

Planning and Coordination Council Quarterly Meeting (PACC)
May 1, 2008 (3:00 – 4:00 p.m.)
Byrd Morris Seminar Room
Harrison Institute/Small Special Collections Library
University of Virginia

Council Members/County Board of Supervisors/U.Va. in Attendance: Robert Tucker Jr., Dennis S. Rooker, Kenneth C. Boyd, Julian Taliaferro, Dave Norris, Leonard Sandridge, Colette Sheehy

Also in attendance: Tom Frederick and Butch Davies

1. Call to order – Leonard Sandridge, Chair
Meeting called to order at 3:00 p.m.
2. Leonard Sandridge Approval of February 21 Meeting Minutes
Unanimous approval

Mr. Sandridge moved forward to first item on agenda:

1. Tom Frederick, Rivanna Water and Sewer Authority

Mr. Sandridge commented that the issue of water is an area with vested interest. So, Tom Frederick has been invited to give an update.

Mr. Frederick commented that RWSA takes this issue seriously. RWSA understands that part of the mission is to provide a safe, healthy and reliable source of drinking water at all times. RWSA understands the U.Va. perspective of striving for excellence, and that when the University proposes capital improvement needs, they are based on education. RWSA does not want anyone to worry that there won't be enough water to ensure the success of a project.

In 2004, RWSA looked back and had a computation made for what is the safe yield. The current figure is 12.8 million gallons per day. Demand fluctuates depending on the conditions and the seasons. Use averages about 10 million gallons per day; some of the peaks are over 14 gallons per day. The community and retail sectors have worked hard on drought management. RWSA provided a series of community meetings from 2005-06 to listen to ideas, but have to determine what is reliable and necessary to comply with regulatory requirements. In community discussions, they've tried to build a marriage between the local interests and regulatory needs.

In 2006, there was a major breakthrough with definite interest to stay in the watershed area. There is interest in advancing natural resources in rural areas by improving buffers with the Nature Conservancy. In July of last year, this plan was recognized by a national journal as an innovative idea. The idea came from grass roots interest in building a water

supply plan that meets other community needs. One concept was to raise Ragged Mountain Reservoir by 45 feet to meet the needs of this community in 50 years, and hopefully beyond, while meeting other environmental goals. An application was filed with regulatory agencies in June 2006 after four local boards unanimously approved the plan to go forward. Regulatory agencies have been reviewing, and meanwhile, a mitigation plan was created for the environment that includes buffers for 75,000 feet of linear streams, 200 acres of forest, and 4 acres of wetlands. The state issued a permit to build the alternative that's been selected.

RWSA is anticipating within the current month that the Corps of Engineers will issue the federal approval which will be the last regulatory hurdle to accomplish the long-term plan.

There's been discussion in the community about dredging the South Fork Reservoir. RWSA is very interested to continue being a part of innovative ideas that come forward with regard to maintenance dredging. They want to conduct the necessary technical studies and to assure the community that public safety and health goals are seriously considered.

There is a council work session next Tuesday, May 6 to hear talk about the community water supply plan and discussion on dredging of the South Fork Reservoir. It's a good opportunity to get more detailed information and share with public.

Mr. Boyd asked Mr. Frederick to describe the mitigation plan.

Mr. Frederick commented that the buffers are located on Buck Mountain Creek, which is on land already owned by RWSA.

Mr. Rooker commented that it was land purchased for a reservoir.

Mr. Frederick commented that RWSA has leased some tracks to tenants used for various agricultural purposes for 1.5 years now in ways to bring buffers and education to tenants on how to preserve agricultural use of the land. There are four acres of wetlands adjacent to Moore's Creek which is accessed off of South Franklin Street in an urban area of our community. Scientists believe the site was originally wetland and are trying to bring it back to what it was.

Mr. Rooker commented that in order to understand dredging, it's wise to have soil sampling done because the dredging quotes are dependent on the composition of soils. He wondered if there is an idea of cost incurred in order to do preliminary testing.

Mr. Frederick commented that there are a variety of numbers, so the more sampling, the better the information, and the higher the costs. Hiring an engineering firm to do this would be high in the \$150,000 range, but there are also resources at Virginia Tech to do this at less cost.

Mr. Boyd asked has it ever been done. Mr. Frederick commented that the survey was last done in 2002. The estimates in South Fork are based on the survey.

Mr. Rooker asked if the survey provided soil compositions. Mr. Frederick commented that there was a different study with three soil samples in 2002. Interestingly, the results were sand, silt and clay. Mr. Rooker commented that sand is most lucrative to dispose of once you get it out of the ground.

