

**MINUTES
TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE
MARCH 14, 2017**

A regular meeting of the Town of Boone Transportation Committee was called to order at 12:05 p.m. Tuesday, March 14, 2017. The meeting was held at the Boone Council Chambers and was conducted by Chairperson Craig Scheffler.

Committee members present were Council Member Lynne Mason, Council Member Jeannine Underdown-Collins, App State Parking & Traffic Director Barry Sauls, App State Design & Construction Engineer Allison Kemp-Sullivan, Watauga County Planning & Inspection Director Joe Furman, High Country Council of Governments/RPO Transportation David Graham, NCDOT Project Team Lead Dean Ledbetter and Boone Area Cyclist Board / Alternative Transportation Committee Member Kathy Henson.

Staff members present were Public Works Director Rick Miller, Public Works Deputy Director Eric Gustaveson, Facilities Maintenance Superintendent Todd Moody and Police Chief Dana Crawford.

Guest: Pam Cook of the NCDOT Transportation Planning Branch

Craig Scheffler welcomed all in attendance and opened the meeting.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES: January 10, 2017

Minutes were reviewed by attending members with no additional comments. Committee Member Joe Furman made a motion, seconded by Committee Member Barry Sauls to approve the January 10, 2017 meeting minutes as written.

VOTE: Aye – All
 Nay – None

PUBLIC COMMENT: NONE

NEW BUSINESS: COMPREHENSIVE TRANSPORTATION PLAN (CTP) UPDATE

Committee Member Dean Ledbetter shared that the Watauga County CTP project connecting Poplar Grove Road to Bodenheimer Drive has been updated, with a recommendation that the preferred route be the alignment that travels up Poplar Grove from Hwy 105 crossing over the Gragg property to connect to Bodenheimer Drive. He stated that updating the CTP to reflect this will assure the residents on Home Spun Hills Drive that they will not be impacted by this project.

- The project will continue to be designed as a two-lane road.
- It was suggested that the addendum to the CTP reference the Town of Boone Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan.

Pam Cook explained that the jurisdiction(s) impacted by the project will be asked to adopt any changes made, the RPO will then endorse the change, and the NCDOT Board of Transportation will then adopt the revised plan.

Upon much discussion, the Committee agreed to recommend Council's approval to request the initiation of the changes in the *2013 Watauga County Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP)* and to include *Town of Boone Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan* adopted on April 24, 2014. The motion was made by Council Member Jeannine Underdown-Collins, seconded by Committee Member Dean Ledbetter.

VOTE: Aye – All
 Nay – None

Upon Council’s approval, this request will be sent to the High Country Rural Planning Organization (RPO) for processing. At which time it is endorsed by Watauga County, the adopted Middle Fork Greenway Plan can be also requested for inclusion in the CTP.

Mr. Ledbetter mentioned including planning efforts to connect Brookshire Park with Bamboo Road to eventually reach Hospitality House and the Greenway Trail at the Wastewater Treatment Plant. It was said that this would be a County Project since it is outside the Town limits.

Council Member Lynne Mason requested the possibility of an information session about the CTP process to update newly elected officials and include townships such as Seven Devils, Beech Mountain, etc.

NEW BUSINESS: RIVER STREET PLAN

Committee Member Joe Furman requested an update on the current plans for the River Street Project and stressed his opinion for the need of keeping it a 4-lane street and increasing the speed limit to 35mph placing pedestrians overhead or underneath to make it safe.

Mr. Ledbetter stated that it has been discussed to reduce River Street to a 2-line divided facility with roundabouts replacing the existing signals which would provide the same capacity as the existing 4-lane road and be safer for pedestrians.

OLD BUSINESS: EASTBROOK & WESTBROOK UPDATE

Staff Member Eric Gustaveson updated the Committee stating that Council has directed Staff to come back with engineering costs as part of the budget for the 2017/2018 year. Previous estimates are being updated to be included in next year’s budget. Council also directed Staff to investigate traffic calming options that can be utilized Town-wide.

OLD BUSINESS: NEWMARKET BLVD UPDATE

Mr. Gustaveson shared with the Committee stating that Council has directed Staff to lower the speed limit from 35mph to 25mph on a trial basis.

INFORMAL DISCUSSION:

- Mrs. Mason stated that she will bring the new Council Members up to speed on the history of the New Market Complete Street Concept.
- “Walk Boone” map is in the final draft stage.
- “Watch for Me NC” application is close to being submitted. New partners consist of Appalachian Regional Health Care, Watauga Medical Center, and Campus Recreation.
- “Walk Friendly Community” is due in a couple of months and is on the Alternative Transportation Sub-Committee agenda to complete.
- Mr. Ledbetter stated that Junaluska Road is down on the priority list for improvements and new traffic counts will be collected in the Fall of this year.

On a motion by Committee Member Dean Ledbetter, seconded by Committee Member Allison Kemp-Sullivan, the meeting adjourned at 1:15 p.m.

Marsha Story, Program Coordinator