

Planning Commission Work Session

June 25, 2014 – 5:00 p.m.

NDS Conference Room

Commissioner's Present

Dan Rosensweig - Chairperson
Kurt Keesecker
Lisa Green
Natasha Sienitsky
John Santoski
Mike Osteen

Staff Present

Jim Tolbert
Missy Creasy
Amanda Poncy
Chip Boyles, TJPDC
Sarah Rhodes, TJPDC

Public

Lena Seville
Travis Pietila
Dede Smith

Mr. Rosensweig called the meeting to order at 5:05 pm. The meeting opened with a discussion on the LRTP letter. This letter was drafted by Mr. Rosensweig and staff to the MPO to discuss the Commission's experience with the LRTP and their desire to be involved in the beginning of the next LRTP plan review.

A copy of the letter was sent to MPO Program Manager Sarah Rhodes, who commented by expressing the perspective of the MPO and has offered to discuss the matter further.

Ms. Rhodes proposed changes which would result in a very different letter than was reviewed by the Commission at the June 10, 2014 meeting. The Commissioners have this opportunity to review both and provide additional guidance.

Commissioners had different points of view of the letter.

Kurt Keesecker spoke that the Planning Commission and Ms. Rhodes letter should be attached together.

Mr. Santoski said he was okay with the Planning Commission's original letter.

Ms. Keller is in favor of sending one letter. She said the Planning Commission shared the preliminary draft of the letter with Sarah Rhodes and she offered comments that were incorporated into the letter.

Mr. Keesecker asked Ms. Rhodes about the report she mentioned in the last meeting. He said she was doing a report and some of these same thoughts were going to be used in the document to be sent to the MPO for observations as to what went well and what didn't.

Ms. Rhodes commented to Mr. Keesecker that they are currently drafting a 15 page "Lessons Learned" report incorporating comments from the Southern Environmental Law Center. She would prefer one letter with unified lessons learned.

Ms. Green, Mr. Santoski, and Mr. Rosensweig would prefer one letter as well.

Jim Tolbert said when he was advised of the letter, a meeting was set up for next Wednesday to talk about how to incorporate the Planning Commission with MPO in the future.

A revised letter will be forwarded shortly.

Jim Tolbert gave a quick overview of the Community Planning Efforts.

- a. Multimodal Efforts
- b. Bike and Pedestrian Plan Update
- c. Green Infrastructure Plan
- d. Code and Regulatory Audit

Mr. Tolbert said one of the future citizen engagement opportunities (early September) will be to incorporate neighborhood walks in every neighborhood with maps to talk with the associations about issues.

Mr. Keesecker questioned the access of maps and his concerns about utility placement.

Ms. Green questioned the coordination with Public Works/Engineering.

Mr. Tolbert remarked that this information is in the report.

Ms. Green also questioned the walking signals at Reid's supermarket.

There was discussion on speed limits and the consistency of levels of speed.

Ms. Keller said a legislative approach would be helpful and the city would then have more control over speed limits. She recommended that the city explore the potential for requesting from the General Assembly the ability to establish low speed areas in non-school zones as deemed appropriate.

Mr. Rosensweig would like to have the consensus from the commissioners in support of proposing legislative changes.

Mr. Tolbert said after the neighborhood walks, the next part is to have a timeline and get consensus from the Planning Commission on a vision.

Mr. Santoski asked if the commissioners are to prioritize the modes of transportation and what is the vision of the city.

Mr. Tolbert answered that bike and pedestrian are priority areas.

Ms. Green, Mr. Rosensweig and Mr. Santoski agreed that priority is the key to what they want it to be and priority is better than balance.

Mr. Rosensweig asked for any public comment at this time.

Travis Pietila asked how small area plans interact with broader policy items.

Dede Smith asked if the planning commission had the information from Ian Lockwood lecture and expressed her concerns for public transit. She also said commuters enrich communities and some things in the past have caused problems

Bill Emory said he is in favor of the legislature having control of the streets and speed limits. He also said he would ask if someone would check the Virginia laws on the rights and privileges for pedestrians on the streets.

Ms. Green said the new rules indicate motorists should drive a 3 foot distance from the bikers but she felt the real problem is that law enforcement should be a part of the conversation.

Lena Seville stated her mind is engaged while she is driving and observing things around, your mind stays active. She said one thing of importance to a pedestrian is having interesting things to look at. She said when code changes are made please consider making windows interesting to look at.

Bob Fenwick asked is the purpose of this process because plans are not working or is it the "will" (political).

Ms. Keller said that these plans that would not replace the comp plan but implement the comp plan.

Ms. Green said these plans will assist with updating the SADM.

Ms. Keller moved to adjourn at 7:00 pm