Active Transportation Advisory Committee Meeting
Wednesday, July 29, 2014 4:00 PM
Benjamin L. Hooks Central Library, 3030 Poplar Avenue, Memphis TN

SUMMARY OF MINUTES

Mr. Kyle Wagenschutz called the meeting to order at 4:00 PM. In addition to Mr. Wagenschutz, the following members were present at the meeting:

Mr. Dennis Lynch  Sierra Club
Ms. Dawn Vinson  Citizen
Mr. Sean MacInnes  Christian Brothers University
Mr. Gene Carkeet  Citizen
Mr. John Freedman  WIN
Mr. Brad Corey  Mid-South Trails
Mr. John Paul Shaffer  Livable Memphis

The following Memphis MPO Staff were present:

Mr. Kyle Wagenschutz  Bicycle/Pedestrian Coordinator
Mr. Kwasi Agyakwa  Transportation Planner
Mr. Nicholas Oyler  Transportation Planner
Mr. Mitchell Lloyd  Transportation Planner
Mr. Peter Jenkins  Transportation Planner
1) Welcome & Introductions

Mr. Wagenschutz briefed the committee on the meeting’s agenda, and provided a summation of the items discussed during the previous ATAC meeting on April 30, 2014. As there were some new MPO staff members in attendance, those present at the meeting briefly introduced themselves. The committee members were requested to stay after the business discussion had finished in order to participate in the activities used at the public meetings being held in regards to the update to the Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.

2) Bike/Ped Plan Update

a. Public Meeting Update

Mr. Wagenschutz provided an update to the committee on the public meetings being held in regards to the update of the Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. For this round of the process, MPO staff has organized a total of 14 meetings throughout the MPO area, with 5 remaining as of July 29. These meetings have included a couple in Desoto County, a couple in Fayette County, and several in various communities around Shelby County. MPO staff sent invitations to all municipalities and counties within the MPO’s area to host a meeting; the MPO has coordinated a meeting in each community that responded to the request. Attendance has averaged 6-7 individuals per meeting.

At the meetings, MPO staff provides an approximately 30-minute presentation about the Bike/Ped Plan and the MPO. Attendees then have the opportunity to ask questions and make comments before performing interactive exercises. These exercises are intended to retrieve input from the public that can be applied in the plan. Mr. Wagenschutz stated that the exercises consist of 3 activity stations:

1. A visual preference survey of bicycle/pedestrian facilities
2. A travel calculator that asks participants how far they are willing to walk or ride a bike
3. A participatory budgeting exercise that has participants allocate transportation funding

The meetings and exercises have generally been positive experiences. Mr. Wagenschutz reminded the committee members to stay after the discussion had ended in order to perform the activities.

b. Public Survey Update

Mr. Wagenschutz stated that the public survey closed in the middle of June. A little over 1,100 individuals submitted a completed survey. In addition to the online surveys, MPO staff attended public events to publicize the survey and distribute paper versions of the surveys as well as postcard-size advertisements. As a motivation to complete the survey, the MPO offered a cash
grand prize drawing for one participant. Mr. Wagenschutz informed the committee that the winner, a certain Mr. Mark Plumlee, was selected and announced on July 1, 2014.

The survey consultant recently delivered the results of the survey. MPO staff has not yet completed a full summary of the data, but Mr. Wagenschutz presented some of the initial findings:

- Spring is the preferred season for making trips
- 9% of participants perceive walking as transportation to be “unsafe”
- Pedestrians who do not walk for a specific purpose would be encouraged to walk if there were more nearby destinations to reach on foot
- 31% of participants indicate they do not own a bicycle
- A majority of participants indicate that bicycling in the MPO region is “somewhat safe”

c. Bike/Ped Count Update

Mr. Wagenschutz informed the committee that the bicycle and pedestrian counts at area intersections are complete. Consultants performed the counts at 40 intersections, which included a mix of arterial streets, local streets, rural roads, and greenways. The counts took place over a 24-hour period at each intersection, and over 3 days in April for the entire process. The weather during these 3 days was good and generally favorable towards outdoor activity.

In all, 9,005 pedestrians and 1,124 cyclists were counted. The average count per intersection (minus outliers) was 137 pedestrians and 22 cyclists. Pedestrian counts ranged from 0 to 2,280 per intersection; cyclist counts ranged from 0 to 249 per intersection.

d. Overall Timeline Update

After the input meetings finish in early August, MPO staff will prepare a draft of the plan. Public review meetings of this draft will occur on September 2 and October 7. In addition, the draft will also be presented at the October 28 meeting of ATAC. The plan should finally be adopted by the ETC and TPB in November.

