

**MINUTES  
SILVER LINE TASK FORCE  
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 5, 2020  
7:00 PM  
ZOOM REMOTE MEETING**

**PRESENT:** Chairman Bill Stevens; Members Lou Abernathy, David Blackley, Wyatt Dixon, Natasha Edwards, Chris Hough, Jim Johnson, Kerry Lamson, Lynn Lewis, Scott Phillips, and Jana Reeve; Planning Director Jay Camp; Town Engineer Susan Habina-Woolard; Transportation Planner Dana Stoogenke; Planning Director Jay Camp; Senior Administrative Specialist/Deputy Town Clerk Shana Robertson

**ABSENT:** Members Fred Baylor, Jennifer Saunders, and Walter Wright

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Bill Stevens called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM

**WELCOME**

Mr. Stevens reviewed discussions from the July 15, 2020 meeting of the Silver Line Task Force.

Mr. Stevens motioned to approve the minutes from the July 15, 2020 meeting as submitted. Scott Phillips seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

Transportation Planner Dana Stoogenke said that the goal of the task force was to recommend a Silver Line alignment to the Board of Commissioners. Ms. Stoogenke verified that members were going to review the three proposed alignments with Andy Mock at this meeting and on August 19<sup>th</sup> and September 2<sup>nd</sup>, members would work on a matrix so a decision on the final recommendation could be made.

Mr. Stevens said that after this meeting is where the work of the Silver Line Task Force would begin and to take the nights meeting as the last information gathering session.

**PRESENTATION BY CATS TEAM**

Andy Mock, Senior Project Manager for the LYNX Silver Line, Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS) said that he would be reviewing three conceptual Matthews alignments. He said the alignments shown would be more detailed than what will be shown at the six public meetings that are being scheduled. Those public meetings will start September 15, 2020. Mr. Mock said formal invitations would be sent and he reviewed the format for those virtual public meetings and community engagement sessions. Mr. Mock encouraged members of the Task Force to attend.

**MONROE ROAD AT SARDIS ROAD**

(Exhibit A attached and made part of these minutes)

Mr. Mock started the review at Sardis Road North and Monroe Road in Charlotte. The Silver line has two alignment possibilities, the CSX right of way or on Monroe Road. Mr. Mock said that the Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) would have the light rail going down the center median of Monroe Road and would cause a reconstruction of Monroe Road similar to the Blue Line on North Tryon Street. There would be a bridge over Sardis Road North and a station at the Galleria Shopping Center. Mr. Mock said that the alternative would be a shared corridor with CSX. Mr. Mock explained that conversations had occurred with CSX and CATS had concerns with this option because of dependencies and CSX requirements.

Kerry Lamson asked if there would be a station at the Galleria Shopping Center with the CSX model and how that would be accessed. Mr. Mock said there would be a proposed station at Sardis Road North and the shopping center. Mr. Mock said that the challenge was that there was not as much opportunity along the CSX route for redevelopment and it would be difficult to access. Mr. Lamson said that there was a long-range opportunity for redevelopment of the Family Dollar site. Mr. Mock said that the Monroe Road option served that opportunity better.

Chris Hough asked about the Monroe Road alignment with the bridge over Sardis and asked if that was similar to what was in place with the Blue Line at South Boulevard. Mr. Mock said that Blue Line extension was a better design standard to use as an example for walls and bridge structures.

Mr. Lamson asked about parking around the Galleria station as it was the first or last station close to the Matthews boundary. Mr. Mock said that a parking component would be evaluated for this location.

Mr. Phillips asked what the cost difference was for the Monroe Road alignment verses the CSX alternative and if there was a monetary advantage to working with CSX. Mr. Mock said that, in theory, to rebuild Monroe Road would be more expensive but it was not known what CSX would demand for their right of way and there was an added risk involved with the CSX alignment.

David Blackley said that for years the idea was for the light rail to follow Independence Boulevard and asked if that was a different project or if that plan was abandoned. Mr. Blackley added that the Independence route seemed to make more sense as it was more open and available with access to the hospital and Sportsplex. Mr. Mock said that the south-east corridor did go along Independence and in 2012 there was a study done where the CATS bus way was abandoned by the City of Charlotte for the added express lanes. Mr. Mock said that there was a greater goal expressed to serve downtown Matthews and the Monroe Road development potential. Town Engineer Susan Habina-Woolard said that one of the benefits of light rail was the opportunity for economic development and that the connections to the stations creating a more walkable community. Ms. Habina-Woolard explained that with the Independence Boulevard model, whether on one side or in the middle median, did not serve multiple network opportunities and people would still have to drive through the downtown area to Independence Boulevard.

