

**Minutes**  
**Lenoir County Transportation Committee**  
**Lenoir Economic Development Board Room**  
**Scheduled Meeting**  
**October 14, 2015 – 8:30 a.m.**

**Attendance:**

<b>Voting</b>	<b>Non-Voting</b>	<b>Absent</b>
Gordon Vermillion, Lenoir County at Large, Chair	Patrick Flanagan, RPO	Mike Jarman, Manager, Lenoir County
BJ Murphy, Mayor, City of Kinston	Chris Harper, County Administration	Woody Gurley/John Craft, Town of LaGrange
Bill Whaley, Lenoir County Economic Development Board	Mark Pope, Executive Director, Lenoir County Economic Development	Carol Sykes/Donald King, Town of Pink Hill
Mary Jane Westphal, NC GTP Authority	Barry Seay, Lenoir County Planning Board	Joe Albright, Town of Grifton, Manager
Eric Rouse, Lenoir County Commissioner	Jeff Cabaniss, NC DOT	
Dan Sale, Lenoir County, Member-At-Large	Larry Moolenaar/Adrian King, PRIDE of Kinston	
John Marshall, Kinston-Lenoir County Chamber of Commerce	Laura Lee Sylvester, Kinston-Lenoir County Chamber of Commerce	
	Adam Short, City of Kinston	
	John Rouse, Division Engineer, NCDOT	
	Steve Miller, Assistant Public Services Director, City of Kinston	
	Brian Lucas, City of Kinston	
	Aaron Bullard, District Engineer, NC DOT	
	Tony Sears, City of Kinston	

**Chairman Gordon Vermillion was called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. Quorum was not present.**

**Update:**

**TIP Projects – Aaron Bullard, NC DOT**

- **B-4565:** Bridges #42 and #43 over Neuse River on US 70 Business (Queen St.), Awarded to Thalle Construction Co., Inc. Project approximately 18% complete.
  - The Southbound overflow bridge has been removed and the substructure work has begun
  - The Southbound Neuse River bridge demolition is in progress
- **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, lowest bid was above the available funding, attempting to re-scope the project
- **EB-3314D:** Kinston Riverwalk, multi-use path from downtown through Pearson Park to the Power plant, contract awarded to Lanier Construction. Project is approximately 30% complete; completion date December 16, 2015. Sidewalks are almost complete on Pollock Street.

**Non-TIP Projects – Aaron Bullard, NC DOT**

- **Smithfield Way** (49005) - extend road from SR 1548 Hill Farm Rd to US 258, paving complete
- **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., paving complete, only minor work remains

**Resurfacing - Aaron Bullard, NC DOT**

- **Secondary Roads-** awarded to Barnhill Contracting Co., available July 1<sup>st</sup> 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

Mayor BJ Murphy stated that there have been some concerns with businesses located on South Queen Street with the closure. Mr. Aaron Bullard stated that outside of initial contact during planning for the Queen Street closing, he has not heard other concerns by the businesses. Mrs. Laura Lee Sylvester stated that the Chamber has been approached by downtown businesses with concerns about people knowing that where their business is and that it is open. She then stated that some additional signage could alleviate the problem. She suggested a sign stating that through the construction the following businesses can be found and then list the businesses. She stated that there use to be more through traffic before the closing. She suggested that another sign could state that the business district is located to the left. Mr. Tony Sears stated that the City of Kinston has almost completed their construction on South Queen Street and a majority of the equipment and blockage will be removed. He then stated that the construction would move block by block on North Queen Street. Mr. Gordon Vermillion asked if some of the signs could be moved further back on South Queen Street. Mr. John Rouse stated that it is a federal mandate to have the signage located where it is currently placed. He then stated that it is imperative to follow these mandates for safety and traffic control. Mr. Brian Lucas stated that it will look different once the services have been completed. Mr. Tony Sears stated that the utilities have to be updated in preparation for the repaving of Queen Street. Mr. John Rouse stated that the signs have to be posted off the right of way if placed by the business or include all the businesses in the area if placed by NC DOT. He then stated that it was not feasible. Mr. Gordon Vermillion stated that some of the committee members will look at the signage and go from there.

### **Old Business:**

#### **Approval of Minutes – Gordon Vermillion, Chairman**

- A quorum was present. The minutes were reviewed by the committee for August 12, 2015 and September 9, 2015. Mr. Bill Whaley made a motion to approve the minutes. Mayor BJ Murphy seconded the motion. All voting members were in favor of this motion. The minutes were approved by the committee.

