

**City of Glenwood Springs
Transportation Commission Meeting Minutes**

Tuesday July 7, 2020, 7:30 to 9:30 a.m
Via Zoom

1. Attendance and receipt of minutes:

Commissioners present: Sandy Lowell, chair, Ralph Trapani, Steve Smith, Lee Barger, John Stephens
City Council: Charlie Willman, Shelly Kaup
City Staff: Terri Partch, Jenn Ooton, Michael Hixson, Linda DuPriest
Others: Nick Senn, David Johnson and Ben Ludlow, all of Roaring Fork Transportation Authority (RFTA)

1) 27th Street over and underpass project review and recommendation to Council – RFTA engineer Nick Senn gave a presentation on a proposed bicycle/pedestrian grade separation for the intersection of SH 82 and 27th Street. Both RFTA and City of Glenwood have looked at this for several years for a safer way for bicyclists and pedestrians to access 27th St station, and because of a fatality in this location several years ago. The project will also include consideration of a grade separation of 27th and the Rio Grande Trail.

Among topics discussed by Commissioners were cost, whether there would be an overpass or underpass, if grade separation would occur on the south or north side of intersection on 82, aesthetics and visual impacts. **COST:** RFTA staff gave an estimate of \$9 to \$10 million, and confirmed that the project at this point is short approximately \$3 million: RFTA stated that underpasses are typically less expensive than overpasses. Commissioners had questions about the user experience and aesthetics of over vs. under. In addition, width and winter maintenance for both options were discussed. RFTA believes that all things considered, under is superior. **AESTHETICS and Visual Impacts:** RFTA’s presentation included photos of a bike/ped underpass in Basalt which utilized a great deal of stone work. Commissioners expressed concerns about the cost and if it was really necessary; there was a suggestion that stone could be used just at entrances while the main body of a tunnel could be concrete finish to save money. Commission Chair asked what action is needed at this time; RFTA asked for the for the Commission’s preference on an overpass or underpass. Chair moved to recommend a south side underpass; Steve Smith seconded followed by unanimous approval.

2) Review of South Midland sidewalk and pedestrian facility control measures – Terri Partch presented a memo from consultant SGM for pedestrian protection between Park West to Mt Sopris Drive. Commissioners asked if we could extend this protection to Cardiff Bridge Rd as well as south of Mt. Sopris to roundabout area. Terri will discuss with contractor and massage the plan before it goes out the door. Commissioners brought up the subject of backup alarms on construction equipment, how they can become excessive, both creating a noise disturbance for neighborhood but also rendering them ineffective over time. Ralph Trapani has access to new research and methods and will forward to Terri Partch for consideration.

3) Discussion about CDOT signal and pedestrian signal optimization – Discussion centered around how to make crossing Grand Avenue easier for pedestrians, and if the City should assume responsibility for signals from CDOT. Terri Partch recounted some history of this issue including having met with CDOT, resulting in changes at 8th which were later reversed due to comments from “anxious” drivers as well as crashes. Terri noted that if the City were to assume signal timing, full responsibility would fall to the City, and she is not sure the City could do a better job, citing the constant struggle to balance side street vs Grand Avenue movements. Commissioners suggested other solutions such as switching 8th and 9th to one-way pairs, installing cameras that work better at detecting bicyclists, pedestrian activation buttons that work better, and bringing in more highly qualified signal timing experts from Denver, as well as making sure we are aware of the latest technology advances in signal timing. Lee Barger asked specifically about signal technology that could provide longer and more frequent pedestrian crossing phases depending on the day of the week and time of day. Terri suggested that perhaps inviting CDOT’s signal engineers to the next meeting could shed some light on these issues. Ralph Trapani, who formerly worked at Parsons, indicated they would have latest expertise; Terri Partch will contact them.

4) Update on South Bridge design and South Midland design – Terri Partch briefed the Commission on the 30% review of the South Bridge project including sewer, water, broadband, tunnel under the airport and runway issues, intersection of the Rio Grande Trail and 82, and utility locations. Commissioners asked if the airport issues have been resolved and if the airport land use study of 2019 was being considered. Terri replied that Council has not taken action on that study; Council Member Shelly Kaup affirmed that the airport was a political issue that Council had not taken on yet. Terri reviewed several topics from the last Airport Board meeting such as a desire to add hangars, increase medical helicopter services plus a proposal to add more buildings. Commissioners discussed additional issues including if the airport is the highest and best use of the land, the economic benefit to the City of developing the airport land, the additional costs of building South Bridge if it has to tunnel under the airport, and the size of constituency served by the airport vs. if the land was used for development that would include housing, parks, and jobs. Council Member Kaup asked if the Commission has any desire to make a recommendation on the airport vis-à-vis the tunnel. Commissioners had a similar question. Council Member Willman proposed putting this item on Council agenda sometime after the next Airport Board meeting. Terri Partch concluded with stating that at this point in time the design team was moving ahead with the tunnel.

S. Midland Design - Terri Partch reported that they are currently finalizing right-of-way and that the project was on track for a late August/early September bid. Steve Smith asked for clarification on bicycle/pedestrian design treatment from Cardiff Bridge Road to the roundabout. Terri replied that is a 6 ft. wide path in planned. Steve Smith with concurrence from John Stephens commented that it was not a sufficient design. Terri will bring this issue back to the next meeting

5) Quick review of Large and Small Capital Project Lists – Terri Partch asked if there were any changes to previous drafts of the list. Commissioners stated they would like more detail on some of the bike/pedestrian projects, especially that changes to 8th street need to be scoped better

and more detail on 6th street needs to be preserved in the document. Terri directed Linda DuPriest to work with Steve Smith on improving these items for the August meeting.

6) MOVE study update – Terri Patch reported that when the public involvement results were presented to Council they suggested presenting it to County Commissioners to ensure more input from west Garfield County residents and interests. The team is now working on technical packages of the project including possible locations of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) routes and transfer stations. There was a robust discussion of a proposal to put the BRT route along the Rio Grande Trail corridor from 27th or 23rd to RFTA property near 8th St. Commissioners expressed strong concerns with the lack of detail being supplied about the proposed Rio Grand Trail “busway” and that the Commission expects to receive more information on this idea in the near future. Commissioners also wanted an update on alternatives to the Rio Grand corridor, such as alternating BRT commute lanes on 82/Grand Avenue, or for routes on Pitkin, Cooper, and Colorado. In addition, Commissioners expressed a general concern that they were not having enough input on this project. Terri Patch assured them that she would take all their concerns back to the Technical Advisory Committee for the MOVE study. Council Member Kaup reminded the group to keep an open mind on all the alternatives as the project moves forward. Regarding transit service in general, Commissioners stressed that transit service in underserved parts of Glenwood, such as the West and South parts of town are to be included in the scope of the MOVE study.

7) Bell Rippy Project follow-up -Terri Patch reported the latest on the Bell Rippy development including response to neighborhood concerns. She stated that the Blake gate will be opened, plus that the only motor vehicle access to the development will be from Blake, and not Palmer.

8) Other Business – Commissioner Steve Smith stated that since he is on the focus group committee for the MOVE study, he asked for assurance that West and South Glenwood transit needs would be included in MOVE study. Terri Patch affirmed that it would be discussed at the August meeting.

9) Meeting was adjourned at 10:07.