



The COMET Intermodal Committee Meeting minutes are prepared and presented in summary form, audio recordings of the meetings are on file at The COMET and are part of the approved minutes. If you would like to hear the recording from the meeting, please contact Paige Jernigan @ cometadmin@thecometsc.gov.

Per SC Code of Laws, Title 30, Chapter 4, Section 30-4-80 - All public bodies shall notify persons or organizations, local news media, or such other news media as may request notification of the times, dates, places, and agenda of all public meetings, whether scheduled, rescheduled, or called, and the efforts made to comply with this requirement must be noted in the minutes of the meetings. The COMET complied with the notification of this meeting on July 5, 2019 at 3:30 p.m.

**Central Midlands Regional Transit Authority Intermodal Committee
Wednesday, July 10, 2019 -2:00 P.M.
3613 Lucius Road, Columbia, SC 29201 - Conference Room A**

Members Present:

Derrick Huggins, Chair
Jacqueline Boulware*(joined call at 2:05)
BJ Unthank

Guests Present:

Doug Frate, South Carolina Dept of Transportation
John Fellows, City of Columbia
Charles Hamilton, Davis & Floyd
Aaron Marshall, Davis & Floyd
Reginald Simmons, CMCOG
Kenneth Whitted, Sr. Architect Director, Brownstone

Absent Committee Members:

Joyce Dickerson
Lil Mood

**Indicates participation by phone.*

COMET Staff Present

John Andoh, Executive Director/CEO
Paige Jernigan, Interim Administrative & Customer Service Specialist

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Huggins called the meeting to order at 2:02 p.m.



DETERMINATION OF QUORUM

A quorum was not present at the opening of the meeting, so it was determined that the meeting will continue with informational/non-voting items.

Ms. Boulware joined the call at 2:05 p.m. to result in a quorum.

2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Motion:

None

Approve:

Absent:

3. MINUTES

Motion:

None

Approve:

Absent:

Motion passed.

4. OLD BUSINESS (John Andoh)

Mr. Andoh introduced the Brownstone Group to review an Intermodal Facility on the site of the Amtrak station. The Amtrak station in Columbia is a steel structure, built in 1991. Amtrak moved the station to the current Pulaski Street location when the City of Columbia removed the rails and the Seaboard Air Line Railway trestle along Lincoln Street. The former Seaboard Air Line and Amtrak station, built of red brick in 1903, still stands at Gervais Street. It was abandoned and then restored and made into a restaurant, the Blue Marlin.

Greyhound and Southeastern Stages are located at 710 Buckner Rd, Columbia, SC 29203 and Megabus is located at Lucius Road @ Marlboro Street in Columbia. The nearest Blue Bike is at Lincoln Street @ Gervais Street. Transportation options are scattered throughout Columbia.

Bus/Rail Intermodal facilities in the Southeast exist in North Charleston, SC, Durham, NC and Raleigh, NC are examples. Charlotte Gateway Station is under construction. Bus only



intermodal facilities exist in Sumter, SC, Greenville, SC, Charlotte, NC, Augusta, GA and Spartanburg, SC.

The COMET system is going to be studied and changes could occur and as a result, a hub and spoke transit system in Downtown may no longer not be needed. A large majority of the riders riding The COMET do not end in Downtown Columbia, they travel through, which means a centralized bus transfer facility is not needed, but a network of crosstown routes and/or satellite transit centers.

In September of 2016, the Central Midlands Council of Governments (CMCOG) initiated a study to examine the opportunities that a Regional Intermodal Transportation Center (ITC) located in or around downtown Columbia would bring to the Central Midlands area. The study identified 22 potential sites for a new ITC in the City of Columbia. These 22 locations were examined by the Study Steering Committee and using a pre-defined set of site evaluation criteria, the sites were analyzed, and the highest-ranking site was identified. An environmental analysis was performed for the top four ranking potential sites. No "fatal flaws" from an environmental perspective were found at any of the sites.

Mr. Andoh reviewed a map that was requested from the Committee at the last meeting showing how far a passenger can travel from Columbia. He then introduced Brownstone and Davis & Floyd to present the proposed Columbia Station and added that they were involved in the North Charleston.

Mr. Whitted, Mr. Hamilton and Mr. Marshall introduced themselves. Mr. Whitted began by reviewing the proposal.

Lease to The COMET and construct a small intermodal transportation center to bring together the following modes:

- Amtrak Silver
- Greyhound
- MegaBus
- Southeastern States
- The COMET
- Taxi
- Lyft and Uber
- Blue Bike bikeshare station

Property Amenities: Two Story Building

- Community Room
- Vista Guild Office Space



- The COMET Customer Service Office
- Amtrak Office break room and baggage room
- Greyhound/Southeastern Stages Office break room and baggage room
- Police Substation Office
- Security Office
- Cafe Space
- Restroom
- Single Bus Operator Restroom
- The COMET Breakroom with small kitchenette
- Shared waiting room for all modes
- Vending Machine
- Elevator and Stairs
- Also Including:
- Parking for 50 or less people
- ADA Compliant Railroad Platform
- Mailbox
- Passenger Drop off Area
- Taxi and Rideshare Staging Area
- Intercity and The COMET Bus Bays in a bus loop fashion to hold up to 10 buses
- Public Art
- Bike racks
- Sidewalk Infrastructure along College Street and Pulaski Street

Proposed Operating Hours: 24 hours with 24-hour security

Mr. Whitted reviewed the renderings, the Master Plans and explained each page in detail. He added that there is potential future development piece, office rentals, room rentals, etc. for additional income.

