

Kendall County – Boerne – Fair Oaks
Transportation Committee Minutes

01 June 2021
2:02 – 4:02 p.m.

The Kendall County – Boerne – Fair Oaks Transportation Committee convened in the Boerne City Hall First Floor Staff Training Room.

In Attendance:

Don Durden, Bryce Boddie, Jeff Carroll, Ben Eldredge, Northern Hendricks, Gary Louie, John Kight, Rich Sena, Bitsy Pratt, Del Eulberg and Steve Sharma. There were several residents in attendance as well.

Not in Attendance:

Bob Manning, Jonah Evans, Rankin D’Spain, Henry Acosta, Tim Bannwolf, Stephen Zoeller, Mark Stahl, Marcus Garcia, Josh Limmer and Kim Blohm.

Visitors:

There were several members of the public in attendance.

Item 1: OPENING REMARKS

Don Durden begins the meeting. He explains that Bob Manning is out for knee surgery, but he says that he is doing well and recovering. He also thanks the City of Boerne for its helpful resources as the committee continues to meet.

Item 2: CONSIDER APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Durden asks the committee if there are any objections to the previous meeting’s minutes.

John Kight asks if there is a voting quorum present. Durden clarifies that the committee will not conduct a vote unless a consensus fails. In other words, if there is a reasonable majority present, the Chair will ask for a consensus to approve the question. If there is no objection, that decision

will be made. If there is an objection to the consensus, a quorum at a future time will be needed to decide the question.

Regarding the minutes for the May 18, 2021 meeting, there are no objections and the minutes are approved.

Item 3: PUBLIC COMMENT

There are no comments from the public attendees at this time.

Durden introduces Del Eulberg as the new representative for Precinct 3.

Item 4: REPORT FROM PROJECTS/GIS GROUP

Durden explains that some of the subcommittees met since the last meeting and a report of their work is contained in the last few pages of the agenda packet provided at the beginning of the meeting.

Bitsy Pratt takes the lead on presenting the information, saying that the subcommittee was tasked to put forward project ideas to the larger committee. The subcommittee reviewed the Interim Report that was created by Durden and Manning, but they also took a step back and came up with 14 suggestions. They also looked at the information provided by BISD and worked off of the demographic study that Rich Sena presented in the last meeting. Approaching the work, the subcommittee looked at working in sections based off that study. They compared the recommendations of the Interim Report with the Preliminary Projects Report and found the highest area of demand is the school district on the southeast end of Boerne. Some loose recommendations were formed including Corley Road, School Street, I-10 and Johns Road, and she explains that there are several areas begging for opportunities. They also found several neighborhoods that could interconnect to create better thru traffic for buses, ideas for connector roads, and suggestions for hike and bike paths. She notes that the data they pulled from can be found on the committee's website at www.kcbfotc.com. She recommends to the committee and its visitors attend a meeting that will be held on June 2, 2021 at 10 a.m. at the central offices of the BISD location. Patricia Gonzalez will host for more information. Pratt says their goal is to itemize the content in a way that will help making decisions easier. With the needs

in mind for BISD, their approach is to help solve some of those problems that are having a great impact on the mobility of the community.

Durden thanks Pratt and the subcommittee. He reiterates that the Interim Report was a request from the City and County and that it does not include everything, but they created it with the hope that there would be more ideas from the committee as a whole. He also mentions two other topics of future discussion, although he does not go into detail about them: long range transportation improvement plan and program of recommended policies.

Item 5: DISCUSSION OF INTERIM DELIVERABLES

Durden notes that he and one of the subcommittees have pulled together a report with a suggested timeline and a rough outline of the committee's plan thus far. He explains that the BISD demographic report would be a good building block. He suggests comparing the reports and ensuring there are no disconnects.

Ben Eldredge chimes in and notes that cars are becoming increasingly more technologic. He says the report should include some technological factors. He notes that electric bicycles are taking off as well as a mode of transportation for kids getting to school. He notes that the Old No. 9 trail in Boerne is more for recreation than it is for getting people from A to B. He suggests thinking about *both* of those things as they move forward in working to try and get more vehicles on the road.

Durden reminds the committee that part of their charge is to consider the impact of economic development. He looks to Steve Sharma and asks him to think about how to incorporate any contributing factors into the report by the end of July. Sharma agrees with enthusiasm.

Next, Durden suggests looking at the roadways system within Kendall County as a whole, seeing how it all the road systems currently work together and what would add to it as it is. He is hoping to have that figured out during the month of June.

Durden rhetorically asks the committee what it means to preserve the quality of life? He notes that it means something different to everyone. He asks the committee members to consider what people generally consider to

be a good quality of life. Presenting that he says could give their report more credibility.

