



Safe Routes to School Subcommittee

August 19, 2016
10:00 –11:30 am

Participants

Amy Sackaroff
John-Paul Zitta
Danny Arnold
Kristen Brookshire
Dhanya Sandeep
Todd Edwards
Kenneth Withrow
Jennifer Delcourt
Michele McKinley

Matt Witosky
Stephen Sposato
Lynn Edmonds
Jeff Weisner
Jason Brown
Tim Gardiner
Sara Merz
Sharon Felton

Welcome and Introduction

Ms. Amy Sackaroff called the meeting to order and began the meeting with the introduction of her Stantec GIS technician Mr. Matt Witosky.

Updates on the John Rex Endowment Child Pedestrian Safety Grant

Ms. Kristen Brookshire of UNC Highway Research Center updated the Committee on work being done at the five pilot schools and looking at policies in the area that may influence SRTS. Kristen shared with everyone the “Action Plans” for each of the five schools. The Northwoods Elementary School Action Plan is complete and has been posted on the Wake County SRTS website and Town of Cary website. Action Plans for the four remaining schools are nearly complete; mostly finalizing priority projects. Kristen also noted that an infrastructure project has been identified for Ligon Middle School. The City of Raleigh, with the help of Stephen Sposato, has identified locations for proper bus turning movements; as well as where students currently walk and may be able to walk. Kristen mentioned that at various schools, the project is vulnerable to staff/principal turnover (particularly at Bugg and Hodge Road Elementary Schools). Other challenges include getting the “Let’s go NC Pedestrian Safety Education” materials taught in various schools. Following discussion by the Subcommittee, Kristen directed the Subcommittee to review the Northwoods Elementary School “Action Plan” as displayed on the video screen. One of the items reviewed was the “Action Table” within the Action Plan. The priority project in the area identified by the school task force and Town includes curb extension, high visibility crosswalk, and ADA compliant curb ramp. The costs for the project will be paid by the grant and the Town of Cary. The project addresses hazards and constraints faced by neighborhood students going to school.

ACTION ITEM: The Subcommittee received as information.

Update – SRTS policy directive for WCPSS

Ms. Lyn Edmonds briefed the Subcommittee concerning the outcomes of the meeting with Jim Martin, chair the WCSPP Policy Committee. Mr. Martin reviewed the policy document and suggested that (1) possibly use language from the document and incorporated within the existing Wake County school transportation policy, and (2) for the Policy Directive Working Group to examine the existing planning assumptions as adopted by the School Board and county commissioners. A meeting with Mr. Bill Fletcher had been proposed, but he has declined due to election obligations and job commitments. The group is now attempting to schedule a meeting with Mr. Tom Benton, the Wake County Public Schools Board chair. Ms. Sara Merz also stated that she had participated recently in the Greater Raleigh Chamber of Commerce’s leadership event that included a school board candidate forum. Ms. Merz met with Christine Kushner, Jim Martin, and Bill Fletcher during the event; with Mr. Fletcher reiterating his schedule challenges. Therefore, he will not be available until after the election. Ms. Edmonds stated that in spite of the situation, the Subcommittee should pursue inviting leaders to the “Walk to School Day” events which are scheduled October 5, 2016. Discussion

continued, with Ms. Karen Rindge noting that SRTS issues are not the highest priority for the Wake County School Board; therefore the opportunity for SRTS issues will be presented over time. The general consensus is that the Wake County School Board is very supportive of SRTS issues. Ms. Rindge finally noted that there will be two school board candidate forums this fall (late September/early October) in which SRTS issues can be addressed. Ms. Edmonds noted that getting items into the Planning Assumptions is very huge; and that there is real commitment by the Board to incorporate SRTS elements in school policy. Mr. Jeff Weisner indicated that he will volunteer in helping to address modifying the Planning Assumptions. Discussion continued, with Kristin indicating that she will be conducting a new municipal policy audit this fall to see if local governments have made any changes over the past year. Ms. Jennifer Delcourt briefly addressed the Subcommittee concerning "Walk to School" Day; and inviting local mayors to local events. Ms. Rindge suggested that the Policy Directive Working Group during the first two weeks of September hold a conference call to develop strategies for Walk to School Day. Amy and Kenneth will organize the conference call.

ACTION ITEM: The Subcommittee received as information.

SRTS Prioritization - Greenlight EOI Application

Amy Sackaroff provided the Subcommittee background on the Greenlight EOI application process. The Prioritization Working Group will be tackling prioritization and how to rank SRTS project that can be incorporated into the Capital Area MPO LAPP. Matt Witosky will build the GIS database to do a "grid-cell analysis to create a special map to show where "high needs" (for safe routes to school) are. The grant award is scheduled to occur in October.

ACTION ITEM: No action was taken. The Subcommittee received as information.

Subcommittee Updates

Amy Sackaroff briefly reminded the Subcommittee of the four existing working groups that are a part of the Subcommittee. The working groups are: (School Siting, Prioritization, Policy Directive, and Active Transportation Zones). She mentioned that Mr. Stephen Sposato is pursuing as a part of his work a way to delineate the area around schools the no bus (now called "Active Transportation Zones").

Leesville Road SRTS Project Update

Kenneth Withrow explained to the Subcommittee the context of the Leesville Road schools SRTS project. The public design review workshop for the project was held on June 23, 2016. The final design was completed in July, 2016. Construction is scheduled to occur in the fall; with project completion to occur in late Winter/early Spring 2017. Mr. Withrow showed that the project is linked for both the Capital Area MPO website, as well as the City of Raleigh website.

Senate Bill 778 (SB 778) Mr. Withrow explained that while SB 778 did not pass, the bill's sponsor will reintroduce the bill in January, 2017. The bill, if passed, would exempt school projects from addressing the municipality's infrastructure needs in which the school resides. The impetus for the bill had come from a conflict between Wake County schools and the Town of Apex. Ms. Julie White of the Mayor's Coalition suggested that before the bill is reintroduced, local governments in Wake County need to meet with the Wake County Public School System to address the problems; which may mitigate the need for the bill.

Other Business

The next meeting will be held on October 21 at 10:00 am.

Adjournment