

Kendall County – Boerne – Fair Oaks Transportation Committee Minutes

20 July 2021
2:07 – 4:03 p.m.

The Kendall County – Boerne – Fair Oaks Transportation Committee convened in the Boerne City Hall First Floor Staff Training Room.

In Attendance:

Bob Manning, Don Durden, Bitsy Pratt, John Ramirez for Henry Acosta, Del Eulberg, Rankin D’Spain, Ben Eldredge, John Kight, Jonah Evans, Jeff Carroll, Northern Hendricks, Steve Sharma, Annette for Stephen Zoeller, Gary Louie, Tim Bannwolf, and scrivener Erika Yount. There were also 9 members of the public present at the meeting.

Not In Attendance:

Rich Sena, Bryce Boddie, Josh Limmer, Kim Blohm, and Marcus Garcia.

Item 1: OPENING REMARKS

Bob Manning opens the meeting, saying that there are an impressive number of spectators in attendance, and he wonders if that is because they have an exciting agenda planned. He also says the committee is on the cusp of having its first quorum to memory.

He moves on to some housekeeping notes, saying that the committee always meets on the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of the month at City Hall in the Staff Training Room. Agendas are posted to the committee’s website and tells the members to get with Northern Hendricks for getting emails and information about meetings.

Item 2: CONSIDER APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR JULY 6, 2021

Don Durden opens the floor for consideration of approval of minutes from the last two meetings: June 29 and July 6. Jonah Evans makes a motion to approve the minutes. Rankin D'Spain seconds the motion.

Bitsy Pratt asks if Dr. Veni's presentation is going to be made available for public viewing. Ben Eldredge replies yes, the presentation is available on YouTube, and he will share the link with her.

Regarding the minutes, none are opposed. Durden deems the minutes are adopted.

Item 3: PUBLIC COMMENT

No comments from the public are made at this time.

Item 4: REPORT FROM THE PROJECTS COMMITTEE

Pratt begins the presentation. She pulls up planning unit information on the screens around the room. She says that Jeff Carroll put together a larger map of the City of Boerne with the city limits, the ETJ, and the extended ETJ. The planning units listed are relative to the City and she would like the committee to notice that some of the planning units are in a different jurisdiction or even in Bexar County. She says they do not have control over all the roads, but they have developed relationships with developments that do have control.

Pratt says they have a good snapshot of the growth that is projected to take place over the next decade with the BIRD demographer report. She explains the subcommittee broke up the map into 4 major quadrants and used IH-10 and Hwy 46 as bisectors. The most immediate growth over the next decade will be in the Southeast quadrant, she says. On the map displayed, there is a section of yellow shading that represents the area she speaks of.

Pratt explains that according to a survey, much of this area is already full and built out. She says the subcommittee looked at the road situation in the highlighted areas to see what was on the books and what has not yet been

achieved. It included a roundabout at Cascade Caverns, an extension of Cascade Caverns to IH-10, improvements to Scenic Loop, and 5 other projects. She explains that the recommendations they have for this area are in the minutes for those meetings the subcommittee has had. They are on the committee's website. She also notes that the low water crossing at the county line is a choke point when it rains.

She says many of their recommendations came out of the bus barn on interconnectivity through the neighborhoods. Many recommendations also surrounded the need for crosswalks and sidewalks for movement through neighborhoods.

Focusing on the highlighted areas in the southwest quadrant, they understand there are development agreements already in place, but she says Carroll provided insight on other opportunities in that area. If there is a small parcel of property available, and landowners were on board, there could be a connection made to Upper Balcones that would enhance the east and west connectivity. She explains that Carroll sent information about a developer that has purchased Fox Falls on Upper Balcones, but it has ROW that the development will extend a roadway from Scenic Loop to Balcones Creek Road. That could be another strong east to west connector in the future.

She explains that any new roads that will go in will have sidewalks to enable pedestrian traffic. There are no schools in the southwest quadrant area yet, but elementary school number 8 is next, and that land is in the process of being purchased.

The northeast quadrant is discussed next. This was broken up into 4 chunks. She explains that the City already has a good transportation plan in this area. The only thing they could think to add would be to connect some of the development on the east side of Hwy 87 down south toward the bulk of Main Street, giving those folks a chance to walk into town.

The primary thing they saw was that there is no east/west connector in that area. The only options are to take Hwy 46 or Hwy 474. She says there is

no big traffic demand there yet, but it could be something to consider in the future for school and emergency traffic.

Pratt moves into discussion about Esperanza, saying it is its own entity, and she says they are going to put in over 2,100 homes. This community opens to Hwy 46. There is still more discussion to be had on this development and its future. Is this a development that they can give a back door? Currently, that idea intrudes on landowners and on Bentwood. Other options move into the ETJ or the county. Those routes have been rejected by the county citizens. She says she doesn't think the planning committee can tackle that alone, and they will bring their ideas back for presentation.

