

**MEETING MINUTES
OF THE DVRPC REGIONAL CITIZENS COMMITTEE
APRIL 13, 1999**

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

The minutes of the RCC meeting of April 13, 1999 were approved as submitted. Jane Glenn made a request to be placed on the agenda for May to discuss Barbara Kaplan's letter about Venice Island and the Friends of the Manayunk Canal.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:

Dennis Winters reported that the RCC has been asked to postpone appointing a representative to the Central Jersey Transportation Forum for one month for housekeeping reasons.

TIP MODIFICATION 9826:

Sue McNamara, Transportation Subcommittee Chair, reported on the following projects which fall under **TIP Modification 9826:**

Route 95 Scotch Road, Mercer County:

There are \$12.0 M of IM (Interstate Maintenance) funds programmed for ERC in FY 1999. The construction phase will not be authorized this federal fiscal year. Thus, that portion of the funding, along with the Obligation Authority is available for other pressing needs. Therefore, the transfer of \$2.9 M from FY 99 to FY 00 is necessary. Fiscal constraint in FY 00 will be provided via unprogrammed resources, which will be accounted for at the end of the current STIP revisions package.

Route 130, Section 1J, Camden County:

There are \$5.25 M of NHM funds programmed for construction in FY 00. The latest cost estimate is \$7.25 M. The major reason for this increase is costs associated with the pump house. The construction authorization is currently scheduled for mid-April. Therefore, programming of \$7.25 M of NHS funds for CON in FY 99 is necessary. The \$2 M additional Obligation Authority will be provided from the Route 95 project. The \$2 M of additional NHS funds will be provided from unobligated balances.

Federal Street Bridge, Camden County:

There are \$1.5 M of BRZ (Bridge Off System) funds programmed for construction in FY 99. The latest cost estimate is \$2.4 M. The major reasons for the increase were the addition of roadway approach work and also the additional work of removing contaminated material. The construction authorization is currently scheduled for the beginning of May. Therefore, programming of \$2.4 M of BRZ funds for CON in FY 99 is essential. The \$0.9 M of additional Obligation Authority will be

provided from the Rt 95 project.

The \$0.9 M of additional BRZ funds will be provided from obligated balances. The subcommittee recommends approval.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

MOTION (by Sue McNamara, seconded by Lorraine Brill) that the RCC approve TIP Modification 9826.

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

TIP AMENDMENT 9901:

TIP Amendment 9901, according to Ms. McNamara is a request from SEPTA for DVRPC to initiate action to amend the Fiscal Year 1999 TIP to add the following SEPTA project:

Cross Country Metro (MIS/DEIS):

Total cost	\$300,000
Federal Funds (New Starts)	240,000
Local Funds	60,000

Currently, a draft of the MIS/DEIS report has been prepared that includes a draft Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) consisting of electrically-powered light rail from Glenloch to Morrisville via King of Prussia and Norristown. A principal advantage of the routing via King of Prussia is the addition of about 4,900 new daily riders, compared to leaving King of Prussia unserved. The proposed alignment for the LPA would turn north from the existing Morrisville Line right-of-way in King of Prussia in the vicinity of South Gulph Road, provide for a station at South Gulph Road, traverse the west side of Crockett Road and cross DeKalb Pike (US Route 202), and enter the mall area to serve a station located in the mall; the entire line would be an elevated structure. This alignment would require acquisition and demolition of eight (8) houses on the west side of Crockett Road, three (3) properties on DeKalb Pike and one (1) property on South Gulph Road. As a result of several meetings with local municipalities, communities, and interest groups, SEPTA wishes to reconsider the portion of the proposed Cross County Corridor alignment from the Morrisville Line northwards into the King of Prussia Mall due to its proposed impact on the Crockett Road neighborhood.

