

MEETING MINUTES
OF THE DVRPC REGIONAL CITIZENS COMMITTEE
OCTOBER 13, 1998

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

The minutes of the RCC meeting of September 8, 1998 were approved as mailed.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:

Dennis Winters, RCC Chair, announced that Illy Sobel is recovering at the home of his son-in-law and would appreciate receiving calls from RCC members and friends. His phone number is 610-255-0429. The committee is looking forward to having Illy back at future meetings. Winters also announced that the DVRPC Board has moved the RCC report up on its agenda to follow action items, therefore providing more time to hear RCC business. He felt that this worked well.

Patrick Starr announced that he has requested copies for the RCC of SEPTA's "Highlights of Entries from the Design Competition".

TIP MODIFICATION 9751:

Sue McNamara, RCC Transportation Subcommittee Chair, stated that TIP Modification 9751 is a request from SEPTA to modify the TIP by providing additional FY 1999 funds for their Operating Assistance project (TIP #S032). This project currently has \$12.7 million in federal dollars programmed in FY99. SEPTA is proposing to add a total of \$21.675 million to the existing amount. The Transportation Subcommittee recommended approval of the modification.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

MOTION (by Sue McNamara, seconded by Ernest Cohen) to recommend that the DVRPC Board approve TIP Modification 9751.

MOTION CARRIED. (See Item A on voting record.)

TIP AMENDMENT 9815:

Ms. McNamara reported that TIP Amendment 9815 is a request from PATCO to amend the TIP by adding the ADA Compliance Plan (TIP #D005) to FY99 at a cost of \$500,000. This project, involving alterations to the PATCO High Speed Line to improve access for disabled customers, had previously been on the TIP but must be reprogrammed due to higher anticipated costs. The Transportation Subcommittee had had questions regarding this project that were not answered, and therefore did not have a recommendation for the RCC. In a call to DRPA's Linda Hayes, Candace Snyder discovered that the project involved improvements at non-

key stations (i.e., 9th, 10th, 12th and 13th Sts in Philadelphia) to add signage, lighting improvements, and a train announcement system.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

MOTION (by Sue McNamara, seconded by Pat Ingenthron) to recommend that the DVRPC Board approve TIP Amendment 9815.

MOTION CARRIED. (See Item B on voting record.)

RECOMMENDATION RE: CRITERIA:

The Transportation Subcommittee reviewed a draft of a letter to John Coscia that would transmit the Criteria for Motor Road Proposals and for Transit Projects, asking that these be conveyed to staff so that they will be prepared to answer the RCC's questions when making presentations. A copy of that letter was submitted to the RCC for action.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

MOTION (by Sue McNamara, seconded by Patrick Starr) to forward the letter with the Criteria to John Coscia for action.

MOTION CARRIED.

DISCUSSION WITH DVRPC BOARD CHAIR AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

Colin Hanna, DVRPC FY 1999 Board Chair, and John Coscia, DVRPC Executive Director, were present to address the citizens' concerns regarding procedural matters and to review goals for the year. John Coscia began by stating that Dennis Winters does a good job in representing the RCC, and the Board takes RCC recommendations very seriously. In July, a number of issues appeared on the Board agenda that did not follow normal procedures by going to the committees for review. Coscia asserted that this was highly unusual and due to a series of bad timing on the part of the projects and questionable decisions. He stated that DVRPC has moved forward by instituting several new procedures geared to making RCC members aware of the significance of their contribution; namely, moving the RCC report up on the Board agenda to follow action items; issuing a staff summary of RCC recommendations and Board response; and additional assistance for the Public Affairs Office. He stated that the RCC should be aware, however, that sometimes details are not always available on certain projects and that the schedule of meetings can create problems since issues can arise between the time the RCC meets and the date of the Board meeting.

