

**MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 5, 2007 MEETING OF THE  
GREATER BUFFALO-NIAGARA REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL  
PLANNING AND COORDINATING COMMITTEE (PCC)**

A meeting of the Greater Buffalo-Niagara Regional Transportation Council Planning and Coordinating Committee was held on December 5, 2007 at the NYS Dept. of Transportation, Buffalo, NY. The meeting began at approximately 9:35a.m.

The following GBNRTC-PCC Members or their representatives were present:

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|----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Joseph Buffamonte | NYSDOT                |
| 2. Melissa Golen     | NFTA                  |
| 3. Paul Gareis       | City of Buffalo       |
| 4. Kevin O'Brien     | County of Niagara     |
| 5. Douglas Tokarczyk | NYSTA                 |
| 6. John Loffredo     | County of Erie        |
| 7. Robert Curtis     | City of Niagara Falls |

Others present were:

- |                         |                                       |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Hal Morse            | GBNRTC                                |
| 2. Robert Wagner        | GBNRTC                                |
| 3. Timothy Trabold      | GBNRTC                                |
| 4. Richard Guarino      | GBNRTC                                |
| 5. Christopher Church   | NYSDOT                                |
| 6. Peter Nixon          | NYSDOT                                |
| 7. Chris Renn           | NYSDOT                                |
| 8. Charles Sickler      | County of Erie                        |
| 9. Matt Latko           | NYSTA                                 |
| 10. Thomas DeSantis     | CNF - Planning                        |
| 11. Heidi Bugenhagen    | Buffalo Niagara Partnership           |
| 12. Maria Lehman        | Bergmann Associates                   |
| 13. Thomas Frank        | Bi-National Niagara Bicycle Coalition |
| 14. Cristen Manning     | The Knoer Group                       |
| 15. Gregg Merlihan      | Greenman-Pedersen, Inc.               |
| 16. Gladys Gifford      | Advisory Group                        |
| 17. Joelle Guy          | Town of Amherst Planning              |
| 18. Jon McNulty         | Senator Mary Lou Rath                 |
| 19. Michael Gent        | Voice Buffalo                         |
| 20. Keith Harlock       | Parsons Brinckerhoff                  |
| 21. Roy Schneggenburger | Bowmansville/Lancaster Resident       |
| 22. Sheila Ransbottom   | Fisher Assoc.                         |

## **I. PROCEEDINGS**

### **A. Roll Call**

Mr. O'Brien called the meeting to order at approximately 9:35 a.m. At the time of roll call, all seven members or their representatives were present.

### **B. Public Participation**

Ms. Gifford related a recent unpleasant AMTRAK experience – the ride was bumpy and the train did not arrive on time. She encouraged the group to put a statewide focus on passenger rail over freight.

### **C. Approval of Meeting Agenda (12/5/07)**

*Mr. Gareis moved to approve the meeting agenda, seconded by Mr. Curtis, and all were in favor.*

### **D. Approval of GBNRTC-PCC Meeting Minutes (11/7/07)**

*Mr. Loffredo moved to approve the meeting minutes of 11/7/07, seconded by Mr. Gareis, and all were in favor.*

## **II. ACTION ITEMS**

### **A. Approval of 2008 Meeting Schedule**

A proposed schedule of PCC meeting dates and locations was included in the package for approval. The consensus was that the meetings would continue to be held on the first Wednesday of the month, with the exception of January 2008, which has been moved to January 9<sup>th</sup>. It was noted that all dates and locations are subject to change.

*Mr. O'Brien moved to recommend approval of the 2008 Meeting Schedule, with the above noted change, seconded by Mr. Curtis, and all were in favor.*

### **B. Election of 2008 PCC Chair**

Mr. Morse stated that relative to the attachment noting the rotation of past Chairs, the Chair position would rotate to the City of Niagara Falls for 2008. They have indicated their willingness to serve. No other nominations were made.

*Mr. Buffamonte moved to approve the City of Niagara Falls representative as PCC Chair for 2008, seconded by Mr. Gareis, and all were in favor.*

## **III. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

### **A. Subcommittee Reports**

Transportation Projects Subcommittee – Mr. Sickler reported the TPS met on November 21<sup>st</sup>. Members welcomed Nancy Peters as NFTA's new Grants Specialist.

TPS Action Requests included: Rail Car Rebuild 06/07: Project Rollover, Lockport Street/CSX Cost Increase, and the Niagara Falls Signals: Funding Shift

Additional items discussed included: Project Tracking/Fiscal Constraint, and FHWA Financial Activities.

The City of Buffalo requested advice on expenditure of federal funds outside of the ROW line. Mr. Trabold noted in January the outgoing chair of the PCC would assume the chair of this subcommittee.

The next TPS meeting is confirmed for Wednesday, December 19<sup>th</sup>, 9 a.m. in the GBNRTC offices.

### **B. University at Buffalo Master Plan/GBNRTC Interface Approach**

Mr. Morse reminded members that a presentation was given a couple of months ago with the suggestion that an Advisory Committee be formed to participate in regional implications of UB's proposed expansion. Work has been done internally to look at what GBNRTC's scope is vs. UB's specific transportation scope provided by their consultants within the 2020 Master Plan. STV, UB's transportation consultant, produced the posters in the room regarding transportation issues in and around the three campuses. GBNRTC will be providing a regional approach including existing and future traffic. Impacts, possible projects and potential infrastructure needs will also be discussed.