Ms. Boulware left the call at 3:00 p.m.

Mr. Whitted and Mr. Huggins opened the floor up for discussion.

CD change occurred

Mr. Fellows inquired about what where we are in the process. Mr. Andoh stated the conceptual stage. He added that the zoning be problematic. Introducing coffee shops, businesses etc. needs to be visible from the street. He mentioned that the building looks to be on the Credit Union property which makes the parking lot appear far from the building. He also mentioned that the Credit Union property has had an offer to purchase but they would not sell.



Discussion ensued regarding the apartment complex and the possibility of using their parking facility. Mr. Fellows mentioned the Denver airport and how it is aesthetically pleasing even though the distance is far, plants, landscaping etc. He also mentioned that the entire transit facility is white, and people identify white with transit.

Mr. Whitted mentioned that there are several issues for that location, parking at the ball park being one. Discussion occurred regarding the exterior design and how it will blend in with the Columbia area. Mr. Fellows added that the front of the building should be shops and retail and the operations portions should be out of sight. He added this will be more inviting and drive more traffic.

Mr. Andoh reminded that this will not be a replacement for Laurel and Sumter. One remedy is to reduce the number of buses. He added that traffic is always a concern, but good circulation could remedy this issue. Homelessness and the intercity bus crowd is also a concern. Mr. Huggins suggested we address once we get the right people to help us address these certain issues.

5. NEW BUSINESS

A. Presentation from SCDOT Regarding Public Transit and Rail

Mr. Frate introduced himself and presented a packet for the Committee to review. He explained the State Mass Transit Funds breakdown. The State Mass Transit Fund of \$6.0M is broken out Rural 46% - \$2,739,196, Urban 44% - \$2,660,804, Admin/Other 10% - \$600,000. The COMET does receive funding from the State Mass Transit Fund.

Mr. Andoh asked if only \$6.0M is appropriated to all public transit. Mr. Frate explained the SMTF may fluctuate due to state gas taxes but only budget \$6.0M. Mr. Andoh then asked about the Transit Trends and what are the specific trends that go into that formula. Mr. Frate stated ridership and vehicle miles traveled.

Mr. Andoh questioned how we equitably split the federal and state funds for the rural and urbanized areas. He added, if we increase ridership on both rural and urbanized areas, proportionately our SMT funding could increase as well? Mr. Frate said it could, but the pot is (limited) fixed funding, so if an agency increases ridership, or other variables you must take into all other transit centers across the nation.

Mr. Frate explained the FY 2020 Public Transit Funding Plan: Federally \$57.949M / \$6M state. The Federal Fiscal Year is October 1 - September 30 and the State Fiscal Year is July 1 - June 30. Federal funds are allocated annually via Federal Register and the funds within one FY are



distributed during the following state FY: FFY 2019 - (October 1, 2018 - September 30, 2019)
SFY 2020 - (July 1, 2019 - June 30, 2020).

SCDOT Multimodal Planning

- Plan/ Statewide Transit and Statewide Rail Plan
- Corridor Management Plans-I-85, I-26, Carolina Crossroads, enhanced commuter opportunities, Mobility Management/High-Capacity Transit Options.
- Southeast Rail Coalition/Southeast Rail Plan
- Atlanta to Charlotte Passenger Rail Corridor Investment Plan.
- Mr. Frate gave a brief overview of Lowcountry Go: a regional partnership of the Berkeley- Charleston-Dorchester Council of Governments, SCDOT, The federal Highway Administration and local employers and stakeholders.

Mr. Huggins asked when Carolina Crossroads is to begin constructions. Mr. Frate explained the targeted construction is 2020/2021-time frame but of course this date may change.

Mr.Frate summarized the High Capacity Transit slide:

Charlotte LYNX Blue Line- Mr. Frate noted the considerable cost increase from the original line opening in 2007 with 9.6miles, project cost of \$462.7M to the extension opening in 2018, 9.3 miles, project cost of \$1.2B.

Lowcountry Rapid Transit-Proposed 23-mile bus rapid transit system under development between Charleston and Summerville. This will include 18 stations, with four (4) of those being park and ride and two (2) transit hubs with anticipated project completion date in 2025. Estimated cost of project \$360M. Mr. Frate reviewed the Project Development Timeline.

Southeast Rail Coalition Southeast Rail Plane-Mr. Frate reviewed the SE Rail Coalition and the Regional approach to planning construction and operation of the rail network. He then touched on the Atlanta to Charlotte Passenger Rail, the investment plan and Tier 1 Environmental Impact Statement.

Mr. Frate discussed the planning process, the long term and short-term time frame. Mr. Simmons reiterated the importance of a strategic plan to ensure everyone is all on the same page. He gave an example of Richland County and Columbia being on the same page. Mr. Huggins asked Mr. Fellows who our Richland County contact would be. Mr. Fellows suggested **Ashley Page**.



Mr. Huggins offered a standing invitation for Mr. Frate to attend the Intermodal Committee meetings in the future and thanked him for presenting.

6. LEGAL/CONTRACTUAL/PERSONNEL (may require executive session)

None.

7. ADJOURN

Mr. Huggins adjourned the meeting without motion.

Meeting adjourned at 3:44 p.m.

CENTRAL MIDLANDS REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY

Adopted this 7/10/19, 2019, Agenda Item _____

Prepared by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Paige Jennigan', is written over a horizontal line.

Paige Jennigan, Interim Administrative & Customer Service Specialist

Approved by:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Andy Smith', is written over a horizontal line.

Andy Smith, Secretary

