

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

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

The minutes of the RCC meeting of June 8, 1999 were approved with the correction of several typographical errors.

**CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:**

Dennis Winters, RCC Chair, announced the death of Marcile Woodworth and called for a moment of silence. He then reviewed the Staff Summary of Board action, noting the action taken by the Board related to the PennVest requests. Discussion then ensued regarding the Board's decision to approve the PennVest request from Bucks County even though it marked action that was contrary to the goals of the Year 2020 Plan.

***ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:***

***MOTION*** (by Kevin Smith, seconded by Cathy Zukoski) to send a letter to the Board asking for an explanation of its decision to approve Bucks County's PennVest request in June. The RCC notes that this request was not in the best interest of the community, the county or the region, is a change of direction from true regionalism, and is outside of any proposed growth area noted in the Year 2020 Plan. The letter will also include a request for the Board to reverse their vote on this decision; it is hoped that future votes of this type will conclude differently.

***MOTION CARRIED.***

Lorraine Brill then reported that the City Streets Department had come to a meeting in her community to address the Arterial Interconnect project, stating that they would redesign the project if possible, and if not, they would drop it. She offered an article about the project which will be mailed to RCC members. It was noted that Denise Goren stated at the Board meeting that she would look into this issue as well.

Winters reviewed and distributed the TIP ranking process and asked RCC members to use it when reviewing transportation projects. This will also be mailed to the RCC.

The location, date and time of the August meeting will be announced in the next mailing.

**TIP AMENDMENT 9829:**

Sue McNamara, Transportation Subcommittee Chair, reviewed TIP Amendment 9829, stating that this is a request from NJ TRANSIT to add \$250,000 to the New Jersey TIP for a soybean-based bio-diesel fuel demonstration at the Hamilton Bus Facility. The Maryland Soybean Board has offered a \$50,000 grant to NJ TRANSIT for the incremental cost of the bio-diesel fuel. There will be a ten-month trial period for the new fuel, after which time a decision will be made as to whether to continue the program. Dennis Winters questioned whether NJ TRANSIT has a schedule for conversion to alternative fuel vehicles. Members of the subcommittee felt that the fleet should be turned over to natural gas, which is much cleaner than the hybrids. Dennis Winters stated that this issue has been studied to death. Don Nigro believes that NJ TRANSIT shouldn't just take these funds because they are available. This is a wasteful use of these dollars. The subcommittee, therefore, recommends that the RCC not approve TIP Amendment 9829.

***ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:***

***MOTION*** (by Sue McNamara, seconded by Ernest Cohen) to recommend that the Board not approve TIP Amendment 9829 because bio-diesel fuel is not significantly cleaner than diesel fuel; both NJ Transit and SEPTA should be converting their fleets to something much cleaner than bio-diesel; this marks the wasteful use of \$250,000 of public transit funds that are increasingly rare.

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

**TIP AMENDMENT 9911:**

Ms. McNamara reported that TIP Amendment 9911 is a request from the Borough of Pottstown to construct a transit mall and park through Section 9 funding. The total cost of the project is \$400,000; the project will be built on approximately one acre of undeveloped land in the heart of Pottstown and will serve as the focus for public transportation. The parcel lies adjacent to the hub of Pottstown Urban Transit (PUT). In the future, it is hoped that the mall is provide pedestrian access to the Schuylkill Valley Metro. The subcommittee recommends that the RCC approve TIP Amendment 9911.

***ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:***

***MOTION*** (by Sue McNamara, seconded by Bob Machler) to recommend that the Board approve TIP Amendment 9911.

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

**TIP AMENDMENT 9914:**

Ms. McNamara reported on TIP Amendment 9914, noting that this is a PennDOT package that encompasses approximately 24 projects, including TIP Modifications 9912 and 9913, which were mailed to the RCC. All are existing projects that are or were on the TIP. Most changes address project readiness and incorporate minor scope changes. The subcommittee recommends that the RCC approve TIP Amendment 9914, but continue to express its opposition to projects contained herein that the committee has opposed in the past. The RCC had questions regarding Route 413 and requested additional information.

***ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:***

**MOTION** (by Sue McNamara, seconded by Elaine Cohen) that the Board approve TIP Amendment 9914, but the RCC continues to oppose US 202 (Section 700) and the Chestnut Street Intermodal project.

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

**TIP AMENDMENT 9915B:**

TIP Amendment 9915B is a listing of Transportation Enhancement (TE) projects that must appear on the TIP in order to move forward. An 11th project for Washington Crossing was just added and involves the acquisition of land for a bicycle extension. Dennis Winters questioned the use of TE funds to purchase land. This is a \$2 million project and only \$200,000 of this is TE funds. The subcommittee recommends that the RCC approve TIP Amendment 9915B.

***ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:***

**MOTION** (by Sue McNamara, seconded by Lorraine Brill) to recommend that the Board approve TIP Amendment 9915B.

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

**TIP MODIFICATION 9916:**

Ms. McNamara explained that TIP Amendment 9916 is a request from DVRPC to move its aerial photography project into the FY 1999 Pennsylvania TIP. The project is already in the FY 2000 TIP with funding spread over two years. The purpose of the project is the acquisition and editing of black and white aerial imagery and conversion and editing to

digital-ortho imagery. The flights are to be done in the spring of 2000. To meet this schedule, DVRPC needs to enter in contracts later this summer. Therefore, \$500,000 must be moved into the FY 1999 TIP. The subcommittee recommends that the RCC approve TIP Amendment 9916.

***ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:***

***MOTION*** (by Sue McNamara, seconded by Ernest Cohen) to recommend that the Board approve TIP Modification 9916.

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

**FY 2000 DVRPC REGIONAL AIRPORT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (AIP)  
RECOMMENDATIONS:**

Roger Moog, DVRPC Manager of the Office of Aviation Planning, explained that DVRPC is required to produce a list of projects that it considers priorities for funding. This list is consistent with the Year 2020 Regional Aviation System Plan which was adopted in 1995, and which emphasized the need to retain vital reliever airports in the suburbs. Moog noted that the region can only recommend priorities to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and the states of Pennsylvania and New Jersey. The FAA makes final funding decisions.

Moog summarized charts that outlined the FY 1999 Regional Airports Grants, as well as a listing of the priorities for FY 2000. These priorities include, among others, new terminal access for Philadelphia International; various phases of runway extensions for Wings Airport, Pottstown-Limerick, Brandywine and Summit; and taxiway improvements for New Castle Airport. A total of \$19.3 million in funding was received by the aviation region, which includes 12 counties. Approximately \$11 million in additional funds was generated by private investments. The FAA is not contributing as much funding as DVRPC has recommended or would like for the region.

An additional issue is the need to lock in private airports, which are particularly vulnerable to the advances of development. About 70% of suburban airports are privately owned, and have not received the public funds that commit them to remaining in the aviation system for a period of years in the future. Those airports in danger include Oldman's and Cross Keys in New Jersey, and New Garden in Pennsylvania.

Those that have recently closed are Cecil, Eastern Bucks, Salem and Gloucester. Discussion focused on the federal authorizing legislation, how this region compares to others with reliever airports, and freight movements.

***ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:***

**MOTION** (by Lorraine Brill, seconded by Pat Horrocks) to recommend that the Board approve the FY 2000 Regional Airport Improvement Program (AIP) recommendations.

**AMENDMENT** (by Finley Shapiro, seconded by Elaine Cohen) to add that the RCC is concerned that a number of airports that fulfill business aviation needs will contribute to sprawl in the region.

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

**DVRPC FY 2000 - 2002 TIP FOR NEW JERSEY:**

The Transportation Subcommittee had been charged with the responsibility of coming to the full committee with recommendations regarding the FY 2000 - 2002 TIP for New Jersey. The subcommittee recommends the following:

1. *The RCC finds the I-295/I-76/NJ 42 TIS (TIP 2340A and B) 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:*
  - (a) *Light rail and modified light rail (modified PATCO) alternatives to Mantua where the Camden-Glassboro freight line intersects Route 55.*
  - (b) *Furthermore, Atlantic City Rail Line Improvements should include --*
    - (1) *The addition of one peak direction round-trip;*
    - (2) *Lessen travel time of each run by 20-35 minutes to what it was 50 years ago;*
    - (3) *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.*

2. *The RCC continues its opposition to NJ Route 29 (TIP 4320).*

The subcommittee discussed the Route 33 Bypass and the Millstone Bypass but did not make specific recommendations pending any discussion by the RCC.

**ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:**

**MOTION** (by Don Nigro, seconded by Sue McNamara) to recommend that the Board not move the I-295/I-76/NJ42 (TIP 2340A and B) project forward.

**MOTION CARRIED.**

**ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:**

**MOTION** (by Don Nigro, seconded by Sue McNamara) to recommend that the Board oppose NJ Route 29 (TIP 4320).

**MOTION CARRIED.**

*In addition, the RCC continues to oppose the I-95/Scotch Road project (TIP 4321).*

The RCC then discussed the Millstone Bypass (TIP 4311A). Peggy Killmer presented a booklet prepared by STOP that outlines the impacts and alternatives of the currently proposed bypass. She stated that a letter from Attorney Mary Henefin in the packet of public comments received on the Draft TIP outlines specifically the objections of STOP to the phase proposed in the TIP. Ms. Killmer contended that NJDOT should be examining the possibility of installing a frontage road parallel to Route 1. She outlined the responsibility of the D & R Canal Commission in approving the currently proposed alternative, and stressed the need to maintain the integrity of the canal. A paved road surface, as proposed, is the largest threat to wetlands in this area, according to Ms. Killmer. She feels that this project is only moving forward because of the Hightstown Bypass and the connection to Route 571.

