

Minutes
Lenoir County Transportation Committee
Lenoir Economic Development Board Room
Scheduled Meeting
June 10, 2015 – 8:30 a.m.

Attendance:

Voting	Non-Voting	Absent
Gordon Vermillion, Lenoir County at Large, Chair	Rob Will, RPO Planner	Adrian King, PRIDE of Kinston
BJ Murphy, Mayor, City of Kinston (Tony Sears, Kinston City Manager)	Chris Harper, County Transport	John Craft, Manager, Town of LaGrange
Bill Whaley, Lenoir County Economic Development Board	Adam Short, City of Kinston	Patrick Flanagan, RPO
Mary Jane Westphal, NC GTP Authority	Jeff Cabaniss, NC DOT	Joe Albright, Town of Grifton, Manager
		Barry Seay, Lenoir County Planning Board
Eric Rouse, Lenoir County Commissioner		Brian Lucas, City of Kinston
Donald King, Town of Pink Hill		Mark Pope, Executive Director, Lenoir County Economic Development
John Marshall, Kinston-Lenoir County Chamber of Commerce		Mike Jarman, Manager, Lenoir County
		Dan Sale, Lenoir County, Member-At-Large
		Aaron Bullard, District Engineer, NC DOT
		John Rouse, Division Engineer, NCDOT

Chairman Vermillion called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. Quorum was present.

Update:

TIP Projects – John Rouse, NC DOT

- **B-4565:** Bridges #42 and #43 over Neuse River on US 70 Business (Queen St.), Awarded to Thalle Construction Co., Inc., utility work starting, road closure tentatively set for July 6th.
- **W-5202K:** NC 11- Construct 21 left turn lanes at existing median openings from South of SR 1826 Mewborn Ave to North of SR 1719 Odham Rd, Let date June 29, 2015, available August 1, 2015 with a completion date of July 1, 2016.
- **EB-3314D:** Kinston Riverwalk, multi-use path from downtown through Pearson Park to the Power plant, bids open June 24, 2015, available August 1, 2015 with a completion date of December 16, 2015.

Non-TIP Projects – John Rouse, NC DOT

- **Smithfield Way** (49005) - extend road from SR 1548 Hill Farm Rd to US 258, state forces to complete box culvert and grade work, paving to be done by Barnhill Contracting Co.
- **Hill Farm Rd** (48102) - extend existing turn lane on SR 1548 (Hill Farm Rd) past Kinston FD Station 3 to 465 ft north of SR 2021 (Smithfield Way), awarded to Barnhill Contracting Co., available March 16, 2015, completion date of December 31, 2015

Resurfacing - John Rouse, NC DOT

- **NC 55** - from NC 11 to the Craven Co line, contract awarded to Barnhill Contracting Co., paving is complete, shoulder work to start soon
- **Castle Oaks Subdivision** - resurface roads and reconstruct shoulders, contract awarded to Barnhill Contracting Co., available March 15, 2015 with a completion date of November 15, 2015
- **Secondary Roads** - awarded to Barnhill Contracting Co., available July 1st with a completion by November 13, 2015
 - SR 1116 Jonestown Rd from NC 11 to US 258, widen from 18' to 24' and resurface

- SR 1578 Airport Rd from 2 lane section to NC 58, mill and resurface
- SR 1569 Carey Rd from US 70 Bus. (Vernon Ave) to SR 1571 (Plaza Blvd), mill and resurface

Mr. Jeff Cabaniss stated that Kinston has received great press recently during an MPO Conference. He also stated that the RPO meets quarterly and Mr. Rob Will has volunteered Mr. Jeff Cabaniss to assist in hosting the event. Mr. Rob Will and Mr. Jeff Cabaniss have selected Kinston for their meeting location due to all of the activity occurring downtown. All RPO representatives across North Carolina will participate in this meeting.

Chairman Gordon Vermillion asked Mr. Jeff Cabaniss to provide a synopsis of the recent US 70 Corridor Commissioner meeting held at the Woodmen Community Center. Mr. Jeff Cabaniss stated that C.F. Harvey Parkway preplanning has already begun. He also stated that the plan is to complete this project through the division.

Old Business:

Approval of Minutes – Gordon Vermillion, Chairman

- A quorum was present. The minutes were reviewed by the committee for May 13, 2015. Commissioner Eric Rouse made a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. John Marshall seconded the motion. All voting members were in favor of this motion. The minutes were approved by the committee.

RPO Report –Rob Will, Eastern RPO Planner

- Mr. Rob Will said that the 4.0 schedule is almost complete. A copy of the timeline has been placed in the committee binders.
- The database of current projects will be reviewed for modifications in July. Splitting, deleting, and placing on hold for the current projects will be determined at this time.
- The RPO would like for the Lenoir County Transportation Committee to assist with the alternate criteria process for regional impact and division needs scoring in August.
- Mr. Rob Will stated that he would provide the committee with a current listing of the Lenoir County projects in the SPOT system to prioritize.
- New projects will be entered into the system October 1, 2015. A lot of new projects are not anticipated, however, updating current projects is a must.
- Mr. Eric Rouse stated that he feels the committee should build a consensus with the other RPO and MPO around Lenoir County to focus and prioritize completing the Quad East Loop (C.F. Harvey Parkway).

