



La Crosse Area Planning Committee

*Metropolitan Planning Organization
Serving the La Crosse/La Crescent Urbanized Area*

Tom Faella, Director Jackie Eastwood, Transportation Planner
La Crosse County Administrative Center
400 4th Street North ☎ Room 2300 ☎ La Crosse, WI 54601-3200
Telephone: 608.785.5977 or 608.785.6141 FAX: 608.793.6525

Minutes of LAPC Meeting, May 18, 2011

Minutes of the meeting of the La Crosse Area Planning Committee held on Wednesday, May 18, 2011 at 4:30 p.m. in Room 3220 of the La Crosse County Administrative Center, 400 4th St N, La Crosse.

Members Present: Lynnetta Kopp, former chairperson, Town of Shelby; Timothy Candahl, Town of Shelby; Roland Bogert, Town of Onalaska; Dennis Manthei, Village of West Salem; Mike Giese, City of Onalaska; Matt Harter, City of La Crosse; Steve Doyle, La Crosse County; Mike Poellinger, City of La Crescent; Scott Johnson, Town of Campbell; Nancy Proctor, Village of Holmen. **Members Absent:** None. **Members Excused:** Linda Seidel, Town of Medary. **Others Present:** Tara Johnson, Jai Kalsy, Adam Pohlman, Greg Paulson, Don Smith, David Jolicoeur, Paul Wydeven, Jean Meyer, John Boland, Greg Pates, Sue Howe, Larry Kirch, John Von Ruden, Anne Meyer, Jack Zabrowski, Steve O'Malley, Jenny Kuderer, Jamie Klonowski, Jill Miller, Barry Warner, Ken Holte, Linda Larson, Tom Faella, and Jackie Eastwood.

Call to Order: Lynnetta Kopp called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

1) Approval of Minutes of the March 16, 2011 LAPC Meeting:

Mike Poellinger motioned to approve the minutes of the March 16, 2011 meeting; Mike Giese seconded. All were in favor.

2) Public comment relative to agenda items, with a 5-minute time limit per comment:

Larry Kirch spoke in favor of Resolution 4-2011 in Support of the Mississippi River Trail. Public comment regarding the Dresbach Bridge project was deferred until agenda item 6.

3) Recognition of service and introduction of new policy board members:

Mike Poellinger recognized Lynnetta Kopp for her service to the LAPC and presented her with a plaque. Mr. Poellinger then introduced the new members of the policy board, Timothy Candahl, Chairman, Town of Shelby and Roland Bogert, Chairman, Town of Onalaska.

4) Election of chair and vice-chair:

Mike Giese motioned to nominate Nancy Proctor as the chair of the Policy Board; Dennis Manthei seconded. All were in favor.

Nancy Proctor motioned to nominate Mike Giese as the vice-chair of the Policy Board; Scott Johnson seconded. All were in favor.

5) Resolution 4-2011 in Support of the Mississippi River Trail:

Mike Poellinger motioned to adopt Resolution 4-2011 in Support of the Mississippi River Trail Bicycle Route. Scott Johnson seconded. All were in favor.

6) Local share dues for 2012:

Tom Faella stated that local share dues have remained the same for the last seven years, but that the board could choose to lower or raise them. In response to a question by Tara Johnson, Mr. Faella stated the LAPC could reduce the dues and operate on carry-over; however, the carry-over has been decreasing. Mike Poellinger requested that the Policy Board discuss local dues for 2013 at the November, 2011 meeting when all of the communities are considering their budgets for 2013. Mike Giese stated that this is not an easy vote for him considering the budgetary realities in Onalaska. Mr. Giese continued that he would like to see a nominal reduction in the dues, but that he would support no change in the dues if the other members were so inclined.

Mike Poellinger motioned to set the local share dues for 2012 at the same level as 2011; Scott Johnson seconded. All were in favor.

7) I-90 Dresbach Bridge:

Jai Kalsy, Ken Holte, and Barry Warner presented on the construction staging, visual quality plan, and bicycle and pedestrian accommodations for the I-90 Dresbach Bridge replacement project. The project design was changed to eliminate some access to the "Area of Interest (AOI)" including the Minnesota rest area, Lock and Dam No. 7 and Mississippi River boat launches. I-90 eastbound traffic will be able to access the AOI, but traffic from the AOI will be signed to go north on I-90 to the Dresbach exit to travel eastbound to Wisconsin. Mike Poellinger voiced concerns for emergency vehicles and safety during construction, further stating that the Dresbach exit is inadequate to handle semi traffic. Mr. Kalsy stated that Mn/DOT will prepare an incident management plan.

