

**EAST ALABAMA RURAL PLANNING ORGANIZATION  
MEETING MINUTES  
DISTRICT POLICY COMMITTEE & TECHNICAL ADVISORY  
COMMITTEE for the SOUTHERN DISTRICT  
November 5, 2009 - 10:00 a.m.  
ALDOT Division 4 Office – Alexander City**

Policy Committee Members in Attendance:

Mr. Jerry Thrower, City of Lanett  
Mr. DeJarvis Leonard, ALDOT Division 4

Technical Advisory Committee Members in Attendance:

Mr. Donnie Cash, City of Roanoke  
Mr. William D. McDaniel, ALDOT Division 4

Other Attendees:

Mr. Larry Woodruff, City of Goodwater  
Ms. Dawn Landholm, East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission  
Ms. Stacey Browning, East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission

Ms. Dawn Landholm, acting as Chairman, called the meeting to order at approximately 10:15 am.

Under “Old Business”, Ms. Landholm asked if there were any corrections to the minutes from the July 23, 2009 meeting. Mr. William McDaniel moved that the minutes be adopted as presented. Mr. DeJarvis Leonard seconded the motion, which was passed by a unanimous vote of the committee.

Ms. Landholm skipped the scheduled “Nomination and Election of New Chairman and Vice Chairman” based on the fact that not enough members were present at the meeting to nominate and elect.

Mr. DeJarvis Leonard gave an update on ALDOT’s projects on US and State routes in Coosa, Chambers, Randolph, and Tallapoosa Counties. A copy of ALDOT’s handout entitled “Status of County/City Projects” is attached to these minutes. Mr. Leonard mentioned that the letting date for the Welcome Center on I-85 is unknown because of the current money issues. The SR 22 Connector to US 431 is a new project, which will have an environmental review with the FHWA on the 18<sup>th</sup> of November. Mr. Leonard informed the attendees that the federal funding bill expired in September, and that ALDOT is unsure when a new bill will be passed. Furthermore, Congress rescinded \$170 million from ALDOT. ALDOT has a few stimulus projects that it is working on, including several resurfacing jobs. ALDOT has tried to put a stimulus job in every county.

Mr. William McDaniel, of ALDOT's 4<sup>th</sup> Division, gave an update on ALDOT's projects in Chambers, Coosa, Randolph, and Tallapoosa Counties. Mr. McDaniel discussed a Federal Aid bridge replacement project near Waverly and north of Lafayette. He also discussed an alternative to asphalt in which a cement-treated base is laid down. Some people still prefer asphalt. The I-85, Exit 70 interchange light rehab project has selected a contractor. In January, work will begin. Two poles will be replaced and all of the other lights will be rehabilitated. In Randolph County, the Roanoke Streetscape project was unable to get stimulus money. Mr. McDaniel and Mr. Leonard discussed a new restriction on funding for local and county projects. Historically, the FHWA has allowed certain types of federal aid jobs to be let locally. Now, all projects except for TE must be let by ALDOT. This has proved to be a burden on both ALDOT and communities applying for small grants. Administration and time costs are high. It is unknown when this requirement will end.

After it was determined that there was no "other new business," the meeting moved on to "Special Program."

The "special program" was a review of information obtained by Ms. Browning and Ms. Landholm at the National Rural Peer Learning Conference in Savannah, Georgia. A copy of the handout "Lessons from the National Rural Peer Learning Conference" is attached to these minutes. Ms. Browning discussed the Livable Communities Initiative, a federal program that emphasizes access to affordable housing and transportation. She then discussed regional livability, in which the issues of sustainability and livability were applied to a region rather than a community. Regions looked at upcoming projects that would influence growth and determined how they wanted that growth to happen. The Grand Vision project in Michigan had over 15,000 people participate in the process. Ms. Browning discussed transit planning and the ways in which Georgia's transit development plans emphasize finding where populations that need transit live. Ms. Browning then discussed corridor studies, specifically the study undertaken by Northwest Alabama on US 72. A land use, access management, and mobility study was conducted, and accessibility was found to be a key to the region. Economic development was seen as vitally important, and scenarios were developed. The towns and centers scenario proved to be the most popular with citizens. In the discussion of Transportation Authorization, Ms. Browning discussed the fuel tax, funding for transit, and smart growth. There was discussion on the role of transit in rural areas and how (or if) it is feasible. Ms. Browning briefly mentioned the Safe Routes to School program and what other states are doing with it. In closing, she mentioned that a session on freight had emphasized the importance of inviting the private sector to discussions on transportation and land use planning.

Ms. Landholm discussed the Alabama Human Services Coordinated Transportation Plan, and elaborated on how human services and transit funding can be combined. She mentioned that the plan emphasizes the better use of existing transit. She also discussed how the Plan was created and how transit dependent populations were identified. There was some discussion on the transit systems in the region. Ms. Landholm

discussed access management, and she mentioned that a model access management ordinance had been started and would soon be revisited. She discussed how access management became an issue to the EAC because the southern portion of the region along Highway 280 was worried about growth making the area look more like Highway 280 in Shelby County. The ordinance would provide communities with menu-like options from which they could pick and choose which ones would work for their specific needs. She also mentioned that ALDOT in Montgomery had been working on access management as well. Ms. Landholm discussed the extension of SAFETEA-LU and transportation authorization bills. She mentioned the conflicts that are occurring in Congress concerning the authorization.

Under “Open Discussion and Announcements,” Ms. Landholm mentioned that the next meeting would take place on January 28, 2010 at ALDOT Division 4’s office at 10 am. After this, the meeting was adjourned.