Pace, the Suburban Bus Division of the Regional Transportation Authority  
550 West Algonquin Road  
Arlington Heights, Illinois  
Board of Directors Committee on Planning Meeting Minutes  
October 08, 2019

The Board of Directors Committee on Planning of Pace, the Suburban Bus Division of the Regional Transportation Authority, met in public session on Tuesday, October 08, 2019 at 12:00 p.m. at Pace corporate headquarters, 550 West Algonquin Road, Arlington Heights, Illinois, pursuant to notice.

Chairman Christopher Canning called the meeting to order at 12:03 p.m.

Roll Call

Directors present: Christopher Canning, Linda Soto, Karen Tamley

Staff present:

- Rocky Donahue, Executive Director  
- Lorraine Snorden, Chief Planning Officer/Chief of Staff for OED  
- Melinda Metzger, General Manager/Chief Operations Officer  
- Robert Huffman, Service Planning and Scheduling Department Manager  
- Steve Andrews, Community Relations Representative  
- James Garner, Research and Analysis Department Manager  
- Erik Llewelyn, Service Planning and Scheduling, Section Manager  
- Renee Lawson, Operations Administrator  
- David Tomzik, Strategic and Capital Planning, Department Manager  
- Taqhi Mohammed, Supervisor Transit ITS Engineer  
- Charlotte Obodzinski, Rapid Transit Supervisor  
- Ryan Ruehle, Rapid Transit Corridor Planner

Approval of August 05, 2019 meeting minutes

Director Canning moved, and Director Soto seconded a motion of the Board of Directors Committee on Planning meeting minutes of August 05, 2019. The motion passed with a unanimous vote.
No Public Comment

Driving Innovation Update

Ryan Ruehle, Rapid Transit Corridor Planner provided an update on Driving Innovation, the updated Pace Strategic Plan. Most of the technical analysis are substantially complete with the project Steering Committee currently reviewing Tasks 4 and 5 on Intelligent Technology and Corridor Development. Grant funding for a Facilities Study was recently awarded from IDOT through their Statewide Planning and Research program. The release of funds is still pending, as the paperwork is still being processed. The project is expected to start sometime in mid to late 2020. The internal draft of scope is complete and will be circulated internally among other departments for review. The scope of work will focus on integrating disparate capital and facility plans under one umbrella plan with a focus on supporting Rapid Transit Program projects. The final plan document is also in progress, to be shared with board members after the November meeting. The consultant team will also present draft recommendations at the November Board meeting.

Network Revitalization

- Erik Llewellyn, Section Manager of Service Planning and Scheduling discussed updates on the network revitalization plan. Upon the completion of Pace’s updated strategic plan, Driving Innovation, the Network Revitalization project will use the goals and objectives established in the strategic plan to undertake a systemwide restructuring effort. Pace staff is currently in the process of developing a draft scope of work. It is staff’s intention to submit a final scope of work, and other related documents to Procurement by the end of this year. The project is expected to begin sometime in late summer/early fall of 2020 with an estimated completion date 2-3 years later.

Pulse Update

Charlotte Obodzinski discussed updates on the four (4) corridors which includes looking at land use along the corridors.

- Milwaukee: All Pulse Milwaukee Line stations in the Village of Niles are substantially complete. Due to permitting issues, construction on the remaining 7 stations in the City of Chicago is ongoing. Extensive work at the Central Northbound and Devon Southbound stations remains.

- Dempster: The Pulse Dempster Line entered into the architectural and design phase in September. The goal of this phase is to prepare the appropriate engineering plans to put this project out for construction in the first quarter of 2021. Pace is using a CMAQ grant to construct this project. Steve Andrews is working on setting up meetings with impacted communities and coordination is taking place with adjacent property owners.
- Halsted: We are currently in the environmental review phase of the project and will be doing extensive traffic analysis to further define the traffic impacts of the proposed bus lane which will require the conversion of a travel lane and removal of on street parking in some segments as well as advanced conceptual engineering of proposed improvements. The study area is Halsted Street from 79th Street to the Pace Harvey Transportation Center with small segments along 79th and 95th connecting to the respective Red Line Stations. The project is evaluating a proposed dedicated bus lane from 95th and Halsted to 154th as well as Pulse stations south of 95th Street. The CTA is proposing queue jumps and shelter installations north of 95th. This 15-month project began in September 2019. $500K of the $955K project is being funded by an Invest in Cook Grant from Cook County. CTA is covering $50K of the local match, with Pace covering the remainder of the budget.

