



New Bern Housing Authority and the City of New Bern

CHOICE NEIGHBORHOODS PLANNING GRANT
Trent Court/Craven Terrace/Greater Five Points Neighborhood

Transportation Working Group

Tuesday, March 24 at 3:00 p.m. at Development Services Conference Room

Meeting Minutes

Attendees: Maurizia Chapman – lead, Kimberly Maxey, Alana Gentry, Belinda Humphrey, David Herndon, Jamara Wallace, Linda Godette, Melissa Wallace, Rosemary Stark
Susan Namowicz, Vana Prewitt

Guests: Brad Sceviour – City of New Bern Planning
Don Baumgardner – Craven County CARTS

Handouts: CARTS Brochure
March 3, 2015 Meeting Minutes

Welcome and introductions: Each member introduced themselves. It was agreed that Kim Maxey would take minutes of this meeting.

Review of last meeting minutes: The group was provided meeting minutes from the initial kickoff meeting held March 3, 2015. Collectively all verified they accurately reflected the discussion.

Preliminary list of critical needs: Based on needs assessment and community input, the following topics were discussed as the biggest transportation/infrastructure issues:

- i. 63% of respondents identified improving public transportation:
 - Mr. Don Baumgardner with Craven County attended the meeting on behalf of CARTS.
 - Ms. Chapman relayed that with the creation of the NBAMPO in April 2013, the CARTS program has been looked at differently. CARTS previously served as a rural system. Now CARTS qualifies for both Rural and Urban Transit Funds.
 - CARTS has hired consultants to work with them in developing the Transit Development Plan (TDP). Ms. Chapman has facilitated the connection of the TDP consultants and the CNI consultants who should collectively review efforts and forge a partnership moving forward.
 - Mr. Baumgardner advised hiring the consultants to review the TDP is a program requirement for the new process.
 - Ms. Alana Gentry discussed findings on a recent CNI Transportation group drive-around of the Duffyfield/Five-Points area, noting that bus stops are limited, and none provide shelters. She continued relaying the residents are aware of the bus stops through word of mouth, not because they are properly marked.

- Lt. Linda Godette added that having residents with the group during the ride-along was the only way the rest of the group knew that some of the CARTS stops existed.
 - Ms. Belinda Humphrey suggested a laminated schedule be available at the bus stops providing route paths and bus times.
 - Mr. Jamara Wallace also suggested having schedules posted on buses.
 - Ms. Chapman suggested having the CARTS website address posted on bus stops as well as having brochures available to the public.
 - Mr. Baumgardner provided a brief background on CARTS and the growth process they have already gone through in trying to meet the resident's needs, including implementing the urban loop within New Bern. He relayed that now that the area is included in the New Bern Area MPO, it has opened new avenues for funding and services. In upscaling the services provided, this will require a fee change for riders.
 - Ms. Chapman agreed, noting that because of the new funding, now CARTS will report directly to the Federal Government and not the North Carolina Department of Transportation.
 - Mr. Baumgardner relayed that they understand after hour coverage is the biggest concern they hear from residents. They cannot always meet the time frames preferred from residents, therefore continued taxi service will be important to accommodate residents schedules. He noted a tax assessment will be necessary to consider for the growth the citizens want. Improving the base level of service will grow ridership which will in turn increase the options available for service.
 - Mr. Wallace noted that picking up the after-hours residents needs is what he and his company would like to target, along with direct transport of elderly citizens and children.
 - Mr. David Herndon questioned the time frame for this change. Ms. Chapman advised the funding change will take place July 1, 2015. The match required on this date means that for every \$1.00 provided in grant funds, CARTS must match it by \$1.00, where before the it was an 80-20 split. The system change date has yet to be determined. She also noted that the Federal Government will look for increase participation by local jurisdictions.
 - Lt. Godette questioned Jamara on his timeline. He advised his non-profit status is established but they need funds to launch the program as well as purchase vehicles and equipment. He also noted he would be willing to have CARTS own his vehicles and provide a contracted service.
 - Ms. Stark questioned Mr. Baumgardner about CARTS capacity. Mr. Baumgardner feels there is room for growth but preferred to defer that question to Mr. Gene Hodges, who was not able to attend today's meeting. Ms. Stark noted she has 20 churches within her group that she could help boost ridership with. The MPO provided a few brochures for her to take.
- ii. Limited transportation options is a barrier to parent involvement in school, youth participate in out-of-school time programs and for those with disabilities.
- It was noted that persons with disabilities can directly call CARTS to make arrangement for transport.
- iii. Better street lighting identified as one of top-rated neighborhood improvement (42%).

- Ms. Chapman suggested we incorporate this item into the next agenda item; what was learned from the drive-around tour. The group agreed.

