

Alexander Street and University Place Transit Task Force

March 26, 2014

Meeting Minutes

In Attendance:

Committee Members: Appelget; Bottigheimer, Jackson, Liverman, Simon, Wilkes

Staff: L. Solow; R. Kiser, J. West

Also in attendance: K. Cherry, C. Crider, R. Fisk, A. Lahnston, M. Lyons, S. Sturgis

Review URS and AECOM Responses to Widner Comments

Wilkes indicated that a conference call took place in February with URS and a meeting with AECOM took place last week to discuss some of the comments raised by Ralph Widner in his January 7th memorandum. Wilkes reported the following.

AECOM - It was determined that the baseline traffic volume used by AECOM included Hospital traffic and that the AECOM numbers are significantly lower than the DVRPC counts. After reviewing available data AECOM believes the DVRPC numbers may be wrong as they have numerous sources that support the lower volumes.

Regarding future traffic growth AECOM is confident that their calculation of approximately 1,100 additional vehicles by 2027 on Alexander Road is accurate as it is based upon known future development. The percentage increase in traffic may differ depending on the base line traffic which appears to fluctuate. They also cautioned about using American Community Survey data which is not as reliable as the 2000 Census Journey to Work data.

AECOM agreed with Mr. Widner that we should review traffic outside the study area but noted that this is not within the scope of this study.

URS – Wilkes advised that the ridership projections will include options to capture regional traffic and that the report should be provided very soon.

USDOT – Tiger Grant

A proposal dated March 26, 2014 prepared by Kevin Wilkes was handed out for consideration. Wilkes stated that the USDOT has announced another round of funding under the Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) discretionary grant program. The grants are an off-shoot of the Recovery Funding Act of 2008. A total of \$600 million is being released for projects around the country for studies related to road, rail, transit, and port projects. Up to \$35 million may be awarded nationwide for Planning Grants. He recommended that we apply for a planning grant in association with Princeton University, NJ Transit, Mercer County and surrounding municipalities. In order to do this in a timely and efficient manner he recommended we engage URS at a cost of \$20,000 to prepare the application. Wilkes indicated that if the Task Force agrees he will approach other groups for a contribution since these upgrades in Princeton are regional. The application deadline date is April 28th.

Fisk recommended the task force apply for a capital grant rather than the planning grant. He felt that a capital grant would allow for the extension and improvement of the Dinky now rather than an expanded planning study. Concern was raised that because the Dinky line is owned by NJTransit, obtaining a capital grant without NJTransit participation may be impossible.

Motion was made by Simon and seconded by Liverman to endorse the effort to form a regional coalition for the grant request and to authorize the Chair to meet with area representatives to garner support for submission of an application for a TIGER planning grant. The task force specifically endorses the effort of the Chair to collaborate with Princeton University, NJTransit, Mercer County and West Windsor for this grant. If the Chair is unable to collaborate with these regional parties to commit the necessary funds

and cosponsor the application, then the application will not move forward. The vote was 5-1 in favor. Appelget voted no, she stated that this initiative is not the charge of this committee and she feels that the goals for the study are not clear. Motion carried.

Kiser noted that a Resolution of Support from Council will be needed for the grant. Wilkes noted that regional transit movement, the report by the ASUP task force and the scope of work for the next phase should be a part of the grant request.

Minutes:

- February 12, 2014 - motion was made by Appelget and Jackson seconded to approve the minutes of February 12, 2014 as amended.

Next Steps

- NJ Transit – necessity for consideration of dinky line coordination with transit line trains.
- Subcommittee to meet with regional interest groups, West Windsor and Plainsboro officials to discuss the TIGER grant and to obtain financial contributions.

Next Meeting: April 9, 2014