Bryce Boddie chimes in and asks if the committee will break into more subcommittees. Durden replies jokingly that people can either volunteer for that or he will volunteer them.

Pratt says the short-term projects she thinks could be concluded on by July, but she explains that the long-term projects are something the subcommittee feels should be discussed among the larger group. The committee agrees.

Sena shares his agreement with Pratt's statement saying that identifying the fastest growing areas can be something they look at, but big-ticket-item decisions cannot be made with only 5-6 people.

A member of the public, Theodora Kaufmann, shares her frustration that the City and County have already been through this and yet developments continue to come in and run through private properties and residences. She notes the leeriness the residents of Kendall County feel regarding this new plan the committee is working to come up with due to events in the past.

Vialissa Gerhard, another member of the public, states that she herself bought property in 2010, and was unable to sell because there was already a plan for a developer to come and cut through the land. This instance, she says, was the first time she had heard of the plan to cut through her property. She explains that it is difficult for herself and others in the same position to make plans for their futures when situations like that occur.

Mr. Kaufmann chimes in to suggest turning away new developments and fixing the traffic issues first. He asks why the congestion issues have not been rectified before allowing developments to continue to come in and make plans.

Durden addresses Mr. Kaufman saying that there are things even he himself is frustrated with as a County Commissioner, that those things prohibit them from doing things like what he speaks of. Durden tables this discussion until the next meeting. He asks the committee members to consider what has been said and what ways they feel called to invest themselves in.

Sena chimes in to say that the goal of the committee is not to provide savings but to help the people of Kendall County. He notes that with the amount of students expected to come in this next year, there will invariably be a need for new roads. He asks how the committee can do that with minimum disruption, and he notes that is the toughest part about being a committee member.

Tom Adelman, another member of the public, agrees that school traffic is one of the problems locals are facing and chimes in to ask how the people of the County can help themselves.

Durden speaks for the committee and says the goal is to solve this problem: there are too many cars on too few roads.

Sena notes that as the community develops, bottle neck areas should become minimized as new schools open on the west side of I-10, keeping children and parents commuting to school on their side of the highway where they live. Being smart about where schools are being planted will help the problem.

John Ramirez with BISD chimes in to explain that it can be tough to find bus drivers, and that helping kids walk or bike to school will also help solve some of the transportation issues to get more cars off the roads; even 10% of the traffic can be removed with these simple improvements. Durden notes that this alone will not solve the problem, however.

Pratt notes that the goal is to understand where people are going when they decide to come here to visit the downtown area and such. The committee is hoping to gain as much data as possible to see if they can work with existing road structures. The projects committee is looking into those things.

Eldredge circles back to Durden's comment about too many cars on too few roads saying this is more of an engineering solution. He explains that he emailed the committee members about wide-nosed, narrow roads, saying that roundabouts can process up to twice the number of cars in the same amount of time. He basically explains that traffic can still move efficiently even with few roads as long as roads are designed smarter.

Durden also notes that not all County roads belong to the City or County. Some roads belong to TxDOT, and he suggests finding ways to cooperate with them.

Item 6: DISCUSSION ABOUT THE POTENTIAL FOR A NEW ROADWAYS CROSSING CIBOLO CREEK BETWEEN HERFF ROAD AND THE COUNTY LINE

Durden moves on and proceeds to show a map of Kendall County, pointing out that most of the population lives south of a line that is three miles north of and parallel to Hwy 46; he refers to Sena's demographics study and presentation from the previous meeting.

Durden begins this item by mentioning the first Major Thoroughfare Plan was created in 1974. He goes on to say that in 47 years, the City and County have never been able to come to a consensus about placing a road that would get people from Hwy 46 to I-10. Why is that? He says this is the logical thing to do, but as he thought through the reasons, all he could come up with is that it is a pristine and beautiful part of the county that contributes to the quality of life that is here. He says he thinks this is the thing that hinders a county-wide transportation plan. He takes a few minutes to name the cases for each side of the argument—those who are for and those who are against. He asks the room to discuss both sides of the argument.

Another public attendee says there are caves that run along that area. Durden responds and says he has seen sink holes on a map, but he does not think there is one continual cave running from one end to another.

Eldredge discusses interconnectivity suggesting finding ways to work out cost share solutions to make sure they can get the connections and transportation they need. Durden says that topic of discussion would fall under "Recommended Policies".

Gerhard says that the City and County have put residents' lives on hold for 20 years, explaining that the residents can no longer sell their properties because the land has been plotted on and no one wants to buy.