Gary Louie speaks up and asks if there is a map that simultaneously shows the City limits and the data of the projected growth. Carroll responds and says the tan shading is the Boerne City limits, but much of this particular map they are looking at show a lot of the BISD limits. He says he can create a zoomed-out version of this map. Pratt says they did an overlay of the current map with the planning units for the work they did. Louie responds and says that BISD does not drive the rules when it comes to road improvements; that is driven by the City of Boerne and the communities outside the city limits. Carroll says the green area is today's ETJ and what the City has control over.

Louie circles back to the northwest quadrant asking if it falls under the City's influence. Carroll says that is correct. He also notes there is no influence over in the Tapatio area.

Pratt begins closing the update by saying that a lot of this probably looks familiar, and a lot of what they have come up with includes low-hanging fruit projects that could be done quickly and improve the traffic flow a lot.

Durden wraps up and says the subcommittee is doing a lot of work. He asks if the population numbers will be presented with their recommendations. How technical will they go?

Pratt explains that the technical expertise is coming from John Ramirez. She says they can be specific in certain areas, but not in places where the

City is highly involved already. She does not think there will be much specificity on the back-door idea for Esperanza, but she says the subcommittee will have other recommendations for things in that area, and afterward default to engineering studies for other areas.

Manning commends the subcommittee for their works and says things are beginning to get real now. They will have recommendations soon. He notes that being a committee that represents the voice of the community is what sets them apart from previous efforts.

Eldredge asks about the GIS public input data and wonders if the information the subcommittee is finding will overlay with the consensus of the community. Pratt says they can come back together and figure that out. Eldredge says he asks because he thinks the GIS has some data to make it a very holistic representation.

Evans comments on the GIS information, saying there was a very productive meeting held about it. They are hoping to repackage the data and make it available to all. He says they are still feeling the void of a GIS expert though.

Durden says that refining that data into something that is coherent is the next step. After that, they can consider hiring a GIS person.

Pratt makes one more note and asks what the traffic impact of Hwy 46 is. She suggests it could be workable to have signage directing traffic to IH-10 from 3351 and Herff Road and off Main Street to SOBO. What impacts would those things have?

Item 5: NARROW ROADS/WIDE NODES PRESENTATION BY JEFF WHITEACRE AND AMY AVERY

Jeff Whiteacre kicks off the presentation. Jeff and Amy Avery are representatives from Kimley Horn. He says there are always questions about this concept. How much ROW should there be?

Whiteacre introduces himself saying that he has been with Kimley Horn for 16 years, and they often work with the City of Boerne, but most recently on a TIA ordinance update. They are also working with Kendall County on policy recommendations. They are transportation planners and traffic engineers. Whiteacre has had a lot of opportunities to work with different communities regarding traffic matters, and he notes that each community is unique and has different needs.

Whiteacre begins by saying that when it comes to transportation planning, most people think of a map, and he notes the importance of preserving ROW when developing. He explains that nodes are not often covered, and sometimes there needs to be segments that are broken up. Some towns he uses as examples are Fort Worth, Lubbock, Colleyville, and Southlake—all in Texas.

Whiteacre notes that when reserving ROW, it is important to design safe and efficient nodes, to build each segment with function and character, and to understand the city policies and strategic direction.

Major Thoroughfare Plans, he says, help cities to understand where they want to be in the future. He notes that much of traffic frustration comes from nodes. Most plans do not cover intersections, and there is not a lot of detail. Many times, more ROW is needed at intersections, but it can become very expensive if it is not planned for. Which then begs the question: why are intersections not included more in master planning efforts? Every project is different.

Tim Bannwolf asks Whiteacre if there is a diagram showing nodes.

Whiteacre discusses roundabouts and says they are a positive solution, but a signal can also be a positive solution as well. It just depends on the intersection. If safety is an issue, roundabouts take away accident probability.

He notes that efficiency at intersections can be enhanced with planning and design. He then elaborates on an example where a roundabout was an efficient fix for an intersection in Fort Worth. He explains that building

intersections is often about trade-off, which means sacrificing one thing for another. Looking at the goals and priorities are imperative for this because when sacrificing one thing for another, you want the trade off to really add more to the situation than take away from it.

He then discusses the concept of retrofitting which is the repurposing of constrained roads to address multimodal and efficiency concerns. What are the established goals and priorities when considering trade-off? In a constrained environment, consider retrofitting. It is important to know the goals so the design will match. Constrained ROW requiring trade-offs is tough and requires clear priorities.

Bitsy asks about unique pedestrian crossing. She says that Boerne has some intersections that could potentially benefit from with a solution like a roundabout, but how would that work with pedestrian traffic? Whiteacre notes that sometimes the negative side to roundabouts is the lack of options for pedestrians. The only options left are to make pedestrians very visible or you must stop traffic.

Avery chimes in on this saying that those movements can occur with very little overlap and using different halves of roundabouts. That's why it is important to look at what the movements are. She also notes that another important aspect of planning for roundabouts is the planning for utility lines.