Jana Reeve said she had the same thought as Mr. Blackley and she understood the want for economic development but Matthews was running out of land. Ms. Reeve said there was no room for more development that created more traffic and impact on local schools. She agreed with Mr. Lamson on the redevelopment of the Family Dollar site but did not want to see that site as a parking lot that would further increase traffic on Monroe Road with rail commuters traveling to and from during peak hours. Ms. Reeve said she felt that Independence would be a better option as there was more land to work with. Mr. Mock said that when Independence was planned for a corridor, it was planned to run in the center of the road that added lots of logistical problems but that option is no longer available with the NCDOT's plan for improvements along Independence Boulevard (Project U-2509A,B).

Mr. Stevens asked if the Monroe Road alignment and the CSX alignment were still being discussed. Mr. Mock said that it was not a closed discussion and options were still being weighed.

#### **LOCALLY PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE AND MODIFIED LOCALLY PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE**

(Exhibit B attached and made part of these minutes)

Mr. Mock said that the LPA exits Monroe Road from a median bridge to an aerial station near Industrial Drive. Mr. Mock explained that Industrial Drive was seen as an area for potential redevelopment. The rail would continue aerial over the CSX railway and return to grade, paralleling the Duke transmission lines and Sam Newell Road. The Silver Line would then cross over Crews Road at grade with gates and bells. Mr. Mock said that he understood that Crews Road was a first responder facility and conversations would need to occur to discuss coordination.

Mr. Mock continued that the line would then tunnel under Matthews Township Parkway and N Trade to resurface onto the Novant Hospital campus with a station located on the campus. Mr. Mock explained that after discussions, Novant was objecting to this alignment because of their plan to develop a new building on the site. The LPA continues along the northern side on Matthews-Mint Hill Road crossing over the road and under transmission lines. Mr. Mock said that crossing under the Duke transmission lines would not be possible and caused engineering and design concerns. Mr. Mock said the LPA then paralleled Independence Pointe Parkway, crossing over I-485 with a station stop on CPCC Lane or Campus Ridge Road.

Mr. Mock said that the LPA Alternative would be the same from the tunnel under Matthews Township and N Trade Street but would shift the return to grade closer to Andrew Caroline Drive with a proposed station location. Mr. Mock said that with all the conflicts with the Duke Transmission lines and the goal to have a station that would serve the Entertainment district area (ENT), the Silver Line would need to run on the south side of Matthews-Mint Hill Road, cross over Independence Pointe Parkway and curve around to run against the current ENT development plan that was under construction. Mr. Mock explained that this would be challenging with engineering, designs, and cost impacts but it would alleviate traffic patterns.

Lou Abernathy asked for clarification on the alternate LPA at Independence Pointe Parkway and Matthews-Mint Hill Road. Mr. Mock said that the desire was to cross Independence Pointe Parkway and run parallel to Matthews-Mint Hill Road at grade. The line would turn to merge back into the LPA at Independence Pointe Parkway. Mr. Mock added that this alternative would allow them to come in at a more standard geometric design and could better control that crossing.

Ms. Reeve asked if there were any road construction plans at the intersection of Sam Newell and Matthews Township Parkway. Ms. Habina-Woolard said the only plan was to restripe the road so there could be dual left turn lanes from Matthews Township Parkway onto N Trade Street and Sam Newell Road.

## **W MATTHEWS STREET**

(Exhibit B attached and made part of these minutes)

Mr. Mock reviewed the third alternative option that came from the Downtown Mobility Study. He said that the W Matthews route would continue from where the Silver Line crosses over CSX at Industrial Drive and would continue under Highway 51 to W Matthews Street on a side running alignment. This option would require the reconstruction of W Matthews Street and a change to the character of that street. The station location would be at the corner of E Matthews Street after crossing N Trade Street at grade. The route would continue down Matthews-Mint Hill Road. Matthews-Mint Hill would also require reconstruction to adequately support the placement of the light rail. Mr. Mock said that this alternative would serve the Downtown area best.

