).

Mr. Doyle asked if temporary connections could be set up. Mr. Goff stated that there would be peak hour restrictions and temporary road widening but no detour.

Mr. Doyle stated that in conversations with other NYSDOT Regions, he found a way to use federal funds to build alternate routes systems for hamlet areas to make connections. This could offer an opportunity for connectivity.

Mr. Tobin asked if bus pullouts or shelters were planned. Mr. Goff said there would be two, one at Main Street and one at Van Loans.

Ms. Ruiz noted that Citibus goes through Salem Road and UCAT stops at BOCES.

Mr. Goff said the residents surprised him by asking for sidewalks everywhere so there will be sidewalks throughout along with decorative street lighting. There will be a pedestrian crossing at Salem Street. In his experience, people usually would prefer having sidewalks, but sometimes balk when they find out that property owners will each lose 5' of their property to accomplish this task.

Mr. Finkle asked what the project final cost would be. Mr. Goff stated at this point it is \$4.7 Million which does not include funding for the Town Hall relocation.

Mr. Schaller asked if NYSDOT would be taking care of Clay Road. Mr. Goff stated that they can't flatten it out too much but will level off at the top.

Mr. Doyle asked if there would be a left hand turn there. Mr. Goff said yes.

Mr. Doyle asked how they are dealing with issue at the parking lot at BOCES. Mr. Goff stated the sidewalk will be closer to the road with a buffer strip.

Mr. Jackson asked who would be responsible for maintaining the sidewalks. Mr. Goff replied that the Town has agreed to maintain them and will do so using a Maintenance Resolution.

Ms. Ruiz asked how many parking spaces will be at Salem Street. Mr. Goff replied nine spaces will be eliminated in front of the Chinese Restaurant and on the side but will be added around the corner nearby.

Mr. Finkle asked when the project started and how long it has been in the planning stage. Mr. Goff replied that the first correspondence was dated 1994. Mr. Goff has been working on the project since Fall 2001.

Mr. Doyle complimented Mr. Goff on the overall corridor planning and design process. Mr. Goff stated that the extra time put into public involvement was worth the effort.

Ms. Ruiz asked if the project was being documented as a model. Mr. Goff stated that Sandra Johnson of NYSDOT has documented the process which can be used as a model for future projects. Stone Ridge has already contacted him about their conceptual design plans.

Mr. Tobin asked if they had planned on 14 public meetings from the beginning. Mr. Goff replied "no" but the conceptual meeting was not well received. So at the first public workshop they asked for comments and changed the tone of the discussion. He noted that generally the greater the participation, the greater the project cost.

Mr. Doyle thanked Mr. Goff for attending and presenting.

YEAR 2030 LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN AMENDMENT DISCUSSION

Mr. Doyle asked how the UCTC would like to handle plan amendments for the Year 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP).

Mr. Finkle stated that if funding becomes available we should look at it every 6 months to a year with the exception of a special project or emergencies.

Ms. Ruiz asked whether specific examples didn't come up at the last meeting.

Mr. Doyle stated that we would first like to have a process then discuss amendments.

Mr. Tobin added the LRTP could be amended as often as needed.

Mr. Peters stated that the LRTP should not jump around every month.

Mr. Tobin said we need to include public involvement component which may make the LRTP amendment process time consuming.

Mr. Peters stated we need to look at the consequences and how an amendment fits into the existing plan.

Mr. Jackson asked if this issue should be decided by the Policy Committee.

Mr. Doyle said that it is up to the Technical Committee to make recommendations and comment on the process.

Mr. Finkle stated if an opportunity or need arises the LRTP should be amended accordingly.

Mr. Tobin stated the next LRTP update will occur in about four years.

Ms. Ruiz said the Council should try to schedule amendments to coincide with the regularly scheduled LRTP update process for the purposes of efficiency.

Mr. Doyle said rather than look at individual town updates we should change the plan to go along with UCTC priorities. Instead of looking only at community issues the Council should be looking at broader regional transportation issues.

Mr. Tobin asked about the need to change for errors missed in the editing process. Mr. Doyle stated we don't need an amendment process to edit the plan for typographical errors.

Mr. Meyer suggested going with a yearly amendment process.

Mr. Finkle suggested looking at the plan and prepare amendments annually or on an every other year basis.

Mr. Doyle said that staff will look at the LRTP. He added that Council members are welcomed to propose amendments.

Ms. Hokanson stated whatever comes up should coincide with the LRTP goals and objectives.

Ms. Ruiz asked if there wasn't something that Saugerties wanted to add.

Mr. Helmoortel suggested adding a passenger rail feasibility study.

Mr. Tobin asked where we stand or who would be in favor of a passenger rail component.

Mr. Peters stated that we have to look at if passenger rail is feasible concept then make recommendations.

Mr. Helsmoortel asked if it needed to be in writing. Mr. Doyle answered it would be reflected in the minutes that Saugerties would like to see a plan amendment for passenger rail service.