Federal New Starts funds were earmarked for this project in the FY 1999 Department of Transportation appropriations bill. The subcommittee recommended that the RCC approve TIP Amendment 9901 because the locally preferred alternative recommended by the MIS/DEIS could eventually be funded; it is important to support the request of the residents who could be impacted by

this scenario. However, the subcommittee had misgivings about the project; namely, if the project is truly lacking public support, the RCC should questions the need to spend additional dollars for another study; the subcommittee also questions the cost effectiveness of the project and the study.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

MOTION (by Sue McNamara, seconded by Claudia Crane) that the RCC approve TIP Amendment 9901. There is the possibility that the locally preferred alternative recommended by the MIS/DEIS could eventually be funded; it is, therefore, important to support the request of the residents who could be impacted by this scenario. However, the RCC has misgivings about the project; namely, if the project is truly lacking public support, the RCC questions the need to spend additional dollars for another study; and questions the cost effectiveness of both the project and the study.

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

ADDITIONAL PENNDOT/SEPTA AMENDMENT):

Ms. McNamara stated that an additional **PENNDOT/SEPTA Amendment** would fund a shuttle bus at the Cornwell Heights Park and Ride Lot to bring commuters from outer parts of the lot to the station. The amendment has two requests (1) change the scope of the park and ride lot to include this special shuttle operation; (2) fund the project in FY 99, move \$617,000 into FY 99, and defer construction of US 13/Bristol Pike project until FY 00. Don Nigro expressed concern about the original project. The subcommittee requests that SEPTA provide an update on the use of the lot. The subcommittee recommended that the RCC approve both requests.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

MOTION (by Sue McNamara, seconded by Lorraine Brill) that the RCC approve both requests and ask that SEPTA provide an update on the use of the lot.

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

I-295/I-76/NJ 42 INTERCHANGE TRANSPORTATION INVESTMENT STUDY (TIS):

Paul Truban, Project Engineer, NJDOT stated that within the State of New Jersey, DVRPC has identified the I-295/I-76/NJ 42 Interchange as a high priority regional need within the 2020 Long Range Plan. The Interchange was so identified due to deficiencies in urban mobility, geometric and operational constraints, and highway safety.

The current DVRPC Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) includes two improvements for the

Interchange. One would construct the missing ramps (the “missing moves” project) between I-295 and Route 42 and the other (the “direct connection” project) would provide a direct connection for I-295 through the Interchange.

Don Nigro contended that the recommendations approved by the RCC at its meeting of July 14, 1998 were ignored by the consultant, DVRPC and NJDOT, and that transit was not taken seriously or studied as part of the TIS for this highway.

Nigro presented a series of charts showing his calculations for daily ridership, VMT, personal hours of delay and the impact of electric light rail, modified light rail and diesel light rail. He stated that these findings have been documented, and pointed out that only diesel light rail was considered in the TIS. Combining modified light rail with a partial build would provide a strong alternative. Nigro quoted the TIS minutes of November 4, 1998 stating that: *This strategy depends on rail transit to mitigate interchange area transportation deficiencies by serving area travel demand otherwise served by driving. The concept focuses on the effect of the future rail line between Camden and Trenton and its studied extension to Glassboro.* Nigro also pointed out that a DVRPC staff member stated that *although it is to be considered in the TIS, the rail project serves a different market and is a project independent of any interchange improvement.* He feels this is evidence that transit was not seriously considered in the study. Nigro went on to emphasize that modified light rail would have an impact on accessibility and mobility options; social, economic and environmental factors; land use and economic development; and energy consumption. All are factors that were not considered when evaluating the impacts of the TIS alternatives.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE

MOTION (by Sue McNamara, seconded by Ernest Cohen) that the RCC find the I-295/I-76/NJ 42 TIS inadequate; the TIS needs to reconsider the RCC recommendations approved at the July 14, 1998, RCC meeting which stated that transit alternatives can significantly, or even fully, address the mobility pressures of the area: the Burlington- Gloucester MIS needs to be considered. Specifically, the alternatives to be studied should include:

1. Light rail and modified light rail (modified PATCO) alternatives to Mantua where the Camden-Glassboro freight line intersects Route 55.
2. Furthermore, Atlantic City Rail Line Improvements should include--
 - a. The addition of one peak direction round-trip;
 - b. Lessen travel time of each run by 20-35 minutes to what it was 50 years ago;
 - c. Directly extend service to Suburban Station.

