

Minutes of the Transportation Committee

The Transportation Committee of the McLean County Board met on Tuesday, March 14, 2006 at 8:00 a.m. in Room 401 of the Government Center, 115 E. Washington Street, Bloomington, Illinois.

Members Present: Chairman Bass, Members Dean, O'Connor, Hoselton, and Baggett

Members Absent: Member Cavallini

Other Members Present: None

Staff Members Present: Mr. John Zeunik, County Administrator; Mr. Terry Lindberg, Assistant County Administrator; Ms. Christine Northcutt, Recording Secretary, County Administrator's Office

Department Heads Present: Mr. Jack Mitchell, County Engineer, Mr. Eric Schmitt, Assistant County Engineer; Mr. Phil Dick, Director, Building and Zoning

Others Present: Ms. Christine Brauer, Member, Regional Planning Commission; Ms. Jennifer Sicks, Transportation Planner, Regional Planning Commission

Chairman Bass called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

Chairman Bass stated that the only item for consideration at this special meeting of the Transportation Committee is the Intergovernmental Agreement between the City of Bloomington, the Town of Normal, and the County of McLean for an East Side Highway Study. Chairman Bass opened the floor for discussion.

Mr. Hoselton stated he would like to forward this item to the full County Board without recommendation.

Motion by Hoselton/Dean to recommend forwarding, without recommendation, an Intergovernmental Agreement between the City of Bloomington, the Town of Normal, and the County of McLean for the East Side Highway Study on to the County Board for consideration at its March 21st Meeting.

Chairman Bass asked if there were any comments or questions from Members of the Committee. Mr. Baggett stated that he has not had any problem with further

study of this issue. He notes that he has been persuaded by testimony from members of the public that this proposed highway is not necessary at this time. This issue failed to pass at the February Transportation Committee Meeting and this item was not brought up at the regular March Transportation Committee Meeting. Therefore, it seems unfair to bring this item before the Committee at a special meeting.

Mr. John Zeunik, County Administrator, responded that this item was not brought up at last week's Transportation Committee meeting in part because several Members of the Committee had stated at the February meeting that it was important for the Town of Normal and the City of Bloomington to act on this item before the County. The other concern that has been expressed outside the Transportation Committee Meeting by other Board Members is that this issue is important enough that it should be considered by the full County Board. The motion made by Mr. Hoselton and seconded by Mr. Dean is simply to move this matter to the full Board without recommendation so that all 20 Board Members can have an opportunity to discuss this issue and make a decision. Chairman Bass thanked Mr. Zeunik for his comments.

**Ms. O'Connor entered the meeting at 8:07 a.m.

Mr. Hoselton advised the Committee that he and other members of the public want to be assured that if and when a new study takes place, the results of the previous study are set aside and not taken into consideration. Mr. Zeunik replied that in pursuant to the terms of the federal grant, the consulting firm that is retained to do the study will need to consider the entire three mile wide area from Towanda-Barnes Road east to 2200 East Road. Within that three-mile corridor, the consulting firm will attempt to determine what alignment makes the most sense for the entire community. Mr. Mitchell added that federal regulations require that the study consider the entire area not just a previous alternative.

Mr. Hoselton asked if the Regional Planning Commission is involved in this process. Mr. Zeunik responded that the \$800,000.00 federal grant has been awarded to McLean County, and McLean County will be the lead agency throughout this study. The previous study that was performed by Bernadin Lockmiller was funded through a grant that was awarded to the Regional Planning Commission. Mr. Zeunik added that there have been questions as to why the Village of Downs and the Village of Towanda are not involved in this Agreement. Mr. Zeunik advised that this Intergovernmental Agreement commits funding from the City, Town and County to provide the local match.

Mr. Mitchell advised the Committee that Members of the McLean County Regional Planning Commission will be on the Steering Committee that oversees the study process. The Steering Committee will also be comprised of representatives from all three local governments.

Mr. Hoselton stated that he would request that Mr. Zeunik be a member of this Steering Committee because he feels confident that Mr. Zeunik would handle this situation with the best interest of the citizens involved.

Mr. Tim Bittner, a member of the audience, asked Chairman Bass if he could make a brief comment. Chairman Bass advised him to make it brief. Mr. Bittner stated that he feels that the City of Bloomington and the Town of Normal are only looking at the current corridor which was proposed by the last study. The County needs to be certain that the study is unbiased and is not "tainted" by the results from the previous study.

Mr. Hoselton stated that he does not agree with the location of the proposed corridor and he is certain that a new study will take all options into account.

Mr. Zeunik informed the Committee that any contract award to complete a study will come through the Transportation Committee first and will be forwarded on to the full County Board for approval. The County Board will be the ultimate contracting entity as it relates to the study.

Chairman Bass called for the question. Mr. Hoselton called for a roll call vote.

Member O'Connor	"Yes"
Member Dean	"Yes"
Member Baggett	"No"
Member Hoselton	"Yes"
Chairman Bass	"Yes"
Motion carries by a 4-1 vote.	

Chairman Bass asked if there were any further comments or questions. Hearing none, he adjourned the meeting at 8:21 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine Northcutt
Recording Secretary