Colin Hanna told the RCC that their work is important and necessary and he was disconcerted that this procedural issue came up at his first meeting as Board Chair. He stated his belief that the proper framework for examining projects is a three-dimensional one -- a model that deals holistically with transportation and land use as well as the environment. He pointed out that Chester County has gone further than many in comprehensive

planning. According to Hanna, “We should attempt to locate new development near or in existing centers. Open space preservation and this concept are linked. Transportation linkage between centers or developed areas must be serviced by adequate arteries.” Hanna stated that the three major planning goals, in his opinion, are open space preservation, urban revitalization and transportation corridors. Economic development, environmental sustainability, and mass transit opportunities function within these contexts. This is cohesive with DVRPC’s mission.

The question and answer period focused on such issues as TIP development, the CMAQ selection process, and the role of local governments in regional priorities. John Coscia pointed out that staff is working on a white paper with recommendations to the Board on the CMAQ project selection process. Coscia wants creative thinking from stakeholders, as well as technical input from the Regional Transportation Committee. Two separate pots of money have been set aside for CMAQ and transportation enhancements. Patrick Starr questioned whether a decision had been made regarding the RCC’s legislative recommendations. Barry Seymour, DVRPC’s Assistant Executive Director for Regional Planning, answered by stating that the Board Policy Committee recommended that the Board delay taking a position on these recommendations until staff could review the report from the 21st Century Commission. It is now time to move forward with this. Colin Hanna asked that staff re-examine the RCC’s recommendations as well as the 21st Century Commission report.

Additional discussion focused on RCC members and reaching the underserved; sustainability; the need to more closely examine transit alternatives; and the need for DVRPC to examine what approach other areas are taking to major issues. Pat Horrocks stated that DVRPC should be looking at the larger picture and charged the Board with contacting other MPO’s for input. Colin Hanna stated that this was an excellent suggestion and should be addressed at the Board Retreat.

PENNVEST APPLICATION:

Barry Seymour explained that PennVest is an independent agency of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania managed by a 13-member Board and chaired by the Governor. The agency provides funding for drinking water, wastewater treatment and stormwater management projects. The program provides long-term loans through a revolving loan funds to municipalities, authorities and some private entities at below market interest rates. Limited grant funds are also available. Seymour announced that PennVest has forwarded one application to DVRPC for review for consistency with the regional plan. The Borough of Upland in Delaware County has requested \$184,950 in funding to improve and extend the stormwater collection system at various locations throughout the borough. The areas served by this project are now developed and identified as future growth areas in the Year 2020 Plan. Therefore, it is consistent with the plan.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

MOTION (by Pat Horrocks, seconded by Ernest Cohen) to recommend that the DVRPC Board approve the PennVest application for the Borough of Upland.

MOTION CARRIED. (See Item C on voting record.)

YEAR 2030 TRANSPORTATION AND LAND USE PLAN:

Barry Seymour went on to explain that the Year 2020 Comprehensive Plan for the Delaware Valley was undertaken in response to the new planning mandates of ISTEA, which was enacted in 1991. The Year 2020 Plan provided an integrated transportation and land use planning approach, with a focus on developing concentrated centers and corridors of growth with supporting transportation infrastructure. Since adoption of the plan in 1995, DVRPC and its member governments have worked to implement its recommendations through detailed corridor studies, through greenway and land use planning projects, and through collaboration and coordination of county, local and state plans.

Adoption of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century, or TEA 21, presents a new imperative to revisit and revise the work of the Year 2020 Plan. TEA 21 provides additional funding for transportation improvements but also significantly revises the planning factors for metropolitan areas and presents new selection criteria for both highway and transit projects. In addition, the release of the PA Governor's 21st Century Commission report and the refinement of the NJ State Development and Redevelopment Plan present new policy directions for the region. And, with the approach of the year 2000, it is essential to maintain the required 20 year planning horizon and extend the target date of the regional plan. DVRPC is therefore undertaking the work needed to begin the Year 2030 Plan.

