

# Transportation Task Force

Chair, Ken Hagan  
Hillsborough County Commissioner, Chair

Recap of Meeting on April 7, 2008 at 1:30 p.m.  
County Center

The following Transportation Task Force members were present:

## Members

Ken Hagan, Chair  
Robert Abberger\*  
Ray Chiaramonte\*\*  
Frank M. Chillura\*  
Randy Coen  
Jill Collins\*  
John G. Evon, III\*  
John Fernandes\*  
Edward F. Giunta, II

Scott Jones\*  
Rick Lott\*  
Dave Mechanik\*\*  
Gwen Miller  
Louis Miller  
Dan Molloy\*  
Ron Pierce\*  
Steve Polzin  
Jerome Ryans

Thomas Scott\*\*  
Mark Sharpe  
Richard Wainio\*  
Phil Waller  
\*Not in attendance  
\*\*Late arrival

## Welcome

Commissioner Ken Hagan called the meeting to order at 1:38 p.m. He suggested holding off on approving the recap. He mentioned that the first meeting of the Affordable Housing Advisory Board was held that morning.

## New Starts/Small Starts Program – Federal Funding Presentation

Jeffrey Boothe, Chair, made a presentation to the task force.

### *Question and Answer session followed*

- Dave Mechanik requested a description of a typical sequence of events for a referendum. How do we start? – Mr. Boothe has never been to a region that felt it was the right time to do it. \$750K to \$1M is needed to begin. Commitment from the Task Force. Examples: 1) The state of Virginia failed in 2004 for lack of specificity. 2) Seattle failed because too much emphasis was placed on roads and not on transit. The Task Force should do enough work to define corridors (generally where to make investments) and determine time frame of benefits.
- Dr. Steve Polzin asked how do you go to public with a plan where no Federal funding commitment has been made? – There is no one answer. Part of it is polling. Is there an obvious corridor that everyone agrees has to be done? Phoenix failed because they over-promised. How much for transit, rail, and roads? What are people willing to pay?
- Dave Mechanik asked how do you go to public without Federal commitment? – While there is a promise for dollars and not getting dollars until final design. Charlotte took five corridors through alternate analysis.
- Commissioner Ken Hagan said that Mr. Boothe mentioned an obvious corridor – to start with that. Have the corridors been regionally or locally based? – Atlanta and Norwich decided to do themselves.

- Commissioner Ken Hagan mentioned there may be one or multiple referenda. TBARTA and local communities want to pass a referendum. Are they privately initiated or through an elected board? – Take leadership where you can find it. In Charlotte, it was Bank of America. The trend has been increasing over time that business community that takes leadership role. Great videos came out of Utah Transit.
- Louis Miller mentioned he was involved in Utah initiative. Item was placed on ballot and tax was not implemented until Federal dollars were received. Started small then grew larger. Sales tax only if referendum passed. Used Federal grant. – Denver built with dollars up front. Charlotte used 75% shared costs.
- Commissioner Mark Sharpe expressed that the presentation was very educational. Hillsborough County does not want to be described as Kansas City. Charlotte put rail where rail was supported by the facts. – Mayor is very focused on what could move first and what technology would move corridor. Street car commitments were made before November and committee members wanting to cash in now. Plenty of experts wanted to more than one corridor at a time.
- Commissioner Mark Sharpe commented that the referendum as a consensus issue. Agencies are not talking to one another and information is not being shared as early as possible. – Tampa has too many plans. The public will vote no.
- Ray Chiaramonte asked if a good argument for Hillsborough County is that we are one of 30 largest metropolitan areas? – Writing proper economic development strategies. Change of focus to require change and increase in densities. Establish zones and benefit assessment districts. Make commitment to do that. Process needs to reward densities around transit stations. Place importance on cost effectiveness. Consider climate and green house gases.
- Councilman Thomas Scott asked if in Mr. Boothe's 20 years he had seen any community move forward without a referendum? – Yes. Salt Lake, Denver, Norwich, Orlando Tri-Rail. It is a tougher path. Surface Transportation Program (STP) and highway dollars go to transit. Build a more scaled back project. First project may be established to provide public trust; when public sees results, then referendum is more likely.
- Councilman Thomas Scott suggested going back to the Committee of '99. – Growth will outstrip congested road network. Employers/workforce of the future look to transit. Quality of life.