Wyatt Dixon said he understood that it was important to the Town that there be station proximity to serve the downtown area. Mr. Dixon asked if there was a summary of disruption expectations that the construction would cause. Mr. Mock said that while the road reconstruction would be disruptive, traffic would be maintained and they did not anticipate any full road closers. Mr. Mock said there could be greater impacts on the community during constructions of underpasses such as the proposed tunnel at Sam Newell, Matthews Township Parkway, and N Trade Street.

Natasha Edwards asked if CATS had identified any historic properties that would be impacted. Mr. Mock said there could be some impacts on some of the buildings and it may not be possible to preserve all of them. He said this would be looked at during the design process. He added that there was only one possible historic property (110 W Matthews Street) and CATS was evaluating cross sections to alleviate building impacts.

Mr. Lamson asked where the stations would be for the three alternatives. Mr. Mock said that Monroe Road would have stations at the Galleria Shopping Center and on Industrial Drive. The Downtown district could have a station at either W Matthews and N Trade, Andrew Caroline Drive, or on the Novant campus. There was a possibility for an additional station on Matthews-Mint Hill Road in front of the Novant campus. The other proposed stations would be in the ENT district and on or close to the CPCC campus. Mr. Lamson asked if there was an option to travel from the N Trade Street station and loop around to the back side of the ENT district. Mr. Mock said that was evaluated, but because of the downtown historic district and the many impacts to that area and residential properties, those routes were not desirable.

Ms. Reeve asked about parking at the rail stations. Mr. Mock said that many of their community neighborhoods, such as South End, did not have parking. Based on feedback from the Town, the station located in town would be a walk-up station. Parking on the Novant campus would require further discussions with the hospital. Other stations will require further conversations on what the Town saw appropriate for those stations.

## **BENEFITS AND RISKS EVALUATIONS**

(Exhibit C attached and made part of these minutes)

Mr. Mock discussed the three benefits and the three risk that CATS used to measure the route alignments for all 26 miles of the Silver Line project. The three benefits included reliable transit time, access to destination and local connectivity, and promote equitable transorbital development. The three risks were dependency on third parties, capital and operating cost, and reduce risks on environmental screening. Mr. Mock reviewed the benefits and risks for the three routes that were discussed.

Ms. Reeve asked if there was a study done that showed the ridership at the hospitals. Mr. Mock said that hospitals were tricky and had mixed reviews. The University area hospital saw the station as benefit to their employees. Mr. Mock said that Novant found no benefit in the rail system.

Mr. Phillips said that parking was tight in the downtown district and asked what the parking ratio was for these kinds of stations and how much land area may be needed. Mr. Mock said that if they identify a station to have parking, a ridership model would be performed. That model estimates how many people utilize that station and estimations would be done to calculate the parking need. Mr. Mock said he understood that the Town did not wish to have parking at the downtown station.

Jim Johnson asked if anyone had explored traveling up E Matthews Street and traveling behind the Williams Business Park then merging in with the ENT district. Mr. Mock said he did not know if that was looked at during previous studies but noted that CATS did not like to relocate residential properties unless it was absolutely necessary.

Mr. Stevens reviewed the proposed stations for each route that was reviewed and further discussions were had regarding parking. Mr. Stevens asked if the route with the station on the hospital's campus was off the table since it was so opposed by Novant. Mr. Mock said it was, but because it was the approved LPA, CATS was obligated to present it within the possibilities. Mr. Mock explained that the LPA was an administrative hold until the Metropolitan Transit Commission (MTC) acted to adopt a modified or new LPA.

Mr. Hough noted that the Galleria center was not in Matthews and asked if Charlotte had a similar task force that was reviewing the routes. Mr. Mock said that for Charlotte CATS, Charlotte Planners, and Matthews staff were participating in the development conversations and planning designs. Mr. Mock added that the Galleria Shopping Center provided a desirable station location due to the Walmart store location on that site.

Mr. Lamson said that he would find a broader picture helpful during this process that would show where commuter stations and activity centers could be located. Mr. Lamson said that it was also natural to take a look at the proximity to 74 with the highway improvements that are planned. He felt that commute times for the Silver Line and US74 should be evaluated.

Ms. Edwards said that if it came down to taking the light rail into Charlotte or driving, she could see many using the free parking that the Silver Line would provide. Ms. Edwards said that she paid \$185 per month for parking and that was something to consider.

Mr. Blackley said that the Town does not enforce the two-hour parking and he could see this downtown station allowing commuters to park in town all day. Mr. Blackley said that the Town had the opportunity to purchased land for parking but did not.

