

Planning and Coordination Council Quarterly Meeting
May 16, 2012; 2:00 p.m.
Room 241, Albemarle County Office Building at McIntire Road

Council Members in Attendance: Tom Foley, Satyendra Huja, Ann Mallek, Maurice Jones, David Neuman, Dennis Rooker, Kristin Szakos

Also in Attendance: Bill Letteri, Mark Graham, Wayne Cilimberg, Steve Williams, Crystal, Riddervold, Jeff Sittler, George Shadman, David Neuman Also at the meeting: League of Women Voters representative, Neighborhood Representatives, Members from the Public, Media Representatives

1. Call to Order/Election of Officers – Ann Mallek

Ms. Mallek, Chair of the Albemarle County Board of Supervisors, called the meeting to order at 2:04 p.m.

2. Approval of February 16, 2012 Meeting Minutes

Ms. Szakos moved approval of the February 16, 2012 minutes as written; Mr. Foley seconded. The motion was carried by a voice call vote of 6-0.

3. Transportation Update

Jim Utterback, VDOT Culpeper District Administrator, presented the following information:

Mr. Utterback said the Culpeper District covers nine counties from the northern part of Fauquier County to the southern portion of Albemarle County. He said the biggest municipality within the District is the City of Charlottesville. He reported on several projects that are happening at the northern end of the District.

- The Opal interchange at Rt. 29 North and Rt. 17 currently under construction costing \$44 million
- Rt. 3 between Fredericksburg and Culpeper widening last two lane piece of roadway to four lanes; going to design/build and is a \$35 million project.
- ROW acquisition has begun on an interchange at Rt. 29 and Rt. 666 in Culpeper which will be a grade separated interchange.

Mr. Utterback provided an overview of construction allocations for the Culpeper District stating that, over the last five years, there has been a continuing decline in transportation funding.

Mr. Brent Sprinkel said projects currently in the six year plan include four gravel road projects in Albemarle County scheduled for construction this summer: Rt. 608 (Happy Creek Road just off Rt. 231 next to the Orange County line); Rt. 672 (Blufton Road in the Doyleville area off 810); Rt. 704 (Fortune Road in the Keene area off Rt. 20), and Rt. 762 (Rose Hill Church Road, between Rt. 250E and Rt. 53).

Mr. Sprinkel said the Rt. 250/McIntire Road interchange is being administered by the City and has a total value of approximately \$33.5 million. This project should be advertised this summer based on the completion and approvals with the City's project. Rt. 53, which includes three spot safety improvements in Albemarle County, will be advertised in February 2013 with an estimated cost of just under \$1 million.

Mr. Sprinkel said Rt. 616 (Black Cat Road Bridge near Shadwell) is going to advertisement March 2014 at an estimated cost of \$3.8 million and is well into the design stage. The Route 708 bridge over Buckingham Branch Railroad has a May 2013 advertisement date and the total project value is \$2.4 million. He reported that a spot safety improvement is planned on Rt. 53 at the intersection of Rt. 729. Another project on Route 53 is located near Lake Monticello in Fluvanna County and VDOT is working both projects together. Those two have an October 2013 advertisement and would total a little over \$1 million.

Mr. Sprinkel said the project on Rt. 29 southbound from Hydraulic to the 250 bypass (Best Buy Ramp), is a key interchange at two major roadways and is on schedule for November 2014 advertisement with

current estimate being a little under \$5 million. Mr. Utterback said the project is on the National Highway System and will require a traffic analysis which will take a couple of months.

Mr. Sprinkel said the Rt. 677 bridge replacement over Buckingham Branch Railroad (Broomley Road) is scheduled to be advertised December 2014 and is currently estimated at \$4.7 million. He said another bridge replacement project is on Rt. 637 over Ivy Creek (Dick Woods Road), which is between I-64 and Rt. 250 and is scheduled for advertisement in December 2014 at an estimated cost of \$2.5 million. VDOT will be doing some repairs to that bridge in the very near future so it can be kept open until the replacement project is put into place. Mr. Sprinkel said the project will be designed to minimize impacts to the area. There is federal money on the project and VDOT will have to meet some federal criteria and work with them on the design.

Mr. Sprinkel said Rt. 20 Belmont Bridge is being administered by the City. The current advertisement date is Jan. 2015 and current estimate is a little over \$14 million. He said Hillsdale Drive Extended is being administered by the City as well and has a July 2015 advertisement date with an estimated cost of \$13.9 million and does reflect the donated right of way. The City has indicated that, if the right of way can be acquired faster, the funding will be there and the project could advance.

Mr. Sprinkel said the Rt. 29 widening north of the river from Ashwood Blvd. to the Town Center Drive is fully funded and estimated just under \$33 million with a December 2015 advertisement date. Mr. Sprinkel said VDOT will minimize the impacts to the extent possible but the grade differential between the old section of 29 and some of the new sections are going to be one of the design challenges.

