



Lowcountry Area Transportation Study (LATS)
Policy Committee Meeting
Friday, June 5, 2020 at 10:00 am
Zoom Conference and Facebook Live
MINUTES

Policy Committee Members Present:

Chairwoman – Mayor Lisa Sulka, Town of Bluffton
Robby Robbins, SCDOT Commission Chairman
Glenn Stanford, Town of Hilton Head
Mayor Joe DeVito, Town of Port Royal
Mike McFee, City of Beaufort
Mayor Harry Williams, City of Hardeeville
Barbara Clark, Jasper County
Paul Sommerville, Beaufort County Council
Susan Zellman, LRTA

Technical Committee Members Present:

Mary Lou Franzoni, LRTA
Katie Woodruff, City of Hardeeville
Kevin Icard, Town of Bluffton
Bill Harkins, Town of Hilton Head
Anne Cyran, Town of Hilton Head

LCOG Staff Present:

Ginnie Kozak, Planning Director
Christian Dammel, Planning Assistant
Maleena Parkey, Senior Planner
Kira Fuller, Executive Assistant

Others Present:

Brent Buice, East Coast Greenway Alliance
John Fleming, SCA
Joe Fragale, Sun City
Mark Wilkes, Coastal Region MPO Savannah
David Spisso, City of Hardeeville
Shawn Colin, Town of Hilton Head

Policy Committee Members Absent:

Sen. Tom Davis, JC Leg. Delegation Chairman

Technical Committee Members Absent:

David Pritchard, City of Beaufort
Kraig Gordon, Chairman Beaufort CTC
Lisa Wagner, Jasper County
Linda Bridges, Town of Port Royal

SCDOT Staff Present:

Megan Groves
Craig Winn
LaToya Grate
David Gray
Josh Johnson

Others Present:

Joe Croley, LIT
Dan Wood, Town of Bluffton
Ashley Jacobs, BC County Administrator
Mark McCain, Beaufort County CTC
Noah Krepps, Beaufort County
Richard Hamilton, LRTA



1. Call to Order: Chairwoman Lisa Sulka called the meeting to order at 10:07 am
 - a. Pledge of Allegiance
 - b. Invocation – led by Lisa Sulka
 - c. Introduction of Members, Guests and Staff
 - d. Designees – None.
 - e. Action on May 5, 2020 Meeting Minutes – Barbara Clark made the motion to accept the minutes. Mayor Harry Williams seconded. No discussion. **Motion carried unanimously.**

2. Old Business:
 - a. SCDOT US 278 & US 17 Project Update – Craig Winn, SCDOT
 - i. US 17 – Everything is on schedule for an August construction letting. SCDOT is working to get a C & I firm selected. Construction should start this fall. They have coordinated with Georgia for the Back River Bridge project. Craig has been attending the monthly project meetings.
 - ii. US 278 – In the November, there will be a public hearing sometime between Election Day and Thanksgiving. Last week, SCDOT held a quarterly project stakeholder meeting, in which almost 20 stakeholders participated. There was a presentation on the 3 new reasonable alternatives, and intersection alternatives for Squire Pope Road and Spanish Wells Road. Over the next few months, they will focus on the planning of the Jenkins Island section. Four reasonable intersection alternative concepts will be finalized. SCDOT and FHWA are working to review the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) document. The review will start in July. The review and coordination for Pickney Island Wildlife Refuge, the C.C. Haigh, Jr. Boat Landing, and the Daufuskie Island Ferry portion has begun. Also, SCDOT is working on bridge alternatives. They plan to meet with the project team and DOT structural engineers to discuss in June and July. They will continue developing preliminary plans in the selection of the preferred alternative.
 1. Public Involvement – SCDOT is putting more information on social pages, Facebook and Twitter. Each week there will be more details released regarding project costs, ride way impacts, relocations, etc.
 - iii. Question: Mayor Harry Williams asked, “Is there a new projected completion date for Highway 17 widening Back River Bridge?”
 - iv. Craig replied, “I have not seen a completion date but that should be coming out soon. As far as widening US-17, I would anticipate 4 years and then the bridge would be after that.”
 - v. Lisa Sulka said, “We possibly need regular updates every 2-3 weeks on the Back River Bridge.”
 - vi. Craig said he would supply monthly updates from the C&I firm once construction starts.
 - vii. Question: Glenn Stanford asked, “Is SCDOT still targeting to have the preferred alternative by the end of this calendar year?”
 - viii. Craig replied “Yes.”
 - b. Implementation of the Recommendations of the SC 170 Corridor Access Management Study, Subcommittee update – Katie Woodruff
 - i. Last month, Katie was asked to take the lead on forming a subcommittee with the technical committee. Jasper County representative Lisa Wagner, Rob Merchant from Beaufort County and Katie Woodruff met with Ginnie about forming the subcommittee. They are formalizing the committee through a Memorandum of Understanding, which is in draft phase. It will be shared with the policy committee at a future date.
 - c. Palmetto Breeze Update – Mary Lou Franzoni
 - i. Palmetto Breeze has continued to provide services during the Covid pandemic. At the beginning, there was a large reduction in ridership. All seasonal services did not begin in March and April.