Seymour stated that the work will follow a three-year "3-D" planning process of discovery, debate and delivery. This plan is not beginning from scratch; the concept of "centers and corridors" will not be abandoned but will go forward with more public debate about how to implement the policy. Claudia Crane remarked that the RCC needs more specifics about what type of region we want for the future. This provides an opportunity for the RCC to promote some of its goals. Seymour replied that DVRPC understands this and agrees on a policy level but implementation continues to be a challenge. Patrick Starrf stated that DVRPC needs to set parameters outlining exactly where growth should and should not take place.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

MOTION (by Patrick Starr, seconded by Lorraine Brill) to recommend that the DVRPC Board amend the FY 1999 - FY 2001 Work Program to include the Year 2030 Transportation and Land Use Plan and authorize the Executive Director to seek additional funding as required.

MOTION CARRIED. (See Item D on voting record.)

TRAFFIC ANALYSIS ZONE SYSTEM REVISIONS REQUIRED BY THE YEAR 2000 CENSUS:

Dr. Thabet Zakaria, DVRPC Deputy Director for Transportation Planning, explained that the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has requested that DVRPC revise the system of traffic analysis zones (TAZ) used in the travel simulation models as part of the advanced planning for the Year 2000 Census. This project will update the regional TAZ system in cooperation with the county planning commissions and the Bureau of the Census, and prepare the required census/TAZ correspondence for the nine-county DVRPC region, as well as three zones in Berks County. The 2020 TAZ system will be prepared in FY 1999; in FY

2000, coordination with the counties and the Bureau of the Census will be completed. The correspondence will then be transmitted to the Bureau of the Census for use in planning for the Year 2000 census and in tabulating the census data.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

MOTION (by Jack Hopkirk, seconded by Ernest Cohen) to recommend that the DVRPC Board amend the FY 1999 Work Program to include Project 9-42-140: the Year 2000 Traffic Analysis Zone System Revisions, and authorize the Executive Director to submit any required documentation and enter into, negotiate and execute any necessary contracts modifications.

MOTION CARRIED. (See Item E on voting record.)

INITIATION OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS FOR THE DRAFT FY 1999 - 2002 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM:

Charles Dougherty, DVRPC Associate Director for Transportation Planning, stated that federal law and planning regulations require the development of a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for the metropolitan region to become eligible for federal transportation funds. The metropolitan planning organization (MPO) prepares this document in cooperation with the state and the transit operators, and must provide ample opportunity for input and comment by the public. The development of the FY 1999 - 2002 TIP for the Pennsylvania portion of the region was delayed by the late passage of TEA 21. In addition, PennDOT has been working with the MPOs in the state to re-engineer the planning and programming process, of which the TIP is the centerpiece. The PA Subcommittee of the RTC and DVRPC staff have been working on a draft TIP that meets the requirements of TEA 21 and is within the financial constraints of the guidance. The subcommittee expects to have the draft document available for public review by the beginning of November. The RTC has recommended that the Board authorize staff to initiate a 30-day public comment period with proper notification, to publish the draft TIP on the internet, to make copies available at certain public libraries, and to hold public meetings in PA.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

MOTION (by Lorraine Brill, seconded by John Boyle) to recommend that the DVRPC Board authorize staff to initiate a 30-day public comment period with proper notification, to publish the draft TIP on the internet, to make copies available at certain public libraries, and to hold public meetings in Pennsylvania, for the purpose of gathering public comments on the draft FY 1999 - 2002 Pennsylvania TIP.

MOTION CARRIED. (See Item F on voting record.)

UPDATE ON TEA 21:

OTHER BUSINESS:

Linda Ingenthron questioned whether a Nominating Committee would be selected to suggest candidates for the position of RCC Chairmaqn; the election will take place in December. Dennis Winters stated that this will be the first business on the November RCC agenda. Ms.Ingenthron stated that last year the RCC Chairman had determined the number of volunteers to serve on the Nominating Committee, and questioned if this would be the case this year. After some debate, it was deterjmined that the Rules Subcommittee will meet on November 5, 1998, immediately following the meeting of the Transportation Subcommittee to draft nominating procedures and to make recommendations to the RCC in November.

Other staff presentations and subcommittee reports were cancelled due to the late hour.