

VILLAGE OF WESLEY CHAPEL
SPECIAL MEETING
WESLEY CHAPEL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
120 Potter Road, Wesley Chapel, NC 28110
April 13, 2011 – 7 PM
www.wesleychapelnc.com

ALL ITEMS ARE FOR DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION.

The Village Council of Wesley Chapel, North Carolina, met in the Fellowship Hall of Wesley Chapel United Methodist Church at 120 Potter Road South, Wesley Chapel, North Carolina.

Present: Mayor Horvath, Mayor Pro-tem Bradford, Council Members Brotton, Hess and Ormiston

Others Present:

Clerk/Finance Officer Cheryl Bennett; Planning/Zoning Admin. Joshua Langen

Concerned citizens: Carol and Jim Mullis, Becky & Butch Plyler, Tessie & Richard Morris, John Bowen, Elaine Rosoff, Julie Brown

Meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM and a quorum was present.

1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND INVOCATION

Mayor Horvath led the Pledge of Allegiance and Mayor Pro-tem Bradford gave the invocation.

2. CALL TO ORDER OF TOWN COMMITTEES/BOARDS HAVING QUORUM PRESENT

Only a quorum of Council was present. Ormiston made a motion to open the meeting. Brotton seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously.

3. PRESENTATION BY BOB COOK FROM MUMPO ON ROADS AND SIDEWALKS

The presentation objectives are to review: MUMPO and its role in the regional transportation planning process; road projects from concept to funding, sidewalks both in general and from the Village Commons to park; and funding.

MUMPO is the federally-designated transportation planning agency for the Charlotte urbanized area. The area is determined by the census, and came further east in Union county. MUMPO is responsible for the allocation of federal transportation funds. They ensure federal policies are implemented when federal funds are used (Clean Air Act). For air quality they have to demonstrate that any project won't violate the air quality standards. There is a conforming plan and program. MPO's are required in urban areas with more than 50,000 population.

Major tasks are the Long Range Transportation Plan which goes out to 2035 and is updated every four years; the Transportation Improvement Program which is a seven year funding document and air quality conformity determinations. The thoroughfare plan (which covers Mecklenburg, part of Union, and a little of Iredell Counties) was adopted November 2004 and is being converted to a Comprehensive Transportation Plan.

Mr. Cook went over road projects – concept to funding. There are certain assumptions such as widening of an existing road or that the project will use state and/or federal funds, and the process is not necessarily linear, some tasks can take place out of the order listed, or concurrently.

They must identify the need – is the project needed to relieve existing congestion? Is the project needed to relieve future congestion? Are there other reasons, e.g. safety? This may include wider lanes or alignment of roads. The concept of complete streets is to build the road to accommodate all users. They determine the scope of the improvement needed – such as number of lanes and design. Constraints include environmental both natural and human/built – what will the community accept? They must also build local support.

The Western Union County Transportation Plan, aka LARTP was a collaboration of Wesley Chapel, Marvin, Waxhaw and Weddington. It provided much of the needed advance work. The next step is to work with NCDOT and MUMPO to incorporate the recommendations into the Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP). MUMPO's CTP is now being prepared by NC DOT staff.

The Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) - it is essential to have a desired project in the LRTP and funding is dependent upon inclusion in the LRTP, but LRTP's must be financially constrained. It cannot be a "wish list" of projects; only approximately 30% of the 300 projects nominated for inclusion in the current LRTP were actually included.

NC DOT prioritization is a component of NC DOT's Transportation Reform effort. It is a data driven process – quantitative (volume-to-capacity ratios, crash rates, pavement ratings) and qualitative (MPO rankings, MUMPO is now working to align its process with NC DOT's – the LRTP project ranking may serve as MUMPO input).

The Transportation Improvement Program (previous activity brings project to – hopefully – funding in the TIP, which is a seven year funding document.) They are working on the 2012-2018 TIP. There are meetings in May for public comments and then it is adopted by the MPO. Mayor Horvath noted the only project we have in the LRTP is widening Highway 84 in three sections – near the airport, the easternmost part first, and the west part near Rea Road second. The Rea Road extension would intersect 84 just west of Aero Plantation with a signalized intersection with a turning lane. The widening of 84 would cost an estimated \$55 million.