Mr. Rooker asked if the plan is approved, is there a requirement to do anything. For example, something must be done with Ragged Mountain Dam, but the approval would allow the dam to be raised to various heights.

Mr. Frederick commented that it's more complicated than that. The plan that's been approved includes requirements for stream flow releases past the dam. There's a figure for what has to be released at Ragged Mountain to Moore's Creek, Morman's River and South Fork River. Based on data in terms of how much storage in the system, unless storage raised to 42 feet is added, we could not reliably meet the requirements in the permit for the Mormon's River without a new pipe from South Fork to Ragged Mountain.

Mr. Rooker commented he's a proponent of maintenance dredging if it can be done reasonably and wondered if able to achieve ideal conditions, would that allow downstream releases, without going to 42 feet on the dam.

Mr. Frederick commented that the way to confirm a situation would be to do an engineering model and look at the output and determine what it does. A scenario would be determined to decide if it was worth it for the investment.

Mr. Frederick commented that an alternative plan is being built right now and would be able to go to Department of Environmental Quality to seek a permit to do the dredging we'd want to perform.

Mr. Rooker commented that getting a plan approved gives the option of executing the plan. It doesn't prevent one from getting a bid on maintenance dredging and adjusting what's being done on the dam.

Mr. Frederick commented that there should be caution in discussions about adjusting the dam, because it could reopen the permit.

Mr. Rooker questioned that as long as downstream requirements are satisfied, building to 30 feet instead of 42 feet could be an option.

Mr. Frederick commented that the permit means building the dam to 45 feet, but downstream requirements must be met.

Mr. _____ asked if you can accomplish this and meet the conditions.

Mr. Rooker commented that before the contract is signed, someone should look at maintenance dredging and give a proposal before locked into the contract.

Mr. Tucker commented that timing is a consideration and if the permit is attained, there might be delay, to take up the question of the dredging.

Mr. Norris commented that there's so much to do on the front end to replace the infrastructure and base of the dam and designing the dam. If we spent six months looking at the scenario, we would have difficulty moving the plan forward.

Mr. Boyd suggested to Rivanna to spend \$75,000 to have someone look at it. Mr. Norris commented that this is why work sessions are taking place, but it's something to consider.

Mr. Frederick commented that aside from issues related to the water supply plan, there is a separate action by state agencies that has placed a deadline on RWSA to submit a preliminary design on the Ragged Mountain dam by November of this year. This community has asked for multiple deadlines over the years. The community is currently on schedule, but work stopped, the deadlines could not be met. If the community wants to look at it, RWSA is here to serve, but would recommend against slowing the current progress of the design for safety reasons.

Mr. Tucker commented that there is concern in moving forward with multiple projects. Have RWSA given any thought to managing both projects with RWSA staff?

Mr. Frederick commented that it is an ambitious plan with a lot of needs. It is a concern to manage workload, but it doesn't mean turnkey proposals can't be entertained. Certainly, financial constraints are always issues, and they admire the tough decisions that need to be made.

Mr. Sandridge thanked Mr. Frederick for the update and leadership and commented that U.Va. is interested in facilitating an orderly process to a good solution.

2. Update on Transportation – John J. (Butch) Davies, Culpeper District Representative on the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB)

Mr. Davies commented on his frustration of the CTB and that projects accelerate and double in cost, but there is no funding. This is due in part to the cost of materials and increases with regard to petroleum products. The accelerating cost of right of way has tripled in cost.

One of the other changes in the last six years is an intermodal look at transportation. For years, the interest was in pavement and roads. There was an opportunity at the last meeting in Lynchburg to review a draft of a six-year rail plan. CTB is looking at what can be done to address the rail and infrastructure issues. It goes to the movement of freight and passenger service. There is a growing awareness of the need to find another way to

move trucks on I-81, and it may be rail. There is a rapidly expanding port in Tidewater and Hampton Roads and the capacity of the port is going to double. The Norfolk Southern is looking at a rail line to carry a piggyback rail to Roanoke to a location where a new inland port will be. The piggyback rail will disperse from there and there will be a 50% increase on freight transport. This keeps piggyback trailers off I-64 and I-81 and will have an impact as trains will be longer and there will be more of them.

Significant time has been spent looking at pedestrian and bike paths. There has been focus on the trails from Williamsburg to Richmond which is almost two-thirds complete. This is economic development at its best and an effective use for tourism.

Rapid transit is also a concern and there is a need to look at corridors. With the cost of gas accelerating, it will be important to look at the use of a rapid transit system. Park and ride lots will need to be available to utilize the system and there are lots evolving in Madison, Greene and Culpeper. The Madison and Greene lots will be bringing traffic toward Albemarle and Charlottesville.