Mr. Helsmoortel stated passenger rail services could be within the existing CSX railroad corridor.

Ms. Ruiz said that CSX does not have enough capacity for their own operations and have no room for passenger service. She asked if NYSDOT could comment on this concept. Mr. Peters agreed.

Mr. Doyle stated that we will take a look at passenger rail for Saugerties. He asked if we could come up with a recommendation.

Mr. Brink asked if CSX was receptive to a passenger rail concept shared along with their freight operations along the Hudson River west shore railroad corridor.

Mr. Peters said that there have been many studies on the west shore from New Jersey through Haverstraw and CSX is concerned with having passenger operations on their tracks. CSX wants a double track arrangement for freight operations. CSX would require additional track for passenger service.

Mr. Doyle noted that in the past there has been a conscious decision to not extend passenger rail service into Ulster County. Southern New York communities would not support it. The Capital corridor study showed that not many people would utilize it.

Mr. Peters stated there was an attempt to look at bringing Metro North up to Rhinecliff but communities are against this concept due to crowding, development, etc.

Mr. Peters asked how Saugerties sees passenger rail service enhancing economic development in Ulster County. Mr. Helsmoortel said a passenger rail study would need to be completed to know the answer to this question.

It was agreed to schedule a passenger rail meeting to continue discussions concerning a passenger rail concept in Ulster County.

FEDERAL FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM MAP UPDATE DISCUSSION

Mr. Mank stated that in the 1990s NYSDOT updated the Ulster County federal functional classification system which is divided into urban and rural roads (by interstate, principle arterial, major and minor arterial, collector, and local road). In 2003, the UCTC was created and the Urban Area boundary changed significantly from its 1990 configuration.

Mr. Doyle stated staff has compiled a preliminary draft map with amendments for NYSDOT review. Mr. Doyle stated there are several advantages to getting on the Federal Aid System.

Mr. Peters stated there is a statewide limit on the number of roads that qualify for placement on the federal aid system.

Mr. Doyle explained that the Town of Ulster has become an activity center in the 1990s. There were also changes in the villages and hamlets (for example Mike Kraut Road).

Mr. Doyle noted that staff will present a resolution to the Council before formally submitting an adopted federal aid system map to FHWA.

TMA MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Mr. Doyle stated that the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) recommended the three MPOS (Dutchess, Orange and Ulster) formalize TMS staff activities. Staff is proposing the MOU describing shared services and decision making. The MOU was developed cooperatively among the three MPOs.

A consensus was achieved to recommend the TMA MOU be forwarded to the Policy Committee for review and possible adoption.

FTA SECTION 5307 TMA FORMULA FUNDS METHODOLOGY UPDATE

Mr. Doyle stated that earlier this year, Dutchess, Orange and Ulster County Transportation Councils agreed to set aside \$1.7 million of FTA Section 5307 TMA formula funds for competition among the three MPOs. Before the three MPOs and public transit operators can begin competing for these funds, an established process for selecting and awarding proposals is needed. TMA staff are actively working together to develop a fair and equitable methodology for evaluating, scoring, ranking and selecting project proposals. A Section 5307 staff meeting was held on October 11, 2005 to initiate efforts to explore a methodology for evaluating and selecting project proposals among Dutchess, Orange and Ulster Counties.

Ms. Ruiz stated that a submitted project must benefit the Region. Currently, UCAT is planning to propose three projects. Ulster, Dutchess, and Orange Counties, and the City of Poughkeepsie and MTA are designated recipients and can compete for projects. Funding can come from any town, transit agency, etc. For example, Shortline could utilize three different sponsors. Ms. Ruiz stated the three Ulster County projects being proposed include (1) the purchase of a 35 foot low floor \$350,000 bus to back up Mulligan, (2) the purchase of a 35 foot low floor \$350,000 bus to service the New Paltz to Newburgh route, and (3) the purchase of a 35 foot low floor \$350,000 bus to provide both service between Town of Ulster and the Rhinecliff Train Station as well provide loop service at the Town of Ulster shopping area.

Mr. Doyle stated that people should contact Ms. Ruiz if they have other project ideas.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Tobin stated that February 7, 2006 is the next scheduled Technical Committee meeting and asked if the council would like a back up plan for inclement weather.

Mr. Tobin proposed that in the event weather threatens a scheduled meeting, he will leave a recorded voice message on his office answering machine (as early as possible) in advance of the meeting so people can call in and hear a recorded message. To learn whether a UCTC meeting has been postponed or cancelled as a result of inclement weather, please call (845) 334-5590. In the event a meeting has been postponed or cancelled, staff will work with Committee members to reschedule the meeting as soon as possible.

Ms. Ruiz said we could also use the UCAT transit alert system and they would call the radio stations.

CALL FOR CITIZEN COMMENTS

No comments were submitted.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 12:05 p.m.