



## **Steering Committee Meeting Video Conference**

### **MINUTES**

**August 26, 2020**

**2:30PM – 3:30PM**

#### **I. Welcome – Mayor Woolsey**

Mayor Woolsey welcomed everyone.

#### **II. Previous Meeting Minutes – Mayor Woolsey**

Minutes from the April 2020 Steering Committee meeting were approved unanimously.

#### **III. Phase 1 Project Update – Devri Detoma**

In July, Charleston County received a participation agreement from the South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) to manage the federal funds. The terms and conditions of that agreement include a requirement to have a maintenance agreement in place prior to moving forward with right-of-way acquisition. The Town of James Island will take the lead on preparing the maintenance agreement. Once the maintenance agreement is complete, James Island Town Council and Charleston City Council will need to approve it. Then, Charleston County will submit it to SCDOT and wait for approval for right-of-way acquisition to proceed. Gaining these approvals will delay the schedule.

Non-standard items that would be covered in the maintenance agreement include decorative signal mast arms, green paint as part of the bicycle facilities, and any sidewalk greater than five feet in width. As part of developing and approving the maintenance agreement, the Town of James Island and City of Charleston will need to determine their capacity to maintain these items. While money will not have to be put aside upfront, there will need to be an understanding that the cost of regular, long-term maintenance will be the responsibility of the Town and/or City, not SCDOT.

#### **IV. TST Funding Update – Devri Detoma**

The Town of James Island and the Rethink Folly Road Steering Committee submitted an allocation request for Transportation Sales Tax (TST) funding to extend pedestrian improvements from the intersection of Folly Road/Grimball Road/Fort Johnson Road south to Publix. While funds were not approved for the entire project, they were approved for pedestrian improvements at the intersection itself. Charleston County is currently negotiating a design scope and fee with one of their on-call consultants. This project will be exclusive to pedestrian safety improvements at the intersection and will not address drainage issues; allocation funding cannot fund drainage projects.

## **V. Bus Stop Overview – Belen Vitello**

The Charleston Area Regional Transportation Authority (CARTA) currently offers fixed route transit service on Folly Road via its Route 31, as well as on-demand paratransit service. Route 31 has a 90-minute service frequency, with a 2019 ridership of over 20,000 people. Current and future shelter locations will be based on the Berkeley-Charleston-Dorchester Council of Governments (BCDCOG) Regional Transit Framework Plan. Route 31 runs 6:00am-9:00pm on weekdays, 8:00am-8:00pm on Saturdays, and 9:00am-7:30pm on Sundays.

Route 31 has 26 outbound stops and 27 inbound stops. Fares are \$2.00 for a fixed route one-way trip and \$3.50 for an express one-way trip. There is no charge to transfer, passengers under 18 are free, and seniors over 55 receive a discounted fare. The Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC) and College of Charleston have participation agreements with CARTA for their students to have access to transit.

BCDCOG will be working with municipalities on transit and bus stop design guidelines.

Guidelines will provide a framework for developing and maintaining bus stops, promote consistency for good design and provision of bus stop amenities, assist in making stops easy to identify and a better match to use, location, and potential to attract more riders. Various types and styles of bus stops were reviewed, along with estimated costs of each.

The City of Charleston Transit Ordinance was passed in 2019, requiring certain types of development to provide transit accommodations; it has made a tremendous difference. Since the passing of the ordinance, over 20 projects have contributed to improving transit. City of Charleston and Charleston County have been very supportive.

The Regional Transit Framework Plan identifies Folly Road as a possible corridor for Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Lite. BRT is a bus-based system designed to improve capacity and reliability. It includes dedicated bus lanes, gives priority to buses at intersections, and decreases boarding delays. Questions regarding BRT should be directed to the LCRT project manager, Sharon Hollis.

There was some discussion regarding the frequency of the Route 31 service. Steering Committee members would like to see a 60-minute frequency rather than a 90-minute frequency (i.e., bus frequency is 90 minutes; trip time is 52 minutes). If two buses could serve this route, then frequency could be improved. Need to have some focus on improving traffic congestion as well, through improving other modes.