Lynn Middleton, NJDOT Project Manager, countered that the department of transportation is fairly sure of the Environmental Assessment (EA) conclusion. Because of this, the agency then programs funding for design; this is a normal step at this point in the life of a project. These dollars cannot be spent until the EA is concluded and the federal government has approved it. At this point, Peggy Killmer contended that the DVRPC Board failed to act on the Millstone Bypass two years ago because the EA had not been done. Candace Snyder corrected this impression, stating that the Board did not approve placing the Bypass on the TIP at that time because they wanted NJDOT to study all possible alternatives and to come back with a final recommendation.

Ms. Middleton stated that Route 571 connects directly to the NJ Turnpike and is one lane by direction. The newly proposed bypass will be one lane by direction with a posted speed limit of 40 mph. The bypass is to be constructed to aid the township of West Windsor which is now heavily impacted by the noise and traffic. Another objective is to keep traffic flowing once the Hightstown Bypass is completed. Ms.

Middleton clarified that the D & R Canal Commission is responsible for the watershed and the Millstone River; the entire bypass project is within the Canal review zone. The Commission will examine water quality, noise and environmental impacts. On June 16, the Commission voted not to make a recommendation until the EA results were received. Ms. Middleton stated that the proposed alternative is supported by West Windsor Twp., Princeton University, Sarnoff Research and Mercer County. Princeton Borough and STOP are opposed to the project.

***ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:***

***MOTION*** (by Peggy Killmer, seconded by Sue McNamara) to state to the Board that action by the DVRPC Board on the Millstone Bypass (TIP 4311A) is premature prior to completion of the Environmental Assessment or Environmental Impact Statement; and that action by the Board is premature prior to the release of complete traffic projections by NJDOT.

***MOTION CARRIED.***

***ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:***

***MOTION*** (by Ernest Cohen, seconded by Peggy Killmer) to recommend that the Board adopt the FY 2000 - 2002 TIP for New Jersey, after noting and considering the comments of the RCC.

***MOTION CARRIED.*** (See Item G on voting record.)

Ms. Killmer then asked the RCC to support and present to the Board the STOP publication on impacts and alternatives for the Millstone Bypass. Dennis Winters stated that he would be uncomfortable supporting such material until he had studied it. STOP will be at the Board meeting, instead, to present their publication.

**PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO THE YEAR 2020 TRANSPORTATION PLAN: DRPA AERIAL TRAM:**

The proposed Year 2020 Plan Amendment is a request from the Delaware River Port Authority (DRPA) to include Delaware River Tram and its accompanying sound-and-light show as a regionally significant project. This project, as outlined in the DRPA description, is an effort to create a two-sided waterfront that attracts millions of visitors annually. Construction on the tram is scheduled to begin in the Spring of 2000. The system could carry its first passengers in about a year. Preliminary design calls for the tram to transport eight-person gondolas 160 feet above the Delaware River with terminals built in Philadelphia at Columbus Blvd. and Walnut Street, and in Camden at Delaware and Market streets. The subcommittee discussed the public meetings held by DRPA. . Total

cost of the project is unavailable; however, this has been designated as a federal earmark. The subcommittee recommends that the RCC oppose this Amendment to the Year 2020 Plan. Dennis Winters asked if anyone on the RCC supported the project; the answer was “no.”

***ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:***

***MOTION*** (by Don Nigro, seconded by Jane Glenn) to recommend that the Board oppose the Year 2020 Plan Amendment from DRPA for the following reasons:

- 1) There is no justification for the project;
- 2) This project is tantamount to an amusement park ride;
- 3) There is much concern about the operation of the tram in different weather extremes;
- 4) DRPA should focus on its core mission which is to expand PATCO operations;
- 5) The agency should be addressing other, more timely transportation issues.

***MOTION CARRIED.*** (See Item H on voting record.)

**FY 2000 DVRPC PLANNING WORK PROGRAM AMENDMENT: NEW JERSEY SUPPORTIVE HIGHWAY PLANNING PROJECTS:**

Michael Gatti, DVRPC Work Program Coordinator, outlined the proposed Work Program Amendment for NJ’s Supportive Highway Program. He stated that the two projects to be added are the Delaware River/Assunpink Creek Walkway, proposed by the City of Trenton, and the Route 38 Corridor Study, proposed by Camden and Burlington counties. The Delaware River/Assunpink Creek Walkway is the final phase of a three-year study and is needed to complete a conceptual riverwalk plan in coordination with NJDOT studies for Route 29 and Trenton’s downtown traffic circulation. The Route 38 Corridor Study (phase one of two-year project) will fund DVRPC’s portion of a study of the corridor from Pennsauken to Southampton Township. Funding for both projects will come from the Supportive Regional Highway Program pass-through, which is already allocated for FY 2000.

***ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:***

***MOTION*** (by Don Nigro, seconded by Jane Glenn) to recommend that the Board add the Route 38 Corridor Study to the FY 2000 DVRPC Planning Work Program.

However, this study should consider and assimilate the results of the Mount Holly

component of the Burlington-Gloucester Major Investment Study (MIS). Furthermore, the thinking on the study's technology aspects of the commuter rail alternative needs to be considered and updated to reflect recent advancements in commuter rail propulsion technologies. More specifically, the capital costs of the commuter rail alternatives should be retabulated substituting: 1) diesel multiple unit (DMU); and 2) dual mode locomotive technology for the electric multiple unit technology studied in the MIS.

**MOTION CARRIED.** (See Item I on voting record.)

***ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:***

**MOTION** (by Bob Machler, seconded by Elaine Cohen) to recommend that the Board add the Delaware River/Assunpink Creek Walkway to the FY 2000 DVRPC Planning Work Program.

**MOTION CARRIED.** (See Item J on voting record.)

**REGIONAL TRENDS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT:**

Patrick Starr of the Pennsylvania Environmental Council reviewed the concept of Transit-Oriented Development (TOD), pointing out that recent growth in the suburbs has led even more quickly to the need for this concept. He reviewed population and employment in southeastern Pennsylvania, VMT increases, assets that contribute to TOD usage, and findings. Recommendations include implementable goals for state, county, municipal and regional governments. Some of these recommendations include transit-supportive zoning; the need for limits on land acquisition; identifications of TOD opportunities; a realistic examination of transit constraints, etc. Starr stated that San Francisco and Portland have technical assistance and direct grants from MPO's to communities to promote TOD. According to Starr, "We are undermining ourselves by not making use of high density areas near transit. Transit stations should be the front door to our communities." The RCC then discussed the need for public education regarding transit and its usage. Elaine Cohen pointed out that the 69th Street Station and Swarthmore are good local examples of transit that communicates the right message.

**NEW REGIONALISM:**

Patty Elkins, DVRPC Senior Regional Planner, outlined the concept of *New Regionalism*, which takes New Urbanism beyond isolated planning at the neighborhood scale to include limiting new development to designated growth areas; fostering suburban development based on traditional neighborhood design principles; encouraging infill development and urban revitalization; and preserving an inter-connected open space network.

DVRPC has outlined its concept for New Regionalism in a detailed report entitled, *New Regionalism: Building Livable Communities Across the Delaware Valley*. The report, to be released later in July, explains key strategies and design principles, and makes recommendations for enhancing livability at both the neighborhood and regionwide scale. The report also presents local case studies of how various communities in the Delaware Valley are applying these principles to make themselves more livable. By offering a new vision of development, it is hoped that New Regionalism will spur a public dialogue about changing the way that land use and transportation development decisions are made, as DVRPC prepares Horizons: The Year 2025 Plan for the Delaware Valley.

***ACTION TAKEN BY COMMITTEE:***

**MOTION** (by Jane Glenn, seconded by Cathy Zukoski) to wholeheartedly support the *New Regionalism* concept as exemplified in the DVRPC report, *New Regionalism: Building Livable Communities Across the Delaware Valley* and recommend this as policy to the Board. The RCC also recommends that this publication be sent to county planners and municipalities with a request for their response to this concept.

***MOTION CARRIED.*** (See Item L on voting record.)

**SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Transportation:** No additional report.

**Environmental/Legislative:** Cathy Zukoski reported that the new Environmental/Legislative Subcommittee met today to discuss the Venice Island issue; Darlene Messina is drafting two letters, one to Barbara Kaplan and one to the DVRPC Board. In addition, the subcommittee discussed suburban sprawl and proposed land use legislation. The subcommittee recommends that Senator Allyson Schwartz, Representative David Steil, Patricia Aden (Preservation Alliance) and Janet Lussenhap (10,000 Friends) to the August RCC meeting. The RCC agreed with this suggestion.

**Rules:** Linda Ingenthron announced that her subcommittee will meet in September. She suggested that a mailing be issued to RCC members requesting whether they would like to remain as corresponding members, voting members, etc. Candace Snyder will take care of this in August.

**Year 2025:** Ernest Cohen stated that the Year 2025 Subcommittee met with the

Environmental/Legislative Subcommittee. He discussed the issue of port disputes between Wilmington and Philadelphia.

**Housing:** Bill Rafsky stated that the DVRPC Housing Committee did not meet.