

MINUTES  
ORANGE UNIFIED TRANSPORTATION BOARD  
DECEMBER 18, 2013

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**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Paul Guthrie, At-Large Chapel Hill Township; Jeff Charles, Bicycle Advocate; Ted Triebel, Little River Township Representative; Alex Castro, Bingham Township Representative; Brantley Wells, Hillsborough Township Representative; Andrea Rohrbacher, Planning Board Representative; Donald Wollum – Eno Township Representative;

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Jeff Miles, Pedestrian Advocate; Amy Cole, Transit Advocate; Sam Lasris, Cedar Grove Township Representative; Gary Saunders, Commission for the Environment Representative; Vacant- Cheeks Township Representative; Vacant – Economic Development Representative

**STAFF PRESENT:** Abigaile Pittman, Transportation/Land Use Planner; Tina Love, Administrative Assistant II

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Nancy Cole Baker, Pascale Mittendorf, Holly Reid

**AGENDA ITEM I: CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

The meeting was called to order and new members and guests made introductions.

**AGENDA ITEM II: APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR AUGUST 21, 2013**

The October 16, 2013 OUTBoard minutes were approved by consensus.

**AGENDA ITEM III: CONSIDERATIONS OF ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA**

Alex Castro and Jeff Charles have items to discuss during the appropriate areas of the agenda.

**AGENDA ITEM IV: REGULAR AGENDA**

**DRAFT SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL (SRTS) STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN.**

An overview of the 264-page plan has been provided in the packet. The draft SRTS plan is also available on the Orange County Planning Department website at: <http://orangecountync.gov/planning/transportation.asp> Hard copy of the plan is available upon request.

**OUTBoard Action:** This plan has been referred to the OUTBoard by the BOCC for review, with a request that a recommendation be returned to the BOCC in time for its February 18, 2014 regular meeting.

Abigaile Pittman gave an overview of the SRTS.

Nancy Baker noted that the numbers are old and suggested staff contact the Board of Education to see if the schools have updated numbers.

Ted Triebel asked for the maximum distance one way.

55 Abigaile Pittman responded that the maximum distance is 2 miles.

56  
57 Paul Guthrie asked about the distance for busing and Don Wollum asked about the greatest distance for busing.

58  
59 Abigaile Pittman referred the Board to the map and advised that it shows the traveling distances.

60  
61 Nancy Baker advised the Board that the County also buses students based on 'hazard' and literally have students  
62 who live across the street from the school who are bussed because it is not safe for them the cross the road.  
63 Additionally this program will make it accessible for walkers and bikes not only for the elementary students but also  
64 for the high school students at both Cedar Ridge and Orange High School as they are beside two of the chosen  
65 elementary schools. Nancy noted there are also large apartment complexes within easy walking distance from  
66 Grady Brown and some facilities there are going to help a large group of children. She noted that with Cameron Park  
67 being in downtown Hillsborough the benefits will include a lot of the residents.

68  
69 Pascale Mittendorf noted that many children within walking distance are driven which creates a lot of traffic  
70 congestion. That is especially a concern with Cameron Park as there a bad corner on a hill with limited line of sight.  
71 It is a dangerous location.

72  
73 Paul Guthrie commented that he was not involved in the placement of the schools but he was involved very heavily in  
74 the placement of 2 schools in the Chapel Hill district and he does not remember any time that they talked about the  
75 issue of walking to school. He said the only issue was the driving issue and the only place you could put a school  
76 with the acreage required was out where there aren't any people. He noted that the system has been built where the  
77 schools are located are out away from the towns, so he is very enthusiastic about the request.

78  
79 Holly Reid agreed that the short term costs of locating schools where it is less expensive but then there is the great  
80 long term cost for busing in the County system. She pointed out that the project also helps the afterschool and extra-  
81 circular activities, and since the facility are available for public use it also benefits that use not just before and after  
82 school but multiple times a day and weekends.

83  
84 Abigaile Pittman noted that in the process of meeting with DOT regarding the maintenance for the facilities there will  
85 need to be a contract with the Town of Hillsborough to provide that maintenance. This will be one of the discussions  
86 at the joint meeting between the BOCC and the Town of Hillsborough in February. The final decision on the Plan will  
87 be postponed until after that meeting has been held. She noted it could be a March or April BOCC meeting.

88  
89 Jeff Charles noted that if there are going to be bicycle lanes or bicycle areas there has to be maintenance in those  
90 area that involves running a power brush over them to get debris, gravel, broken glass, etc.

91  
92 Abigaile Pittman advised she would make sure it was included in the discussion. She also told the group that Grady  
93 Brown School went into the project list for the DCHC MPO, who is allowed to submit 20 bike/ped projects up to DOT,  
94 and Grady Brown made it as number 19.

95  
96 Nancy Baker asked Abigaile if that included the overpass and was told that it does.