### **Review and Approval of Recap**

Commissioner Hagan requested that Task Force members review meeting recap for March 10, 2007. Motion to approve by Commissioner Mark Sharpe, seconded by Councilman Thomas Scott, and passed unanimously.

### **HART Presentation**

David Armijo, Executive Director, made a presentation to the Task Force.

#### *Question and Answer session followed*

- Commissioner Mark Sharpe asked if HART has been coordinating with TBARTA? – Yes. In one committee that TBARTA set up, they are in the initial stages of data gathering. Their mission is in a much higher scale.
- Commissioner Mark Sharpe commented on the 2050 concept and how the Westshore Area is dangerous for pedestrians. – Complete route on Kennedy from downtown takes 45 minutes. HART is seeking better connections between St. Pete and Clearwater.

- Commissioner Ken Hagan asked about local plans and feeder routes. – Dealing with the present. Looking to region on getting funding. Light rail follows rider demand. Specifically along corridor where lines are now (Nebraska Avenue / Hillsborough Avenue). There is no revenue from rail to and from St. Petersburg.
- Commissioner Ken Hagan asked if HART has thought of a referendum in '08 or '10? – Joint boards looking at how property taxes were hit last year and this year. Roll back \$36M a year will allow the delivery of 10-year plan.
- Louis Miller mentioned that the Task Force's focus should remain on Hillsborough County's transportation.
- Randy Coen agreed.
- Commissioner Mark Sharpe asked who does the alternative analysis? – Whichever organization is taking on the initiative.
- Commissioner Mark Sharpe asked for data that supports corridor actions and how long the data gathering take? – One to two years.
- David Armijo mentioned that HART is interested in talking about rail. Transit initiatives are not all tied to sales tax initiatives.

### **Mobility Trends**

Steve Polzin, PhD., made a presentation to the Task Force.

#### *Question and Answer session followed*

- Commissioner Ken Hagan made an observation that some are opposed to affordable housing going outside of service area. – There is a market. In Lakeland, what is social value of having highly subsidized transit to commute? They are living in low density.
- Commissioner Mark Sharpe mentioned in order to be successful the Task Force needs to address issues brought forth. Hillsborough County spends \$21 per capita for transit while Denver spends \$241. – To a certain extent, folks that have best success are downtown Washington and state capitols.
- Commissioner Mark Sharpe mentioned that Hillsborough County is competing for higher technology such as creating cluster of high technology areas. Then we can speed up frequency. – In density and frequency issues, today's traveler values freedom and flexibility. Dispersed areas need density to justify frequency. PRT networks have some logic.
- Commissioner Mark Sharpe asked if Hillsborough County needs to establish rail, mobility, transit, and well established feeder systems. Maybe the number of cars per household will go down. Is that a possibility, over a period of time? – Yes. These scenarios have been studied. With a savings of \$3,500 a year per household. India prices transit system by scooter fuel costs.
- Ray Chiaramonte mentioned that other cities have CBDs of three square miles that connect to urban areas. Hillsborough County should calculate amount of people who use transit and connect those dots.
- Dr. Steve Polzin mentioned that University, Downtown, and Westshore areas are premium.
- Commissioner Mark Sharpe commented that we need to move forward. Other communities have moved forward. We need to focus on areas where there is a reason.

### **Discussion and Next Steps**

Lucia Garsys discussed that for the May 5<sup>th</sup> meeting the Task Force would hear presentations by Pat Bean on the Committee of '99 and TBARTA.

## **Public Comment**

Pierre Mathurin distributed a letter to Task Force members and spoke about current transportation systems.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:28 p.m.

## **Staff and Support**

Ned Baier, Planning & Growth Management  
Lucia Garsys, Strategic Management Initiatives  
Bob Gordon, Public Works  
Ken Griffin, Assistant County Administrator  
Sandra Pinol, Strategic Management Initiatives  
Leigh Ann Pyron, Public Works  
Rich Reidy, Aide to Commissioner Ken Hagan  
Bonnie Rubesha, Planning & Growth Mgt.

## **Interested Parties**

Vivian Bacca, U-Can  
Pierre Mathurin  
Don Schings, TBARTA - CAC  
Jim Drapp, HNTB  
Sia Kusha, HNTB  
John Martel, HNTB  
Mary Shavalier, HART  
David Armijo, HART  
Neil Cosentino, FASTA  
Lucie Ayer, HC MPO