Mr. Wagenschutz stated that the biggest obstacle at this point has been summarizing and working with the data provided by the consultant team.

3) MPO Public Participation Plan

a. Plan Update

Mr. Lloyd explained that the MPO has started the process of updating its Public Participation Plan (PPP). Mr. Lloyd likened the PPP to a handbook that describes the Memphis MPO’s public participation methods, strategies for public engagement and outreach, and state and Federal regulations regarding public participation. According to Federal regulations regarding Metropolitan Planning Organizations and transportation planning, the Memphis MPO must possess a PPP and update the document every 4 years.

The last update to the Memphis MPO’s PPP was in 2011. Mr. Lloyd stated that with this update the MPO would like to ensure the PPP is reaching its full potential and that the Memphis MPO remains consistent with the best practices used by peer MPOs around the country in terms of public participation. Furthermore, the PPP must remain consistent with regulations laid out in the MAP-21 transportation legislation.
Mr. Lloyd provided a brief overview of current outreach techniques used by the MPO and described the 3 focus areas of the PPP:

- Educating and Informing the Public
- Accessible Information
- Prioritization of Traditionally Underrepresented Communities

At this point in the update process, the MPO is seeking input regarding the current PPP and recommendations on items in the plan to change, include, or remove. Mr. Lloyd directed the committee’s attention to a fourth activity station in the back of the room – in addition to the 3 other activities associated with the Bike/Ped Plan – and informed the committee that this exercise would seek its feedback on issues of public participation.

4) Discussion

a. Chair’s Remarks

Mr. Wagenschutz provided another overview of the timeline for the update to the Bike/Ped Plan. He also briefed the committee on its next meeting on October 28, during which the committee will schedule its meetings for the next calendar year.

Finally, Mr. Wagenschutz reviewed the 4 activity stations spaced around the room and reminded committee members to complete each one.

b. Public Participation Plan

Mr. Lynch stated that he was confused in relation to the MPO and the Public Participation Plan (PPP). He expressed his understanding that the ATAC is now responsible for the PPP and public participation activities in general per the recent changes to the MPO Bylaws. He asked for clarification.

Mr. Wagenschutz stated that he has not received any directive to change the course of the ATAC.

Mr. Lloyd stated the Bylaws specify that the ATAC is responsible for issues regarding active transportation, and that all MPO committees and boards now share responsibility for public participation issues. Mr. Shaffer stated that he believes Mr. Lloyd’s statements to be accurate, but suggested that the intent of the Bylaws was different.

Mr. Lynch encouraged the MPO to properly advertise the related public meetings and specific measurements for the criteria that will be used in the PPP. Mr. Lloyd stated that a draft of the PPP had not yet been developed.

Mr. Lynch further stated that tracking the participation or outreach should look at specifically defined measurements or definitions. Ms. Vinson asked how the MPO defines underrepresented communities and what criteria are used in such a definition.

Mr. Lloyd and Mr. Agyakwa cited examples of underrepresented communities, such as those of low-income or limited English proficiency. Mr. Agyakwa stated that the MPO strives to reach these individuals in all of its projects.

Ms. Vinson asked if the MPO possesses a list of these communities or some tangible measurement for defining them that can be used to track the progress of outreach efforts.
Mr. Lloyd stated that there is no master list of individual communities, but that the MPO maintains categories of underrepresented communities. Mr. Jenkins further stated that various public and private organizations provide useful information and data that the MPO uses to target these communities. He further emphasized that through the update to the PPP, also updating how the MPO defines and targets these underrepresented communities is one of the desired goals.

c. Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan

Mr. Carkeet asked how many surveys were returned in 2011 for the last update to the Bike/Ped Plan, to which Mr. Wagenschutz replied roughly 1,000 more than the most recent survey. Mr. Carkeet then asked if the MPO is taking into account multimodal trips when asking how far individuals are willing to walk or ride a bike.

Mr. Wagenschutz responded by saying that, in the end, a combined analysis of data from the survey and other sources will take multimodal trips into account.

5) New Business

- Mr. Shaffer announced that Livable Memphis is coordinating with MATA to conduct the Midtown Transit Alternatives Analysis Study, and, furthermore, that they will be presenting the study to the ATAC at its next meeting.
- With no further new business, comments, or questions, the committee broke up to conduct the station activities.

6) Adjourn @ 5:30 PM

NOTE: The meeting minutes are a summary of the meeting. If you would like to review the tape recording of the entire meeting you may so do by scheduling an appointment with Kyle Wagenschutz, Bike/Pedestrian Coordinator at (901) 576-7190.