97  
98 Ted Triebel asked if there was any effort to prioritize between the three schools as to which one should go forward  
99 first. He noted that the possibility of getting funding for all three was slim and Abigaile Pittman responded that the  
100 Grady Brown projects have been prioritized by the BOCC.

101  
102 Abigaile Pittman noted that Hillsborough submitted the Cameron Park projects as a package but it wasn't accepted  
103 as one of the 20 projects.

104  
105 Alex Castro asked if the County would have to pay for 20% of the costs of the Grady Brown project.

106  
107 Abigaile Pittman responded that there is a lot of money left over that was not obligated because very few of the plan  
108 are ready right now if this project can get there first with an adopted plan and constructability with DOT resolved and  
109 cost estimates that are fairly accurate, with the fact that the County has staff engineers that can lay out some pre-

110 engineering work, the project can submit for some of the remaining SAFETEA-LU funds that have no matching  
111 projects. She added that if not, because DOT scored it in their scoring list, it would be eligible for the funds that have  
112 a 20% match.

113  
114 Alex Castro asked if the project was in a position to do all of that and have all the work prepared.

115  
116 Abigaile Pittman advised that was the goal.

117  
118 **Motion** made by Alex Castro that the OUTBoard recommend to the County Commissioners that they consider  
119 approving the 3 SRTS action plans identified for Grady Brown, Stanford Middle School, and Cameron Park  
120 Elementary School projects. Seconded by Jeff Charles.

121 **Vote:** Unanimous

122  
123

124 **AGENDA ITEM V:                   OUTBOARD INPUT FOR COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' ANNUAL PLANNING RETREAT**  
125   Development of a list of concerns or emerging issues for the upcoming year that the  
126   OUTBoard plans to address, or wishes to bring to the Commissioners' attention.  
127   **OUTBoard Action:** Develop and approve list.

128  
129

130 Abigaile Pittman reviewed the staff's list of 7 items for the report.

131  
132 Jeff Charles asked if bicycling would fall into #3.

133  
134 Abigaile Pittman responded it could be under #4.

135  
136 Jeff Charles noted that bicycling is not mentioned.

137  
138 Abigaile Pittman confirmed that is it not and suggested that it could be added to the list.

139

140 Jeff Charles noted that he has comments about the implementation of bicycling projects during 2013 so that  
141 improvements can be made for 2014. He said that there were a number of streets where the OUTBoard was advised  
142 there would be 2 foot extensions put in to aid the cycling community and the biggest one was Dairyland which  
143 handles a lot of bicycling traffic. He stated that it failed miserably and the cyclist never got 2 feet and some of it is  
144 only 6 inches. He stressed that the implementation was a failure and further that Orange Grove Road where NCDOT  
145 went back and redid it and there is a line in it, that section of the pavement is now heaving and separating from the  
146 main road because there is not a top surface. He said that bicycling is getting a C in implementation in Orange  
147 County and they are spending money but no one is overseeing the projects appropriately and he thinks it has been a  
148 failure for the amount of money that has been spent. Jeff thinks the OUTBoard should go on record to state that  
149 there needs to be a bicycling coordinator at the staff level in Orange County to oversee these projects because DOT  
150 is not doing a good job. He said that he cannot state that strongly enough and the damage being done by the  
151 infrastructural changes is now causing significant damage to the roads that are hazardous to cycling. He added that  
152 bicycling is taking a back seat and it is time for Orange County to step up.

153

154 Abigaile Pittman advised that this is an emerging issues list so it is about what the OUTBoard needs to be looking at  
155 in 2014.

156

157 Jeff Charles responded that the OUTBoard needs to recommend better bicycle coordination infrastructural changes.

158

159 Ted Triebel noted that the key is to have somebody that would monitor what is going on and it would become part of  
160 somebody's job description.

161

162 Jeff Charles noted that Dale has that responsibility in Durham and asked who has that responsibility in Orange  
163 County.

164

165 Abigaile Pittman responded that it is not on anyone's job description and that he is right.

166  
167 Alex Castro suggested that it would be worthwhile to have photographs of the road sections mentioned.

168  
169 Jeff Charles noted he planned to do that whenever Chuck Edwards comes to an OUTBoard meeting.

170  
171 Abigaile Pittman reminded the members that Chuck requested an agenda be created prior to setting a date for him to  
172 attend a meeting.

173  
174 Abigaile Pittman noted that she has an item for that list that relates to schools. She said that there are other schools  
175 in the district that have minor issues. She suggested the OUTBoard have a survey of those and noted there is one  
176 elementary school that has a drop off area with a lot of traffic that all it would take is a slip lane at the exit to the right  
177 so people can get out. She noted there are all these minor issues at schools all over the County that are not  
178 necessarily on SRTS and staff can go around and evaluate those needs. She advised that it could then be brought  
179 to the OUTBoard for input and then on up for the BOCC to ask DOT to do something. She added that DOT has  
180 money to do projects for small things like slip lanes or flashing lights, etc.