The CTB approved \$1.5 million in funding for the Route 29 corridor study which runs from Amherst on Route 29 to I-66. Visitors at a meeting, from Lynchburg and Danville, raised concerns that they would like the corridor developed to interstate level. CTB spent \$280 million on Monroe Heights Bypass near Lynchburg.

There are construction projects on I-81 for truck lanes to divert traffic. There will be impact on I-64 and a growing use of the Route 29 corridor in next ten years. There is a growing realization about traffic in the corridor, and that one size will not fit all. The corridor has changed so dramatically since the last studies that innovative concepts will have to be researched.

CTB has spent \$40 million on the bypass and \$30 million on right of way acquisition. CTB has not completed the right of way acquisition, and the cost of the road is somewhere north of \$200 million for a six lane road. The plan from 1991 is now antiquated, and there is no funding. The right of way is still in place for a Meadowcreek-style parkway. The right of way may be used for pedestrians, bikes or trails as long as funds that have been expended are used in addressing Route 29 solutions. VDOT can't afford to not be reimbursed.

Meadowcreek Parkway is in its 39th year. A secondary road project in the county moved revenue sharing funds to other projects to keep this on schedule. The county is purchasing right of way that will be deeded to the city to replace park land. It's beneficial to the city, but a commitment by the county of unique importance. The recent activity deals with issues related to the school board. Questions have been asked by the school board - questions that were asked years ago. Many are not familiar with the history, so it's an educational process.

The second phase is the urban portion at the McIntire Park route. CTB first spoke to a senior citizens group who were on a citizen study commission, and they stated that

without the road, the park is not used. They had a written report submitted to the city with projected uses.

The third phase is the interchange which is a major piece, and there is a growing consensus that without the interchange, it will be very difficult to make the Meadowcreek Parkway work. Several have tried to get the state to match the money, and former Governor Warner put it in budget. CTB was thrilled to see the earmark as it was the largest in the state. The interchange has a unique opportunity for corridor and traffic patterns.

The Hillsdale project is important because it is on the yellow sheet, which means there is insufficient funding. It hasn't been removed from the plan, but they have noted caution that the funding is not there. It will move to the top by donation of right of way by property owners. The right of way is \$17 million, and CTB is looking for a \$12 million donation. Once there is written affirmation to Richmond that \$12 million has been achieved, the project can advance. The frustration is a lack of commitment by VDOT to recognize the city's effort, and VDOT questions the availability of funding. Cuts have been so drastic, that it's not feasible in the six-year plan. Money must be moved from other projects to keep it moving. Route 29, from the river to Hollymead, is going to get worse before it gets better. It has been removed from the plan for lack of funding through the proffer system. The bottleneck problem is still an issue and hopefully the Route 29 corridor study will address it. It may be funded with the bond issue. The real frustration is the impact on secondary road funding. CTB has received requests from counties not to drop the projects. There was \$3 billion cut at the first meeting, because there was no money. At the next meeting, \$ 2.5 billion was cut. CTB wants to deliver integrity in the planning, and Mr. Davies has made sure that the funding is committed to Advance Mills Bridge. There are other sensitive local projects that were removed, and they'll have to find a way to restore the funding.

On the positive side, there are different pots of money and local governments use them effectively. The county is proficient in piggybacking on funds. Those funds remain and the legislature says that it has \$15 million, but can go up to \$50 million and has authorized the use of bonds.

Enhancement money is another pocket. Albemarle County applied for funds for the Lewis and Clark Center. Mr. Davies was able to get \$200,000 out of the district money for projects of national or state significance. The money had been drained to Jamestown and some for Montpelier and Monticello. This year they also will receive \$100,000 from the state fund and will be approved at the CTB meeting in June. Money can be shifted for projects of historic nature people feel passionate about.

Members of council have expressed that a solution must be found and cannot deal with the budget cuts. By 2016, CTB won't have money to match federal dollars, partly because of rollback of money that was not envisioned. If we can't find another source of revenue, road responsibilities will get shifted to local government.

Mr. Boyd asked if Mr. Davies could talk about the engineering study from Amherst to Gainesville. Mr. Davies remarked that the study will be underway by fall and committee meetings will unfold through winter. A report can be expected after the legislative session in 2009.

Mr. Rooker mentioned a prior corridor study with options to create limited access to the corridor from Charlottesville to Warrenton at a cost of \$1 billion, and assuming it's increased by now to approximately \$2 billion. A number of people are interested in the corridor and how it might connect I-64 to I-66 by a new road. He wondered if a consultant will have the authority to look at options.

Mr. Davies commented that a consultant can listen to people make suggestions in localities. The cost of going east is not going to be a lot different.