Mr. Sprinkel said projects currently underway include: Rt. 250 Shadwell Bridge scheduled to be completed in July with a cost estimate of \$3 million; Jarman's Gap Road has been under construction for a while, has a \$13 million value and should be brought to conclusion in September of this year. The JPA bridge replacement in the City, at about \$11 million, should also be completed September of this year.

Mr. Sprinkel said McIntire Road Extended in the City is a \$10 million project, and scheduled to be completed in October 2013. He said the Zion Crossroads Divergent Diamond interchange improvements at I-64 is a design build project and has about an \$8 million value and construction should be completed sometime in late 2014.

Mr. Rooker asked when the citizen information meeting on the by-pass project would be held and if there would be adequate opportunity for people to comment at that meeting as well as in writing.

Mr. Utterback said the project is under an accelerated schedule so VDOT will have a meeting as soon as is possible. He added that VDOT will provide lots of opportunities for comment so that those are captured appropriately. Again, there is an approved document so this is a re-evaluation which will focus on comparing it to the original document.

Mr. Rooker asked if the draft environmental analysis would address the changes that have occurred since the last work was done and Mr. Utterback said it would deal with the current design. He added that, if there is a deviation in the new design, VDOT would go back and address that.

Mr. Rooker expressed concern about the landscaping project being separated out from the road project. He said separating it out would probably cost more for the landscaping work because it will have to be retrofit into the construction design as opposed to fitting it together. He requested VDOT look at the initial specs in the original RFP and develop something similar and bring those specs forward and let the public comment before it is put out to bid.

Mr. Utterback said there will be opportunity to do that. He said the intent was to do something that would involve the community, and allow folks to reach consensus on what makes sense from a landscaping standpoint. He added that, if the contractor does not have to move the dirt off the job and can move it into berms, it's a win-win for everyone and the project can be landscaped appropriately. Once into contract, and into some preliminary design, there will be opportunities to do that. The intent is to have the best solutions.

Ms. Judy Mueller, Director of Public Works, City of Charlottesville, presented the following information:

Charlottesville Area Transit (CAT) receives funding from a number of sources: state and federal government (43%); City's General Fund (33%); fares (13%) and the County (11%). CAT provides free service to University of Virginia faculty, staff, and students if their UVA ID card is used.

CAT has worked closely with University Transit Service (UTS) to eliminate overlapping services and, together, they provide one unified guide which is published annually.

CAT's fixed route service serves the City and a number of areas in the urban part of the County. Routes operate Monday through Saturday from 6:15 a.m. to 11:45 p.m. Sunday service runs from 7:45 a.m. to 6 p.m. Service is offered on all holidays, except Christmas day. As of the end of April, CAT had served 1.9 million passengers this fiscal year which is on record to beat last year's numbers. Ms. Mueller said the Downtown Transit Center opened in March 2007 and is the first gold municipal LEED facility in Virginia. The customer service desk is open Monday through Saturday from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. and on Sundays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. The operation and maintenance facility opened in 2010 and is also LEED certified which allows CAT to centralize all of their transit operations.

CAT's main routes are the Trolley, Routes 5 and 7. Route 7 is one of the main core routes that travel up Route 29. Route 7 and the Trolley run a 15 minute frequency. The frequency is 1 hours during non-peak hours. Each bus costs \$500,000 plus labor to operate.

The City recently did some rebranding of CAT and those efforts have been incredibly successful. Ms. Mueller reported that, as a result of those efforts, the City received a marketing award from the American Public Transit Association, adding that the work was done entirely by the City's marketing staff.

Ms. Mueller reported CAT boardings have increased every month for the last two years so service is growing at about 5.3% and that is due to the market - listening to the customers, trying to figure out what staff can do to make it easier to ride public transportation. The City has just engaged the firm of Nelson Neigard to take a look at CAT's transit routes. She said the consultants will be looking at every aspect of the operation in an effort to identify areas of improvement.

Ms. Mueller said, on the horizon, certain routes will need to be adjusted to accommodate changes to McIntire and the new Shops at Stonefield development.

Ms. Rebecca White, Director, Parking & Transportation, University of Virginia, presented the following information:

University Transit Service (UTS) operates to meet specific goals on grounds of the University; however, anyone may board, affiliated or non-affiliated with UVA. UTS and CAT have been coordinating on many efforts, including a shared GPS system. UTS does not receive state or federal funding nor does it receive funding from the University. UTS is a unit within the Dept. of Parking and Transportation at UVA which allows this service to be self-funded.

Peak service has about 24 buses in operation. Being part of Parking and Transportation is vital to making UVA's parking inventory work. UVA has a very large parking inventory; however, these are not all on central grounds, so it is critical to use this parking inventory to its best and highest level.