Avery notes that planning for the City of Boerne is a long game. There will not be instant gratification. There could be a plan to set aside ROW, but it may not get used until 15 years later. How can things be planned out that will be conducive to the long-term goals of the community? Chipping away at these types of questions can be easier as things develop like mixing in turn lanes, roundabouts, and other solutions.

Retrofits and shaping what is to come are both equally important. It is important to identify missing connections. Avery uses Esperanza as a great example. There is a line on the Major Thoroughfare on the back, but it could take some time for family ranches to turn over. In the interim, work can be done on the nodes.

Eldredge mentions one thing they played around with on the GIS map was series of roundabouts that would take a driver up to Blanco or Adler and cut across the north side of Main Street. Whiteacre says that type of work could maybe be done in phases. Avery notes the goal of a Major Thoroughfare is the long-term plans. What are the solutions for the existing intersections? Looking at solutions based on the priorities helps to guide toward which control is most appropriate. Whiteacre says most of the time the holdup is funding. There is higher level detail on large cities.

Evans notes that one of the things he thinks about is how a 2-lane road can carry a lot of traffic, but it comes down to intersections, signage, and turns. There is a lot of analysis and data, but there was difficulty in selling the idea to the public because the idea of trade-off does not sound good. He asks how best to present this information?

Whiteacre and Avery both agree that listening to the concerns of others and trying to find some way that the proposed solution will also be useful to that person's specific concerns can be helpful. Education is key and it can sometimes be a process. Whiteacre also notes the support of a police chief can be useful when it comes down to safety concerns.

John Kight notes that putting bicycle lanes and medians would be helpful. Potentially making Blanco Road a 2-lane with a median lane would help traffic continue to flow. He says maybe a 3-lane road would work now, but maybe a 5-lane would be better in the future, and they can try to plan for that by protecting any ROW.

Durden asks Whiteacre and Avery if they would have any issues with the committee posting this presentation on their website. They respond saying there should be no issue.

Item 6: CONSIDERING OF COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

Durden explains his recommended wording regarding an attendance policy is in the back of the agenda. He suggests appointing an alternative, and if there is no desire to be represented, the committee will remove the role. Voting will take place with a modified consensus if committee members are

unable to attend and place their vote in decision making, and there must be 75% of voting members to pass.

Louie says he thinks this is a soft proposal. He explains that he feels if a seat is vacant, he noticed a lot of the responsibility falls back on Durden and Manning to reach out to the members but that it does not really solve the quorum issue.

Durden explains his concern that an appointee will not report back to their entity.

Louie says that regardless, if a committee member does not show up, he thinks the seat should be vacated, therefore changing the count, and making it feasible to move forward.

Bannwolf likes the concepts in Durden's suggestion and wants people to stay engaged, but he makes his own suggestion to change the wording to read:

“Appointing entities whose representatives have not attended most of the meetings since the Committee restarted will be contacted by the Co-Chairs and asked to make new appointments. Until such appointments are made, such entity representatives shall not be considered for purposes of determining consensus or modified consensus among committee members when making decisions.

Likewise, should the representative of an appointing entity fail to attend three consecutive committee meetings, the Co-Chairs shall contact the appointing entity and ask that it replace such representative in accordance with the terms of the immediately preceding paragraph.”

Louie says he hears a quorum issue, not a representative issue. If they come under 5%, they will not be able to act.

Bannwolf motions to change the language.

Evans suggests reaching out to a member who has missed 2 meetings. Bannwolf agrees, and Manning says he is happy to make that call.

Del Eulberg asks if they should put something in the language about being approved for leave? He explains that if someone goes on leave but has a reason for not being there, is there a way to approve that on a case-by-case basis?

Evans says they would not be kicking anyone off, but if they are not available for several meetings, the quorum number goes down, and business continues.

Durden asks if there are any objections to the modifications. With no objections, the motion is adopted by consensus.

Item 7: REPORT ON MEETING AND DISCUSSION WITH AAMPO

Durden says there was discussion on having a meeting with AAMPO and there will be action on that.

Eldredge says the district is toying with the idea of crossing the Cibolo. It is encouraging to look at all the options. He says he will make sure to bring the hydrology and water quality documents to the next meeting to ensure those things are accounted for.

Item 8: PUBLIC COMMENT

Tom Adlestein weighs in, saying he thought this meeting's presentations were great. He wonders about the details on suggestions. He suggests using money from the City to get experts to help. He also suggests using the presenters as experts who review the committee's suggestions and getting their insight and expertise.

Pratt chimes in and says she learned a lot from this meeting's presentations as well. She says she would like the projects subcommittee to look at the quadrants they gently touched on and look at possible solutions for intersections again.

Durden notes that the committee is not quite at a point where they need consultants yet, but once they get to the list of recommendations, they may start talking about projects and what those really look like.

Eldredge notes a common theme of the committee has been looking toward innovative solutions and not creating the same traffic-inducing “solutions”. He says the defining word has been “mobility”. They are not just trying to create the context of growth, but they are after intelligent growth. Anything the committee can do to influence developers to provide multiple modes of mobility will be helpful.

Item 9: ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 4:03 p.m.