Mr. Rooker commented there would be two roads.

Mr. Davies commented that there would be huge environmental issues. He's expecting that sections of Route 29 will be targeted for improvement to secondary roads and to eliminate crossroads. Developing a consensus is not going to be easy. The challenge will be in how to fund it. A bond issue can provide for construction.

Mr. Boyd commented that CTB is looking at alternatives for moving traffic and wondered who's doing that.

Mr. Davies commented that it is part of the Route 29 corridor study. Limited resources require backing away to start again. The road from Berkmar to Hollymead is a secondary road and he has tried to upgrade the road to a primary road to get primary road funds, but it's unlikely that will happen.

Mr. Boyd commented on the interest of the Charlottesville Business Council and landowners who might be interested in discussions.

Mr. Davies concurred that the land owners are a major part, and that it's a unique opportunity to look at that connection.

Mr. Tucker asked what percentage of tractor trailer traffic would be removed by the use of rail from Roanoke to Northern Virginia.

Mr. Davies commented that it would be very small, but it has a significant impact on slowing the growth of traffic.

Mr. Norris noted a city and county project related to the creation of regional transit authority. He inquired about the best advice for going to Richmond.

Mr. Davies commented that the city should seriously promote the effort. VDOT gives credence where multi-government entities are participating because it makes it more cost

efficient and viable to serve more people. The cost of gas is a significant factor. It's important to make the case of the people and how they will benefit.

Mr. Boyd asked Mr. Sandridge about moving employees back and forth with regard to a park and ride in Greene County.

Mr. Sandridge commented that there is no question that the economic impact of the cost of gas is making a difference. The plan is to have incentives by the end of the summer for carpooling. Since U.Va. has 17,000 employees coming to work every day, work schedules vary intentionally, so they're not coming to work at the same time. This is a challenge for carpooling, but U.Va. is considering the idea of remote lots, primarily for people who come on standard schedule.

Mr. Boyd commented that it seems like people who have lower income jobs live further out, so travel costs are significant for them.

Mr. Sandridge commented that there are many people who come from locations in Augusta, Buckingham, Goochland, Greene, Orange Counties and Richmond, and there is great concern for those people who travel everyday.

Mr. Boyd noted that U.Va. has an active rideshare program.

Mr. Sandridge commented yes, but there is still room for improvement in expanding the program.

Mr. Taliaferro noted the discussion on the Fontaine/Sunset area connector at the last meeting and wondered what Mr. Davies might recommend.

Mr. Davies thinks the connector is needed. He's worried about getting funding, and note that new sources of revenue are needed. CTB is not getting revenue from state gas tax, since people are buying less. Local tax districts could help, but Richmond has not been supportive of that.

Mr. Rooker commented that taxing districts put burden on the property tax.

Mr. Davies agreed and noted that part of it is getting the public comfortable with how the connector will benefit everyone.

Mr. Rooker asked about the inland port at Roanoke and the increased use of rail.

Mr. Davies commented that this is for freight and coal and Roanoke is one of the few places to dock and unload. CTB does not want I-64 to be used for transporting these resources.

Mr. Rooker asked how far in the future one should expect the increase of rail. Mr. Davies commented that it should be expected in the next decade.

Mr. Rooker asked about the commitment to an inland port concept.

Mr. Davies commented that it's been fast-tracked. Norfolk Southern is committed, and there's lots of potential. It will build over period of time - more rail will be used because it's cost-effective.

Mr. Rooker asked if the bridges are capable of dealing with piggyback.

Mr. Davies commented that they're high enough. The concern is with the Heartland Expressway, and the tunnels are being rebuilt which will increase the volume.

Mr. Boyd asked about the strain from freight on passenger service.

Mr. Davies commented that \$40 million is being spent between Front Royal and Warrenton for east-west flow to increase the rate. They're building 11,000 foot sidings, and if the levels are failed to be met, we get reimbursed.

Mr. Norris noted that it's a narrow window right now. Mr. Davies agreed.

Mr. ____ asked if there are funding changes or issues with the bridges at JPA and Belmont.

Mr. Davies commented that because of what happened in Minneapolis, money allocated for bridges cannot be diverted.

Mr. Rooker asked what the cost was. Mr. Davies commented that it was approximately \$800,000 just to reinforce the sides of the wooden bridge.

Mr. Sandridge commented that he appreciated Mr. Davies' candor and directness.

Mr. Sandridge asked if there was other new business. He noted that the next meeting is August 21 and an agenda is being worked on. Reports were distributed on what we have covered and what will be covered. Thanks to Tom and Butch.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:33 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Careen Waterman