Joint Work Session
Albemarle County &
City of Charlottesville Planning Commissions
June 25, 2013
City Space
Minutes

Commissioners Present:
Ms. Genevieve Keller (Chairperson)
Mr. Kurt Keesecker
Mr. Dan Rosensweig
Ms. Lisa Green
Ms. Natasha Sienitsky
Mr. Michael Osteen
Mr. John Santoski

County Commissioners Present
Mr. Calvin Morris-Chairperson
Mr. Russell (Mac) Lafferty
Mr. Bruce Dotson
Mr. Don Franco
Mr. Thomas Loach
Mr. Richard Randolph
Mr. Ed Smith
Ms. Julia Monteith, AICP, Senior Land Use Planner for University of Virginia

Staff Present:
Jim Tolbert, Director NDS
Missy Creasy, Planning Manager
Brian Haluska, Neighborhood Planner
Michael Smith, Neighborhood Planner
Rich Harris, Deputy City Attorney
Wayne Cilimberg, Planning Director
Elaine Echols, Principal Planner
Andrew Sorrell, Senior Planner
Greg Kempner, County Attorney
Sarah Rhodes, MPO Program Manager, TJPDC

Ms. Keller convened the Charlottesville Planning Commission meeting at 5:00 pm.

Mr. Morris convened Albemarle County Planning Commission at 5:00 pm.

Ms. Keller turned the meeting over to Sarah Rhodes the MPO Program Manager from the TJPDC and she gave a brief presentation on the Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MPO) 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan update. She explained how this is federally funded and what items needed to be included in the plan. She explained how the plan was developed and the process in which data was collected and analyzed.

Ms. Rhodes explained Scenarios 2A and 2B including the commonalities and differences. Performance measures were developed using categories in line with those included in the City and County's Comprehensive Plans. Each locality was given work papers for their locality and this meeting was an opportunity for the commissions to provide feedback on the process.

Questions and Discussion

Mr. Rosensweig asked why traffic for commercial industrial was seen as always a negative in the model. Ms. Rhodes stated that indicator was specific to land consumption.

Mr. Lafferty wasn't sure how individual projects were chosen for 2A and 2B and if the combinations make sense. Ms. Rhodes stated that groupings were needed for the assessment. These were combinations which provided for that assessment.

Mr. Randolph wanted the selection criteria for the scenarios more clearly defined and along with the cost of each project/scenario. He feels 2A and 2B create winners and losers. Scenario 2B benefits his district and 2A doesn't. How does the LRTP as a whole move Charlottesville and Albemarle towards a multi-modal community.

Mr. Franco wanted to take the sheet and cross things off that were alike in both A and B. He really had a hard time seeing if it made sense because of these repetitions. He would have like to have seen projects broken down more specifically and wondered how this impacts the comp plan.

Ms. Green noted this affects bike planning negatively. She saw a lot of road widening projects. She would like to see how landscaping would be addressed. She would like to see more of what the public wants. She asked if they were building this with the bypass in mind. Ms. Rhodes stated that they are building with the assumption that the bypass will be built.

Mr. Lafferty stated that we have no idea how much federal money we will receive. He feels without financial figures we don't know if we can make choices. Ms. Rhodes stated that we do have some cost estimates but they are very preliminary.

Mr. Lafferty asked if the areas where most accidents occur were looked at like the intersection of Rio Rd and US29. Ms. Rhodes stated that the Rio Rd intersection is in the long term plan.

Mr. Rosensweig asked how the grade separation interacts with a multimodal 29. What about grade separation at 29? Ms. Rhodes stated that they did not look at 29 with the interchanges in the capacity development project scenario analysis because interchanges cannot be modeled.

Mr. Morris would like both sides of 29 brought together. He would also like 250 and Pantops looked at. He feels there is a need to get across both of them as well.

Mr. Rosensweig feels there are more projects than money. Ms. Rhodes stated that they didn't want the commission to get caught up in the details of the projects, but how they connect to the comp plan.

Mr. Franco feels that widening of Pantops will be a plus and a minus.

Mr. Dotson feels we need to keep in mind what we are being asked to do – to look for comp plan consistency. He could not do that based on the scenarios but was able to do so looking at projects. He feels we are being asked a simple question, but one that is hard to answer. He was able to provide pros and cons for individual projects but not for the scenarios.

Ms. Monteith noted that names to the scenarios may be helpful as well as a different map scale.

Ms. Rhodes stated that the goals included in the worksheets were picked because they seemed to connect best to the LRTP.

Mr. Franco asked what criteria commissioners should look at.

Mr. Keesecker has had similar thoughts and feels a diagram would successfully connect the dots. He feels it would be easier to look at the projects if you could see them in a visual.

Ms. Keller would like to see how the projects work together and what data was used.

Ms. Rhodes stated that they used the travel demand model and data from VDOT crashes.

Mr. Lafferty felt if 29 became a boulevard with bike lanes and with buses stopping everywhere there still would be a lot of traffic on 29 North. He is not sure such an approach can actually work.

Mr. Loach could not do this exercise. He thought it might be helpful for the community advisory councils to review.

Mr. Randolph stated that there are three proposals for 29 and would like to caution us in thinking in these terms. There is concern for the local traffic on 29.

Mr. Dotson noted that some projects are consistent with the Comprehensive plans but others would need additional details to make an assessment.

Ms. Rhodes provided some insight on how projects were included in the scenarios. She asked for feedback on how the Commissioners would connect the scenarios to each locality's Comprehensive Plan goals and asked if there was another way it could be done.

The Commissioners generally felt that their review of the possible projects in the scenarios was coming late in the long range transportation plan update process and felt that their assessment should come earlier as the scenarios are being developed.

Mr. Rosensweig sees a lot of common themes in what has been discussed. He feels projects are missing that would build “places and spaces” and other projects may be better able to address this.

Ms. Keller stated that perhaps each commission should consider their own areas. This process seems more concerned about land disturbance than place making.

Ms. Green stated that based on qualitative modeling we need to find a model where we move people. Then we would have a better way of accessing things.

Ms. Rhodes stated that the fact needs to be accepted that we will be building some roads.

Ms. Green suggested taking the scenarios and seeing the "what if" of how traffic is shifted and what the indirect impacts would be.

Mr. Randolph asked who would benefit from each project. Should the county be paying for road improvements when they aren't benefiting from them?

Both localities would like to see this again with a third round of scenarios. They both suggested having smaller work sessions.

Ms. Keller recessed the Charlottesville work session at 6:00pm and Mr. Morris adjourned the County work session at 6:00pm.

Adjournment

With no further items, the Albemarle County Planning Commission adjourned to the Tuesday, July 16, 2013 meeting at 6:00 p.m. at the County Office Building, Second Floor, Auditorium, 401 McIntire Road, Charlottesville, Virginia.

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V. Wayne Cilimberg, Secretary

(Submitted for approval by Sharon C. Taylor, Clerk to Planning Commission & Planning Boards)