UTS provides on-grounds mobility, mid-day mobility, and transit links for students living off-grounds, on-grounds and employee parking off-grounds. Their service goal is to have parking intercepts and large parking inventories on the edges of grounds so the last mile of travel can be picked up by transit as opposed to lots of cars trying to get into the core. The goals of service are to provide alternative transportation to the single occupancy vehicle and advance environmental issues and stewardship.

UTS provides about 70,000 hours of service per year on a fixed route within a two-square mile area. Frequency averages 8-15 minutes. UTS runs every day, Monday through Friday, 6 a.m. to 12:30 a.m.

every 15 minutes during those core times. There is an additional service when classes are in session on Saturdays and Sundays beginning at 12 noon with extended service on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights until 2:30 a.m.

UTS has 3 million boardings a year. UTS and CAT have a reciprocal program whereby UVA IDs are honored in lieu of fare on CAT. In addition, UTS is the public provider for five of the City's corridors (Arlington Blvd., JPA, Rugby Road, Grady Avenue and 14th Street). In exchange, UVA provides funding to the City for the reciprocal ridership program and the Free Trolley. About 30,000 boardings a month are UVA IDs on non-trolley routes.

UTS is participating in the Virginia Environmental Excellence Program (VEEP) and was just elevated from E2 status to E3. UTS received a Governors' Award for Excellence for environmental stewardship. They have very extensive spill prevention plans; have made extensive storm water protection investments for the vehicle maintenance area and parking lots as well. Other initiatives include car sharing on-grounds with 8 shared cars currently in inventory. There are a number of carpool incentives; about 1/3 of UVA employees live within walking distance of either a CAT or UTS bus stop. For the other 2/3s, a great alternative are the carpool programs. UVA offers pretty significant discounts: two-person carpools enjoy a 25% discount; 3-person carpools get a 40% discount and 4-people or more get their parking permit for free. There are some occasional-parker programs offered as well. UVA has an on-line ride matching tool exclusive to UVA employees and students.

Parking permits can run as high as \$90/month in the medical center; however, there are pricing incentives that, if someone parks their car at the very edge of campus, fees are discounted down to as low as \$18/month, which is an effective way to reduce congestion and reduce single occupancy vehicle use. There are quite a number of bike programs, and bike education is also provided. Looking ahead, UTS intends to also use Transportation Demand Management (TDM) to reduce parking demand.

UTS received a Transportation Enhancement Program (TEP) grant two years ago to study the feasibility of bike share on grounds and have now applied for an implementation grant. Because the UTS buses are packed all the time, UTS is hoping to shift some of that ridership onto the bike and pedestrian ways.

4. Update – “Many Plans, One Community” Project

Steve Williams, Executive Director, Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission presented the following information:

At the end of March, staff finished their first community outreach series on the City and County Comprehensive Plans related to topics on housing, environment, economic drivers, transportation, community facilities, etc. In Mid-April, the results were shared with the City and County Planning Commissions. TJPDC is now in the process of conducting further outreach in the community related to the different goals adopted from the City and County Comprehensive Plans that were presented during the outreach series. TJPDC developed a public input form which identified all of those goals by program and asked people to rank their top ten. This form went to about 60 community groups in the area and those responses are due back mid-June. Over the course of the summer, TJPDC's Project Manager, Summer Frederick, will meet individually with both Planning Commissions to conduct facilitated sessions on identifying priorities and goals. Once completed, TJPDC will meet with City and County staff to begin planning activities for the Fall and Winter.

Mr. Williams said Sarah Stamp, TJPDC's Livability Team member, developed a database which encompassed 81 plans adopted by the partner organizations in the livability project, the City, County, University, TJPDC, the MPO, JABA, and a few other such organizations. He said Ms. Stamp went through all of those plans and identified every goal, recommendation, objective, priority, strategy and action. She pulled that text out, put it into a giant Access database -- 12,007 of those items - and then created a system to search those using text tags. Ms. Stamp said a query may be conducted using straight text as well.

Mr. Williams said the database allows a person to pick almost any combination of topics and quickly see what the combined efforts of all the planning that has taken place in the region in the last 15 years has

said on those particular issues. TJPDC provided training to City and County staff so it will be a very easy tool for them to use in searching their own documents and a quick way to find relationships in all of the different plans. Mr. Williams said the plan is to make this available on the web so the public will be able to conduct searches as well. A demo was provided.

5. Identify Future Agenda Items

- Ms. Mallek suggested a discussion on an entertainment tax.
- Ms. Szakos suggested a discussion on housing and its impact on traffic and transit.
- Mr. Jones suggested an update on economic development.
- Mr. Rooker suggested an update on proposed changes to the growth areas and possible impacts.

6. Adjourn

Meeting was adjourned by Ms. Mallek at 4:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Mullins