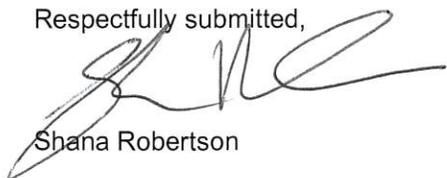
Ms. Stooгенke said she would gather date information for the Silver Line Public Meetings and Engagement Sessions and distribute those to the Task Force members.

**NEXT MEETING: August 19, 2020 at 7:00 pm via Zoom**

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned 8:54 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Shana Robertson

**APPROVED**  
**8/19/2020**

Senior Administrative Specialist/Deputy Town Clerk

---

APPROVED  
8/19/2020

# Exhibit A

## 8/5/20

- LEGEND**
- PLAN
  - TRACK CENTERLINE
  - BALLAST CURB
  - RETAINING WALL
  - CORRIDOR LIMITS
  - LPA CORRIDOR
  - BRIDGE
  - TUNNEL
  - STATION
  - AT-GRADE XING
  - AT-GRADE WITH TRAFFIC SIGNAL
  - SLP ROAD IMPROVEMENTS
  - NC DOT PROJECTS
  - CITY OF CLT PROJECTS
  - PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT
  - EXISTING PROPERTY LINES
  - RAILROAD ROW
  - UTILITY ROW
  - DUKE ENERGY TRANSMISSION
  - COUNTY LIMITS
  - CITY OF CLT PROPERTIES
  - COUNTY PROPERTIES
  - STATE PROPERTIES
  - TOWN/MUNICIP. PROPERTIES
  - PARKS
  - HISTORICAL BOUNDARIES
  - BROWNFIELD SITES
  - TRAILS/GREENWAYS
  - HOSPITALS
  - FIRE/EMS STATIONS
  - FEMA FLOODWAY BOUNDARY
  - FEMA FLOODPLAIN BOUNDARY



NO.	DATE	REVISION	BY	CHK	APP



WSP USA, Inc.  
1001 Morehead Square Drive,  
Suite 610  
Charlotte, NC 28203



STV Engineers, Inc.  
800 West Trade St., Suite 715  
Charlotte, NC 28202  
NC License Number: F-5991



CHARLOTTE AREA TRANSIT SYSTEM

PREPARED BY:		DATE:	06/05/20
DRAWN BY:		SHEET:	10 OF 11
CHECKED BY:		DRAWING:	
APPROVED BY:		CONTRACT NO.:	

**LYNX SILVER LINE LIGHT RAIL PROJECT**

CONCEPTUAL ALIGNMENT REFINEMENTS



		E10 / E11 (Matthews)				
		<b>Adopted LPA (Sam Newell through Novant property)</b>	<b>Refinement Options Compared to Adopted LPA</b> = similar to Adopted LPA + better than Adopted LPA - worse than Adopted LPA ? to be determined			
			<b>Modified LPA (Sam Newell along edge of Novant property)</b>	<b>Matthews Street (from Monroe Road or from CSX)</b>		
<b>Benefits</b>	Achieve competitive and reliable transit travel time	Somewhat curvy alignment restricts speed, but less interaction with traffic	=	Somewhat curvy alignment restricts speed, but less interaction with traffic	=	More interaction with traffic on Matthews Street, but not a major differentiator
	Improve access to destinations and local connectivity enhancements	Nearby access to downtown and to the hospital	=	Similar proximity to downtown as previous LPA	+	Closest access to downtown
	Promote equitable transit-oriented development	Limited TOD potential on hospital site	=	Limited TOD potential on hospital site	+	More TOD potential in Downtown
<b>Risks</b>	Minimize dependencies on other projects & third parties	Incompatible with Novant Health's campus development strategy	+	More compatible with Novant Health's campus development strategy	+	Requires close coordination with Town for integration in Town-owned streets
	Minimize capital and operating costs	High construction cost due to tunnel, long bridge over CSX, and transmission line relocation	=	High construction cost due to tunnel, long bridge over CSX, and transmission line relocation	+	Lower construction cost due to avoidance of tunnel
	Reduce risks associated with environmental screening	Buildings impacts along Trade Street; emergency vehicle access concerns at Crews Rd.	=	Buildings impacts along Trade Street; emergency vehicle access concerns at Crews Rd.	?	Substantial change to character of Matthews St.; potential impacts to businesses along Matthews Street