*Motion to have the Steering Committee Chair draft a letter to CARTA in support of increased frequency for Route 31 by having two buses service the route. Motion carried.*

## **VI. Property and Business Owners Stakeholders Group – Toole Design Group**

The idea of establishing a property and business owners stakeholders group has been mentioned several times during previous Steering Committee meetings. During the development of the Rethink Folly Road Plan, there was a similar group of stakeholders that was engaged. If such a group was formally established, it would become a conduit between the Steering Committee and property and business owners along Folly Road. The group could meet several times a year, and it would be a good way to

establish engagement, share educational materials, and provide progress reports on the Plan. In keeping with the Operating Agreement's intent that Steering Committee membership be tied to an agency, group, or organization, rather than an individual, this group would also provide a nexus for Steering Committee representation.

Steering Committee members were supportive of the idea of a property and business owners group. There was a desire to ensure that there is equal representation in the group for business owners, rather than just property owners. There is a need for a better understanding of who would be part of this group, what they would do, and how it impacts those who own property and businesses along Folly Road. Toole Design and several Steering Committee members will collaborate to flesh out the idea a bit more and bring it back for further consideration at the October 2020 Steering Committee meeting.

## **VII. Jurisdictional Updates**

Brief updates regarding development along Folly Road were provided from various jurisdictions.

### **Town of James Island – Kristen Crane**

- New fire station at 1108 Folly Road is nearing completion.
- Trident free-standing emergency room at 943 Folly Road (i.e., formally Burger King) has almost completed site plan review; however, construction will not begin until 2021 due to the pandemic.
- Automated car wash proposal at the corner of Folly Road and Fort Johnson Road went before the Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) in July 2020, but it was denied.

### **City of Charleston – Christopher Morgan**

- Charleston City Plan, the City of Charleston's Comprehensive Plan, is underway, and the Steering Committee is invited to participate; James Island community meetings will be September 29, 2020 at 9:00am and 6:00pm, both virtual.
- 334/336 Folly Road – Former Exxon gas station will be torn down and a Refuel gas station will be built. It will be modeled after the Refuel gas station located on Daniel Island. It will have an outdoor dining area and prepared food. It should be a very attractive building, and it will need to go through the City's Design Review Board (DRB).
- 1061 Folly Road – Church of the Nativity Parish Hall is being upgraded and they have granted a 12-foot easement for a future multi-use path.
- 1144/1150 Folly Road – Former single-family residential structures that have been zoned to office residential. 1150 improvements are significant enough to require they build the multi-use path.
- 1285 Folly Road – Existing parking lot area will become a car wash. It has gone through the DRB.
- 1325 Folly Road – Another car wash adjacent to the new Publix shopping center. It is currently going through the DRB.

### **Charleston County – Dan Frasier**

- The County does not have any active developments along the corridor.

- Amending the Zoning and Land Development Regulations (ZLDR) ordinance over time. When Chapter 5 is updated, which includes the Folly Road Corridor Overlay, the 12-foot multi-use path requirement will be included for all developments requiring a site plan and above (i.e., would not include single family detached).

**City of Folly Beach – Aaron Pope**

- New Councilman Adam Barker will be the City’s new elected representative on the Steering Committee.
- No new projects along the corridor, but the City of Folly Beach is working to align its ordinances with the Town of James Island, City of Charleston, and Charleston County. The City will be proposing an ordinance amendment to require the 12-foot multi-use path along the frontage of properties in the City when developed or redeveloped. The City is asking for approval for Toole Design to draft a memo in support of this to help bolster the recommendation of the amendment.

*Motion to have Toole Design draft a memo supporting the City of Folly Beach’s ordinance amendment to include the 12-foot multi-use path requirement. Motion carried.*

**VI: Adjourn**

Meeting adjourned.