

MINUTES

COMMUTER RAIL FEASIBILITY STUDY TASK FORCE

OCTOBER 17, 2006

IN ATTENDANCE:

TASK FORCE MEMBER AGENCIES

Aroma Park – Mayor Grimsley, Mike Grimsley

Bourbonnais – no attendee

Bradley – Mayor Kent

Illinois Department of Transportation – Norm Johnson, Chuck Abraham, Amy Welk

Kankakee – no attendee

Kankakee County – Sam Nicholos

Manteno – Craig Blanchette

Monee – Henry May

Peotone – George Gray

Will County – Colin Duesing

OTHERS PRESENT

Chad Kalecki, Mike Lammey, Sarah Billadeau, and Dave Bergdahl, Kankakee County; Dennis Gary and Gary Foyle, Earth Tech; Larry McClellan, South of Chicago (sub to Earth Tech; Laura McElroy, Herald; and Mary Baskerville, Journal

CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME

Mayor Grimsley welcomed the Task Force to the Village of Aroma Park, and Chairman Nicholos called the meeting to order at 2:38 P.M.

MINUTES

Mr. Mike Grimsley moved approval of the August 15, 2006 Minutes, and Mr. May seconded. Unanimous vote.

CONSULTANT PRESENTATION

Mr. Gary from Earth Tech made a presentation including the following items:

- Project Overview
Mr. Gary reviewed the schedule for the project and the issues that would be dealt with at the meeting. He showed the status of current Task Orders, and of the Task Orders to be proposed at the meeting. He reviewed the budget for the project.
- Task 3, Site Studies

Mr. Gary stated that a meeting had been held with the Village of Monee, at which time the station site mentioned in the Phase I study had been confirmed as the best site.

Mr. Gary stated that a meeting had been held with the Village of Peotone, during which time potential sites for a train yard and station site at some location north of Peotone were discussed. The new federal transportation bill has a line item authorization for the extension of Metra Electric (MED) service from University Park to the proposed South Suburban Airport (SSA).

Mr. Gary stated that a meeting had been held with the Village of Manteno, at which time Manteno had stated their preference to locate a station site in the downtown area. Because of the likely MED extension to SSA, it would not make sense for Manteno to be the end of a very short KACOT rail line shuttling to Metra. Therefore, if they choose, Manteno can move their station site downtown where there would be less station parking without major impact to the project. He stated that Manteno is in the process of purchasing railroad right-of-way in the downtown area.

Mr. Gary stated that a new Task Order covering an activity titled “Transit Supportive Land Use” was being authorized. This activity would include the review of existing village and city plans in the corridor, the preparation of a “how-to” book on TSLU, and a workshop on TSLU, to include a classroom session in the morning and a field trip in the afternoon. In response to a question from Mr. Duesing about the timing of such a workshop, Mr. Gary stated that this activity would require some preparation, and is likely to occur after the December holidays.

Mr. Gary stated that ROW maps had been received from the CN Railroad, and were being reviewed. He stated the CN position of a 25 foot separation between their existing freight line and the proposed passenger line. He stated that the Task Order titled “Independent Rail Alternative” would include conceptual design, preliminary site identification of a maintenance and storage facility, and a conceptual cost estimate.

- Task 6, Institutional Issues

Mr. Gary stated that a meeting with CMAP (formerly CATS) with Kankakee and Will County staff will be held on October 27 to discuss the ridership estimates for the project.

Mr. Gary stated that a meeting was held with the River Valley METRO Board on the commuter transit issue, and that METRO expressed interest in being the operating agency for the service, particularly if a bus rapid transit alternative is chosen. He stated that the METRO Board requested that a meeting of the Mayors of the respective jurisdictions that are members of METRO be held.

Mr. Gary stated that an organizational meeting of the “Ring-Around-the-Collar” Counties was held on October 13, and that the meeting was positive on the joint goals

of the respective areas. He stated that sample Resolutions of Support had been authorized to be drawn up by the group.

Mr. Gary stated that continuing contacts with Metra and CN were being held, and that additional information was being gathered. He stated that a new Task Order titled "Institutional Issues" was being drawn up to cover the interfaces with Metra, CN, Amtrak, the South Suburban Airport, and with all other related projects.

- **Task 8, Public Education/Outreach**

Mr. McClellan discussed feedback from Task Force members gathered at the last meeting, and stated that a major organizational meeting will be held on October 25 with the member agencies of the United Way in Will County. He stated that there were a number of goals for the meeting, one of which was to develop a model for the same kind of meeting in Kankakee County.

Mr. McClellan stated that at least two newsletters will be published during the study, and that a project website is being developed. He explained the comprehensive contacts list, stating that this list will be useful to both Will and Kankakee County staff for projects beyond the scope of the commuter transit issue.

Mr. McClellan passed out an example of the fields provided for each name in the Contact Database.

- **New Task Orders**

Mr. Gary stated that four new Task Orders were in development at present, and that there were at least three more Task Orders to be discussed at future meetings.

NEXT MEETING

Chairman Nicholos stated that the next meeting of the Task Force would be on December 12, at 2:30 P.M. and will be held in Bourbonnais.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Mike Grimsley moved adjournment, and Mr. May seconded. Chairman Nicholos adjourned the meeting at 3:25 P.M.