In addition, the RCC encourages vigorous consistency with the New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan, with particular emphasis on the transportation improvements listed above.

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

ADDENDUM TO CONFORMITY DEMONSTRATION:

On March 2, 1999, a US Circuit Court in the District of Columbia issued an opinion in the case of the Environmental Defense Fund vs. Environmental Protection Agency. Among other issues, the court remanded a portion of EPA's conformity rule which permitted metropolitan planning agencies to use budgets 45 days after they were submitted to the EPA by the state even if EPA took no action on the submission.

In its January 28, 1999 resolution, the Board of DVRPC adopted the FY 1999-2002 Transportation Improvement Program and amended the Year 2020 Transportation Plan citing a conformity demonstration using budgets which were annulled by the decision of the court.

This addendum revises the conformity determination (hereinafter referred to as the original determination) to use an analysis which would have been appropriate had the new budgets not have been submitted. Specifically, the regional analysis compares emissions of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) to a budget established by the state for the year 1996. The conformity rule requires that VOC emissions remain below this level throughout the period of the Plan.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

MOTION (by Lorraine Brill, seconded by Pat Horrocks) that the RCC approve the Addendum to Determination of Conformity between the Amended Plan and the TIP and the State Air Quality Implementation Plan.

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

NJ 55/DEPTFORD CENTER ROAD INTERCHANGE CONGESTION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM ANALYSIS :

Mike Boyer, DVRPC Senior Transportation Planner, explained the Congestion Management System (CMS) report for NJ 55 - Deptford Center Road Interchange. The Interchange, located in Deptford Township, Gloucester County, is a partial interchange that provides primary access to the Deptford Center mall. NJ 55 is a four-lane limited access highway that runs between NJ 42 in Deptford Township to just south of Vineland. Deptford Center Road is a two-lane by direction, county-maintained road that connects two major roads (NJ 41 and NJ 55) and provides local access to a number of large retail facilities.

Boyer explained that the current partial interchange provides for all movements between NJ 55 and Deptford Center Road. However, certain movements involve uncontrolled left turns. Additionally, all traffic using this interchange must travel through the Deptford Center Road and Almonessen Ave. intersection, which has a significant magnitude of congestion. NJDOT is proposing improvements to reduce the back-up at the interchange.

ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:

MOTION (by Pat Horrocks, seconded by Ernest Cohen) that the RCC approve the NJ 55/Deptford Center Road Interchange Congestion Management System Analysis.

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

OTHER TRANSPORTATION SUBCOMMITTEE ACTION ITEMS:

Pa 41 Needs Analysis:

The RCC tabled the PA 41 Needs Analysis for discussion at the Committee’s May meeting

US 202 (SECTION 300) CONGESTION MANAGEMENT STUDY (CMS):

Mike Boyer presented US 202 (Section 300) Congestion Management Study as an information item to the RCC. Boyer stated that this preliminary engineering and environmental study is being managed by DVRPC as a partnership between Chester County, PennDOT and FHWA. This phase is intended to identify the necessary transportation improvements, address engineering feasibility, assess potential environmental and community impacts, develop appropriate mitigation and identify the public’s concerns. The next phase of the project will include final design of the proposed improvements.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS:

Transportation: The report was tabled for presentation at the May meeting. The PA Route 41 Needs Analysis will be discussed at that time.

Legislative: The Subcommittee may change its meeting day so that more members can participate.

Rules: the report was tabled for the May meeting

Year 2020: The Task Force would like to change the name of the committee to Year 2025. Members have a 4/22/99 meeting with Barry Seymour.

Environmental: The report was tabled for the May meeting