



City of Glenwood Springs Transportation Commission

Minutes approved by the Commission on October 6, 2020

September 2020 Meeting Minutes

The September 2020 meeting of the City of Glenwood Springs Transportation Commission was called to order at 7:30 a.m. on September 1, 2020 via Zoom™.

Present were Commission Chair Sandy Lowell (SL), and Commissioners John Stephens (JS), Ralph Trapani (RT), Roger Poirier (RP), Lee Barger (LB), Steve Smith (SS) and Robert Gavrell (RG).

Also present were City Council Member Charlie Willman (CE), City Engineer Terri Partch (TP), and Transit Planning Development Lead Linda DuPriest (LD).

I. Adoption of the minutes from 8-4-2020 (Will be sent out on 8-31)

RG presented suggested revisions to the proposed minutes from the August 2020 meeting via redlines prior to the meeting. RG also offered to take over responsibility for taking notes and drafting proposed minutes moving forward.

By general agreement, the Commission postponed discussion and approval of the August 2020 proposed meeting minutes until the October meeting.

Commissioners agreed to send any additional comments / revisions to the proposed August minutes, if any, via email to RG to incorporate into the proposed minutes for presentation / approval at the October meeting.

IV. Other Business.

A. Revising / Refining / Finally Approving the TC 2021 Small Project Priority List

CW reported to the Commission that the Council will be reviewing the 2021 budget on Thursday (9/3/20), and he requested that the Commission complete the process of refining / finally approving the Commission's Small Project Priority list for 2021 for presentation.

TP presented the current version of the proposed Small Project Priority list (5/1/20 version) for Commission review and formal adoption. SS presented his proposals for modifying sequencing on certain projects, and certain aspects of certain projects, previously circulated via email.

General Discussion on a number of topics, including (a) adding language to item #2 related to installing bollards behind the bus stop, (b) removing the word "Small" from the title of the list, (c) adding an item related to moving the crosswalk on the east side of the intersection of 7th and 8th to the west side of the intersection, (d) adding improved safety measures to that intersection, generally, (e) possibly creating a mid-block pedestrian crossing of 8th Street between its intersections with Midland and 7th Street at or near the north entrance of Veltus Park, and (g) raising the north east crosswalk of the Midland / 8th intersection to make it more visible and for its traffic calming benefit (either as a stand alone project or as part of a large project overhaul of intersection).

After discussion, RG moved to adopt the Small Projects Priority List as presented on 5/1/20 with the following modifications:

- Renaming the list to be the "<\$1M Transportation Project Priority List" (removing the word "small");
- Adding as the first step under Item # 2 ("Highway 6 Bike Path Improvements") the following language: "Add bollards to behind bus stop at intersection with Traver Trail, to prevent improper car parking."

SL seconded. All in favor except RT. Motion passes.

TP commits to (a) see that a bollard will be placed in the pedestrian crossing on the east side of the intersection of 7th and 8th this winter (2020-2021), (b) consider options for adding a pedestrian crosswalk at the north entrance of Veltus Park crossing 8th for later presentation to the Commission.

II. Discussion of public process on the Blake and Palmer circulation issue.

TP reported to the Commission that, notwithstanding the Commission's request from its August 2020 meeting that she advise and report on circulation / traffic calming ideas related to Bell Rippy project, she could not do that. TP reported she was advised that due to ongoing discussions with developer, such a report would be premature. When those conversations are better worked out, she can make a report.

This item to be added to the next TC meeting for follow-up / updates.

III. MOVE Study - Review of Level One Alternatives Screening Results.

There was a wide ranging discussion by Commissioners about perceived problems / shortcomings in the ongoing MOVE study and the perceived focus of public participation being solicited to date.

RG raised concerns that, even by the study's best projections, a BRT line along the Rio Grande Corridor would improve travel times for bus commuters by merely a few minutes but would be projected to cost up to or over \$25M.

RT raised concerns that a bus line along the Rio Grande is not the right solution to a projection of 44,000 VT per day; a 3.5 minute faster bus travel time is not going to solve that problem. RT advocated for better TDM efforts, especially looking at local trips, and especially looking at downtown parking following the Aspen model. RT expressed concern that sacrificing the Rio Grande corridor for BRT would be losing one of the best parts of town to traffic, to "save it" from traffic.

JS raised concerns that if the MOVE study just focuses on downtown it will solve none of city-wide transit problems it purports to intend to address; the focus should be on a west Glenwood intercept. JS suggested any useful study will need to identify how and to what extent potential options presented will facilitate a reduction of vehicular traffic in GWS.

SL expressed concerns that the MOVE study was an attempt by RFTA to implement its own long term planning through Glenwood without adequate conferral (referring the 27th Street BRT station built without adequate parking being another example).

JS raised concerns the MOVE study had not adequately considered the target audience for the buses, and without doing so planning the best routes for the buses was a backwards approach.

LB questioned TP's 44K vehicle trip estimate and suggested other models / data should be considered. He suggested the City should not be planning for a 44K number – a 44K number was ultimately unacceptable and it should be up to us to take action, now, to ensure we never get to that number.

RT questioned the benchmarks for success built into the study as overly favoring "speed of RFTA's buses" rather than improved transit of quality of life for Glenwood Springs.

JS raised concerns that the model was flawed for not first identifying the best transit hub locations; he questioned exploring what the best "route" options were through the City was premature without first identifying the route's destinations.

RT questioned what new demand a proposed new Rio Grande corridor was designed to serve.

Responding to Commissioner comments generally, TP at various times offered that:

(1) the issue of aligning a BRT route in the Rio Grande corridor related not so much to the present time savings for bus commuters but for future benefits considering gridlock projections for GWS up to as high as 44K projected vehicle trips per day; (2) many persons contributing to the MOVE study are in fact her and city staff and local business, (3) the 44K vehicle trip projection number is justifiable and indeed was used by the City in support of its own South Bridge calculations, (4) doing nothing is not an option, and there is concern that too much criticism without taking action of some kind will eliminate some options in the future, when traffic may have already become much worse.

TP also offered in response to RT's suggestion of more emphasis on TDM (e.g. Aspen) that Aspen's entire model of TDM is designed to keep parking way down using paid parking and heavy enforcement to lower vehicle trips and generate money for transportation alternatives and ROD systems. TP reminded the Commission that there had been historically little / no support for this approach in downtown GWS.

There was also general discussion about making the Commission a more active player in the study process, by e.g. passing more firm resolutions for and against some alternatives, but no resolutions were offered. There was also discussion about letting the study play out a bit more before taking more significant action.

RT proposed an interim meeting for the Commission with RFTA / consultants to be held on September 9, 2020 at 7:30 a.m. purely to discuss the MOVE study.

TP to set up interim meeting for Commission to be held on September 9, 2020 at 7:30 a.m. purely to discuss MOVE commission study with RFTA / consultants.

RT also asked TP to direct the MOVE consultants to analyze (1) routing BRT buses through downtown over the Grand Avenue Bridge, bypassing 8th and Midland and going directly to the West RFTA park and ride lot via the highway and (2) utilizing one-way dedicated bus lane through on Grand during peak traffic periods only, using existing asphalt, paint and signage.

TP to meet with MOVE personnel and report back to TC regarding analysis of (1) routing BRT buses through downtown over the Grand Avenue Bridge, bypassing 8th and Midland and going directly to the West RFTA Lot via the highway and (2) utilizing a one-way dedicated bus lane on Grand, using existing asphalt, paint and signage, during peak traffic periods only.

Adjourned at 9:41 a.m.