Queen Street Redesign Project – Tony Sears, Manager, and Adam Short, Planner, City of Kinston

- Mr. Adam Short stated that a public input meeting was held at the public library. The consensus was for angled parking.
- The committee agreed that they would review the materials and for the focus area. The sections reviewed were for North Queen Street. Option 1 shows the existing conditions. Option 2 shows angled parking with 2 way traffic pattern sharing with bike lanes. Option 3 shows a buffered bike lane with 2 lanes of traffic with a center turn lane keeping the parallel parking. Option 4 shows a landscaped median. Option 4 would come with a considerable construction and maintenance cost.
- Tree options were reviewed. Option 1 would be to remove the current trees. The trees that are in place at this time are gum drop holly and require constant maintenance. The tree that would replace these would provide a canopy of shade and less maintenance. Business owners are being blocked out by the Holly tree. The canopy species tree would keep the business visible.
- South Queen Street has also been rendered with the same options as listed for North Queen Street.
- North Queen Street overwhelmingly supported two way traffic, with angled parking. They are also for changing the trees. South Queen Street also saw a similar favoring for the two way traffic and angled traffic option.

- The City of Kinston is looking for the Lenoir County Transportation Committee to assist them with getting information out to the public and obtaining letters of support for the selected options. A plan needs to be submitted to NC DOT upon the completion of the Queen Street Bridges.
- Mr. Tony Sears stated that there was a distortion of the data collected from the public meeting due to participants not following the requested methods of selecting their preferred option. He has heard directly from business owners that they prefer angled parking and changing out of the trees. There is an opportunity to install mast arms. This is an opportunity for Kinston to provide its downtown with a facelift. The City of Kinston will be working with NC DOT in getting this project funded. Some of the changes will not be paid for by NC DOT and will be the City of Kinston's responsibility.
- Mr. Donald King asked Mr. Adam Short and Mr. Tony Sears what the angled parking would do to the traffic flow. Mr. Tony Sears stated that the change in traffic flow would be going around on MLK or down Heritage. He also stated that tractor trailer trucks would stay off Queen Street. According to numbers that have been collected by NC DOT, two lane traffic with angled parking is doable on Queen Street.
- Ms. Mary Jane Westphal asked if two different options could be selected for North and South. Mr. Tony Sears stated that the project could be split. Mr. Adam Short stated that South Queen Street could have its own different identity from North Queen Street.
- Commissioner Eric Rouse stated that the median with trees allows drivers to have a nice canopy to drive through. He stated that this would completely change the dynamics of downtown Kinston. Mr. Tony Sears stated that the main concern offered by downtown businesses was the amount parking that would be offered in front or by their businesses.
- Mr. Tony Sears then highlighted the cross walks options available. Mr. Chris Harper stated that Option 4 is more visually pleasing than the other options. Chairman Gordon Vermillion stated that parking is essential for business owners. Mr. Tony Sears stated that the project could be broken up into sections. Mr. Tony Sears stated that the focus should not be what Queen Street is, but what Queen Street could be.
- Mr. Jeff Cabaniss suggested that some thought go into connecting the changes on Queen Street to the Riverwalk concepts.
- Mr. Adam Short stated that the committee was in favor of two of the provided options. Mr. Tony Sears stated that the next step would be to sit down and figure the cost of each option.
- Mr. John Marshall asked what the funding sources would be for this project. Commissioner Eric Rouse stated that legislation should be approached for some of the funding. Mr. Adam Short stated that detailing the cost of each option should help to determine their feasibility.
- Mr. Tony Sears stated that the City of Kinston would sit down with Mr. John Rouse to formalize a plan. Commissioner Eric Rouse stated that he would be willing to share with the public at rotary and through the commissioners meeting. Mr. Tony Sears stated that he would like to have the blessing of NC DOT before speaking publicly about options.
- Mr. Adam Short asked Mrs. Amanda Conner to forward the digital copy of the presentation to the committee.
- Chairman Gordon Vermillion stated that the City would let the committee know what steps to take after the City's meeting with NC DOT.

US 70 Corridor Report/Resolution – Amanda Conner on behalf of Mark Pope, Executive Director, Lenoir County Economic Development

- Mrs. Amanda Conner stated that Mr. Mark Pope referred a request from the US 70 Corridor Commission. The Commission has requested resolution support from various counties for the Military Corridor Transportation Improvement Act of 2015 and that the NC DOT allocate priority funding to US 70 improvements for this designation. This is being brought before the committee to refer to the Commissioners if they feel Lenoir County should support these efforts.
- Mr. Jeff Cabaniss attended this meeting and confirmed the request for support from counties.
- Mr. John Marshall stated that this was introduced by Butterfield, Jones, Meadows, Holding, Rouzer, Adams, and Price. Chairman Gordon Vermillion stated that he did not see any conflicts with supporting

this effort and made a motion for the committee to draft a resolution of support to be presented to the Lenoir County Commissioners. Commissioner Eric Rouse seconded the motion. All voting members were in favor of this motion. Drafting a resolution in support was approved by the committee.

New Business:

- Commissioner Eric Rouse stated that there was an issue with wrecks on Highway 11 where school buses are stopping to turn onto Ferrell Road and then stopping again for the railroad crossing heading to Contentnea Savannah School. An exemption can be obtained through legislation to help with this unnecessary hazard. Commissioner Eric Rouse made a motion for the committee to give Chairman Gordon Vermillion permission to sign documents on behalf of the Lenoir County Transportation Committee in favor of this exemption upon receiving school board approval. Mr. John Marshall seconded the motion. All voting members were in favor of this motion. Exempting school buses from stopping at the Highway 11 North and Ferrell Road railroad crossing was approved by the committee.
- The next transportation meeting will be Wednesday, August 12, at 8:30 a.m.

Much discussion followed

The meeting was adjourned at 9:33 a.m.