The Daufuskie Island Ferry shuttle has resumed. Palmetto Breeze is running a beach shuttle for Hilton Head Island which operates on Saturdays and Sundays between USCB and Coligny Beach. The beach shuttle has been running for two weekends in a row and will continue to throughout the summer. Many hotels that Palmetto Breeze provides services for have not, and will not, receive any visa workers this year. Therefore, there will not be any buses running any of those routes. The company is preparing the trolleys to resume services near June 22nd or July 1st.

- ii. Currently, the public information portion of the town hall is now live on the Palmetto Breeze Transit website. It will be open until Sunday, June 7th. Please view the town hall and leave a comment.
 - iii. Question: Glenn Stanford asked, “What is the ridership of the shuttle from USCB to Coligny Beach?”
 - iv. Mary Lou answered, “Off the cuff, the first weekend of service was Memorial Day weekend. On Saturday, 450 people and Sunday 375 people used the shuttle. On Monday, only 3 people rode the shuttle. On May 30th and 31st, no one rode the shuttle Saturday, but 200 people rode on Sunday.”
 - v. Question: Mayor Sulka asked, “Is Palmetto Bluff on hold?”
 - vi. Mary Lou answered, “Yes, they generally have a lot of visa workers, but there are none this year. We’ve been working together for a few individual people who need transportation. Not sure how Palmetto Bluff will be staffing their organization. Palmetto Bluff was working to help with the funding (of Palmetto Bluff shuttle), but it probably won’t be this year.”
- d. Update on Long Range Transportation Plan Update – Ginnie Kozak
- i. Due to staffing conditions, LCOG will be using consultants to do all the work on the update of the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). It will tie into the rural part of LCOG, so the Rural and Urban LRTP will be completed by the same consultants. We will engage the same consultant to serve as an on-call transportation planning consultant for LATS and LCOG. LCOG is waiting for SCDOT to review the RFP package and then it will be placed on SC Business Opportunities website.

3. New Business:

- a. Introduction to Beaufort County Bicycle and Pedestrian Task Force/ Comprehensive Plan Update – Rob Merchant
 - i. At the end of 2019, a Bicycle and Pedestrian Task force was formed to look at ways to fill gaps in the biking network and expand the network to incorporate more neighborhoods. The task force’s goal is to coordinate with municipalities, so that the task force is comprised of individuals from Beaufort County, LCOG, and bicycle advocacy groups.
 - ii. The task force is looking to coordinate with the update of the LRTP that the bicycle pedestrian portion of that plan will be addressed. In addition, they would like to produce a report/plan to be presented to each of the municipalities to be considered for adoption and incorporation. In the summer, the force will engage with the public via online surveying and mapping exercises to present existing information. The task force will report draft findings to the LATS Policy Committee and work with LCOG to incorporate it into the Long Range Transportation Plans.
 - iii. Rob Merchant will provide a list of task force members.
 - iv. Question: Joe DeVito asked, “Is the group discussing how a coordinator might be put in place to coordinate down the road after plans are implemented?”
 - v. Rob Merchant responded, “Yes. Part of what will make this work happen is having someone dedicated to implementing the plan.”
- b. Update on replacement of LCOG Planning Director – Ginnie Kozak



- i. Sabrena has interviewed local candidates; however, that has not worked out. She is now advertising with the Standard American Planning Associates and receiving resumes from qualified candidates. We have a new senior planner, Maleena Parkey, who will be taking a lot of responsibility until a Planning Director comes on board. Ginnie will be available as an on-call consultant, for LCOG and LATS. She will be available via phone, text, or email as needed. Christian is very familiar with the policy committee and working on transportation projects. LCOG is hiring qualified consultants to prepare the plans.
 - ii. Lisa Sulka stated, "It is a vote of the policy committee to approve an administrative group and LATS chose LCOG. LATS has the ability to choose the organizational group and hopes that LCOG understands that. All parties responsible are asked to take this issue very seriously because there is a vote that can move the administrative group somewhere else."
 - iii. LCOG will investigate meeting in-person for August the meeting.
 - iv. Question: Mayor Lisa Sulka asked, "Who at the state advises our MPO? A refresh of how we were organized and where our policy board sits on things will be helpful."
 - v. Ginnie replied, "Latoya Grate is our advisor."
 - vi. Latoya Grate will give a presentation in August regarding MPOs. It will be added to the agenda for August.
4. Other Business: None
 5. Public Questions via Facebook Live: None
 6. Next Meeting: Friday, August 7, 2020
 7. Adjourn: Barbara Clark made a motion to adjourn. Rob McFee seconded. **Motion carried unanimously.** Meeting adjourned at 10:45 am.

See Links:

[US 278 Project Status Update](#)

[SCDOT Project Status Report](#)

[May 1st, 2020 Minutes](#)

[SCDOT Proposed US 278 Alternatives](#)