An all day session held by UB on December 4<sup>th</sup> was well attended.

### **C. Studies Update: Scajaquada Corridor, Buffalo Corridor**

Mr. Morse stated that the Scajaquada Corridor Study is and one portion of the Buffalo Corridor Study (I290 & I90 Interchange) is support upcoming capital projects identified in the TIP and Long Range Plan. GBNRTC is supporting the study team consultants in their analysis on the Scajaquada project. The consultant has collected data and a model review is to be completed with new traffic numbers post tolls. A meeting was held on November 13<sup>th</sup> to resolve the approach used, software, and schedule. A scoping session was held by NYSDOT on November 28<sup>th</sup>.

A similar analysis and approach will be used on the Buffalo Corridor Study. A meeting was held on December 4<sup>th</sup> with the consultants and issues of traffic diversion and modeling were discussed. A consultant contract supplement from NYSTA is pending.

### **D. Safe Routes to School- Schedule and Intent**

NYSDOT is coordinating a statewide effort to initiate this program. Mr. Trabold gave a brief presentation on the subject. Some of the program highlights discussed included:

- The program was created in 2005 on passage of SAFETEA-LU.
- It is 100% federal reimbursable funding.
- Its purpose it to promote a safe, healthy alternative to riding the bus or being driven to school.
- \$1.8M is being made available to Region 5.
- Members may be approached by sponsors and applicants requesting to partner in an application submittal.
- Deadline for submission is April 1, 2008.
- More information could be found on the NYSDOT website ([www.nysdot.gov/safe-routes-to-schools](http://www.nysdot.gov/safe-routes-to-schools)) or by contacting Matt Balling/NYSDOT SRTS Coordinator (847-3233).

### **E. Draft CMAQ Guidance**

Mr. Morse stated that in October FHWA issued new guidance regarding the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) program to reflect changes to the program as a result of SAFETEA-LU. A draft of Updated FHWA CMAQ Regulations and Revisions to NYSDOT CMAQ Program Guidance was distributed to the membership for review. Comments will be received until 12/31/07.

### **F. Regional Freight Study: Presentation and Initial Deliverables**

Mr. Guarino gave an overhead presentation on the first two portions of the study and indication of the next steps. Some of the items discussed:

- Technical Memos 1 and 2 were delivered November 9<sup>th</sup> and are being reviewed by the Steering Committee. Technical Memo 3 due mid-late December
- Preliminary Findings: Strengths and Challenges/Opportunities on Air Cargo, Highway System, Rail and Water

Mr. Morse added that there are a number of suggested appointees for a freight advisory group to generate recommendations and input.

### **G. TIP Management: Presentation of Statewide Study Findings**

Mr. Trabold distributed copies of a final report on a statewide study that the NYS MPOs commissioned entitled "Innovative Approaches to Planning Implementation (Shared Cost Initiative Study)." The objective of the study was to improve TIP Project Development and Tracking. The study process included scanning NYS MPO project tracking needs and issues, and national best practices in project tracking. The presentation concluded with a synopsis on lessons learned and suggested next steps to further address the issue.

### **H. Transportation Projects Financial Issues of Concern**

Mr. Morse distributed informational copies on the subject. FHWA has been working with NYSDOT in undertaking a series of reviews looking at the funds management of Federal-aid highway projects, and the time to progress projects. Several points were given for members to be aware of. Also discussed was the potential of further rescission.

### **H. Policy Meeting Date and Agenda**

A draft agenda for the subject meeting was distributed to the members. The meeting is tentatively scheduled for February 2008 (several potential dates were indicated) in Niagara Falls (location to be determined). Mr. Morse then briefly went over some of the agenda items and asked that he be contacted if there are any additional inputs.

## **IV. STATUS REPORTS/INFORMATION**

### **A. Member Agency Reports**

Ms. Golen reported that there will be a Grand Opening of the Niagara Falls Transportation Center on 12/21/07. New bus service will begin from this location on 12/23/07. This is in conjunction with the new service being offered in Niagara Falls; improved scheduling and new routes.

Mr. Tokarczyk reported that on December 12<sup>th</sup> there will be a major letting on the South Grand Island Bridge project. This will be a two-year project (2008-2009 construction season).

Mr. Curtis reported that there will be a public information meeting on 1/11/08 at 6pm at the Niagara Falls Convention Center on the 10<sup>th</sup> Street reconstruction project. A public information meeting is to be scheduled in January on the reconstruction of Buffalo Ave. Phase I.

**B. Director's Report**

Mr. Morse reported on the following:

- UPWP progressing on schedule. Administrative Committee to meet in late December to review budget and scope summaries- recommend to PCC for January approval.
- Visited the Port of Hamilton recently regarding their freight operations and possibilities of partnering with a US side port.
- STIP extension in the works to maintain project eligibility.
- Video on national transportation areas of concern shown as a prelude to reauthorization.
- Mr. Morse introduced Teri Call as the replacement to Terry Blaszkowiak who is retiring at the end of this year.

**Mr. O'Brien noted that the next meeting is scheduled for January 9, 2008 at NFTA.**

*Mr. Loffredo made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:00 a.m., seconded by Mr. Curtis, and all were in favor.*