181  
182 Paul Guthrie noted that while it is a good discussion, the County has no jurisdiction on the state road system. The  
183 building of the lanes was done speedily and was probably not very well inspected.

184  
185 Jeff Charles responded that DOT was supposed to do Old Greensboro Road with the 2 foot for cyclists and if they  
186 say they are going to do it, then they should do it.

187  
188 Paul Guthrie stated that what he's hearing is that the Board would very much like to talk to the district engineer and  
189 suggested that the members prepare a list of things for discussion and then Abigaile can put in the request.

190  
191 Alex Castro would like to add to the list the following- study the feasibility of using existing triangle region railway  
192 infrastructure for commuter rail purposes. He noted that one of the backgrounds on this is the 440 that will be under  
193 repair for the next three years and one of the ways they are looking to relieve congestion is to use an existing rail link  
194 from Selma up to Raleigh and putting in temporary commuter rail station along the existing route to take some of the  
195 commuters off the highway. Alex thinks that could be extended through the triangle region as there is existing rail  
196 infrastructure that goes right through the RTP and through Hillsborough and a there is a plan to put a station in  
197 Hillsborough. Alex suggested initiating a study to see what is, what it will take, and then piggyback what DOT is  
198 doing as they are implementing this already for the 440.

199  
200 Paul Guthrie noted that he served on the Hillsborough Rail Station Task Force and it was stimulated by Amtrak  
201 saying it was financially feasible for them to make a stop at Hillsborough. He noted that one of the ideas with the  
202 Hillsborough station that he would like to see the OUTBoard to query the Town of Hillsborough is where they are in  
203 that process. He indicated that the station could be used as a hub for bus lines and other forms of transportation.

204  
205 Alex Castro showed the Orange County Land Use Map and noted the light rail link and the economic development  
206 zones which is along existing railways. He noted that we have it if we get it worked out. He referred to Northern  
207 Virginia and they put in commuter rail on existing rail links and it's called Virginia Railway Express and they have  
208 good ridership. He says that is the idea to address where future development is proposed and see what can be done  
209 using what is with additional on the margin funding compared to what is being talked about for the LRT.

210  
211 Alex Castro amended what he suggested earlier to say – Study the feasibility of using existing triangle region railway  
212 infrastructure for commuter rail purposes as part of a multi-modal transportation system.

213  
214 **Motion** made by Alex Castro to approve the report to the County Commissioners as amended. Seconded by Jeff  
215 Charles

216 **Vote:** Unanimous

217

218 **AGENDA ITEM VI:**

**STAFF UPDATES**

219 a. Notes from the NCDOT luncheon meeting

- 220 b. Eno EDD Access Management Plan
- 221 c. Ad hoc committee to define the needs of the County Central and Rural Bus Program
- 222 **OUTBoard Action:** Receive updates

223  
 224 Abigaile Pittman gave the OUTBoard updates to review at their convenience and noted the Eno Access Management  
 225 Plan was approved by the BOCC on November 19<sup>th</sup> and she gave the Board information on the ad hoc committee for  
 226 bus programs. Abigaile noted that this will include an OUTBoard member and Alex Castro has expressed interest.

227  
 228 The OUTBoard designated Alex Castro to the ad hoc committee by consensus.

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 231 **AGENDA ITEM XI: 2014 MEETING**  
 232 **OUTBOARD ACTION:** Receive calendar

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 235 **AGENDA ITEM XI: ELECTION OF CHAIR/VICE-CHAIR**  
 236 The terms for the current Chair and Vice-Chair are concluding, new appointments are  
 237 needed.

238  
 239 The OUT Board reappointed by consensus Paul Guthrie as the Chair of the OUTBoard.

240  
 241 The OUTBoard reappointed by consensus Jeff Charles as the Vice-Chair of the OUTBoard.

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 243  
 244 **AGENDA ITEM IX: UPCOMING AGENDA ITEMS OF INTEREST ON OTHER REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION RELATED**  
 245 **BOARD AGENDAS**  
 246 **OUTBoard Action:** Receive information as a handout

247  
 248  
 249 Alex Castro noted that he attended the DCHC MPO TAC meeting and noted they received information regarding  
 250 funding for fiscal year 2014, 2015, & 2016. He would like to see those numbers and added they will be approved at  
 251 the DCHC MPO TAC February meeting.

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 254 **AGENDA ITEM X: BOARD COMMENTS**  
 255 **OUTBoard Action:** Receive comments

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 258 **AGENDA ITEM XI: ADJOURNMENT**

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 260 The meeting was adjourned by consensus.

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Paul Guthrie, Chair