Mrs. Kaufmann asks why the developers were not required to put in roads.

Durden refocuses the conversation on the agenda point.

Another public commenter speaks up to say that he thinks 3351 is a road that helps to bring people from the north to the south while still not interfering with the lives of those who live on the south end. He remarks that Herff Road was meant to be this magic connector road to help facilitate better traffic from Hwy 46 to I-10. He does not agree that adding another connector road would be helpful because that was the goal for Herff Road.

Durden notes that his comment is germane to the question. He opens the floor for anyone who is in favor of the connector road between Hwy 46 and I-10.

Sena takes a detour referring to the southeastern part of Kendall County. He says the BISD demographer divided up the county into 86 planning units, contacted several homeowners, and from there projected the growth over the next 5-10 years. He says 30% of housing units within Kendall County are in the southeastern unit. He explains that when you add up the number of expected units of housing in the various pie slices of BISD, the numbers are just as big. His point is that there is growth everywhere, and the important thing for the committee to do is look at how best to improve mobility within the community.

Northern Hendricks chimes in and encourages everyone to look at the BISD Report. She notes that when looking at maps, there are a lot of areas that are going to be disturbed by upcoming developments anyway. She also notes that the committee is looking at as much data and reporting as they can as they are making decisions on what to suggest for improvements.

Durden notes that when George's Ranch came to Kendall County, there was talk about a connection down to Ammann Road, but it would not have fit the land plan. He explains that the County does not have control over land plans. The County cannot control everything, but they can assert leverage to make suggestions. He notes that is exactly what the committee is trying to do.

Another public attendee says that TxDOT will have the same attitude as a developer would, coming in to make rules and walk away with the profits of

an area that does not affect their own lives. She says that if someone *wants* to sell their property and is offered the right deal, great for them. But she does not think that the same instance using government money and force is right at the detriment of its citizens.

Mr. Kaufmann suggests a “if they won’t do it, we won’t approve it” attitude that the City and County could take on.

Jeff Carroll responds by saying that developers are looking at the City’s Major Thoroughfare Plan and choosing roads that are within proximity to Major Thoroughfares. He explains that State and Texas Supreme Court laws only allow them to ask for so much roadway. He says that because of the way the current plan is, that allows the City to require and request certain Rights-of-Way and road construction.

Eulberg clarifies with Carroll that the leverage they have is if there is already a Major Thoroughfare Plan in place, developers must follow it.

Carroll notes that Esperanza chipped in over 1 million dollars to help with the development of Herff Road.

Sena notes that as the committee and BISD looks into finding local and regional solutions it has become clear that there will be a need for more elementary schools over the next 12-13 years. He also says that keeping kids on the same side of the highway that they live will also help to cut down on traffic.

Durden stresses the need for the County to have a Major Thoroughfare Plan in place. He says as far as the Cibolo Connector deal goes, he’d like the committee to come up with a consensus on a suggestion for it, but there is not enough data to say at this point.

Pratt asks what kind of data would support that? Durden asks her to expound on what she thinks might be useful in coming to a conclusion.

Pratt says if the County had a transportation plan of some kind, they could have provided a roadway designation. She explains that she feels Herff Road is a violation of principle because it has become a bypass, but 3351 has been an elegant solution.

Durden suggests possibly talking to Karst experts if there is any place that a roadway could cross the Cibolo without jeopardizing its environment.

Mr. Kaufmann says during gateway study the State has said that 3351 is designated as a four-lane with a center turn-lane. Money has not been set aside yet to do that, but he explains that this was their way of appeasing them for that time. Durden says the Committee could encourage a three-lane road.

Sena suggests talking to the leadership of Fair Oaks. Perhaps they would support the widening of 3351.

Kaufmann asks if the committee has ever considered having a TxDOT person come to be a part of the committee decision making. Many in the meeting do not feel that would be a good idea.

Sharma chimes in to say that he does not think adding more lanes to 3351 would be helpful or useful considering the demand projected by 2035. He explains that it will not carry as much traffic as they think.

Durden suggests a limited access facility. Sharma replies that they are looking at a controlled access freeway for Austin because the traffic there hardly moves. He notes that the thought of 3351 carrying as much traffic as Hwy 46 and I-10 would not be likely to be a good solution. He says there is a resource called Street Light where data for things like this is captured based on zoning. He says it is very accurate and gives good information.

Pratt chimes in to say she thinks AAMPO offered the Street Light resource. She rhetorically asks who would use 3351 and who would use some other route that crosses Cibolo—what is the difference?