#### **Revisit Queen Street Redesign – Tony Sears/Adam Short/Steve Miller/Brian Lucas, City of Kinston**

- Chairman Gordon Vermillion stated that the transportation committee stated that the resolution submitted to the commissioners may need to be amended. He stated that the committee needs to revisit this and discuss recommendations that will be presented to the commissioners. The original design submitted by the committee requested a median and after discussion, it has been determined that the median will conflict with maintenance and repair of the infrastructure located below the median.
- Mr. Tony Sears stated that the City should have removed this option from the selections. He stated that the median creates an additional expense to the project if there is a problem with the utilities below the street. Mr. Tony Sears stated that there is also a concern of roots getting into the sewer lines. He then stated that this option was in the packet because it was an option submitted by the consultants.
- Mr. Gordon Vermillion asked if the Option 2: Angled Parking more appealing. Mr. Tony Sears stated that bulb outs at the intersections, pedestrian refuges, and other aesthetic details can be added to the design to make it more appealing.
- Mr. Eric Rouse asked if the median could still be an option if the trees were removed from the equation. Mr. Tony Sears stated that there would still be upkeep and maintenance associated with grass, flowers, or shrubbery and that expense would fall to the City.
- Mr. Steve Miller stated that a traffic median would also propose an issue with safety in trying to keep it maintained. He also reminded the committee that the median was not the public choice for the Queen Street redesign project.
- Mr. Brian Lucas reminded the committee that an enormous cost would be created if decorations and concrete for the medians was tampered with to maintain infrastructure below Queen Street. He stated

that it would be cheaper for the City to reapply asphalt to the street versus replacing the concrete and decorations.

- Mr. Gordon Vermillion asked Mr. Tony Sears what type of improvements are being made to the sewer system prior to the redesign project. Mr. Tony Sears stated that the City would be replacing pipes through a method known as pipe bursting. He stated that plastic would go through existing pipes, bust out the old pipes, and create new piping. Mr. Brian Lucas stated that the pipes will be the same size.
- Mr. Gordon Vermillion asked if this process was done back around 2001. Mr. Brian Lucas stated that a similar project was done then, but it was sleeving, not pipe bursting. He stated that this is a new method that has only been around for a couple of years.
- Mr. Dan Sale stated that the committee has not discussed the Option 3: Buffered Bike Lane. Mr. Bill Whaley stated that it did not appear to add any parking to the area. Mr. Adam Short stated that the angled parking provides additional parking and safety when getting out of a vehicle on Queen Street.
- Mr. Barry Seay asked what the future of Queen Street looks like in regards to redirecting truck traffic off of Queen Street. Mr. Tony Sears stated that the vision of Queen Street does not include this through traffic. He stated that the traffic on Queen Street should ultimately be for shopping and downtown activities. This redesign project should be for the future Queen Street and its purpose as a destination.
- Mr. Gordon Vermillion asked Mrs. Laura Lee Sylvester what she felt would be in the best interest of the downtown businesses. Mrs. Laura Lee Sylvester stated that she felt the angled parking provides additional parking and that that would better serve the interest of downtown businesses.
- Mrs. Mary Jane Westphal made a motion to support Option 2: Angled Parking in regards to the Queen Street Redesign Project. Mr. John Marshall seconded the motion. All voting members were in favor of this motion. The motion was approved by the committee.
- Mr. Gordon Vermillion asked Mrs. Amanda Conner to create the resolution to be submitted to the Lenoir County Commissioners and send to him for approval.

#### **RPO Report –Patrick Flanagan, Eastern RPO Planner**

- Mr. Patrick Flanagan stated that project submission is due by November. He then stated that the committee would not have to worry about this unless they would like to submit new projects that have not already been entered into the system. He referred committee members to the handouts from the last meeting.
- Mr. Patrick Flanagan stated that NC DOT is looking at completing a comprehensive transportation plan for Lenoir County and Lenoir County would need to submit a land use plan for the county that has been created within the past five years. If Lenoir County does not have an updated plan, they can submit the plan that the City of Kinston has created. He does not advise using the City plan, but recommends Lenoir County updating their plan. Mr. Eric Rouse stated that this was recently completed and that Mr. Wayland Humphrey would have this information. Mr. Eric Rouse brought Mr. Wayland Humphrey into the meeting.
- Mr. Wayland Humphrey stated that a land use plan for Lenoir County was renewed within the last couple of years. He stated that certain transportation projections and county specific data were changed in the plan to bring it up to date. He then received contact information from Mr. Patrick Flanagan to forward the plan for assistance with this NC DOT grant.
- Mr. Patrick Flanagan stated that this grant process would take approximately 18 months to 2 years. He stated that the Lenoir County Transportation Committee would need members on the steering committee to assist with this process.

#### **New Business:**

##### **Request of New Business – Gordon Vermillion, Chairman**

- Mr. Bill Whaley stated that the traffic change associated with the Queen Street Bridge project is causing an issue for cars turning left onto Heritage. Mr. John Rouse stated that the light configuration would take time from one to give to the other. He stated that this would ultimately cause a back up on Vernon.

The next transportation meeting will be Wednesday, January 13, at 8:30 a.m.

**Much discussion followed**

**The meeting was adjourned at 9:25 a.m.**