



La Crosse Area Planning Committee

*Metropolitan Planning Organization
Serving the La Crosse/La Crescent Urbanized Area*

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Minutes of LAPC Meeting, April 19, 2017

Minutes of the meeting of the La Crosse Area Planning Committee held on Wednesday, April 19, 2017 at 4:30 pm in room 1107 of the La Crosse County Administrative Center, 212 6th St S, La Crosse, WI.

Members Present: Tim Candahl, Town of Shelby; Tim Kabat, City of La Crosse; Joe Chilsen, City of Onalaska; Jerry Monti for Rolly Bogert, Town of Onalaska; Nancy Proctor, Village of Holmen; Mike Weibel for Linda Seidel, Town of Medary. **Members Excused:** Rolly Bogert, Town of Onalaska; Terry Schaller, Town of Campbell. **Others Present:** Jim Krueger, Leroy Brown, Andrew Andrusko, Jarrod Holter, Stephanie Averbek, Chuck Lee, Carolyn Dvorak, Charlie Handy, Pat Wilson, Karen Acker, Krista Heinz, Joe Van Aelstyn, Steve Trussoni, Clay Czisny, Jason Valerius, Tom Faella, Jackie Eastwood.

Call to Order: Tim Candahl called the meeting to order at 4:30 pm. Introductions were done.

1) Approval of Minutes of the March 15, 2017 LAPC Meeting:

Joe Chilsen motioned to approve the minutes of the March 15 meeting; Nancy Proctor seconded. All were in favor.

2) Public comment relative to agenda items, with 5 minute time limit per comment:

None.

3) Resolution 2-2017 to Approve the Minnesota High Speed Rail Commission Joint Powers Agreement:

Tom Faella stated that the LAPC joined the Commission in 2015. The agreement has since been updated to include MPOs in the commission structure, so now the LAPC needs to approve the agreement by resolution.

Tim Kabat motioned to approve Resolution 2-2017 to Approve the Minnesota High Speed Rail Joint Powers Agreement; Mike Weibel seconded. All were in favor.

4) Commuter Bus Service Feasibility Study:

Tom Faella gave a brief presentation of the background, results, and status of the feasibility study. Charlie Handy added that he and Peter Fletcher hope to get a pilot service up and running in 2017. Applications for the grant for the full service are due at the end of 2017 for 2018. Tim Kabat and Nancy Proctor stated that their communities would consider contributing to the local share.

5) Facilitate Discussion of Transit-related TDM Measures:

Jason Valerius first did a check-in to see if anyone present had anything to add to the previous land use and parking discussions. With no one adding to that conversation, Jason proceeded to highlight what he wanted to accomplish with the discussions. He stated that he has not heard from the Town of Campbell or the Village of West Salem on the land use or parking topics. Dennis Manthei responded by saying the Village's goals and policies are outlined in the Village comprehensive plan.

Mr. Valerius provided a definition of "transit" to include bus, shared ride taxi, carpooling, and other means to reduce commuter trips. Mike Weibel started by saying the Town of Medary has less than 1,500 people and very little business unless it's family-owned. There are no official park-and-ride lots, but some residents seem to use the Midwest Gas lot for carpooling. He is unsure of how the comprehensive plan addresses transit, but Medary would consider surveying its residents to find out how they travel.

Tim Candahl stated that the transit services available in Shelby include cabs and MTU in some areas. Shelby doesn't have a reverse commute as most of the residents work in La Crosse and elsewhere. Shelby has no formal park-and-

rides, although he could possibly see one developed in the Goose Island area. The comprehensive plan does not identify transit per se, but it does call for increased densities for new development.

Jerry Monti stated that the Town of Onalaska is the same as the other towns and he can't think of any available land for a park-and-ride. Carolyn Dvorak said that a lot of people use the Sam's Club parking lot. Jarrod Holter stated that the parking lot behind Angelina's is owned by the County and has about 50 spaces. It just needs improving. The City of Onalaska could look at the Omni Center as a park-and-ride location and other areas served by MTU. The City would need to re-look at MTU service to the Omni Center and the Rider's Club Rd area. The City is looking at increasing the budget for better MTU service.

Nancy Proctor stated that the parking lot behind the village hall has lots of carpoolers to Arcadia. Most, however, meet at their private homes. Holmen would consider expanding the shared ride, but she felt that the village didn't have the population to bring in MTU. The Village would be glad to promote whatever is available. She also sees an opportunity for a park-and-ride lot in the TIF district.

Dennis Manthei spoke of how a lot of people in West Salem will go to Sparta to shop instead of Onalaska or La Crosse. He also stated that the Village would be receptive to SMRT service. Discussion then turned to whether other communities would contribute to the shared ride service.

Charlie Handy answered the five questions for the County. He spoke of the SMRT Bus feasibility study, MTU, the Minibus, and increasing the availability of commuter bike routes and their access and connectivity to transit. He stated that La Crosse County has the second lowest reverse commute out of the county and that most of the reverse commute occurs between municipalities. He identified several park-and-ride lots (one official and several unofficial) to include the West Salem I-90 park-and-ride, the Valley View Mall, the I-90 rest area, Wehr's Chevy, lots at the intersections of STH 162 / STH 16 and of CTH K / STH 35, Centerville, and the southside Shopko. He stated that the County's goal is to assist communities to expand MTU, to support an RTA, to reserve transit corridors in anticipation of new development, and to encourage transit-oriented development. To decrease commuter vehicle trips in the next two years, the County could expand the SMRT service and require users to pay the full cost of parking.

Jim Krueger provided a summary of MTU service, its partnerships with municipalities and businesses, specialized transportation services, and pass programs. He stated that the system experienced around 4,100 trips per day and had over 1,000,000 trips last year. MTU has initiated some enhancements to make service more convenient: Modified the route 5 for permanent service to Gundersen Clinic; will be implementing an app and QR codes at stops for bus arrival times; added Duratech to the MTU Works program; continuing the MTU GO circulator route; and serves several formal and informal park-and-rides in the area. MTU is striving to make service more convenient and is continuing to promote the MTU Works program to major employers. Tim Kabat added that the City's goal is to reach the Nation's average of 5% for commute by transit. The City currently experiences a 2% commute by transit. He would like to look more critically at the contracted routes and concentrate service in the city neighborhoods at for example 15 minutes. The City will be taking up this policy question in the next few months. He spoke on the contracted routes, the circulator, and making transit in the City as great as it can be.

In response to a question by Mayor Kabat, Tom Faella responded that Jason Valerius will digest and synthesize the information from the TDM discussions for presentation at the May meeting.

Discussion continued about stated policies and a willingness to act. Jackie Eastwood commented that the LAPC is an advisory body only, but that some areas have given their MPOs some land use authority and others have elected to earmark a certain percentage of their STP funds to a decided priority. Mike Weibel added that the Town of Medary also is not an approving authority and can only make recommendations to the County. Jason Valerius stated that the region ought to be able to create an RTA and that the LAPC should encourage and advocate for the right to do so. The topic circled around different models for MPOs and how to make the LAPC more effective.

6) Other business; Adjourn; Next meeting to be announced:

Mike Weibel motioned to adjourn at 6:20 pm; Dennis Manthei seconded. All were in favor.