

# **FAIRFIELD COUNTY TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT**

## **MINUTES OF REGULAR BOARD MEETING**

**December 15, 2022**

### **FAIRFIELD COUNTY ENGINEER'S OFFICE**

**3026 WEST FAIR AVENUE; LANCASTER, OHIO 43130**

**and**

**VIRTUAL**

Jeremiah Upp, TID Chair & Secretary/Treasurer, called the meeting to order just after 9:00 a.m. on December 15, 2022 at the Fairfield County Engineer's Office. The following persons were present: Jeremiah Upp (TID Board Chair & Secretary/Treasurer; Greg Butcher (TID Board Member); Rick Szabrak (TID Board Member); Curt Shonk (TID Board Member); Bill Lozier (TransCon Ohio/TID Consultant); Jeff Fix (Fairfield County Commissioner); Dave Levacy (Fairfield County Commissioner); Mitch Noland (Fairfield County Engineer's Office); Stephani Bosco (Lancaster Port Authority); Ron Thomas (Thomas Property); Paul Denny (Woolpert). Attending virtually was Eric McCrady (Fairfield County Engineer's Office).

#### **1. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:**

Rick Szabrak made a motion to approve the October 3, 2022 Meeting Minutes. Greg Butcher seconded the motion. Motion carried.

#### **2. PUBLIC COMMENT:**

There was none.

#### **3. REPORT FROM COMMITTEES:**

##### **a. Financial Report**

Jeremiah reviewed the financial report. There was a beginning balance of \$198,947.96. Checks were written to TransCon totaling \$6,000.00, to the Auditor of State for \$315.70, and to Kegler, Brown, Hill & Ritter for \$427.50. A contribution was received from the Fairfield County Engineer's Office in the amount of \$150,000.00. This left an ending balance of \$342,204.76.

Greg Butcher made a motion to approve the financial report. Rick Szabrak seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Jeremiah reminded all, that the money collected from the County Engineer Office must be used for roadway improvements.

b. State Audit

Jeremiah presented the findings from the State Auditor. There were no findings or accounting issues to report.

4. NEW BUSINESS:

a. Cancellation of Meetings

In the future, we will notify people through the distribution list.

b. Election of Officers

We will need to elect officers in January. Jeremiah asked the Board Members to be thinking of a Chairman, Vice Chairman, and Secretary/Treasurer.

5. OLD BUSINESS

a. Consultant Project Update Report

**Far East Freeway:** Structurepoint is under contract with GPD as the subconsultant. Bill spoke with Scott Seaman of GPD and he is satisfied that the project is scoped adequately. Bill also spoke with Tom Hibbard of Structurepoint and introduced him to Eric McCrady with the Fairfield County Engineer's Office. Bill asked Tom about the intersection on Taylor Road north of SR204 and the structure types. They are not that far in the planning yet. This is the first step in preliminary engineering.

**Refugee Road Corridor:** The Agreement with Woolpert has been executed. Woolpert has preliminary findings and will present them to Jeremiah after this meeting. If everything fits together, we will apply for ODOT's systemic safety funds for pathways. The restudy Woolpert is doing reviews the study previously done by TEC. Based on their current traffic count (pre-COVID vs after-COVID), there were no major changes. They looked at the growth rate and reran the models. They noticed the turn lanes are helping the congestion. The only disruption to progression on this road is at the intersections. The focus will be on the intersections. After everyone meets today, they will determine what route to take with the pathways. Jeremiah has asked Woolpert to look at different scenarios and do a "what if".

Jeff Fix stated that there are two left turns that are troublesome in this area. The first is at Circle Drive just south of Harmon where he has personally witnessed a couple almost collisions. The second is at Pickerington North High School traveling east. There is a

light where you are to turn; however, students have figured out that they can bypass this traffic and enter at the next driveway. This causes additional congestion on Refugee Road. Discussion took place on if a physical barrier could be installed. Greg believes that closing these intersections would be problematic with EMS/Fire.

Bill stated that a decision needs to be made regarding the Ricketts Development area on the southeast corner of Refugee Road. We need to decide if this is left alone or incorporated within the project. Bill's opinion is that the area should remain separate and built by the developer.

Jeremiah stated MORPC approved his office for \$750K for Refugee Road and will move forward with public comment. His office has also applied to OPWC for another \$600K on this project. It has been tough to compete with Franklin County on projects through MORPC. Bill drafted an e-mail to Congressman Balderson regarding this fact as Fairfield County was not originally funded. Everyone is fighting for MORPC to spread the money.

Jeremiah shared a letter written to ODOT requesting bike lanes on Milnor Road.

**US33/I70 Connector:** Bill reviewed a handout of key intersections (what he calls the 10-minute ring) located near Intel. MS Consultants constructed this map. Preliminary findings are showing 270,000 new trips per day in certain areas. Some of the local roads will increase by 17 times the rate they are now. This information will be shared with ODOT.

Bill attended the 20-minute ring meetings. Bill presented the Board with a "wish list" from local government agencies. Jim Gates of ODOT presented the list to the TRAC. Bill stated he is struggling to get the 10-minute ring ahead of the 20-minute ring. Bill stated that there is a lot of work for our group, as we fall into the 30 to 40-minute ring. MORPC came up with this travel time "ring" which ODOT prioritizes. Our goal is to stay as involved as we can with this connector project.

**East Side Industrial Connector:** Structurepoint has submitted a feasibility study. MORPC assisted the City with a street light study. Commercial traffic is using Lancaster as a cut-through as they come 37 across Coonpath. Coonpath does not align with the grant the City has, as it would help the west side not the east side. The goals for this project are to deviate trucks downtown, improve access to the east side, and improve access/travel time to/from the hospital. Curt's committee is to meet and finalize the feasibility study before moving to public involvement. March 8<sup>th</sup> is the deadline for submittal.

**US33 Corridor CAP Project:** Jeremiah made a presentation to the TRAC. They were to come up with draft scoring on December 7<sup>th</sup> but deferred it until January. Bill spoke with Tom Slack of District 6; he stated that the October presentation went well and confirmed that the draft TRAC list would be released in January. Jeremiah emphasized during his presentation that this is more of a regional project and the needs for

southeastern Ohio. Director Marchbanks of ODOT voiced his opinion on his experience driving to Lancaster on US33. ODOT's Chief Engineer approached Jeremiah as well and asked questions.

**Basil-Western Road Realignment:** Jeremiah said they are working diligently with DHL for a public/private partnership to handle the development and truck traffic. Rick has been working with them. There is some interest in other properties as well. We are working to get the entire area into an agreement so that when they develop, they will need to provide upfront costs per square foot that will be applied to roadway projects. There is also a TIFF that will generate money. Rick stated that the Port Authority will also be involved. What happens is the developer would not have to pay sales tax on materials they purchase but rather defer those taxes to the Port Authority and TID. We would need to do a capital lease; the Port Authority would own the land and lease it to the developer. In return, the developer would pay their taxes to the Port Authority with a big portion of that money being directed to the TID. The goal is for each of these developers to do this. The \$1.50/sq. ft. pilot fee would go directly to the TID for offsite improvements. The estimated cost of the project is \$10M. We just need to figure out how to finance this first, as not all these projects are starting at the same time. We will continue to look at ways to fund this up front so we can move forward.

6. OTHER BUSINESS:

There was none.

7. ADJOURNMENT:

Rick Szabrak made a motion to adjourn. Curt Shonk seconded. The meeting was adjourned.

Minutes approved by:

  
Jeremiah D. Upp  
Chairperson & Secretary/Treasurer