Sidewalks – existing conditions between the Village Commons and the park include right-of-way (probably sixty feet and most of it on the south side), pavement width (26 feet), traffic volumes (13,000 vehicles per day), MUMPO classification (major thoroughfare) and LARTP classification (boulevard).

Projected volumes are 19,000 to 26,000 vehicles per day by 2030. The utility poles are way off the side of the roads, and are usually a clue to the right-of-way. Butch Plyler noted this had to do with when the road was paved and moved in the later 1940's.

LARTP recommendations are to widen the road to a four lane boulevard, and endorse sidewalk construction across the board. MUMPO recommendations are a four lane, median divided boulevard with sidewalks and assumes sidewalks will be a part of every project. MUMPO standards call for one hundred feet of right-of-way, but you can't fit all the amenities in that width. The 2010 NC DOT Feasibility study shows a four lane divided road, with 130 feet of right-of-way and recommends five foot sidewalks.

Sidewalks between Village Commons and the future park will establish a critical link in connectivity. The NC 84 widening is not funded. When DOT widens the road they put in sidewalks, and a town our size wouldn't have to bear the cost. The full cost of a sidewalk project before road widening will be Wesley Chapel's responsibility. Sidewalks can cost up to one million dollars per mile. We do have a ditch to contend with. We might consider an asphalt trail in the interim, and provide a generous buffer. Even when the speed limit is 35 when a car goes by it seems fast. Mr. Cook did not know the cost for a mile of asphalt, it would be a little more maintenance but cost substantially less. With a five foot sidewalk two people can walk abreast, but six foot is preferable, and a ten foot asphalt trail provides more room. Safety was discussed, with no curb and gutter and an asphalt trail, you would want a generous buffer and tree plantings. You could do a split rail fence as a barrier.

Sidewalks in general – the LARTP recommends sidewalk improvements as part of roadway improvement projects, and suggests a local sidewalk ranking system that identifies needed projects and ranks them on a series of measurable criteria. You can pursue a pedestrian planning grant from NC DOT; one hundred communities have gotten grants. A plan shows you are serious about it being a priority. It is offered on an annual basis with a call for projects in the fall. A 20% local match is required. While the LARTP recommendations are a good start, Wesley Chapel needs more specifics. The website ncdot.org/bikeped/planning was recommended. You may need to get adequate right-of-way from the center line to make the process easier and cheaper. Joshua Langen noted we are working on that for subdivisions by keeping buildings and parking lots out of the right-of-way.

Funding was discussed. Most TIP projects are funded with: Surface Transportation Program; Surface Transportation Program – Direct Attributable, or National Highway System (NHS). Bike / pedestrian funding comes from a variety of sources including Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ), Transportation Enhancement, High Hazard Elimination (NC DOT Funding), Powell Bill, non-profits, foundations, and public/private partnerships.

Mr. Cook said the population of this MUMPO is more than 200,000 so some funds come directly to them; they get \$10 million per year on average. NHS funds are a little less flexible. Only recently MUMPO can allocate CMAQ funds themselves. There has not been a call for NC Transportation Enhancement

projects in several years. The Village doesn't currently qualify for Powell bill funds.

At the MUMPO site you can contact his staff - Stuart Basham is the engineer and can help with some advice, Nick Polimeni is a planner and is currently re-vamping their website.

Ormiston asked where Stallings got funding for the sidewalk in front of Harris Teeter; Bob Cook said he thinks CMAQ funds, he will check on it. There is usually a call for projects in October, if the project is within the MUMPO area they have to endorse the project which they do routinely.

Bradford asked about the Safe Routes to Schools funds; Bob Cook said it is still viable, he hasn't seen a call for projects lately. Jim Mullis said he heard the principal discouraged use of sidewalks near one school; Mr. Cook said some encourage it and some don't, it may be an issue of a crosswalk needed.

Julie Brown asked regarding the Carolina Thread Trail; Mr. Cook said if they use federal funds MUMPO would get involved, it is more tied to Char-Meck Parks and Recreation. Over a long time the Carolina Thread Trail can become a transportation element. Bradford asked if there was someone at MUMPO who could look over a grant application; Bob Cook said yes, they are glad to do so.

4. ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Horvath thanked Bob Cook for his presentation.

Brotton made a motion to adjourn; Ormiston seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl Bennett, Clerk

Mayor Brad Horvath