Hendricks says looking at the Past Studies, another important thing to look at is where the line for this road they are discussing came from? She says this same line is on the 1974 thoroughfare plan, and she wonders if this line has just continued to get copied and pasted as the City's Major Thoroughfare Plan has changed throughout the years.

Public commenter says the line used to be Herff. She also notes that she thinks the money should be spent on I-10 connections. She says driving down I-10 is a breeze; it's getting on that is the tough part. She then asks

the committee if they have looked at how Covid has affected commuters for work-related purposes.

Durden circles back to looking at the opposing points of the Cibolo connector. He challenges the committee to look at the pros and cons to see if there is a better way to view it.

Item 7: PUBLIC COMMENT

Mrs. Kaufman asks about where she can find a clear-lined map. Durden responds that those resources and others like it can be found on the committee's website under the "Past Studies" tab.

Gerhard asks if the committee has a deadline on these issues. Durden responds that the Mayor is committed to getting answers and is pushing. He wants the City to move on.

Public Commenter says the Kendall Gateway situation was triggering because the public had presented information that was based on research and not emotions. Durden notes that this is a topic where many are passionately engaged.

A public commenter asks about getting money from developers for funding of projects. He says the money that was supposed to connect 10 fell through. Carroll responds and says the funds from Esperanza fell through. The public commenter says he thinks that should be done because it would relieve a lot of the traffic from Herff to I-10.

Eldredge chimes in and says one thing he is looking at but leery of is just drawing lines on a map for the sake of getting things done. He reiterates being strategic and smart about where roads are placed and what projects are being taken into action.

Boddie says the whole reason the committee even got started was because failed Gateway and there is a general consensus from both public officials and residents alike that the transportation within the County needs improvement. He says they are looking at short-term projects as well as long-term projects and trying to be as intentional as possible.

Eldredge asks about getting models of efficient scenarios.

Carroll says AAMPO models do not include all City of Boerne roads, only the major roads.

[not sure what I was referring to here; maybe should follow next paragraph?]

Donna Taylor chimes in to say that Austin hired the Disney Imagineers team to help solve some of their transportation issues to think outside the box, although there were some areas that were beyond help. She suggests possibly looking into hiring them for help on solutions.

Sharma offers to do some models and scenarios for the committee.

Hendricks notes that the AAMPO data are not user friendly, and they are missing a lot of information. She thinks going through the data line by line to look at the details and comments will be the best way to sift through the data. She mentions that AAMPO has opened up some space in their budget for a sidewalk project on Bandera Road and also for a Cascade Caverns roundabout. She explains that they are also looking for public outreach opportunities like an open house or something of that nature to set up a table and talk with people about solutions.

Carroll says there is a technical scoring committee where engineers get together and look at traffic models and numbers, and they score the projects. He says there is also a public input section. He encourages people to comment.

Durden says that is an outgrowth of the recommendation that came out of the interim committee.

Public commenter gentleman says the committee is doing important work and hopes in the end that what happens is better than what TxDOT came up with. He explains that what causes him pause is the possibly of 3351 having stoplights along its route which would only cause more issues he thinks. He hopes the committee will be committed to maintaining the way of the life that so many love about living here. He says perhaps Kendall County should look into hiring Disney Imagineers to avoid the potential of looking "Goofy". The room erupts in laughter at the pun.

Jason Knoll who is attending with his wife and daughter says he and his family love Boerne and think it is beautiful. They understand the need for new roads, but they are unsure what to do because there is a new line road that will cut right beside their property.

Hendricks agrees that the Kendall Gateway was ridiculous, but that the committee formed because of issues like this. She asks the citizens to trust that the committee members and decision makers are working with Boerne's best interest in mind. She reiterates that the committee is working to do things differently and do them right. She says if there has been a line drawn on a map, it was not the committee who drew it.

Mr. Kaufmann insists the City approved the Gateway Study.

Carroll says the City never voted on the lines for the Kendall Gateway.

Mrs. Kaufmann expresses her concerns with the lines running through their homes and properties. She says the State and TxDOT came to their door.

Hendricks clarifies her point: that was TxDOT, not the committee.

Gerhard urges the committee not to give in to developers.

Ramirez chimes in to say that he is very new to Boerne, but he is eager to find solutions. Sena remarks that Ramirez is very smart and has a great, fresh mind for these discussions. He says he wants to be a part of the committee to come up with different ideas and solutions that are not divisive.

Denise Deavor says she has spent a lot of time picking others' brains, paying attorneys, and doing research on these issues and feels that her response to the Kendall Gateway issue was not emotional, but researched with a lot of intent. She then encourages other non-committee members to find their own answers to some of the questions brought up. She says to give true facts to present to the committee.

Item 8: ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 4:02 p.m.