Review what we learned from our tour: Photographs taken the night of the tour were shown and discussed. Issues that were prevalent included:

- Public Safety
- Narrow Streets
- Lack of lighting
- Lack of sidewalks
- Heavy pedestrian traffic
- Awkward road layouts
- Mr. Wallace advised Alderman White has been discussing a phase II pertaining to sidewalks. Mr. Brad Sceviour replied that discussion pertains to a different sidewalk plan, and provided a map of short and long term sidewalks projects throughout New Bern, not specifically within the Duffyfield area.
- A list of projects provided by City Planner Kevin Robinson is attached to these minutes.
- Discussion questioned widening the roads in the Duffyfield area. Lt. Godette advised that will be very hard to accomplish without taking away property from the residents.
- Ms. Mickey Miller advised that when doing improvements, it's based on a master plan. To this point, the City has not had a good plan to form any basis for improvements. This is what CNI is hoping to change, by creating a good plan and encouraging residents to have patience to allow for the growth.
- Ms. Chapman relayed the MPO is working on the first multi-modal plan, which will also be included and incorporated in the planning process.
- Lt. Godette agreed with patience in progress, but questioned if in the mean time we could do some resurfacing, add curbing, address existing street issues and provide some sort of beautification in the area. Ms. Chapman acknowledged the concerns but feels these exact issues make drivers slow down, and as noted from the drive-around, there is heavy pedestrian traffic and many children playing.
- Mr. Herndon acknowledged that bike considerations are good, but in these neighborhoods, needed necessities are within walking distance.
- Ms. Chapman noted if CARTS had bike racks on their buses, we could extend the trip length by getting riders closer to their destinations. The combination of transportation systems becomes important in getting riders of all types to their destination; this is bike/pedestrian infrastructure.
- Ms. Susan Namowicz asked the group to think outside the box; the narrow roads that are topics of concern could be turned into walkways. The awkward convergence of roads could become parking, turning this area into a bike/ped area with beautification, walkable neighborhood and centralized parking. Mr. Sceviour relayed that closing streets is typically done in a market area, not a residential area. Maintenance of these facilities becomes an issue in these situations, especially in an already existing neglected area. He noted on a personal level he supports closing streets in the right setting for bike traffic, but does not support it in this area.
- Ms. Chapman suggested a roundabout for the awkward street convergence.

- Mr. Wallace voiced concern about how the residents would feel about streets being closed in their neighborhood. Ms. Chapman advised there is a process that would have to be followed which includes getting public input. Mr. Wallace agreed that public opinion would be needed to do anything. Ms. Chapman pointed out that this CNI group is exactly that; an opportunity for the residents to get involved and this group does have representation from the public. Mr. Wallace feels we need to give all residents an opportunity to voice their wants. The group agreed, noting that perhaps a presentation from a resident would be well received. Ms. Miller also pointed out that the data must be metric based, and suggested we collect traffic safety data for these areas.

Review planned improvements in neighborhood: Mr. Sceviour provided an update on projects in the area. As previously noted, the list is attached to the minutes.

Start developing transportation vision, goals, and strategies: Ms. Vana Prewitt noted this was her first time attending the transportation group meetings, and questioned what the scope of accomplishments are, as collectively there has been a wide range of topics discussed. Ms. Miller noted that will be up to the group to decide. It was agreed that all ideas should be initially included, then the group would sift through, determining what was plausible and what wasn't. Ms. Chapman proposed to dedicate the next meeting to the Transportation Vision, Goals and Strategies.

Next Steps: Ms. Chapman reviewed next steps noting the following items be provided at the next meeting:

- Accident Data: Lt. Godette will provide
- CARTS ridership: Mr. Baumgardner will provide
- Demographic information: Ms. Miller will provide

Ms. Prewitt noted that based on the kickoff meeting, it seemed that survey distribution wasn't representative of the residents. Ms. Miller relayed that the survey has been re-opened for residents and expects additional results based on driven neighborhood residents. She also suggested the group consider if we would like to form a focus group.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, April 7
3:00 p.m.
City of New Bern Development Services, 303 First Street

**CNI Transportation Working Group
List of City Planned/Ongoing Infrastructure Improvements**

- Planned new sidewalks along west side of 1st St./Country Club Rd. from Pembroke entrance Broad St.
- Planned new sidewalks along George and Cypress to West St connecting the blocks with senior center
- Recently completed sidewalks along Washington St from Hazel to JT Barbour
- Recently completed sidewalk repairs on Spencer, Pollock and other sections

- All intersections from downtown westward to have ADA curb ramp replacements in coming months/years
- Proposed ADA curb ramps at crosswalks: Rhem St./Country Club, Queen/1st Street, Broad/1st Street
- Bike lanes and road diet of 1st Street
- Resurfacing, Bike lanes and restriping (possible 3 lanes) on Trent from 1st to Simmons
- Resurfacing and bike lanes on Pollock from 1st to Queen
- Greenway from Eden to Fleet St expected completion August 2015
- Greenway required for Gaston Blvd tax credit project to connect 3rd Ave/Broad St intersection to Stanley White Rec Center

**Submitted by Brad Sceviour, Planner, City of New Bern Development Services
for March 24, 2015 meeting**