- 95th Street: project definition work was completed in May, however due to budgetary constraints, the project will not move into environmental review until 4th quarter of 2020.

Transit Signal Priority Project Update

Taqhi Mohammed, Supervisor, ITS and Transportation Engineering provided an update on TSP deployment on Milwaukee Avenue. The Milwaukee Avenue testing and fine tuning is planned to be completed by end of first quarter of 2020. The contract for Professional Systems Integration has expired, and the board of directors and RTA approved a new contract as replacement. Currently Pace is working internally to provide Notice To Proceed (NTP) to new Professional Systems Integration Management and Design Engineering for TSP Program II Contract.

Also, the procurement process for TSP System Equipment and Installation along the additional nine TSP corridors is underway. Pace plans to approach the Board for approval in December 2019. The duration of contract is planned for two years and we hope to complete the majority of work within 18 months.

North Shore Phase II Update

Steve Andrews met with Skokie in July, Amazon is moving in on Howard street. They also met with Wilmette on October 03rd. There is a 16 unit development, and they discussed looking into maintaining service. The goal is to get key the stakeholders meeting completed in October. It is also important to make sure the municipalities are up to date before introducing Phase II

Proposed Route Eliminations/Reductions

Bob Huffman, Manager of Service Planning and Scheduling, presented the proposed weekday & Saturday discontinuations on the route network system map. Rocky Donahue shared this list of proposed route discontinuations with each Board member. These routes will be included in the upcoming budget hearings and are proposed for discontinuation sometime in 2020. While Routes 210 & 421 are shown on the map, they will not be part of the upcoming budget hearings
but instead will have a separate hearing early in 2020. Director Canning requested that performance data for Routes 210 & 421. This information will be forwarded to him.

New Studies

- Ryan Ruehle, Rapid Transit Corridor Planner, discussed the upcoming I-294 Tri-State Transit Market and Facilities Assessment study. Prompted by the Illinois Tollway’s plans to construct Flex Lanes along I-294 as part of their Central Tri State project, Pace is planning to roll out Express service in this corridor which would be similar to what Pace has completed with the I-90 Market Expansion Project. The study is funded through the RTA Community Planning Program. Under a joint-partnership arrangement, RTA will manage the contract/consultant team while Pace will manage the work and outcomes of the study, a relationship that has worked out well with past studies. The overall purpose is to understand current and future travel markets that new and restructured bus services could tap into. There is strong emphasis on tying together Pace’s Rapid Transit network on both Pulse and Express services at key points of convergence. Locations of new facilities would also be investigated and recommended with this study, of which capital funding has been earmarked by the State’s Rebuild Illinois program. The corridor extends from Schaumburg to Harvey, within a 5-mile radius of I-90 and I-294. Currently it is out to bid to RTA’s approved list of contractors-NTP expected around the 1st of the year and a 12-month study timeline anticipated. External stakeholder meetings will be held, as will one public meeting.

- David Tomzik, Department Manager, Strategic Capital Planning, discussed the Joliet Express Bus Study. The Vision 2020 proposed building a new bus transit facility in Downtown Joliet at the current Metra/Amtrak station. Pace is now planning to construct the final stage of the project with the bus terminal which is expected to serve local Pace services and intercity bus. The study will initially look at five (5) markets; Joliet to Rosemont/O’Hare Homewood/Tinley Park-I-80, Schaumburg I-90, Naperville-Oakbrook/I-88 and Midway Airport/Bedford Park in addition to other markets determined by the analysis. The study kicked off last month and is expected to be completed within 12 months. Nelson Nygaard is leading the consulting team assisting Pace with this study.

The tentative date for the next Pace Planning Committee meeting is Tuesday December 10th, 2019, if there is any new information; otherwise the committee will meet in January 2020 at Pace Headquarters, 550 West Algonquin Road, Arlington Heights, Illinois.

Renee Lawson
Secretary, Planning Committee