Ken Holte presented the construction schedule, which is anticipated to span four summers beginning in 2012 and ending in 2015. The bulk of the construction for the new bridge structure will occur in 2013. "Head to head" traffic will occur during the construction seasons, but no detours are planned. The old bridge will be demolished in 2015. In response to a question by Scott Johnson, Jai Kalsy addressed closures within the AOI. Mr. Kalsy stated that access to the lock and dam will be available because it's a place of employment; but that the rest area and the Fish and Wildlife boat launch will likely be closed at some points during construction. Mr. Johnson stated that the fisherman in the area will not be happy and requested that Mn/DOT provide adequate public notification.

Jai Kalsy discussed bicycle/pedestrian accommodation in the project, which include connections from the existing shoulders on northbound TH 14/61 and a grade-separated bridge to connect to the southbound shoulder. The Mississippi River Trail through the I-90 / TH 14/61 interchange will be accommodated with no high-speed lane crossings for bicyclists. Bicycle/pedestrian accommodations will not be included on the interstate bridge for a number of reasons including vertical clearance issues for navigation, security, cost, and the fact that the Wagon Wheel Trail is a viable alternative route. John Von Ruden added that WisDOT has no plans to accommodate bicycles on the I-90 corridor east of the bridge.

John Boland asked the project team if they had a plan for getting bicyclists and pedestrians through the construction zone. Ken Holte responded that they have not yet looked at that.

Mike Poellinger stated the frustration among bicyclists that the La Crescent TH 14/61 intersection project does not accommodate bicyclists as requested and the Wagon Wheel Trail project is again delayed. Mr. Poellinger distributed a resolution addressing bicycle accommodations and suggested a special meeting in two weeks to continue the discussion and consider the proposed resolution.

Mike Giese motioned to introduce for consideration resolution 5-2011 in support of planning for future bicycle and pedestrian accommodations on the Dresbach Bridge and to schedule a special meeting and public hearing on Wednesday, June 1 at 4:30 p.m. in room 3220; Mike Poellinger seconded. All were in favor.

Tom Faella will post a notice for the hearing in the La Crosse Tribune and Houston County News. Nancy Proctor opened the floor to public comment.

Don Smith began by honoring the work done by Mn/DOT and then discussed two major concerns with the process: 1) the outcome is inconsistent with the LAPC regional bicycle plan, which recommends the design for a future bicycle/pedestrian accommodation on the bridge; and, 2) the planning process has had inadequate public involvement. Although there have been bridge project technical and advisory meetings, the general public and news media were not invited to participate. Mr. Smith discussed the project Environmental Analysis (EA) study and the requirements for addressing substantive comments within the EA review process. Mr. Smith further stated that accommodations should be included because there is no other river crossing within a half mile, and that adding bicycle and pedestrian accommodations would be less than 20% of the total project cost.

Larry Kirch stated that we live in a metro area located in two states and that it is becoming commonplace to have bicycle/pedestrian accommodations within interstate corridors. Although the project design includes lots of details for aesthetics, it needs to include bicycle and pedestrian facilities on the interstate bridge to make the system multimodal. Mr. Kirch further stated that La Crosse is second only to Madison for commuting to work by bike and accommodations on the bridge would have real commuter benefits; studies show that as bicycle facilities are put in place, participation rates always exceed expectations. This connection would allow La Crescent residents who work on French Island to

access their jobs by biking or walking. It would also provide a means to connect trail systems on the both sides of the river.

Steve Doyle asked if passing the resolution would have an impact. Tom Faella responded that the Policy Board could also remove the project from the Transportation Improvement Program. Don Smith added that the resolution would be offered in comment at the EA hearing and, as a substantive comment, it would have to be addressed.

8) Participation on the Minnesota Statewide Multimodal Plan project management team:

Mike Poellinger motioned to appoint Tom Faella as the representative of the Minnesota MPOs on the Statewide Multimodal Plan project management team; Matt Harter seconded; Mike Giese excused; All in favor.

9) LAPC Strategic Goals:

Tom Faella presented an overview of the goals created at the January Policy Board meeting and the actions staff will include in upcoming work programs to meet the goals. Mike Poellinger suggested inviting La Crosse County Zoning staff to a Policy Board meeting to communicate land use activities among communities.

10) Other business; Director's report; Adjourn; Next meeting to be announced:

Nancy Proctor asked that an item to discuss how members are appointed to the LAPC technical committees be included on the July agenda.

The next meeting will be a public hearing on Wednesday, June 1, 2011 at 4:30 p.m. in Room 3220 of the La Crosse County Administrative Center.

Dennis Manthei motioned to adjourn at 6:15 p.m.; Scott Johnson seconded; Mike Giese and Mike Poellinger excused. All were in favor.