

OCL *Rethinking I-81* Study
Steering Committee Meeting Minutes
University College
December 3, 2008

Present: Phil Bousquet, Emanuel Carter, Chris Capella-Peters, Megan Costa, Carol Dwyer, Rich Landerkin, Rebecca Livengood, Mike Smithson, Tony Malavenda, Sarah McIlvain, Van Robinson, Donna O'Mahoney Rohde, Steve Schroeder, Ben Walsh, Sandra Barrett,

Sandra, Mike, Carol and Sarah had met to discuss the potential purpose and target audience for a Community Leadership Conference. Sarah reported that the committee recommended a half-day afternoon conference in June (in conjunction with the OCL annual meeting luncheon, if board approval) covering 4 major topic areas: 1. History; 2. Environmental and environmental justice aspects; 3. Economic development opportunities; and 4. Quality of life considerations. Speakers might include Dennis Connors, Emanuel Carter, Chris Capella Peter, John Norquist, Tom Brennan. Target audience would include leadership in the affected communities, including city, town, village and county officials, representatives of the business community and the Hill educational and medical institutions, etc. Carol will research possible locations.

Phil Bousquet presented information on federal highway funding, including several handouts from the SAFETEA-LU website, <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/safetealu/summary.htm>, <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/safetealu/reference.htm>, including the attached state and regional planning information. SAFETEA-LU is up for reauthorization in 2009. The funding structure is fairly elaborate; federal share of infrastructure projects (usually 80%, 90% or even 100% for some projects) is funded by the gas tax; state funds include gas tax, bonds, etc. New legislation could look different. The planning process drives everything (see Metropolitan Planning fact sheet).

There was a discussion of the SMTC planning process. The 4-year TIP (transportation improvement plan) is basically a budget; unbudgeted items cannot be included. The planning cycle is 3 years with a 20 year horizons. Consensus is required at the local level.

Infrastructure maintenance comes out of the same budget, therefore maintain bridges (high maintenance) reduces funding for other projects. Can we get these costs??? The DOT/SMTC consultants and studies will set the agenda for the planning process – our study must impact this.

Sandra discussed some environmental air quality issues (see attached). The Edwards and Kelcey study projected that rerouting of through traffic would significantly reduce pollution emissions in the Hill area. Recent measurements of air quality at different points on the Center of Excellence block show markedly higher levels of toxic pollutants closer to the highways (elbow of 81 & 690). CoE will be doing much more extensive monitoring and analysis from tower on the site, as well as a comparison tower in Onondaga Park, over the next several months, which should produce data useful to us. No data locally on health effects, but several studies from other cities show significant adverse health effects on pregnant women/fetuses, children and adults who live or go to school generally within 200m – 500m of highways.

SUNY ESF student presentation on Wednesday, Dec. 10, 4 pm at 409 Marshall Hall. TMR presentation by Rebecca and Doug on Dec. 11, 8 AM, Drumlins. **NEXT MEETING: Wednesday, December 17, 2008, 3:30 – 5 PM, 307 University College.**